

Unraveling the Socio-Economic Condition of Tribal Peoples in West Bengal



Shambhu Prasad Chakrabarty, Jayanta Ghosh, Bhupal Bhattacharya, Santanu Panda

Abstract: *Indigenous and tribal rights have always been neglected in almost all jurisdictions across the world. The international movement has however gained momentum in the last few decades with the turn-around construed by ILO 169. The indigenous movement subsequently reached a significant level with the UNDRIPS. Thirty years after the Convention No. 169 only 23 countries have ratified the convention. Like most signatory countries, India has not ratified this convention and still carries on with the outdated ILO 107 which was criticized as a historic blunder. Like most nations India is also bound to submit the UPR but unfortunately none of the UPRs discusses in details the condition of tribal communities in India. This research studies the socio-economic scenario of tribal peoples in West Bengal. Some perception of the employees, Social worker, NGO professional have been made and a set of recommendation follows for better implementation of development schemes and livelihood.*

Keywords : *Indigenous, Tribal, Ethnic Identity, Law, West Bengal*

I. INTRODUCTION

India is an amazing amalgamation of various races and cultures, with a landscape as diverse as its population. Among more than 2,500 people groups in the nation, about 80 percents are considered unreached, though, the county has largest concentration of the tribal population in the world. According to 2011 survey census, 84.33 million persons were counted as belonging to scheduled tribes in different States or Union Territories in India constituting 8.2 percent of the total population consisting of 567 different tribal populations.

In common parlance, tribes in India are perceived as 'different' socio-cultural groups living in isolation since the mythical Aryan invasion of the Indian sub-continent. Tribals are the most vulnerable sections of the population in India.

It is commonly noticed that the application of laws made in India suffers from an inherent lack of implementation. Lack of infrastructure to explore ways of implementation due to financial reason is the most commonly sighted excuse to avoid implementation of many laws.

Even when it is to some extent true, efforts must be made to develop infrastructure and provide adequate benefits to the tribal peoples and their communities who needed them the most. Lack of administrative will and corruptive practices has also played a significant role in the failure of various laws in making a change in the life of tribal communities.

Large scale corruption in various departments and various wings of the government has taken a toll in the developmental process of tribal peoples and their communities in India resulting in insufficient implementation of policies in uplifting the socio economic rights of these largely downtrodden people and to their society. prepared as per journal the template. 3. Contents of the paper are fine and satisfactory. Author (s) can make rectification in the final paper but after the final submission to the journal, rectification is not possible.

II. SAMPLING UNIVERSE

Bengal had an amazing geographical feature with sea on the south and mountains on the north. The influxes of various invaders for centuries have pushed the indigenous and tribal peoples of this part of India into secluded and forest areas. This exclusion from the natural influx of heterogeneous populace makes them unique and different from the former.

In the political sphere, Bengal has played a pivotal role in India as it was the strategic centre of the two hundred odd years of colonial rule in India with their capital at Calcutta. The partition of Bengal during India's independence broke it into West Bengal and the other East Bengal while the later commonly called East Pakistan. This state has twenty three districts divided into five divisions.

This research was carried out by conducting an opinion survey by taking a sample size of 400 people which got bifurcated into 100 persons from each district comprising of 25 tribal peoples, 25 non tribal people, 25 government employees and 25 NGO/ social activists from four districts randomly selected (two from north Bengal region and two from south Bengal region).

It shall be relevant to state in this regard that there has been an element of discretion involved in making a community with indigenous traits within the terminology of tribal. In some cases irrespective of various indigenous traits, communities have complained of not getting the status of 'scheduled tribes' under the Constitution of India and that politics play a dominant role to determine communities within the stratification of 'scheduled tribes' and thus either

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deprive or fails to provide the needed welfare to those vulnerable peoples of those tribal community. The distribution of various benefits at times fails to reach the needy because of lack of communication and other reasons.

III.METHODOLOGY

Primary and secondary data were collected since more than last three decades from relevant literature [6-10] and stakeholders' views were considered and analysed during 2018-19 (November to March) to unravel the true position of tribal peoples of West Bengal with reference to the selected four districts of the state.

