CONCLUSION
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So far the history of tribal development programmes in Orissa is concerned, it goes back to the promulgation of Community Development Blocks (CDBs) in the whole of country in 1952. CDBs were aimed at the welfare of the tribal communities by improving their economic, social and cultural conditions through ‘Self-Help’. The objective of these programmes wasn’t merely material development but also the intellectual and moral development of tribal communities.

But later on it was realised that this general development policy couldn’t be of much help for the tribals as they needed special care and attention. Accordingly, Special Multipurpose Tribal Development Projects were started during the Second Five Year Plan for the areas of tribal concentration in Orissa. These programmes of Tribal Development Blocks were reviewed in the Third Five Year Plan and it was brought out that the ‘programme’ approach so far didn’t have desired impact on the tribal communities. But all these programmes didn’t succeed fully because they couldn’t remove the age-old exploitative mechanism prevailing in the tribal areas.

In view of the weakness of the earlier area-based programmes, for example, Tribal Development Blocks and Tribal Development Agencies, a new strategy was evolved in the Fifth Plan to formulate separate Sub-Plan for the areas of tribal concentration. This was intended to achieve a speedy development of the tribal areas and evolve such measures, which suit their
local ethos. Priority in Sub-Plan was given to eliminate exploitation of tribals by the middlemen. In the tribal Sub-Plan area, the development strategy followed an area development approach with a focus on the development of tribal communities. Infrastructure development programmes, coupled with community and individual beneficiary programmes have been taken up for the concentrated pockets of tribals.

After the promulgation of the TSP it was realized that this approach also leaves a large number of tribal groups living in isolated places uncovered. In order to cater to the needs of those deprived people special programmes were started in Orissa along with TSP. In 1978-79 Modified Area Development Approach (MADA) was evolved for their development.

Improvement in the quality of life through social development programmes, viz, medical and health care provision of safe drinking water is also evident. Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) significantly reduced the incidence of diseases resistance to malnutrition, infant mortality, morbidity, etc. Recently, the government-sponsored programmes for the tribals in Gajapati district did fairly well. An Integrated Guineaworm Eradication Programme was drawn up in 1987 to relieve the distress of affected people. Guineaworm disease has now been almost eradicated from the tribal districts. It is a very comprehensive programme that includes curative and preventive measures both.

Our tribal development policies and programmes assumed that all the tribals will develop and will ‘integrate’ themselves with the so-called ‘mainstream’. This has happened only in a symbolic way. Most of our researchers agree on this point that as a result of the planned tribal
development, stratification on secular lines has taken place among tribals and only a small section has been able to take advantages of our tribal development programmes. This being so, the question arises: Where do we go wrong? For sometimes people believed that this is because of inefficient and corrupt bureaucracy that the programmes weren’t implemented well. We created special administrative set-up for tribal development and we know that it hasn’t shown better results. At some places tribals cooperatives of different types were shaped. They worked well in the beginning. But their benefits didn’t percolate to the lower strata of tribals. Experiments of tribal development through voluntary efforts have proved successful only in certain cases and in certain pockets. On the other hand, land alienation pushes the pauperized tribals out of their villages and hordes of tribal seasonal migrants move from place to place in search of work. Generally, dams have been constructed in tribal areas by involuntary acquisition of their land. The tribals lose their land, habitat and milieu resulting into pauperization, casualization and psychological stresses and strains.

So, the tribals are part of the Indian society, at the same time they are different. Special policy and programmes are required to address and redress these differences. When we plan for tribal development, we have to regard these differences, take a special note of their different situations and capabilities and provide them facilitation to develop on the line they want to take. The very meaning of development is unfolding from within. This means that the tribals have to unfold their capabilities to develop. Outsiders can’t develop tribals, they can become only facilitators if they want to do so. If they have to unfold from within, they must have participation in any development
decision. Their felt needs should be transformed in development programmes. Nehru did this in slightly different manner when he proclaimed 'panchsheel'.

