



An analysis on the impact of Globalization on tribal Economy

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Abstract: *Even though there could be some advantages of globalization, on the other side, there is fear that globalization adversely effect on poor and it is the matter of world business which favorable to the giant companies. During the globalization, 'poor becomes very poor and rich becomes very rich' is common phenomenon of the public. There is scope to neglect the common man and sometimes it may adverse to culture, traditions and life style of the settled tribal people in the forest by entry of westernization. In these circumstances, there is a need of hour to study the changes in the socio economic conditions of the primitive tribes to frame new developmental activities to the tribal community without effect to the rest of the groups.*

Key words: *globalization, different communities, Regional imbalances, economic inequality*

Introduction

India has geographical and combination of different communities. Regional imbalances and economic inequality is common features. Citizens all over the India worry about the loss of control over their own collective destiny that globalization seems to entail. The impact of globalization is harshest on tribal population perhaps more than any other because these communities have no voice and are therefore easily swept aside by the invisible hands of the market and its operators. The process of globalization has made disastrous changes in the lives of indigenous people across the world, though the degree of exploitation and marginalization vary from state to state and tribal group to group. It has literally crushed local agricultural market hence also affected the rural population including tribal population whose livelihood depend upon agriculture and allied activities. Under these circumstances, our country can still

retain our individuality after being positively inspired by the other countries. The strength of a culture comes from its ability to accept change and move forward with the changing times. Thus, India has to play a dual role as two sides of one coin that, globalization one side and activities to the mass is on the other side.

Globalisation and challenges in tribal development

Primitive conditions of the tribal life, ignorance, illiteracy their vulnerability to economic exploitation, the existing socio - psychological barriers due to isolation, necessitated a cautious and phased approach for the development of tribals. Keeping in view the said facts special approaches have been formulated from time to time by the Indian Government for the betterment of their socio-economic conditions. As a result several developmental institutions were established to look after the all-round development of the tribals. However,



globalisation hits the tribals various ways.

Content wise there is nothing new in the current development strategy being pursued in the resource rich tribal areas, nothing that has not already been happening under 'nationalization' thus far. What are new are the pace and the intensity of exploitation and the zeal of the bureaucracy and even certain NGOs in expediting the process. What a national agency would have taken, say, one hundred years to achieve, is being accomplished in less than a decade by the process of globalization, liberalization and privatisation. The extent of devastation in tribal areas and marginalization, displacement and pauperization of the Adivasi people that has already taken place has been pointed out by Dr. B.D. Sharma (1995)

¹, Walter Fernandes (1992)² and others. One-fifth of the total Adivasi population (about 2 crores) is already displaced and has ended up in the slums of the metropolitan areas of the country. This is not an imagined fear but something that is already happening here and in other parts of the world as well, in South America and South-East Asia where this process has been given a full play. The indigenous peoples of the concerned area having lost their command over resources are heading towards total disintegration, some even towards extinction

Globally there has been an explosion in the quantum of mining and prospecting for minerals, fossil fuels and other energy sources in the last twenty years. In India, with the opening up of the mining sector to foreign players, governments of the mineral rich states are vying with each other to woo foreign

investment in the extractive industries. The Government of India has also set itself a target of doubling energy production by hydropower within the next decade. These policies, which entail opencast mining on an unprecedented scale and construction of numerous dams in the fragile river valleys and hills of the Northeast, will severely impact the last remaining homelands of tribal populations in these states.

The Developmental policies which were initiated as a part of LPG program not only drastically altered the relationship of tribes with natural environment and resources but also changed the pattern and methods of ownership of land and usage. Land and forest are exploited in the name of development that fundamentally altered the tribal way of life. Due to rapid growth prospects in terms of monetary benefits land has become a saleable private property. It is also seen that the region which is traditionally inhabited by the tribes now inhabited by non-tribals which resulted into tribals becoming a minority in their own region. The benefits of large scale expansion of industries and infrastructure, never reaches these tribals and what they get in return is nothing but peanuts in the name of benefit. In case of employment, it is seen that the employment opportunities are being denied to them or they are employed on considerably lower wages by violating settled labour norms, hence overall so called development of Tribal region had deleterious effect on Tribal population however ironically Tribals themselves seen as hindrance to the development. Their traditional socio-economic and cultural systems blamed³.