The methodology of acquiring stakeholders' views consist of three stages i) identification of respondents (tribals, non tribals, government officials and non-governmental organisations)

ii) Identification of civil and economic condition (10 in numbers) and

iii) Evaluation of the respondent's response to construct the socio-economic condition (SEC) through ranking and voting. Although social and economic can be of various types, the present list captures the major areas in four districts of the state of West Bengal in India. Two districts are chosen from the two parts of West Bengal (North and South) and is ranked in terms of the tribal populace. However, as there is high probability of variation of this ranking with the category of respondents, therefore the views of the respondents were also considered (by inclusion of the % of voting along with their respective ranking factor) and finally Composite Socio-economic factors in context to the position of tribal peoples in West Bengal.

It is to be noted in this context that the sample size of respondents are variable *e.g.*, for tribal peoples it is 25 which is also the same with the other three groups of respondents being twenty-five.

IV.STUDY AREA

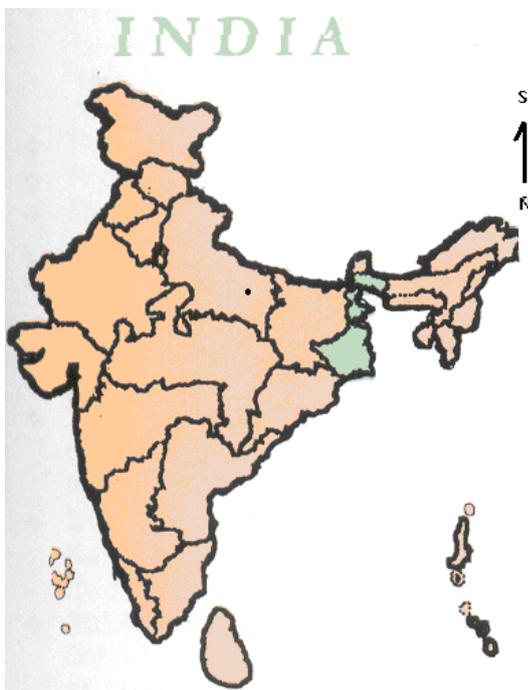


Figure 1: Maps indicating India and the State of West Bengal. The Selected Districts are Highlighted in the map of West Bengal

V.BACKDROP

From the early historical times till 17th century AD ancient Bengal was divided into a number of tribal formations commonly known as janapadas. This study unravels that only forty ethnic groups have been notified as Scheduled Tribes in West Bengal so far. Among these tribes, Totos, Birhors and Lodhas have been notified as PVTGs (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups) in terms of backwardness in different development indicators. Earlier they were nomenclated as PTGs (Primitive Tribal Groups). Totos and Birhors predominantly reside in Jalpaiguri & Purulia Districts respectively whereas the Lodhas are mostly found in the district of Paschim Medinipur. The tribal population of West Bengal is 52,96,963 as per Census 2011, which is about 5.8% of the total population of the state's population. Tribal population of West Bengal constitutes about 5.08% of total tribal population of the country. Higher concentration of tribal population is seen in the districts like Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar, Dakshin Dinajpur, Paschim Medinipur, Bankura and Purulia.

VI.RESPONSES OF THE POPULATION

Cultural regions and cultural elements of the state may be generally classified in the following two groups: North Bengal, and South or lower Bengal. The study conducted in this research incorporates a set of questions carefully selected and were asked to various tribal peoples based on random sampling of the population selected.

Table 1: Opinion Survey conducted of the Respondents of the following closed questionnaire

DESIRED PARAMETER	QUESTIONS PUT TO TRIBAL RESPONDENTS
Formal Education	Have you got any education from school?
Traditional Profession	Do you make sure that your children get the traditional method of education?
Atrocities	Have you been subjected to any act of atrocity?
Government Aid	Have you or any of your family members got any assistance from such schemes, if any?
Traditional Healing Method	In case of any minor health related issues, do you use the traditional method of healing?
Culture	Do you participate in various tribal cultural programs?
BPL Card Possession	Do you possess Below Poverty Level (BPL) Card?
Traditional Cultural Awareness	Is there any specialty of your tribe in regards to art and culture?
Tribal Population Growth	Do you think that the tribal population is decreasing?

