CHAPTER 1

TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES IN INDIA
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Next to Africa, India has the largest concentration of tribal population. Though a lot has been done for their social and economic betterment, yet a great deal remains to be done. Before analysing the approaches of tribal development programmes it seems imperative to comment on the background of the policy makers, planners and administrators. Anthropologists everywhere considered as specialising in tribals and their problems.\(^1\) Unfortunately, the government of India couldn’t in the critical stages, utilised their specialised knowledge due to some pre-conceived notions cultivated and promoted by some vested interests who successfully influenced the thinking of our early leaders and administrators.\(^2\)

‘Development’ commonly refers to the overall improvement in the quality of life. Historically, most of the attempts for the promotion of development have been along the economic lines. The non-economic aspects of development received little attention, of economists and social scientists until 1960s. In South (developing countries), it was sought to be brought by replicating the experience of North (developed countries), without taking into account, the social and regional factors.\(^3\) As a matter of fact, the United

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\(^1\) Nadeem Hasnain, Tribal India, Palaka 1994, Prakashan, Delhi, p.24.
\(^2\) B.D. Chaudhury, Tribal Development in India, Inter-India Publications, New Delhi, 1982, pp. 31-37.
\(^3\) Ibid.
Nations declared the first “Development Decade” in early 1960s, aiming at a minimum annual economic growth of five and six percents for developed and developing countries respectively.

The term “development” received a wider meaning in the terminology of the United Nations in 1970 when the ultimate purpose of development became equitable distribution of income and wealth by promoting social justice, along with the efficiency of production. The emphasis laid on the human element of the development resulted in the conceptual emergence of “Social development” with greater meaning and implication. Social development till 1960s was understood more in a social welfare and social service sense and seen as the social dimension to more dominant economic basis of development. During the 1970s it referred to the process of planned institutional change to bring about a better correspondence between human needs on the one hand, and social policies on the other (Jones, John F, p.3, 1981).

Development is a multi-dimensional process to progressively improve the social, cultural, economic and human conditions of the people—all vital sectors necessary for a balanced growth of the society. “Due emphasis should be paid to establish a meaningful link between the local and national levels of development and of the world at large” (Rath, 1981). This means that no meaningful development projects may be formulated without thorough

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4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
knowledge of socio-cultural base and the physical environment of the people concerned.

B.K Roy Burman (1981) presents the following strategy of tribal development using anthropological approach:

1. Consideration of the strategies of tribal development should cover the following aspects:
   (i) Scope of tribal welfare and development activities.
   (ii) Integration of tribal welfare and development activities in the national development plan.
   (iii) Role of government and statutory bodies.
   (iv) Role of voluntary agencies.
   (v) Role of tribal institutions.

2. Welfare and development activities are expected to be concerned with
   (i) Satisfaction of minimum needs.
   (ii) Control and management of productive resources.
   (iii) Employment optimisation.
   (iv) Broad based participation of the population in development process.
   (v) Socio-cultural and political aspects of national integration.

Satisfaction of Minimum Needs

Broadly, the minimum needs in the tribal areas include food, work in the lean session, potable water, health and sanitation, housing, fodder, fuel, communication and primary and non-formal education.

The most important strategic question in the matter of satisfaction of minimum need is whether it should be done as a welfare measure or by rescheduling the productive activities. Generally the approach has been to satisfy the minimum needs as a welfare measure. This tends to destroy the self-reliance of the tribals and makes them dependent on bureaucratic
management. Also this leads to a distortion in the utilisation of the productive resources at the disposal of the tribal communities. In other words as far as possible, the minimum needs of the tribals are to be satisfied through harnessing the forces of production and orienting the social relations of production in conformity with the tribal ethos of self-management and national objective of building of a socialistic pattern of society.

**Control and Management of Productive Resources**

Control and management of productive resources assume a great importance in the tribal welfare and development administration. This include:

(i) Determination of the nature of rights including communal rights over productive resources through systematic enquiries.

(ii) Preparation of record of rights after giving due recognition to the traditionally prevailing categories of rights.

(iii) Systematic enquiries on the factors and processes of transformation of the traditional categories of rights and consequences thereof on the standard of living of the tribal population, pattern of interaction with the tribal communities and with the rest of the nation.