The globalization has left a very deep scar over growth of tribal people from multiple perspectives. On one hand, they have been creeped by fast growth of industries, on the other; the benefits of development have not percolated among them. Some of those crucial negativities are as follows:

Displacement of Tribes: Displacement of tribals from their indigenous land has been one of the significant issues in post-liberalization era. It is estimated that owing to construction of over 1500 major irrigation development projects since independence, over 16 million people were displaced from their villages, of which about 40 per cent belong to tribal population (Raj. Fr. John Felix)⁴. The displacement has taken place on account of various development projects like irrigation dams, under-ground coal mines, mineral based industries in various parts of the country. The government and the planners are aware of the eroding resource base and socio-cultural heritage of tribal population through a combination of development interventions, commercial interest, and lack of effective legal protection to tribal and the disruption of life and environment of tribal population owing to unimaginative, insensitive package of relief (Planning Commission, 1990). A common feature shared by most of the tribal people is their remoteness and marginal quality of territorial resources. Thus, forced evictions of tribals to make way for mammoth capital-intensive development projects have become a distressing routine.

The tribals are forced to live in juxtaposition with alien capitalist relations and cultures, with traumatic results. They are forced onto the ever-expanding low paid, insecure, transient

and destitute labour market. About 40 per cent of the tribals of central India supplement their income by participating in this distorted and over exploitative capitalist sector. Many more are slowly crushed into oblivion in their homeland or in urban slums. India happens to be the second most dammed country in the world. It has invested over Rs. 300 billion on dams and hydropower projects by 2000. Almost all major dam projects in India are intrinsically linked to world capitalism and its obsequious national stooges. Nearly 60 per cent of these large dams are located in central and western India where most of inhabitants are tribal communities.

Alienation of Tribals: Land is very important component for tribal development. It occupies their source of livelihood. But the globalization trend has alienated tribals from their mainstay. Over a period of time, the tribal communities have tended to get eroded not only through acquisition for public purpose but even fraudulent motives. The states affected by alienation of land are Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Gujarat. Various studies have pointed out that the lack of political and administrative will continues to be the cause for perpetuation of the problems of land alienation among the tribals.

Problems of Indebtedness: The global economy has overburdened the tribals with various debts due to inadequate livelihood resources. The lack of education, purchasing power and lack of resources for engaging in gainful activity has led to indebtedness for tribal communities. The indebtedness of tribals pushes them into extreme conditions of poverty and forces them to dispense with their meagre resources. Due to neo-



liberal economy, the tribal persons have been pushed into severity of indebtedness as they are unable to continue their lifestyle based on their traditional notions. Lack of sound policy to support consumption credit to tribals has tended to make them dependent on usurious money-lenders resulting in debt-bondage⁵.

Deprivation of Forest Rights: The tribal communities being primitive, is based on forests areas for their survival. Although they live in isolation in forest areas, they are having harmonious relationship with forests and species. But the development of wildlife sanctuaries and eco-parks devastate their habitat and displace their living. During neo-colonialism, the developed countries have continued their dominance over developing countries for regulating their economy. Due to it, the local technology, culture and economy were delegitimized and turned into imperialism. The emergence of community forest management has led to growth of state control over their natural habitat. Although state through provision of PESA, 1996, safeguards their rights of livelihood upon forest produce yet, the multi-national corporations have diluted its intrinsic nature of safeguarding their ownership over forests and natural resources.

Cycle of Poverty: As far as neo-liberal development has advanced, the tribal community has been engulfed into abject poverty. During 1999-2000, the percentage of poverty has been ranging between 45.86 and 41.14. The root cause for all these is the perceived dissatisfaction with the existing conditions and failure to receive benefits and facilities promised to them. Globalization based on individualistic

nature, internalises selfishness and consumerism among the primitives⁶.