Traditional Healing Method	80	84	84	66
Culture	52	52	52	76
BPL Card Possession	66	92	92	52
Traditional Cultural Awareness	20	20	8	48
Tribal Population Growth	92	92	96	96

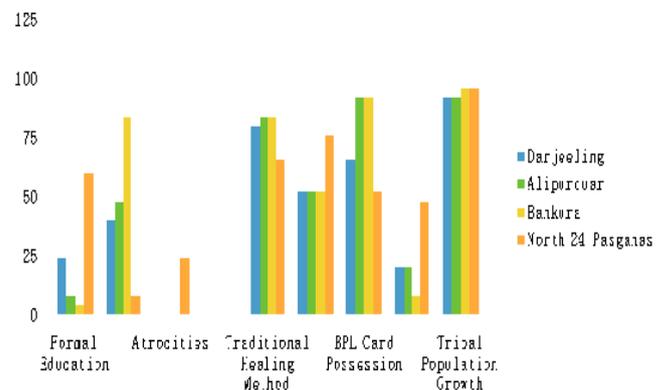


Figure 2: Graphical representation of the responses given by the respondent tribal peoples

Table 2: Positive Responses given by tribal peoples of West Bengal (respondents)

Parameter of SES	Darjeeling	Alipurduar	Bankura	North 24 Parganas
Formal Education	24	8	4	60
Traditional Profession	40	48	84	8
Atrocities	0	0	0	24
Government Assistance	0	0	0	0

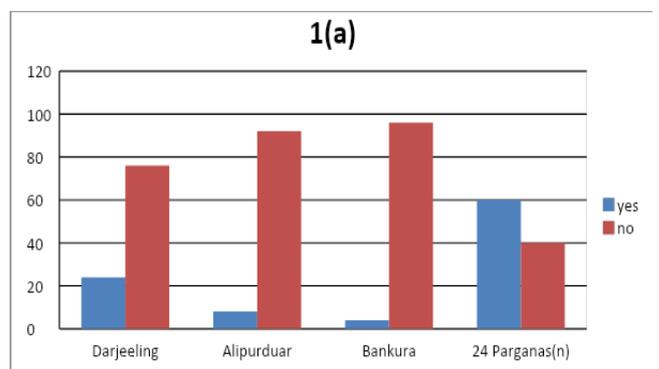


Figure 3: The bar graph shows the Schooling status of the tribal children

VII. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA GATHERED

On perusal of the above questionnaire, the scenario in West Bengal region can be summed up as follows:



A. The Tribal Respondents:

1. The study findings revealed that the majority of tribal peoples in North Bengal have not visited school. This trend is however not there in the district of North 24 Parganas where majority have got the privilege of primary education. All the two districts of north Bengal and Bankura from South Bengal district have got an intense number of non school going tribal peoples, which basically reveals that tribal peoples are vulnerable to the situation in and around them because of lack of modern educational system. This also puts them in a situation of ignorance and being subject to victimization. (fig. 2)
2. However, it has also been a matter of satisfaction that the majority of the tribal populations in both the districts are sending their children and young ones to the school level of primary education. Thus it can be said that the tribal peoples are aware of their weakness arising out of lack of primary education. Hence, it may be noted in this regard that the tribal peoples in and around the districts of West Bengal are exposed to primary education system.
3. The majority of the tribal peoples in the first three districts of the universe make sure that their young ones get the benefit of traditional and ancient method of education arising out of exposure and experience. But the tribal peoples of the district of North 24 Parganas do not practice of transferring their traditional system of education to the new generations. Instances of greater deviation from their indigenous habitat and transmission to the non tribal peoples are some of the common trends found in this district which is sad as it is losing the traditional knowledge at a very fast rate

Statement of Sital Sabar and Sambhu Sabar, Respondents

Name: Sital Sabar Sex: Male Age: 56 Vill: Jhilimili, Bankura

According to the 2011 census, there are only 25 families in this village in which all families are 'Sabar' and belongs to Primitive Tribal Group (PTG). They have settled in the forest region. Earlier they used the forest for life and livelihood purposes. During that period the main occupation of the family was to hunt the animals and collect the forest resources for survival. Gradually with the degradation of the forest they had to search for employment outside the forest. Meanwhile the government also constructed housed and resettlement villages for them in which they are now living both by collecting forest resources as well as by working in the non-farm sectors. No agricultural land was given by the government for them to resettle the Sabars for practicing agriculture. Now their occupation has changed due to the decrease of deep forest and forest resources. They collect leaf, flowers, fruits fuel and other resources and sell in the local 'Hat' (market) which is about 8-12 km. away from their resident villages. Sometimes they jointly hunt the animals for consumption. However, this is not possible to take risk every day to collect the fire wood due to miss behaviour of police. They have any alternative sources for their livelihood. Beyond the PDS system they get rice for ration shops. According to Sital Sabar 'the villagers have no formal education; most of them have never visited the school'.