(iv) Phasing of administrative, legal and political action to reinforce the trends of transformation of the categories of rights which harmonise with the national objectives and with the broader humanistic goal of development.

(v) Elimination of the hangover of the colonial forest policy of imposing state or states-sponsored capitalistic mode of production on primitive, social and technological base.

(vi) Prevention of alienation of tribal productive resources-primarily land through appropriate administrative, legal and political processes and
supplemented by the rescheduling of the productive activities and mode of functioning of financial institutions.

(vii) Augmentation of productive activities which are primarily meant to serve the essential needs of the local communities in a manner, that, only after meeting the needs of the progressively expanding communities (in social boundary and in number), the surplus goes to the market.

(viii) Adoption of a technology and production schedule of maximum recycling of non-renewable resources.

**Employment**

Coming over to employment, it would first be necessary to categorise the tribal labour as follows:

(i) Self-employed and family labour in non-agricultural sector.
(ii) Self-employed and family labour in agricultural sector
(iii) Employees in agricultural sector
(iv) Employees in non-agricultural household sectors
(v) Employees in plantation
(vi) Employees in public sector, industrial, commercial and other establishments.
(vii) Employees in private sector, industrial, commercial and other establishments.
(viii) Government service.

**Participation of the People in the Development Process**

The participation can take several forms:

(i) Participation of selected individuals in planning/implementation or both in planning and implementation stages.
(ii) Participation of tribal representatives in various stages according to the discretion of the officials.
(iii) Participation of tribal representatives as required by the statute.
Again the participation may be confined to giving advice or may be extended to policy-making and operational control functions. Each approach has its own socio-political implications. But over a length of time, the ideal would be to ensure the participation of the tribal representative as required by the statute in policy-making and operational control functions.\textsuperscript{6}

\textbf{Socio-Cultural and Political Aspect of National Integration}

In determining the strategies of tribal development one must also have a well thought out conceptual framework about national integration. The framework may relate to the socio-cultural aspects central to the question of tribal language (as a cultural activity and as a medium of instruction), literature and creative activities, education, symbolic action and ways of life. In these matters there are variant models namely: (a) identification with dominant culture or assimilation in national integration, (b) melting pot or cross-cultural fertilisation, (c) cross-cultural co-existence, and (d) common strivings towards universalistic goals. By and large, at the conceptual level many don’t support the first model, but all the same at the operational level frequently it prevails.

\textbf{Plans and Programmes for the Tribal Development}

The Indian Constitution enjoins on the state the responsibility to promote with special care, the educational and economic interests of the scheduled tribes and to protect them from special injustice and from all forms of exploitation. Their development is a special responsibility of the President,

the Governor is responsible for reviewing the administration and development of tribal areas and for reporting to the President.\(^7\)

The problem of development of tribal areas is primarily linked with the backwardness of these areas, poverty of the people and the concept of integration of tribal with the rest of the population. For promoting the welfare of scheduled tribes and for raising the level of administration of scheduled and tribal areas to the state level, Article 275 of the Constitution provides for grants-in-aid from consolidated fund of India to states for implementation.\(^8\) Also, special funds have been provided in each plan for the welfare of the scheduled tribes in the sector of welfare of backward classes. The assumption behinds such an arrangement is that these funds will be additive to general development outlays which will accrue to the tribal people and areas.

Apart from concentration of tribal population in different states, individual tribes and sub-tribes vary from bare handful to several lakhs. They subsist on a variety of economic activities, belong to several ethnic stocks and speak a large number of language and dialects. They are also at different levels of political, economic and educational development. According to the report of the Task Force on Development of tribal areas (1975), handicaps of tribal people in different zones, in the country may be summed up as follows:

(i) Northern zone stretching from Ladakh in north-east to Tarai region of Uttar Pradesh have tribes who have been neglected by the authorities

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\(^7\) B.D. Sharma, Tribal Development: The Concept and the Frame, Prachi Prakashan, New Delhi, 1978, p. 32-35.

\(^8\) Ibid.
since British days, mostly due to remoteness of their habitat and
difficult climatic conditions. It is only since the Chinese invasion that
along the Himalayan mountains, attention has been drawn to their
plight.