It was in the post-independence India that a planned national perspective of integrating tribals with the national mainstream was envisaged and the five-principles (panchsheel) of tribal development were evolved but those were hardly practised. The basic limitation in the practised policies is that instead of utilizing the traditional wisdom and our own cultural idioms as Mahatma Gandhi and other social activists did government policies depend more on bureaucrats and west-trained middle class expertise which lacks in coming to grips with the reality at many points, especially with regard to its cultural moorings.

The tribal development programmes have brought some changes, though it appears that they haven’t made so far a significant impact for a change in the tribal societies of this region. Educationally too, this belt is one of the most backwards in the state. The close link between education and the economic condition of a population is more relevant in this region. Aptitude for education, by and large, is still on a low degree because of the grim struggle for survival.

There has been almost a complete absence of programmes to generate countervailing forces of sufficient dimensions so as to help the tribal community to become equal partner in the process of growth. From the findings, it was very much obvious that people of these tribal communities haven’t been included in appreciable number in the process of implementation of the scheme. Who benefits most from the tribals development programmes? The more advantaged tribal groups get a major share of benefits from the
tribal development programmes. Even more depressing is the fact that some other groups benefited at the expense of the tribal people. Roads are often said to be beneficial for economic development but their main effect seems to be stimulation of commodity production.

A strenuous effort is needed to mobilize the poor tribal communities as well as to chalk out programmes specially for them. The implementors, in order to make their task easier, concentrated only on already developed tribal communities. This brings the question of how to motivate the implementors of the development programmes to mobilize and motivate the poor tribal communities like Saora and so on. One way is to make it obligatory on them. Besides, the officials should be made responsible in a statutory manner to cover certain fixed proportion of families from such tribal communities whose economic situation is very bleak.

The programmes of immediate benefits to the tribals are generally small with modest financial investments. Preferences to bigger programmes, even though some of them mayn't be of direct relevance to the tribals, persists in most of the sectors. Greater emphasis, thus, would have to be given to beneficiary oriented programmes. A high proportion of the investment by each sector must go into projects that directly benefit the tribals. The economic contents of the plan must be strong.

Let us not be under the illusion that a good plan necessarily produce good results. There are several intervening variables between planning and implementation. For instance, many schools were set up in tribal areas but there was no way of ensuring regular presence of the teacher within the school premises on working days. Truancy of teacher in remote tribal areas is
well known. Similarly, even though the Constitution of India, under Article 350A, affirms that every state must provide adequate facilities for instruction to pupils in their mother tongues, decades have passed and state governments have ignored this prescription for tribal people. Since initial instruction to the tribals is given in an alien language, they understand and assimilate very little. Children can’t understand the teacher, let alone answer questions.

Thus, without the requisite political will, excellently drawn plans can be left to adorn office shelves. Bureaucratic inertia often leads to the ritualistic exercises. It has become very difficult to induce the bureaucracy to carry out goal oriented and time-bound programmes with dedication. The implementation of tribal sub-plan strategy requires tedious and hard works, both at the stages of planning and implementation. Absence of high motivation is responsible for feeble results. If the objectives have to be attained within a stipulated period, a re-energized bureaucratic machinery will have to be geared to action.

There is an imperceptible and yet unmistakable link between the quality of research and the tribal development. In view of this, social scientists must make their researches qualitatively above reproach. It is necessary to have a clear perception what the contribution of social sciences can be to the total process of tribal development. We must be fully aware and conscious regarding the social responsibility of social scientists, to the fact that we must have commitment, individually and collectively to better world for the poor, deprived, underprivileged, downtrodden and exploited tribal people, in fact for all such peoples.
The overall appraisal of the policy matters, the implementation of decisions taken and the mechanism of administration developed during the period 1990-91 to 1994-95, have revealed that certain problems were there while implementing the developmental programmes to benefit the tribals in the TSP area of the state. Besides, certain policy matters and the decisions taken to accelerate the developmental process have also not been implemented due to lack of effective coordination at the state as well as central levels.