Name: Sambhu Sabar, Sex: Male Age: 52 Vill: Jhilimili, Bankura

Shambhu Sabar is one of the family member of the said community. Earlier he was a cowboy and used to graze the animals of other families in the nearby village. He has no formal education. In his youth, he got married and took the responsibility to carry on a family. In the beginning of his family life he used to go to nearer district of Burdwan half yearly as a migrant. Once he bought a couple of bullocks for plough and grew agricultural products. But due to the nature of agricultural land he could not use the bullocks properly. He wanted to acquire the forest land for doing agriculture. Every day he and his wife level the forest (low land) land to prepare the same for agriculture. The total one acre of land has been using for paddy cultivation. Now he grows paddy for 6-8 month for food security. Rest of the time he and his son search the work as agriculture wage labour at their neighbour's village. On failing to get the work nearer to the village they goes to the forest and cut the fire wood and sells in the nearby market or hat. Now his total family members are 5 (Husband wife, sons and son's wife and one little grandson). Now frequently, he feels that if the forest department displace him from the acquire land then he will be landless and suffer irretrievably and sink into chronic hunger.

4. The cases of atrocity are literally negligible or nonexistent in north Bengal region. There has been a co existence of a lot of diversified people in Darjeeling, yet there has been no reported instance of atrocity in that district. The areas of Totopara and other adjoining tribal areas of Alipurduar also do not have any such case of practice of atrocity. There are instances of atrocity being practiced in the District of North 24 Parganas on the members of tribes from that of non tribal peoples.

Irrespective of the number of cases of atrocities faced, by the tribal peoples of the district of North 24 Parganas, majority of them have not been recorded and hence most of these cases go un-redressed. Therefore, the overall impression is that, in every district tribal peoples have not faced any recurrence of any act of atrocities except the district of North 24 Parganas where around only in 10 percent of cases these acts of atrocities have recurred.

5. Overall in every district the majority of tribal peoples are not aware of any self occupational scheme run by the government. Most of them have never heard of any specific schemes run by the government. The most ignorant of the existence of any such schemes is the district of Bankura where almost none have heard of any self occupational scheme run by the government.
6. Even when there are many examples of many self occupational schemes run by the government, none of the respondents have got any benefit from the said schemes. This reflects the poor condition of the schemes and also reflects the lack of awareness of these schemes. The government has failed to reach out to the tribal peoples to involve them in more and more occupational schemes.
7. On matters of health the tribal peoples still rely on their indigenous methods of healing. It must also be stated in this regard that the trend is however on the wrong direction as many tribal peoples have already stopped using traditional healing methods.

The traditional use of plants and other aspects of nature to heal up the physical ailments are slowly and steadily moving toward extinction. The trend shows that if the government and other organization want, this age old technique of healing can still be protected and preserved. But it would take the will of the state to do this in reality.

8. Another fascination revelation of the survey is the popularity of these health centres in these localities. Almost all the tribal peoples have visited these hospitals and health centres in case of their health related problems. Thus it has been identified that the tribal peoples use both traditional and modern health care facilities. No wonder the tribal population in west Bengal as well as the country has rose and the mortality rate of tribal peoples have increased.

9. On the point of cultural practices, the reaction of the tribal peoples have been mixed as most of the response as to their participation has been on a balance. Some of the tribal peoples participate while some of the others do not. This trend also identifies that the cultural popularity of the tribal societies have decreased over the years. It has also been identified that the cultural popularity is concentrating more on the younger generation. Most of the tribal peoples within the universe have accepted that the government participation in tribal cultural program and organising such programs have increased over the years. The tribal peoples have also revealed that their traditions are no longer respected as much they used to be some years back. The tribal peoples are losing their culture uniqueness with the popularity of western influence in the cultural front. In one of the visits to the fare, the researcher found that most of the participants of these programs are wearing western dresses and involved in modern food practices than traditional ones. However, credit must go to the government for their efforts to carry on these programs. However the government must try to protect the traditional practices than the modern practices in these fares and other cultural gatherings.