(ii) In the north-eastern zone, comprising hinterland between Assam and
Tibet, lives tribes whose economy was disrupted, because of severance
of communication, between the rest of the country on account of caring
out of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). This led to almost total halt to
their trade with plain areas and commercial centres in Bengal. The
tribals of these zones are mostly shifting cultivators and have to resort
to shifting cultivation due to dearth of level land and steep hill slopes.
Therefore, jhuming is a major problem in this zones.

(iii) In the eastern, central and western zones, comprising states of West
Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat,
Maharashtra, Rajasthan, problems of tribal development are related to
pressure of population on land, problem of land tenure, indebtedness
and right of tribals in forests and practice of shifting cultivation
coupled with lower production level. Tribals of this area also suffer
from chronic scarcity of food, water and employment. Added to these,
is the problem of modernisation due to growth of industrial complexes
in the heart of tribal areas which has disrupted the traditional style of
life. This has also led to group tensions due to large scale population
movement which industrialisation entails compounded by resettlement
of refugees from erstwhile East Pakistan among the tribal people
especially in Dandakaranya.

(iv) Problems of Southern zone tribes are mostly based on their primitive
economy of Podu culture (shifting cultivation) or food gathering habits
and prevalence of Muttadari system of land tenure.

(v) Tribals living in the Island of Andaman and Nicobar, Laccadive and
Minicoy have their problems arising out of their subsistance economy
based on fishing and cultivation of coconut.
In spite of differences in problems between different zones area, few common features of tribal economic and social life which aren't considered in formulating development programmes in tribal areas. Some of these common features may be listed as given below:

(i) Their habitats are in isolated and difficult terrains with primitive transport system and roads, bridges, etc. are still scarce and don’t link the tribal villages even to the nearest market available or the block headquarters.

(ii) Agriculture and collection of forest produce together contribute major portion of the income of tribals.

(iii) Barter system of services and commodities still exists in tribal areas, the market remains unorganised and commodities loans predominate, making it easier for moneylenders to operate.

(iv) Tribals spend large amounts of their income on social and religious ceremonies, as a result of which they are perpetually indebted to the moneylenders.

(v) Tribals still depend on natural growth of crops with a view to achieve self-sufficiency and lack motivation of making profits.

(vi) Their low rate of literacy makes them vulnerable to the unscrupulous personnel in the bureaucracy or forest contractors.

**Planned Development**

The post-independence period saw a plethora of governmental programmes launched by various officials and non-officials agencies for the welfare and development of the tribal people. But the first systematic effort for the development of tribal areas was initiated in 1955 in the form of Special Multipurpose Tribal Development Blocks.\(^9\) A massive programme of

\(^9\) Ibid., pp. 37-41.
integrated development was initiated by organising 43 Special Multipurpose Tribal Blocks during the Second Five Year Plan in areas with tribal concentration in the country. Such programmes incurred an expenditure of Rs. 43.93 crores spent on tribal welfare during the Second Five Year Plan. Top priority was given to the promotion of education followed by communications, agriculture, animal husbandry and medical facilities. In the Third Five Year Plan the expenditure went upto Rs. 53.40 crores and the integrated development benefits have been made available to all the tribal areas through 489 Tribal Development Blocks opened by the end of 1966-67 on the basis of the recommendations made by the Elwin Committee and Dhebar Commission. During the Third Five Year Plan economic uplift was given top priority followed by education and health, housing and communications. The expenditure figures indicate that although the amount spent on tribal welfare during the Third Five Year Plan increased by 21.56 percent over the the amount spent during the Second Five Year Plan, the per capita expenditure decreased from Rs. 3.90 actually to Rs. 3.58. This has to be attributed to the failure of the planners to visualise the expected increase in the Scheduled Tribe population which rose from 25 million in 1951 to 30 million in 1961. Further, the percentage of expenditure on tribal welfare to the total plan expenditure also decreased from 0.94 percent during the second plan to 0.62 percent during the Third Plan. Another interesting feature of the expenditure is that while according to the 1961 census the Scheduled Tribes

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10 Ibid.
population constituted nearly 7 percent of the population, the percentage of expenditure on Tribal Welfare Programmes was as low as 3.63 percent in the Third Five Year Plan.