The following factors are responsible for dropouts in the schools:

1. Early age of marriage of girls and boys. Most of the boys and girls don’t like to attend schools after their marriage. The girls marry between the age of 12-16 and boys between 15-20.
2. The tribal boys are called upon to share the economic responsibilities in the family at an early age.
3. The school is normally located at a far away place from the village and the parents don’t like to send their small children to such remote places where the children will be staying away from the parents and families.
4. Non-availability of higher classes in the Ashram Schools and Zilla Parishad Schools.
5. Temporary dropouts during the cultivation and harvesting seasons and during festivals also.
6. Girls required to help in the household matters and sometimes required to earn by getting some minor employment in the village.
7. Economic inability of the parents to meet the educational needs of the children.
8. Low level of education of the parents also directly or indirectly affect the dropout rate among the day scholars is much higher as compared to the inmates of the Ashram Schools.
But, in spite of all this, the literacy percentage among the tribals has gone up in the following decades which can said to be a good achievement.

**Health and Nutritional Problems among the Tribals:**

It is a well known fact that the tribal communities have been living in forest and remotest areas in the state, where means of communication and transport aren’t only readily available but are also not in a good condition. It, therefore, becomes extremely difficult for the health authorities to provide medical facilities to the tribals in these areas. With the result diseases spread very rapidly. Large number of deaths occurs among infants during rainy seasons each year. It has, therefore, become a acute problem for the health authorities to how to cope up with this situation and provide reasonable medical care to the tribals. It has also been observed in certain tribal communities that many of the families don’t live in the village but their houses are situated away from each other. Thus, for a health worker it becomes extremely difficult to contact many of the tribal families not only because of difficult terrain but also of the tendency of the individual families to live in isolation and away from each other.

Empirical evidence and data collected by the researcher, revealed the following facts regarding health and nutritional hazards among the tribal population of inaccessible areas of the Gajapati district:

1. Malnutrition among infants, children and women clubbed with digestive, respiratory and skin disorders.
2. Early age at marriage.
3. Lack of adopting scientific methods of contraceptives and spacing.
4. Ignorance about sanitation and personal hygiene.
5. Negative attitude towards family planning, desire to have more children due to high mortality rate among children.

6. Poor dietary intake.

7. Lack of adequate transport and communication facilities.

8. Poverty-stricken backgrounds of tribals.

9. Illiteracy among tribals, especially among women.

10. Lack of pure and clean drinking water facilities.

11. Superstitious beliefs and practices about diseases, health and sanitation.


All the above mentioned shortcomings and hindrances, associated with health and nutritional aspects of tribals, have been the root cause of lack of medical and scientific awareness among the tribals and their poor health and nutritional status as well. These health and nutritional hazards can be brought under control if right approach for tribal development is adopted, and that there is inter-sectoral coordination between health, ICDS and other development agencies of the government.

Since Independence, the problem of development of the tribal communities has been seriously taken into consideration for the upliftment and amelioration of the conditions of tribal life. It is significant that Article 46 of the Constitution of India enjoins on the state not only to promote the educational and economic interest of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes but also protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation. Likewise, as per Article 48A, the state should endeavor to protect and improve the environment and safeguard the forests and wildlife of the country. Hence, the compliance with these two constitutional provisions is mutually reinforcing. Pt. Nehru's approach, widely known as 'Tribal
Panchasheel’ (the five principles for tribal development) in the foreword to Verrier Elwin’s Philosophy of NEFA 1958, has been endorsed through all these years of planned development of the tribal areas. However, it was a little unfortunate that certain important considerations like developing tribals along their own lines of genius and optimum utilization of available natural resources in the form of land and forest wasn’t given due consideration. The emphasis was mere on giving monetary help rather than using their traditional skills at available natural resources.