10. All the tribal peoples are aware of the concept of BPL cards. Thus it may be said that they know the benefits arising out of this card. It has been seen that majority of all tribal peoples across the four districts surveyed have got their BPL cards. However, the majority have stated that many are still left over who are below poverty level.

11. One of the disappointing outcome of the research is that majority of the tribal respondents are not aware of the specialties inherent to the tribal population they belong to. Thus it may be stated in this regard that the tribal peoples are losing their identity and cultural specialty with the passing of time this further encourages certain awareness program of the government to revive the cultural and social awareness of the tribal peoples as to their identification.

12. It is sad to see that the government has taken a very little step to protect the indigenous knowledge of the tribal peoples. None of the tribal peoples of north Bengal districts thinks that the government has taken any step to protect their indigenous knowledge. Only a few respondents from North 24 Parganas acknowledge the efforts of the government to protect their indigenous knowledge.

13. Tribal population is increasing all over the state of west Bengal and it has been reflected in the survey as all the tribal respondents stated that the tribal population is

increasing. All the respondents also stated that population of their respective tribe is also increasing except a handful at the district of Darjeeling.

14. However, the tribal peoples of the districts except one fifth of tribal peoples in Bankura that their indigenous knowledge is reducing gradually. Thus it is understood that apart from the problem of self identification, their traditional knowledge base is also at the verge of extinction.

Statement of Rabi Sabar, a Respondent

Name of the Informant: Rabi Sabar Age: 70 Sex: Male
Village: Rimradanga GP: Vulaveda, Bankura

According to the informant he lived in this village since birth. Rabi told me 'I have no agricultural and home stated land; I maintained my family depending on the forest produce collection and day labourer.' He was born before independence but has not got any help from government. During the Left Front government usually they survive their family through cow grazing. He stated, 'Every morning my wife, son and daughter collected some cow from neighbouring villages for grazing and returned in the evening on the basis of sixteen kilogram paddy or Rs. 200/- per month.' According to his wife 'we collect rice, vegetable, and salt from some families after taking care of their cow in some house; then we consumed some of the collected food every evening and stored the rest for the next day morning'. We have not received any Governmental support nor we have heard of any development schemes of the central or state Government.

While discussing the major challenges faced by the tribal peoples of the Toto community many of the community member reiterated the miserable state of affairs around them a decade ago but things have changed drastically over the last few years with various national and international aids to protect them.

B. The Non Tribal Respondents:

The non tribal peoples and the government employee respondents in the universe of study have been asked identical questions. The following are the analysis and outcome of the data so processed from the set of non tribal respondents:

1. The majority of the non tribal peoples believe that the tribal peoples are poor and live in an inhuman condition. Thus the majority of non tribal peoples understand the problems and financial conditions of the tribal peoples however; some of the non tribal peoples in the district of Darjeeling believe that the tribal peoples no longer have the financial difficulties as the government is providing large scale financial contribution to the tribal peoples. Again because of the reservation system, the creamy layer of the tribal peoples is leading a very luxurious life in comparison to other equally and at times more talented non tribal peoples. The tribal peoples in Darjeeling area are also benefitting from the tourism industries they allege. However some non tribal peoples believe that still apart from a few tribal peoples, the majority are still tattering under the curse of poverty and the virtual death of tea garden in north Bengal have let these communities to suffer a miserable life.

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The non tribal peoples in Alipurduar are also split in their opinion as to the economic position of tribal peoples in the said district as some of them stated that the tribal peoples are getting unparalleled support from the government and various financial benefits offered to them which is not so in case of non tribal areas.

2. An overwhelming response came on the point when the non tribal peoples are asked about their opinion about tribal population. Almost all non tribal peoples stated that the tribal population is not decreasing at all. On the contrary it is increasing. Thus it may be said that tribal peoples are growing in numbers all across the state of west Bengal including areas where primitive tribal groups reside.
3. Most of the non tribal peoples believe that the tribal peoples in all the districts are slowly and steadily leaving their ancestral profession. If not completely but partially because of various reasons. They think that tribal peoples are now found in almost all spheres of profession and service.
4. The majority of the non tribal peoples believe that the tribal peoples still use traditional method of healing. The non tribal respondents are also very sure that the tribal peoples are aware of modern health care system and they take advantage of these facilities.
5. The balance is still towards the support of reservation for tribal peoples in education service and various other areas. This reflects the sensitivity of non tribal peoples towards the needy tribal peoples. However many non tribal peoples do not want this system to carry on. Some non tribal peoples also are certain opinion regarding limitation of reservation system.
6. The majority of all the non tribal respondents of the districts surveyed are of the view that the government is doing enough for the benefits of tribal peoples.
7. Again an overwhelming majority supports the view that government should do more for the tribal peoples and their socio economic developments. The view of the researchers in this regard is that there are many important aspects that have been a subject matter of concern for the tribal peoples for ages and the government should take care of those issues at the earliest.