Even though enhanced allocations were made for Tribal Welfare in the Fourth Five Year Plan. The effect of these higher allocations must have been offset by the increase in population in 1961 and 1971. While the priorities continued to be almost unchanged during the Fourth Plan, certain special programmes like the Crash Special Nutrition Programmes and Crash Employment Programmes were introduced as corrective measures to provide nutritious supplementary diets to the tribal infants in order to save them from malnutrition and to increase the employment opportunities for the educated unemployed tribal youth and also serve them from the nefarious teachings of extremist political parties.11

The most important features of the Tribal Welfare Programme in the Fourth Plan Period was the introduction of six pilot projects in the backward tribal areas covering about 40,000 tribal families under each project with an investment of Rs. 1.50 crores per project. The projects were agriculture-oriented with stress on providing improved agricultural inputs like fertilizers, seeds, equipments, irrigation facilities, etc.

However, it is essential here to bear in mind that the term “region” in planning is defined as a geographically contiguous area or space with common resource potentialities and felt needs of the people inhabiting the

area, so as to constitute a viable unit of development irrespective of its ethnic composition.\textsuperscript{12} Rather, the development situation of the tribals living in such a region may be referred to as both “underdevelopment” and “backward”. The former to emphasize the sub-optimal utilisation of resources and the latter for referring to the backwardness of a given area or region as are the tribal areas, where resource utilisation isn’t upto the desired level.

States like Mizoram, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh and Orissa fall under the first category. Almost all the tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh and other southern states and certain tribal areas of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Orissa come either under one or the other area of the remaining three categories mentioned above.\textsuperscript{13} For the development of areas falling under the first category, the usual norms of planning like resources endowment, administrative viability, geographical contiguity, etc. can be the criteria, whereas for the development of the second and third category areas, a new approach with stress on area planning is to be adopted. While undertaking this area planning, it is important to remember that we have in our country backward areas not only on account of being exclusively inhabited by tribals but even when the population are heterogeneous.\textsuperscript{14} It is, therefore, necessary to plan for the development of these tribals as part of a complex whole as the development of tribals and tribal areas is inextricably inter-linked with the regional development. For this purpose the areas falling under the second and

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
third categories are to be divided into a number of blocks with predominant tribal population and pre-dominant non-tribal population but with sizable tribal component. Both these types of block constitute backward areas. At macro-level, area development schemes like lying of major communication facilities, higher education, marketing, industries, irrigation, etc., can be profitably undertaken by keeping in view the resources potentialities and felt needs of the area.\footnote{Ibid.} However, at micro-level a distinction can be made in resources allocation to these blocks as was done in Andhra Pradesh, where blocks have been classified into advanced, ordinary, backward and tribal-on the basis of certain indices of development, such as extent of irrigated area, number of schools, length of roads, etc, and funds are allocated for advanced, ordinary, backward and tribal blocks.

The strategy for areas of tribal concentration culminated in the concept of a sub-plan for areas having more than 50% tribal concentration and the scheduled areas and the areas with dispersed tribal population. A very broad frame of reference has been provided for the sub-plan in the note of the planning commission. The sub-plans are expected to:

(i) identify the resources for the sub-plan areas,
(ii) prepare a broad policy frame for the development of tribal areas, and
(iii) define a suitable administrative strategy for its implementation.

The sub-plan area in each state is to be divided into viable projects areas, taking into consideration administrative boundaries, topography, level of economic development, ethnic composition, natural resources and
 potentials for development for each of the units so defined, an “integrated tribal development project” with reference to the problems of that area is to be formulated within the policy frame provided by the sub-plan. The most important feature in the new strategy is that it recognises that there is no uniform solution to the variety of the problems facing the tribal areas and communities which are at different levels of socio-economic development. However, certain common features also can’t be missed which will need immediate attention, though solution will depend on the local situation. The Integrated Tribal Development Project will be a continuous effort for understanding the local situation, evolving suitable programmes, their effective implementation and a constant appraisal of the results on the touchstone of their impact on the well-being of the most deprived sections of the community.

Development Programmes in the Plan

The pattern of central assistance for plan programmes depend on whether these are centrally-sponsored or state plan schemes. In case of centrally sponsored schemes, the states get 100% central assistance and for those in the state plan, central assistance is available as block grants and loans. Classification of centrally-sponsored and state plan schemes is as follows:

Centrally Sponsored Schemes

(1) Tribal development blocks.
(2) Co-operation.
(3) Girls hostels.
(4) Post-matric scholarship.
(5) Coaching and pre-examination training schemes.
(6) Research, training and special projects.