Both the central and state governments have made efforts to develop the tribals and the tribal areas like any other backward area. However, as stated earlier, the development programmes have met with very limited success. The government programmes on development and poverty removal, in general, serious shortcomings, which have been well documented. The failure of the government in tackling the problems of poverty, unemployment, social injustice and of late the environmental degradation has led to voluntary initiatives.

However, voluntary initiatives in the tribal areas of Orissa, like other non-tribal areas, began much before the government interventions were planned after independence. In fact, the history of tribal development in Orissa suggests that the first initiatives taken for the development of tribals came from voluntary sector under the influence of Gandhian philosophy and thinking. Non-tribal volunteers, both from within and outside the tribal areas, took initiatives. There was hardly any initiative from tribals themselves. This may be partly due to the fact that the tribal societies in western India, unlike
those in the northeast, were closely integrated with the prevailing colonial system, its economy and administration.

The success or failure of the programmes depends on the designs and potential of the government programmes. The objective of the public policy in India since Independence has been the promotion of rapid and balanced economic development with equity and justice. This is necessitated because India has large traditionally disadvantaged groups of scheduled castes (SCs) and scheduled tribes (STs) as well as large backward areas.

As stated earlier, the tribal people are educationally very backward and therefore they are neither able to improve their lot nor are they able to contribute to further development of the country. Therefore, it is necessary to have a comprehensive human resources development programme for the tribal population. For the human resource development of tribals it is necessary to make available health services, access to basic education and epidemic-free surrounding. What really needs to be done has been very forcefully written by Amartya Sen: “Some countries follow growth-oriented policy but also put emphasis on public services in guaranteeing basic entitlements to poor, particularly traditionally disadvantaged group. The unaimed growth in which growth is fostered but it isn’t ensured through public policy that the fruits of growth are widely shared becomes counter-productive”.

The Constitution of India envisages that “the state shall promote with special care, the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of
exploitation”. A period of ten years was set initially to achieve the legal but as the problem was deep-rooted and many-faceted a single decade was bound to persist through decades. Nevertheless good beginning has been made. And we continue to guard the tribal interest which reflect the sense of responsibility of Indian people towards their tribal brethren.

In this regard also the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, has very rightly emphasized that “the present need is for quick implementation of whatever has been decided”. The fifth Five Year Plan incorporates different “Sub-Plans” for different areas for their total development.

Today tribal development is highly challenging and the same time a very difficult process. The development of tribal people is possible only when the health of the tribals is sound and ideal. Health care, therefore, can’t be visualized in isolation and has to be linked with the overall development of the tribal villages. While developing comprehensive models, efforts should be made to have multi-disciplinary approach, which should include health care, provision of safe drinking water, drainage system, etc.

It is therefore time to seriously look into the possibilities of micro-level planning for health in tribal areas of Orissa. The present highly centralized planning for health can not take into consideration the realities of the main health hazard, the actual health need of the tribal communities, social barriers, hierarchy and political forces which can often render the most efficient plan unworkable at the village level. It is therefore essential and important to evolve a system of micro-level planning for health and nutrition for the primitive tribes of Orissa in general and Saora tribe in particular. The objectives may be similar but the methodology must by necessity be different.
for different tribal communities. Therefore an integrated and inter-disciplinary approach to evolve suitable health programmes for different tribal groups is most desirable and it should constitute an integral part of developmental programme of the primitive tribal communities of Orissa.

Most of the development schemes that are now in operation in tribal areas follow a set pattern without making any breakthrough. A visit to any development agency office and overseeing its activities in the field today make one see how casually things are being managed. Development institutions are languishing. Infrastructure built in the recent past remained unused serving no purpose anymore. Tribal schools give the impression that there is no schooling environment and that there is sickness everywhere. There is utter negligence at the level of the school teachers and the authority. There is no concern, no commitment. People don’t get the required services of doctors in Primary Health Centers (PHCs). Absenteeism of doctors has crippled the PHCs. Roads to tribal villages remain unprepared for years. In many areas the neo-development phase of road communication was of no use to people or to the agency personnel.