C. The Government Employee Respondents:

The government employee respondents in the universe of study have been asked identical questions that have been asked to the non tribal respondents. The researcher has taken into consideration respondents from various government departments for unbiased outcome of the study. The following are the analysis and outcome of the data so processed from the set of non tribal respondents:

1. The majority of government employee respondents have stated their views in favour of the fact that tribal peoples are generally poor. However, there has been contrasting figures between the district of Darjeeling and that of Bankura. While almost half of the respondents think that tribal peoples are not poor any more, their Bankura counterpart gives a 100 percent confirmation that the tribal peoples are generally poor. Hence, it can be seen that tribal peoples of various economic stratification exists parallel in west Bengal.
2. None of the government employee respondents think that tribal peoples are decreasing as far as population is concerned.

3. The majority of the respondents support the view that the change in the socio economic condition of the country has been one of the responsible criteria for tribal involvement in other profession than that of their ancestors. However many still insists that tribal peoples are continuing their ancestral profession.
 4. The majority of the respondents believe that the tribal peoples still using traditional method of healing. The respondents are also very sure that the tribal peoples are aware of modern health care system and they take advantage of these facilities.
 5. The majority of all the respondents of the districts surveyed are of the view that the government is doing enough for the benefits of tribal peoples.
 6. Again an overwhelming majority supports the view that government should do more for the tribal peoples and their socio economic developments. Many have emphasized the development in those areas which shall be helpful for all.
- It must be understood from the said analysis that the reservation policy needs immediate reforms. The Supreme Court directives in relation to the Creamy Layer Doctrine must be adhered into, among other long term reforms than just providing some cash benefits to the tribal peoples.

D. The NGO/ Social Activist Respondents:

A set of same questions have been asked to the NGO/Social Activists in the said districts. After collection of the primary data, the same was analyzed with SPSS software. The following are the outcome of the said analysis:

1. It has been understood that almost all the members of this respondent groups are well aware of the existence of various laws meant for tribal peoples. And most of them were able to give an example thereof.
2. All the respondents are aware of the fact that an act of atrocity under the Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989 is a cognizable offence. Thus it may be said that the NGOs and Social Activists are in a position to play apposite role for the protection of tribal rights in west Bengal.
3. Almost all respondents except a few from the Darjeeling district think that the tribal peoples stay in their ancestral land.
4. All the respondents think that tribal peoples must have the liberty to transfer their indigenous know how to the next generation. Some of them also believe that this is very important for the future of mankind. Thus it may be seen that the government employees are well aware of the importance of the rights of tribal peoples as to their indigenous knowledge and that they have a right to transfer that to the next generation.
5. None of the units questioned thinks that the modern education system is equipped to provide such education to the tribal children. Thus it can clearly be seen that there are lacunas in the education system for the tribal children as they lack the scope of carrying on indigenous knowledge to the future generations.

6. The respondents are very positive to respond in the affirmative as to the role that NGOs and Social Activists can play to help in bridging the gap between traditional and modern educational system. It can be understood clearly that the government should take the advantage of these institution and persons to help creating new policy and work hand in hand for a better future of tribal peoples in India.
7. According to the majority respondents the government is doing enough for the tribal peoples through various schemes. However there has been mixed reaction in this matter which puts a lot of question on the acts of the government departments. The majority thinks the substance is right but the procedure is not.
8. The majority of the respondents believe that returning land to the tribal peoples ousted would solve their economic problems of the tribal peoples. All the respondents considered job for land as well as monetary compensation in case of land acquired by the state as the last resort.
9. The majority of the respondents think that the tribal peoples use conventional and adopt traditional methods of healing still today however quite a number even when on the minority side had opposite views. But all the respondents think that the tribal peoples use the modern health care system in case of health issues.
10. When we come to the cultural participation the majority of the respondents think that the tribal participation in various cultural activities have increased over the years. They also think that government is supporting and organizing more of such programs.
11. On the issue of BPL ration cards the respondents agree that most of the tribal peoples have possessed BPL ration card.
12. The majority of the respondents are aware of the scheme the government has for the people working for tribal peoples. However, the majority of them have not got ant financial assistance from such schemes in Bankura; however, other districts have received various benefits.