State Plan Schemes

(1) Education Pre-matric scholarships, stipends, boarding grants, hostels, supply of free books, stationery, uniforms, mid-day meals, etc.

(2) Economic Development Subsidy for agricultural implements, seeds, fertilizers, etc. cottage industries, rehabilitation, communications, animal husbandary, horticulture, pisciculture, co-operation, minor irrigation, social conservation.

(3) Health, housing and others Housing, drinking, water supply, medical and public health, social and cultural activities, aid to voluntary agencies, and miscellaneous.

1. Special Multipurpose Tribal Blocks

As the first systematic effort for the development of tribal areas, Special Multipurpose Tribal Blocks were initiated in 1955. Forty-three such blocks were opened in different states for the first time in 1956 to speed up the process of development in the areas of the largest tribal concentrations. These blocks were jointly sponsored by the Ministry of Home Affairs and Community Development. The state governments were given charge of implementation of this programme. These blocks differed basically from the normal blocks on the following points
(i) Developmental programmes to be implemented were more intensive in character.
(ii) The population and area coverage was to be much less than normal blocks.
(iii) Peoples contribution had to be kept to the minimum and limited only to supply of the unskilled labour at a lower rate.
(iv) Loan funds were to be diverted as subsidies.
(v) Personnel appointed for these areas had to be suitably trained.

Various centrally-sponsored as well as state sponsored schemes, as mentioned earlier, were taken up under these multipurpose tribal blocks. However, after sometimes it was realised that the programmes being undertaken under these blocks were not yielding desired results. In order to pinpoint the lacunae and suggest a better alternative, a committee was constituted under Verrier Elwin to go into various aspects of the programme. The main observations of the Elwin Committee were as follows

(a) Though the programmes suffered from the defects of all pilot projects, it was sufficiently successful to justify its extension.
(b) In tribal areas, top priority should be given to agriculture and allied subjects, like irrigation, reclamation and soil conservation.
(c) There should be really serious attempt to relate the programme and the way of doing things to the tribal background, etc.

Now a modified version of this programme was taken up a larger scale during the Second Five Year Plan when the Tribal Development Blocks were started.

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11. Tribal Development Blocks

In the Third Five Year Plan (1962-66), Tribal Development Blocks come into being, based on the general pattern of Community Development Blocks, but more intensive in character. The object was to bring about rapid improvement in socio-economic standard of the tribals.

These blocks were originally chosen with a population of one lakh to become the units of formulation and execution of development programmes. Popular representatives were associated with the block’s governmental machinery, so that the programmes could be reflective of the needs and aspiration of the people. Till the end of 1966-67, 484 blocks had been set up in various states. Though no rigid pattern was laid down, the guidelines prescribed that 60% funds should be earmarked for economic development programmes, 25% for communications and 15% for social services. High priority, assigned to communications programme was in consideration of the difficult terrain and in accessibility of tribal areas. An assessment of the programme made by the Vidyarthi Task Force indicated that it had fallen short of expectations, though it brought in a change in the outlook of tribals, particularly in the field of education and agriculture. The following programmes were planned and implemented according to the priorities prescribed.

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18 Ibid.
Agriculture

Schemes for weaning away the tribals from shifting to settled cultivation, agricultural implements, loans and grants for soil-conservation, minor irrigation, etc.

Animal Husbandary

Piggery, poultry-keeping and sheep-breeding.

Cottage and Small Industries

Various types of cottage and small industries depending on local availability of raw materials.

Social Education

Promotion of existing village institutions into community centres.

Women and Children’s Programme

Teaching of health and sanitation through recreational and cultural programmes.