The basis of globalisation is an economy pursuing the highest profit at any cost. Consumerism, the use of goods based on artificially created needs, is its way of ensuring the producer's high profit. Globalisation is also natural resource-intensive. It results in a greater impoverishment of the majority, but the middle class gets its benefits. Due to scarcity of resources, the tribes are always out of access of enjoyment of these benefits. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), 12 million jobs were lost during the first six years of liberalisation, and later. This apparent absence of alternatives increases the sense of helplessness of the tribals who are among the worst victims of globalisation, and legitimises the consumerist society which impoverishes them. Even endorsement of their policy by government leads to provision of extraction of resources from tribal areas at indiscriminate manner. The nexus between state and market has infuriated the tribal people against unilateral development model in India. The lack of employment opportunity and recession from various industries has worsened the situation in cycle of poverty. In the mid-1980s, Coal India began to mechanise its mines and transfer employees to other mines instead of giving jobs to displaced persons (Fernandes, Walter)⁷.

Intellectual Property Rights: Existences of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) among primitive communities are supercilious in the globalisation. As most of indigenous knowledge and information is not documented, the neo-liberal forces have patented those ideas in their own interests. This indigenous knowledge amongst the tribal communities is passed



on from generation to generation through the medium of oral tradition, folklore and practice, which find a place in various life-cycle events including treatment of diseases/ ailments, without any codified text or rights to accredit their legitimate ownership. The tribal people are completely dependent upon biological resources so their existence and sustenance are based on conservation and purposeful utilization of these resources. Corporate protectionism in terms of patents and Intellectual Property Rights arising out of various international treaties/instruments on trade and common property resources such as the Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) under the World Trade Organisation (WTO) represents a real threat to economic livelihood of these communities. They are also a source of potential exploitation of the tribal resource base as bio-diversity expressed in life forms and knowledge is sought to be converted into private property and treated as an open access system for free exploitation by those who want to privatise and patent it(Fernandes, Walter)⁸.

Extinction of Primitive tribal culture: The ethos of globalization has not only impacted the socio-economic conditions of tribal people but their cultural status also. The promotion of consumerism and global order has extinguished their uniqueness of culture. The individualistic nature of neo-liberal order has hypnotised the primitives and tribal culture has got subsumed into multiculturalism. There is no demarcation between indigenous culture and foreign tradition. From state to individual entity, each factor is involved in encouraging existence of status quo. The media imposes the value of consumerism on the

desensitised middle class and make it watch problems from the comfort of the drawing room, without feeling responsible for them. In other words, Globalization is nothing but a penetration of cultural life of popular or dominant sections into tribal sections through reordering of values, behaviour, institutions and identity⁹. In past centuries the Church, the educational system and public authorities played a major role in inculcating native peoples with ideas of submission and loyalty in the name of divine or absolutist principles. The transformation, already begun with colonialism and "national development, is getting intensified with globalisation. Each one is expected to think only of his/her own interests and ignore the damage done to others. More and more of the limited natural, mineral and financial resources are monopolised by a few. One can see this trend in the hardened ethnic identities of many indigenous movements in the Northeast or in the assertion of many tribes in Eastern India that they alone truly represent the whole of tribal India. Because of this cultural subordination, globalization has demolished entire tribal culture and tribal people feel sometimes ashamed of following their own traditions. The process of acculturation has begun with neo-liberal populism.

Conclusion

Economy of India experiences major kinds of changes in the policy during the early part of 1990s, that has got the newer mode of economic reform, relevant popularly marked as Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization (or the model of LPG). LPG aims in making Indian economy the fastest growing front and being competitive on international platform.



There are many reforms followed in the industrial sector, financial and trading sectors of India. The core idea is to attain efficient economic structure. Development should meet the needs of all the sections of the public without adverse effect to anybody. But, due to the globalization, structural changes have been taking place and tribal areas also utilizing for various purposes. Globalization facilitating trade returns, capital accumulation, technological upgradation, health and education and civilization.

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⁵ Ibid

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Ibid