The scenario of change and development is really a matter of grave concern today. It needs greater attention than before. The tribal leaders who are at the helm of affairs, the machinery of development administration and the well-wishers of tribes have to rise to the occasion and reformulate the tribal policy and redesign the development strategy for the tribal areas and the people. The mere humanitarian philosophy of tribal development has to give way to a scientific philosophy of development. The facts of tribal societies can’t be collected mechanically by filling out schedules but lay closely
interacting and keenly observing the people and their interpersonal relationships. The problems of the people have to be examined scientifically and solved clinically.

Planning from below has to be from below, neither mediated nor manipulated. It should be based on intensive study than expensive survey. Action plans should be meticulously prepared, preserved, referred to and revised from time to time allowing scope for flexibility. In the machinery of development administration of tribes and tribal areas, development knowledge is missing. Expertise on tribes isn’t receiving the appreciation it deserves. There is hardly any preparedness for understanding micro-perspectives of tribal development. The macro-perspective of culture and environment and the campaign to turn traditional man into modern man has failed. People are caught in the dead lock of development.

The second phase of development in the last ten years was carried out without much innovativeness and enthusiasm. Proper evaluation of development, positive and negative, were not made. It wasn’t considered important to assess how far tribal development progressed, in which areas and sectors there was relative success, and where it effected the socio-cultural life of the people and the direction of their change. It was also not thought necessary to look into the unforeseen consequences of the development strategy in the tribal areas and the problems encountered there. It was only believed that development didn’t succeed to the desired extent. The nature and quality of pursuance of development programmes deteriorated, supervision and monitoring lost its rigour, development agencies were managed by officers not chosen with care, the field situation worsened, and
development euphoria died down. Some how other schemes and activities were carried on mechanically without any impressive results.

In order to tackle the problem of economic development of the tribes and tribal areas, the social, cultural and political developments in different regions of the country has to be borne in mind. Keeping macro-developments in perspectives, micro approach to tribal development seems to be the right alternative. Analysis of change in tribal societies has to be given the top priority. Understanding the changing frontiers of tribal economy, ecology, culture and society has to be made first before we announce the next phase of tribal development strategy. Scientific plans have to be drawn up for planned development of tribal communities, tribal regions and sub-regions. Dynamic development models can be devised and put to practice. Computer technology has to be used at all levels of tribal development administration for ongoing assessment, evaluation and examination of the day to day progress. It will automatically help promote transparency in development administration and check wastage, stagnation and delay. The present practice of evaluation of development schemes conducted by a second party, not involved in anyway either with development administration or with implementation in the field will not be required.

'Tribal development' needs to be perceived and pursued as a scientific mission, more than a sort of humanitarian aid and help. The problems of poverty, ill health and low literacy among the tribes need to be tackled with a scientific and humanistic spirit. The development variables and the social and cultural correlates have to be examined in the context of the specific tribe and tribal area, taking into account the human resources potential, techno-
economic skill, available natural resources and cultural excellence of the people, and accordingly schemes should be formulated and implemented. The aim is to develop the tribes without harming their culture and ecology. Loss of tribal cultures and natural ecology will be a great loss to the nation and the world of humanity.

**Government Programmes for Development of the Saoras**

At the beginning of the Fifth Five Year Plan, when the tribal sub-plan came into effect, special attention was given to the all round development of the primitive tribal communities of India and some micro-project (1976-77), known as Saora Development Agency (SDA). Some attempts were made to make up the Saoras literate and educationally developed. Yet the efforts made by the governments is unsuccessful which can be found from the literacy rate. The persons employed in the teaching job are unable to adjust with the culture and people of the area. There are some Anganwadis and Non-formal education centres which provide education to Saoras but they don’t function well due to some reasons or other.