111. Sub-plan and Integrated Tribal Development Project

With some changes, the tribal development blocks continued into the Fourth Plan and beyond. These programmes, in practice, became the rigid, although varying conditions demanded different approaches to their problems. The tribal development block area proved to be too small a unit for large investment in infrastructures, economic development and social services. That these blocks couldn’t accommodate schemes like soil conservation, major and
medium irrigation, secondary and technical education, etc., is an instance in point.\textsuperscript{19}

In the Fifth Five Year Plan, attention was given to identifiable group and area, so that a definite perspective emerged for the course of their development. Broadly speaking, the situations in regions of tribal concentration and in areas of dispersed tribal population were quite distinct which required different approaches. In the regions of tribal concentration, area development approach had to be adopted, focussed on the problems of the tribal people.\textsuperscript{20} Keeping these factors into consideration, the concept of sub-plan was evolved. The sub-plan is not a scheme, it represents a new approach. The strategy clearly spelt out the problem of tribal development into two parts (i) that of areas of having more than 50 percent tribal concentration and the scheduled areas, and (ii) that of areas with dispersed tribal population. Besides these two categories, primitive tribal communities at the pre-agricultural level of technology were identified as a special group.

The region of tribal concentration or the sub-plan area in each state compromises a number of viable project areas, known as Integrated Tribal Development Project. For each project an integrated area development programme focussing attention on the specific problems of the area and people in that region has to be formulated.


\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
The long term objective of the sub-plan are

(i) To narrow the gap between the levels of development of tribal and other areas,

(ii) To improve the quality of life of the tribal communities.

Among the immediate objectives are elimination of exploitation in all forms, speeding of the process for social and economic development, building up inner strength of the people and improving their organisational capabilities. In relation to the developmental programmes, the tribal sub-plans represent the totality of public sector effort in that area.

The resources of the sub-plan are as follows

(i) State Plan Outlays,

(ii) Sectoral outlay in the central ministries,

(iii) Special central assistance,

(iv) Institutional finance.

According to the note on the preparation of sub-plan issued by the planning commission, a general strategy to achieve the objectives has to be evolved in the sub-plan keeping in view the specials problem of the tribal region in each state. Some of the elements of this strategy are as follows:

Prevention of Exploitation

No developmental activity for benefiting the tribal population will succeeded unless exploitation in various forms is prevented. Integrated credit-cum-marketing services, covering marketing of agricultural and minor forest produce, supply of inputs and essential consumer commodities, credit for production, purposes as also for consumption and social needs, etc., have to be set up. Redemption of past debts through legislative and executive
measures will have to be taken up. Suitable measures may also be considered for dealing with the resultant liability. Programmes for the prevention of land alienation, restoration of lands already alienated, termination of practices like bonded labour, solution of the problems created in the zones of influence of modern industrial areas and review of exercise and forest policies get special attention.

**Development of Tribal Economy**

Tribals, by and large, depend on agriculture and forest for their livelihood. Hence, development of agriculture is given the highest priority. The most important components for the development of agriculture are land ownership and its development. Provision of irrigation and improved method of cultivation. Completion of land records will have to be given a high priority. Shifting cultivators, forest villagers and forest labourers will be getting special attention.

**Generation of Employment Opportunities**

The level of economic activity in tribal areas is very low, yet the potential of their resource endowment is only partially utilised. Opportunities for better utilisation of available manpower have to be created through programmes of horticulture, animal husbandry, piggery and allied occupations. Cottage industries based on local raw materials have to be developed with a view maximising the proportion of semi-processed and processed goods in the export-mix of the region.

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Provision of Basic Infrastructure

For speeding up the socio-economic development, basic infrastructure, legal, institutional and physical are required to be developed on a priority basis. Growth centres, communication networks, schools, rural health centres, marketing and credit organisation, rural electrification, manpower resources and training have to be planned in an integrated fashion, keeping in view the special conditions of the tribal areas.

Special Groups and Problems

As the sub-plan focuses its attention on the welfare and development of the people, special attention has to be given to areas and groups facing special problems. These include primitive tribal groups in extremely backward pockets, shifting cultivators, and tribals effected by major projects. Those tribal groups, who haven’t received the benefits of development so far and are more backward amongst the tribal communities themselves, need to be identified. Special assistance is provided for such groups.

Preparation of the sub-plan involves:

(i) identification and demarcation of areas of tribal concentration,
(ii) Identification of socio-cultural barriers and promoters of change and development,
(iii) Assessment of potentialities, special problems and felt needs of the tribals areas,
(iv) Assessing the resources availability for the sub-plan,
(v) Formation of sectoral programmes, and
(vi) Devising a suitable administrative set up.
The sub-plan area in each state is to be divided into various project areas, taking into consideration administrative boundaries, topography, level of economic development, ethnic composition, natural resources and potential for development. As the tribal development block was too small a unit for planning and co-ordination, it was decided to constitute a project area comprising a group of development blocks. Therefore, the entire tribal sub-plan area has been divided into a number of viable Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDP). As the situation varied from one state to another one area to another in the same state, the project size was decided, keeping in view the specific situation in a particular case. The project has, on an average about three to four lakhs population and about six to seven blocks.