All the respondents have stated that they work with the tribal peoples at the grass root level and it is them who can do a lot of things from the benefit of tribal peoples. But they did not access the development schemes which are allocated them by the Central and state Government. So either new schemes are necessary or the Government should take initiative to implement the development schemes among the Tribal. The respondents also believe that their participation at the time of framing various schemes of the government for the tribes would make a lot of difference for the success of these schemes in the true sense of the term.

VIII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After a comprehensive study of the tribal peoples of state in West Bengal, They are exploited by the most age-old social and cultural handicaps coupled with environmental factors. The age old exploitation and repression of the tribal have considerably cut them off from the mainstream of socio-economic development of the country as a whole. The researchers have been able to identify the prevailing socio economic conditions and how such conditions have changed over the years. The analysis was helpful to identify the objectivity of this research. Various new and interesting facts were unearthed. One of the fascinating aspects identified in this research is that the tribal peoples are

becoming aware of their situation and they also can understand the need of modern and scientific development to take place in their life. The indigenous knowledge unfortunately is in the verge of extinction and all the elderly tribal respondents in the research have expressed their concern and sadness over it. They have also expressed their views as to how the government can help in protecting this unique area of history. Lack of income opportunity throughout the year is the persistent problem of the tribal in the study area. Most of them have not achieve their school education, so lack of proper knowledge.

It must be stated that the atrocities and forceful displacement has been far and few and most of the tribal peoples in West Bengal reside in their ancestral land and mostly are continuing their ancestral profession. However, the situation has been changing as most of the semi urban areas have noted significant shift in professional choice which is a contrast to their ancestral ways of life. It was observed in the research that today the tribal peoples have become more outspoken and are interested in raising their voice for the demand of justice they have been deprived from centuries. Many insisted specific reforms which was quite natural and relevant. The researchers have also come across certain hard times as the degradable social and economic conditions of some tribal communities have left them with heavy heart.

Lack of proper infrastructural facilities are evident in most of the tribal populated areas including the lack of communication to the outer world which makes it very difficult for them to various hazards the cruel world has in store for them. The non tribal today have come a long way from where they were in respect of tribal rights violation and are more cordial towards them and most of them stated that tribal welfare must be a priority of the government. The study also reflects the positive attitude of the government to work for the welfare of the tribal peoples of West Bengal. Another need unraveled amongst the tribal communities studied is the quality legal awareness. This can be possible with subsequent setting up of projects in furtherance of awareness in various field of legal study including the one conducted herein this research. The recent laws also need to be implemented within a specific time frame and that will also play a pivotal role in protecting the socio economic impact on tribal population. In this regard the researcher has identified that the Self Help Groups (SHGs) can play a very important role. The NGOs working in this field also need to be utilised by promoting various schemes and financial aids for them. A proper analysis of the problem coupled with a systematic and collaborative approach is what is needed today to uphold the interest of the millions of tribal peoples and tribal communities which are in the verge of intellectual extinction.

The research finds out that the position of tribal peoples in West Bengal is in a very vulnerable state as is the position in India in areas like their culture, social identification and tribal traditional knowledge and thus the state should take up appropriate measures to address these challenges prevailing amongst the tribal peoples of West Bengal.

The Position of the Republic of India, the study demands an analysis of the position of the Republic of India in the three UPRs submitted to the UNO to unravel the national position of indigenous and tribal peoples in India.

Unraveling the Socio-Economic Condition of Tribal Peoples in West Bengal

The United Nations Organization (UNO) has made the submission of Universal Periodic Review (UPR) compulsory for all member states which are under the obligation to submit a comprehensive report as to human rights protection in their respective jurisdictions every four years. India in its previous two reports, submitted in 2008 and 2011 respectively, grossly avoided its obligation towards the indigenous and tribal communities of the country. The study reveals the absence of any specific measures adopted to provide education to the member or these deprived communities as a whole. The third report which fell due in the first quarter of 2016 ultimately was submitted on January 18th 2017. The report did little to recognize the rights of the tribal peoples of the country whose human rights have been violated by various acts of the non tribal peoples and governmental policies. Again the rights of education were ignored. An analysis of the UPR Report unraveled the statement concerning tribal amongst others marginalized sections in Part IV of the UPR with the heading 'Rights of Specific Persons or Groups' and consists of paragraphs 123 to 130 which includes within its purview women, children, persons with disabilities, older persons, sexual orientation and gender identity, minorities and lastly SC and STs. The three aspects reflected in the report are:

