



## Neo-Liberalism and Adivasi: A Study about Deprivation

### Abstract

*Neo-liberalism has brought liberalization, privatization and globalisation mode of development, as result the adivasi people has been subjected to discriminated and deprived from their inhabited . As the LPG model has exploited their livelihood by substitute it from agriculture to industrialisation. For the national objective of development, the government has given much impotence of structural development as the foreign investor are become grid for investment in India. This process of development has obliged to work for the elite section of society, as it improvised the condition of indigenous people by depriving them from their natural resource. In current works is devoted to understand how the neo-liberalism has impacted on the Adivasi people. In this article tried to explore who are recognised as Adivasi in India. Again, tried to understand about the recognition of international and national organisation of Adivasi. Moreover find out how neo-liberalism has been exploiting the adivasi through LPG model and what the role of government is in this regard.*

**Keyword:** Neo-Liberalism, LPG, Adivasi, Deprivation, State, International organisation and National organisation.

### Introduction

Flew (2012) stated that Neoliberalism has included the an all-purpose denunciatory category; a particular institutional framework characterizing Anglo American forms of national capitalism; a dominant ideology of global capitalism; a form of governmentality and hegemony; and a variant within the broad framework of liberalism as both theory and policy discourse. According to him, it has able to spread influence through some dominant global institution. The global agenda of neo-liberalism had to destroy the communist economy in the late 1980s and leader like Bill Clinton in the U.S., Tony Blair in Britain, and Gerhard Schroder in Germany was associated with it. But from the Marxian point of view, it is a false ideology by some economic elites or capitalist for maintains their power. Steger and Roy (2011: 19-20) stated that in the era of Neo-liberalism, all the international institution such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation have provide financial support to the developing nation for economic restructuring . Huge numbers of land alienation are visible in the process of Neo-liberalism. It is happen through the combination of corporate and state-sponsored, as result extraordinary land alienation are seen and separated the direct producers from their land. Sawyer and Gomez (2008) Stated that the concept of neoliberalism has change the perception of social and political life of indigenous people. They argued that it has refused the rights of indigenous people and the colonial legacy of racism of state and corporate is clearly visible in case of relationship with indigenous people, such as repression, violence over them.

### How are Indigenous people?

There is lack of universally accepted definition of “Indigenous people”. Several organisations have developed some criteria for distinguished themselves as Indigenous groups. But UN has developed some criteria for identification of Indigenous people. Some of these criteria are included relative geographical isolation of the community, reliance on forest, ancestral land and water bodies within the territory of the communities for food and other necessities, a distinctive culture which is community oriented and gives primacy to nature, relative freedom of women within the society, absence of division of labour and caste system, lack of food taboos. In India, the concept of Tribe is related with the geographical and social

isolation, they enjoyed autonomy over their natural resource, prevent their culture, tradition in a given areas. Around 54.69 per cent tribe are lived in the Central region, states constitute Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and West Bengal, and in opposite it, the North-Western region of Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh has only 0.75 per cent. As a percentage of regional population, their concentration is highest in the North-Eastern region (Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura) and lowest in the Southern region (comprising Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu), (Xaxa, 2014).

### **International and National Recognition of Indigenous peoples**

The International Labour Organization (ILO) had drawn attention for the protection of indigenous people. In 1957, with the adoption of ILO Convention 107, an integrationist approach was taken. The prime aim of this approach is that to assimilate indigenous peoples into national society. But in later, this approach came under heavy criticism. Some other international institution such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which the UN Human Rights Council adopted on 29 June 2006. Again, the UN General Assembly adopted on 13 September 2007, American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, approved by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in February 1997, and the Report of the African Commission's Working Group on Indigenous Populations/Communities adopted by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in November 2003. In the UN Declaration, they have claimed about the rights of indigenous people over their traditional land, even more the provision for autonomy over their areas. Even more, the UN Declaration has called for the "freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development" of indigenous people. Again, in the ILO Convention 169 and the Proposed American Declaration also claimed for participation of indigenous people in the political, social and economic life of their country.