**Educational Problems:**

The project of tribal development is to make the socio-economic transformation smooth, so that the tribal communities can maintain their identity avoiding social disintegration and assimilate themselves with the mainstream of national life. Education plays an important role to establish the bridge between different social gaps. Keeping all these views in mind various educational programmes have been implemented yielding little result. Unfortunately, some problems stand as barriers in the educational problems of the Saoras. These may be broadly classified under four heads:-
Home Environment

The home environment of the Saoras aren’t congenial for education due to various socio-cultural factors. Their dress pattern, health care, socio-religious practices, family relationship, child rearing practices, homesickness, etc. are some of the major causes.

School Environment

Due to various types of shortcomings of the schools, the educational programmes couldn’t yield a satisfactory result in Saora areas. The existing school facilities, like infrastructure, hostel condition, teaching learning materials are very poor in quality and quantity. Moreover, insufficient staff, unwillingness of the teachers, language problems and cultural barriers are the main hurdles in educational progress. The teachers serving in Saora areas don’t know tribal language, customs, etc. which creates a huge gap between teachers and students and ultimately leads to an unhealthy atmosphere in schools.

Psycho-Social Constraints

The researchers feel that the psycho-social problems are one of the main obstacles for the education of the Saoras. These constraints may be due to their early marriage systems, excessive drinking habits, homicidal tendencies, aggressive personality, religious beliefs, poor communication systems, lack of modernity and social awareness etc.

Socio-Economic Status

It is said that the socio-economic status of the family plays an important role on educational success of the child. The economic standard of the Saoras is so poor that they don’t get daily meal. The Saora children have
to assist their parents in various activities. But in name of the so called development we are developing a beggarly attitude among this innocent tribe by giving them some dole from the Government funds.

Suggestions and Conclusions

It is evident from the present study and opinions collected from different segments of the population that the education of the Saoras has been confronted with several problems. The possible solutions of these problems may be as follows:-

i) Parental awareness should be created in the field of education, health, and outer world by government as well as private efforts.

ii) Possible efforts should be made to change their unhealthy social customs and practices.

iii) Various economic programmes should be launched to raise their economic standard. It will be helpful if they are trained with modern agricultural systems, handicrafts, and household products and sell their products in fair price.

iv) More residential schools, should be established specifically in Saora-Hill areas, with all types of facilities like like food, dress, medical treatment, learning kits, etc.

v) Primary school teachers in the Saora-Hill areas should be appointed from among the Saoras. For this purpose qualifications and experience should be relaxed.

vi) For Saora students books should be prepared in the Saora language in Oriya script.

vii) Saora students should be gradually exposed to the outer society by frequent arrangement of excursion, study tours, cultural competition, festivals, etc.

viii) Women/girl children should be encouraged to go to school regularly.
Among the Saoras, education of woman is a serious lapse following by excommunication. Women occupies a higher position in the social life of the community. Woman has dignity in the tribal world which is an unusual phenomenon in the rural or urban society. It is nevertheless a fact that the status of woman isn’t uniform amongst all the different scheduled tribes of India. They vary because of historical reasons, effect of particular social heritage and level of social consciousness through social interaction in the society and also in view of different levels of economy and patterns of occupation. Women haven’t generally been given right to inherent immovable property excepting in matriarchal tribes, such as the Khasi’s and the Garos of Meghalaya.

Women in general in India and amongst the tribes in particular, aren’t conferred with political rights. Even amongst the Khasis where matriliny is there, a woman can never be head of a particular tribe or sub-tribe. From the above analysis it leads to conclude that the role of women in tribal society in India is somewhat significantly different from role of women in other segments of the society. There is an attitude of respect to women in tribal society. Women are the symbol of the foundation of the development of the superstructure, which radiates the light of the role of women in tribal society for which they are much better placed compared to those in other segments of the society.

The women’s education in tribal areas is another major empowerment need. The reasons for tribal girls non-enrolment and/or drop out from the school are many: her preoccupation in economic pursuits, non-relevance of the learning experiences in the present day school to the needs of the tribal
girls (this include content, methods, evaluation, etc.), modern education acting as de-culturing agent/or alienating force in tribal societies, etc. The native approaches may have to be preferred emphasizing learning by doing rather than teaching.