1. Robust Affirmative Action, which is more of politics than of law and have reiterated stark contrast to the international movement to protect the tribal peoples. It is in direct conflict with ILO 169.
2. Amendment to SC and ST Act 1989 where new chapter for SCs are incorporated. This does very little to contribute to protect the tribal peoples and communities as such.
3. State Government to take steps to prevent and punish atrocities. This approach to shred off the responsibility and decentralize the punitive measures also have a negative impact as it would only invoke the blame game politics into the stage with little to do something positive to protect the rights of these people.

The report simply ignores the cry of the million of tribal peoples in India and their suffering in the hands of non tribal peoples. State in action to protect the land and forest rights of these peoples irrespective of apex court directions, mass dispossession of tribal peoples from their land by force, land acquisition and destruction of tribal settlement, handing over such land to private organisations for profit, killing tribal resistance in the name of sedition are some of the commonest form of human rights violation of tribal peoples in India in the last few centuries. Post independence, tribal peoples have been subjected to civil and political atrocities by their own countrymen in almost all the states of India.

Under the prevailing condition the position of tribal peoples of India is far from what international commitments look to attain. Most of the international instruments have been studied with special reference to the social and economic condition of the tribal and indigenous peoples. A plethora of legislation relating to and affecting the social and economic rights of the tribal peoples exists in almost all jurisdictions. The judiciary has also played a very important role in protecting the rights of the tribal communities in India and also many other parts of the world. The need to protect them from displacement from their ancestral land in furtherance to the Samatha Case must be done. It must be relevant to state in this regard that the judgment given in this case is very much related to the case of Mabo v. Queensland of Australia. It must be stated in this regard that as on this date

Australia has also not ratified ILO 169 and there has been a large scale violation of Human Rights of the Indigenous and aboriginal peoples of Australia. However, Australia has gone a long way towards the protection of the rights of these peoples in a variety of ways including protecting the community rights amongst other things. It is not only Australia but many other countries across the globe which is trying in a variety of ways to provide protection to the tribal and indigenous populations of their respective countries. India is also playing a dominating role in the international level while dealing with these peoples. It must be understood that the tribal population in India is huge and that by non implementation of international standards is causing a large scale irretrievable violation of indigenous culture and tribal autonomy. The national moments of the tribal peoples in India has not grown up in a professional level as it has happened in many other countries. It must be acknowledged that judicial intervention in tribal issues has done more good than any other aspect of tribal laws in the last few decades. Not only social and economic rights have been protected, but the judiciary has also come forward to improve and protect the overall human rights of these peoples and their communities.

The tribal peoples irrespective of such development lack basic and primary knowledge of their rights. Lack of proper awareness drives also contributes in most cases in failing to understand the modern steps taken by the government for their welfare. This lack of awareness also indulges corruptive tendencies amongst the officials of the government departments. Formal complaints, because of their lack of knowledge of any rights given to them by such schemes are far and few leaving them as one of the most deprived set of peoples in India, perhaps looking for a miracle as good as a revelry to save them. Needless to say huge indigenous and traditional knowledge has become extinct and the remaining are on their way to extinction.

IX. RECOMMENDATION

Under the above scenario, some list of recommendations have been made which may be considered by the concerned departments of the Government and the policymakers for the better implementation of the developmental programmes according to the specific needs of the Tribes.

- A. Government should take initiative for the awareness programmes on the development schemes to the Tribals.
- B. Government would be organised various skill development training programme for the implement development schemes.
- C. Government would be identify the real loof whole for faliureness of the implement of the development schemes.
- D. The financial assistance for the Tribals under various schemes of Governments plans should also have been made in consultation with the beneficiaries to give honour and importance to their specific needs.
- E. To increase the school attendance for the tribals , the governmnet should take initiative through PPP model.
- F. At first identify the basic need of the tribals, then allocated the schemes.

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Unraveling the Socio-Economic Condition of Tribal Peoples in West Bengal

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