In India, The Scheduled Districts Act XVI, 1874, was considered as the first significant measure to deal with all Adivasi areas as a group. In 1918, the Montague-Chemsford Report had also addressed the issue about the administration of the 'backward areas' and suggest not to enforced the national political reform in the same way to the 'primitive' peoples. Consequently, the Government of India Act, 1919, was enacted to implement the report's recommendations and it had divided the backward areas into two categories namely 'wholly excluded' areas and 'modified excluded' areas. In 1934, the Indian Reorganisation Act (IRA) had brought a new relationship between federal government and tribal relationship, emphasized more on the exercise of tribal self-government. To abolish the erosion of the tribal land base by ending the allotment of tribal land, prohibited lands to be taken away from tribes without their consent, and authorized the Secretary of the Interior to accept additional tribal lands in trust and to proclaim new reservations on those lands etc. The Government of India Act, 1935 had classified the 'backward areas' or 'tracts' as 'excluded' and 'partially excluded' areas. In the 'excluded areas', the Lushai Hills districts, the Naga Hills district, the North Cachar Hills sub-division of Cachar district and the North-East Frontier tracts were included and in the Garo Hills districts, the Mikir Hills were include in the Partially excluded and the British portion of Khasi and Jaintia Hills districts. After the independence, the 'Wholly excluded' areas were incorporated into the sixth schedule areas, and the 'partially excluded' areas were included into the Fifth Schedules of the Constitution (Ratnaker Bhengra, C.R. Bijoy and Shimreichon Luithui, 1999). Again, according to the Public Law 280, 1953, legal rights of tribal administration was transferred from federal government to state government, had a provision for the elimination of the special federal criminal justice role.

Again, in the Panchayat Scheduled Areas Act, 1996, there are some provision for the scheduled tribes to safeguard and prevent tribal traditions and customs of the people through the gram Sabha (Xaxa, 2014). For protection of cultural identities and natural resource through the Gram panchayat, in 1996 the Panchayat Extension to the Schedule Areas (PESA) has been implementing in the fifth schedule areas. But, the extensive violation of this act has been seen in the state Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Orissa through mining and land acquisition (Halavath, 2014). Under the Scheduled Tribe (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill, 2005 seek to recognise land rights to the tribe who have been occupying the land October 25, 1980. This law has prohibited the activities such as hunting and trapping and in this regard, the gram Sabha has the empowerment to determine about the eligibilities of individual or family rights

over forest. Forest is classified into three categories under the acts and all of these are (1.) Reserve forests (2) protected forests and (3).the village forest. To what extent the tribal communities are able to exploited these forest is fully depend up the on its classification.

Again, in our constitution, there is some special provision for a distinct community. Some of these are the provisions for statutory recognition (article 342); in article 330 and 332 there are the provision for the proportionate representation in Parliament and state legislatures. Again according to the article of 19 (5), there are some restriction on the right of the ordinary citizen to move freely or settle in particular areas or acquire property in them , conservation of one's language, dialects and culture, etc. (article 29). In article 16(4), there are the provision of jobs and appointments in favour of tribal communities. In the section of directive principle (article 46) said about the requires of education and economic interest of the weaker section of society including tribe and in article 244 and 244 (a) said about the provision for the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> schedule. In article 244 (a) said about the special treatment of administration for the tribal areas. There are the provision of seat reservation of 7.5 per cent in government, semi-government and educational institution for the tribal communities.

### **Exploitation of Adivasi**

Approximately 90 per cent of adivasi people are depended on agriculture for their livelihood, again, the hunting and gathering has been continuing a key role for their social life. The culture of hunting and gathering is declining due to the deforestation. Again, due to globalisation, the forest and the adivasi people are internally colonized. It is estimated that more than 3,000 hydroelectric dams are also located in tribal areas, where 90 per cent of coal mining are located in the 72 per cent of the forest, 80 per cent minerals falls in these tribal areas. So, it can be side that the foremost industrial areas are falls under the tribal areas, as result the tribes are alienated from their geographical areas. According to the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, 83 per cent of bonded labours are come from the STs population and 85 per cent adivasi lives under the below poverty line. The national development policy has deprived adivasi from their source of livelihood. From this development policy, more than 18.5 million people were displaced where adivasi constitute more than 50 per cent of this displacement. Through several forest conservation acts such as PESA, FRA etc. government has enclosed the forest land, as result land is classified into two categories- private and government land. In India, during the British period, major changes of Adivasis had begun. The naturally abundant tribal areas were taken control by them and through various law, they had extracted natural resource. They used the adivasi people as a labour class for their market-led system. Under the era of globalisation, the state repression is constituted with foreign investment. Niezen (2003:13) stated that the history of indigenous people are associated with the genocide, famine, epidemics, forced labour and resettlement, varying degrees of cultural suppression, political, economic inequality, marginalization and indifference ( Sawyer and Gomez, 2008). After the end of the cold war, the concept of liberalization and globalization had come up and it had brought threat for the tribal communities. Disparities are clearly visible among different class of people (Bhengra, Bijoy and Luithui 1999).

The respective government has continuously violating the Indigenous rights of tribe people which they have been enjoying from generation to generation. To fulfil the national objective of development and for attraction of foreign investor, the government has given more importance for the structural construction. The government has been continuously utilising this natural resource and establishing industries within the territory of indigenous people. As result, thousands of tribal people are displaced from their original people, as they are consider as original people within a given territory. Now, huge erosion of national resource within the tribal belt is recognised as a main factor for the climate change, as result it has carried threat for the tribal community for their livelihood, erosion of their natural resource, traditional knowledge and culture. In India around 67.6 million people are belonging from Tribal community and it is constituted 7 percent of county total population. It is considered that forest is their birth rights, as they are the most primitive groups from the early evolution of society.