It is therefore suggested that:

a) fresh curriculum may be drawn for tribal children with same learning outcomes as that of the non-tribal children.

b) In the initial stage, the local language may be used as medium of instruction (at least in the initial period).

c) News sets of instructional materials (varieties) may be developed completely independent of the prevalent set developed in non-tribal context. The only point of references should be same learning outcomes as started in terms of competencies.

d) A variety of transactional methods may be developed in the context of tribal cultures emphasizing learning rather than teaching. The needs of the girls and their natural activities should find a place in these methods.

e) Evaluation must be based on acquisition of competencies rather than reproduction of rote information.

Suggestions on Tribal Women’s Health

Tribal people are an important section of our population. It is high time that special measures are taken to understand the living conditions of this group. At the same time it must be kept in mind that unjudicial interference may lead to disruption in their society. Proper planning shall be done with the help of social scientists. In a society all the aspects of culture are interlinked with each other. Change in any sphere alters the total system. The government has established health centres in many remote areas. Inspite of them the
services haven't always penetrated in all interior areas. The field is, therefore, open for the NGOs/voluntary bodies. The following suggestions are given for working in this area:

1. The primary task is to conduct a well planned research on the health status of tribal women.
2. At the same time emphasis should be given on understanding the social organisation of the group.
3. Key persons who could be functionaries in introducing the health care systems should be identified.
4. Dietary surveys should be made to understand the nutritional intake of the tribal groups.
5. To work among the tribal women, trained women workers are the best.

Tribals are surviving in their respective environment since time immemorial. They have their unique health care system. A survey of their indigenous system mayn't only help to alleviate the health problems of tribal women but it may also provide alternative means to the modern method which isn't always inexpensive, practical or available to the local people. Unless bold and concrete steps in this regard are taken, there is less likelihood of taking any quantum jump in the direction of improving the status of tribal women.

The data collected from 8 tribal villages (300 tribal families) indicate that the tribals, who were practicing primitive economy (food gathering and hunting), were gradually transforming themselves into a food producing community. Though the tribals are supposed to take full advantage of the development schemes, the non-tribal traders and middlemen are deriving maximum benefit through exploitation of the tribals.
Factors like opening of new economic opportunities, introduction of education and health development programmes, presence of a large number of non-tribal population (traders, middlemen, government officials and NGOs) created both direct and indirect impact on the traditional social, economic and religious institutions of the tribals.

The Third Sector and Development

The government (both central and state) have made attempts to develop the tribals through introduction of various policy decisions and strategies in the form of declaration of the area as ‘Scheduled Area’ and bringing it under Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) approach. The tribals have been notified as primitive tribals (for extra privileges and funds) and the area has been brought under the purview of the Integrated Tribal Development Agency Area (ITDA) for channelizing all the development activities in an integrated manner through the ‘single window’ system. However, the administration failed to deliver the goods at the implementation level due to reasons that the staff at the field level were few, not properly motivated to work in difficult and inhospitable conditions and oriented for creating a rapport with the tribals who were following primitive economy, customs and religion. Due to lack of proper understanding of the problems of the tribals and poor communication skill, the officials kept some distance and failed to create trust and confidence among the tribals. The middlemen, traders and workers attached with few NGOs, however, succeeded in establishing a good rapport with the tribals.

Funds made available to the different development departments (education, health and economic development) either didn’t reach the target group or were not adequate to meet their requirements. The middlemen could
communicate with the tribals in their own dialect and were willing to help the tribals, (even at odd hours) while the existing government agencies (cooperative stores and rural banks) kept a distance from the tribals. The gap between the tribals and the government was filled up by the second sector (market), which was controlled by middlemen, moneylenders and traders. Volumes of documents produced by second sector (Universities, Institutions of higher learning and Autonomous bodies sponsored by the government) didn’t attract the attention of the government, which maintained the view that such documents are of academic interest only. Those organisations didn’t have any expertise in the implementation of development programmes.

Therefore, the only alternative left to overcome the situation is involvement of the ‘Third Sector’. It is true that there are a large number of NGOs which have earned bad names for mishandling of funds and creating social conflicts. But, there are several NGOs (Ramakrishna Mission, Bharatiya Adim Jati Sevak Sangh, CARE, OXFAM, Bhrat Sevashram Sangh, Vanabasi Seva Samiti, Seva Bharati, Vidya Bharati, Swami Vivekanand Youth Movement etc.), which are rendering useful services for the development of education, economy and health status of the weaker sections and especially tribal segments of the populations. The reputed and trusted ones should be identified and encouraged. The NGOs, which are receiving funds from the international or national level agencies, mayn’t require any financial assistance, while they need permission to work in the tribal areas and the government may allow them to work in specific areas to implement selected programmes (literacy, health check-up and immunization, nutrition etc.). Those NGOs, which need financial support can be provided with some
funds (both from central and state sector) for the implementation of selected programmes in the above mentioned fields, keeping in view the requirements of the tribals. The local NGOs, which have established their base in the tribal area and have employed local tribal youth (both men and women) would be a better choice. However, it should be made clear that the concerned NGOs would be responsible and accountable for failure, if any. The activity (education or health or nutrition) to be taken up on priority basis should be decided in consultation with the villagers and local panchayat members. The local administration (Block Office) will closely monitor the implementation and provide additional inputs, if necessary. To strike a balance between the State (First Sector) and the NGO (Third Sector) and create an atmosphere of trust and cooperation ‘conversion’ should be de-linked with development and the NGOs should be advised not to use the religious premises/ platforms for selection of beneficiaries, distribution of assets and running of programmes.

The government programmes failed mainly due to lack of participation, motivation, awareness and skill among the tribals and the tribals weren’t able to retain whatever little assets generated by them. The government failed to appreciate the socio-psychological feelings of the tribals and handled the development work in a mechanical manner. The participation of tribals in the ongoing programmes was limited to wage related activities and the tribal got the impression that the government was interested in certain programmes and hence those were being implemented. Therefore, programmes like, education, health and nutrition which require motivation and community participation, should be entrusted to local NGOs for organizing motivation and awareness building camps and implementation of
the programmes in selected tribal pockets where government agencies failed or didn’t reach.

Another area which can be effectively handled by NGOs in management of the income generating activities. In the changed situation, unless they are able to make profit and save for the future, their survival will be difficult. Some local NGOs should be entrusted with the job of motivation of the tribals for formation of few ‘Self Help Group’ to enable them to handle the job of collection and processing of the horticulture produces—such groups should have significant number of women members. The nodal agencies (banks and state Finance Corporation) insists some guarantee which can be provided by the NGOs on behalf of the SHGs.

The tribal families which have prospered (mainly due to their own efforts and hard labour) are self centred and reluctant to share their experience and knowledge with co-villagers. The government officials aren’t trained and motivated for providing the required services. Thus, the only alternative available is involvement of the NGOs manned by motivated and trained staff (mostly women) who are capable of handling specific tasks which are people oriented. The NGOs may be receiving some funds from religious institutions but so long they aren’t mixing ‘religion’ with ‘development’ and inducing people to change their religion or propagating the idea that their religion is better than the others, their services should be utilised for effective implementation of the policies with the involvement of community.

**Development Impact**

Despite the efforts made during the past 20 years through sub-plan approach, the overall tribal situation hasn’t changed much. Neither disparities
in the level of development between the tribals and non-tribals has minimized, nor the quality of life of tribals has improved. In some tribal areas, more problems have cropped up.

To conclude, proper cognition of cultural milieu of tribal people, identification of problem, areas and address them with appropriate redressal measures, adequate weightage to human resources development along with economic development, sufficient and timely availability of funds, effective management, responsive administration, collaborative efforts of people and functionaries will go a long way to facilitate the process of development to reach out the set goals in tribal areas.