They are the most depriving groups but it is most interesting that the rich natural resources are under the grip of this tribe. But some dominant groups are trying to pull out them from those forests and trying to

assimilate them within the mainstream society. The Constitutional has provided several rights and implement some programmes by assuring their all-round development. But in ground reality they are the most vulnerable groups over the decades. All the constitutional provision is existed in a symbolic way. Only a small section has been able to take the benefit from these. Corruption and inefficiency of official are considered as prominent cause behind this. Since independent around 1500 major irrigation project are made, as result more than 16 million people are displaced, among them 40 per cents are tribe.

In the process of Neo-liberalism, agencies like IMF, WB, and IBRD etc. have forced them to leave their forest due to the evasion and extraction. Over Rs 300 billion were invested for hydropower projects and more than 87 large scale projected were funded by the World Bank. It is linked with the world capitalism and around 60 per cent of these large dams are located in central and western India where about 80 per cent inhabitants are belong from tribals communities. Furthermore, there is no reliable and complete information on the number of tribals displaced since independence in the country. It is estimated that around 5 to 7 million tribes are displace due to establishment of dams and approximately one in every ten tribe are displaced by mines, industries and different developments projects. Many public sector enterprises are sold off to the private sector, as result the tribal people are adversely affected in case of livelihood. For example BALCO is a public sector enterprise which is situated in the tribal belt but later it was privatised.

In the Koraput district of Orissa, the National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO) was established in (Year), as result women were the most victims throughout this project. They had lost their status within the society and also family, as they had played a vital role as a collector of the MFP, firewood etc. From this project, widows were mostly vulnerable from health hazard, malnutrition and various common diseases. It had affected 26 villages, 597 families were displaced, 254 were tribal, 56 dalits and the rest belonged to other communities. Again, Out of the 10,058.76 acres of land acquired, 427.30 acres was for mines, 2,638.96 acres for townships and 6,992.50 acres for the plant. Around 2,805.49 ha (40.94 per cent) was government land for which no compensation was paid and 2,834.56 ha (41.36 percent) were agricultural lands. For them only 156 more houses were built; 352 of these families have been given one job each, viz, 35 dalits, 14 tribals and 168 other castes and eight of the employees were women. In the same line, more than 2,938 families were displaced from the Machkund Hydro Electricity Project, where 51 per cent were tribals. But only 600 families were rehabilitated where 450 families were belonging from tribal communities. Again, in the Upper Kolab - Multi-Purpose Project was situated in Koraput district was constructed to harness the water potential of River Kolab, as result more than 149 villages were affected. Out of this more than 13,095 families were fully affected and among them 2,127 family were dalits, 7,092 were tribals and 3,882 family were belongs to other castes. Out of this, only 3,067 families were identified for rehabilitation, 1,443 of them tribals, 458 dalits and 1,166 others (Kolab 1996). The Polavaram dam of Andhra Pradesh which is situated across the Godavari River, as result displacement of 400,000 people and at least 150,000 tribal people are from the state of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Orissa (Halavath, 2014). State like Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and odisha, around 70 per cent of India's coal mining is located where over 26 million adivasi people are living.

It is estimated that more than one lakh hectares of forest land (almost 11% of the total forest area diverted in the entire country since 1980) has been diverted for non-forest use in the three mineral rich states of Orissa, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh (Das 2016). It is prohibited the transferred of Tribal land according to the provision of 5<sup>th</sup> schedule of the constitution of India. But the government has totally failed to preserve the tribal land alienation. The land Acquisition Act-1894 was the prime cause for land alienation of tribe where the government can take any land for the public purpose. Tribal land are acquiring by the non-tribe in Andhra Pradesh, as they has been taking the way of marriage the tribal women for acquiring their land. Girglani, J.M in his report on Tribal Land issues in Telangana Area 'submitted to the Government in 2005 says that tribal land have been losing to non-tribals since several decades. It is estimated that more than 1.5 lakhs acres of fertile lands have passed into hands of dominant caste people due to ineffective implementation of the Land Transfer Regulation Acts (LTR). Again, Land Transfer Regulation-1959 was amended in 1970 in Kerala, Andhra Pradesh due to accommodate of non-tribals in the coastal areas (Halavath, 2014).

## Conclusion

Neo-liberalism can consider as one of the prominent factor for the progressive marginalisation of Adivasi people. The national policy of development has colonised the adivasi territory, as result it bring contradiction with the traditional self-governance system of Adivasi. As a consequence the adivasi people are become frustrated and have brought threat for their livelihood, traditional culture. Globalisation has brought geographically isolated areas of adivasi to homogenization. But, the constitutional laws are incapable to address the issue of deprivation; hence it has increased the proportion of discrimination through privatisation of natural resources.

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