The project represents the total developmental effort in a particular area and has to accept the problem-solving approach covering a large spectrum from protection to welfare. It has been conceived as comprising the totality of the existing administrative apparatus in the concerned area.

IV. Large Sized Multipurpose Societies

These co-operative societies have been set up since 1974 in tribal areas in the country with a view to supplying under one roof the various requirements of tribal people. Their credit-cum-marketing needs are particularly looked after by these societies. The policy of LAMPS is sought to

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23 Ibid.
be tribal oriented by having tribals on the board of directors. Adequate share capital is being provided for the programmes.

**Schemes Taken up During Plan Periods**

Till the commencement of the Sixth Five Year Plan, the following schemes had been taken up under different programmes:

1. **Protective measures**
   
   (i) Legal aid
   (ii) Marketing agricultural and minor forest produce
   (iii) Scale and supply of essential consumer commodities
   (iv) Bonded labour
   (v) Non-productive credit
   (vi) Recognition of excise administration
   (vii) Strengthening of traditional panchayat

2. **Agriculture and Forests**
   
   (i) Survey and land records
   (ii) Agricultural research
   (iii) General agricultural development
   (iv) Credit for productive purposes
   (v) Landless labourers
   (vi) Training of young farmers
   (vii) Forest villages
   (viii) Development of forests and forest based economies, etc
   (ix) Shifting cultivation

3. **Animal husbandry**

4. **Irrigation,**

5. **Communications,**

6. **Electricity,**

7. **Industry**
   
   (i) Small-scale industry
(ii) Medium industries and mining

8. Special programmes for tribals affected by major projects

9. Isolated small tribal communities

10. Education

(i) 100 per cent coverage of children in age group of 6-11 and 75 per cent in age group of 11-14

(ii) Residential schools

(iii) Provision of principal meals and uniforms

(iv) Hostel accommodation

(v) Pre-matric scholarships

(vi) Post-matric scholarships

(vii) Improvement of standards

(viii) Teaching in mother-tongue

(ix) Extra-curricular activities

(x) Physical education

(xi) Construction of high schools and middle school buildings

(xii) Special programmes for youths in the age group of 15-25

(xiii) Citizen education

(xiv) Stipends to children of the teachers

(xv) Special pay to teachers working in extremely backward areas

(xvi) Construction of residential facilities, specially for lady teachers

(xvii) Recruitment programmes and refresher courses for teachers

(xviii) Development of tribal markets as centres for cultural activities

II. Public Health

(i) New public health centres

(ii) Free medicines

(iii) Special clinics and mobile dispensaries

(iv) Safe drinking water

(v) Research on tribal housing

(vi) Development of small model towns in tribal areas
12. Administration and Voluntary Agencies

(i) Strengthening administrative structure

(ii) Housing for personnel in extremely backward areas

(iii) Special pay for personnel belonging to development department working in extremely backward areas

(iv) Aid to voluntary agencies

"The tribal development programmes will not gain speed as long as complex formal structures of various departments are accorded prominence. The purpose of formulating plans in a rational manner is to facilitate their successful implementation".24 This brings us to the formulation stages of tribal development programmes. But once we formulate such programmes, we implement the same with minimum cognizance of the needs of the tribals, at micro-level. More often, the programmes satisfy, if ever, the target rather than the need.

Review of Tribal Development During Five Year Plans

On April 1, 1951, was launched the First Five Year Plan. On October 2, 1952, was launched the Community Development Programmes. These were all intended to take the benefits of a new life in independent India to the last citizen residing in the farthest corner of the country. Community development was to provide the institutional set up. The Panchayati Raj was intended to provide, in this gigantic task, the backing of the people through a new local leadership (Dhebar Commission).25 These small beginnings were good

25 Ibid.
women for the welfare and development of the long neglected and deprived
tribal population of the country.

The First Five Year Plan was of the order of Rs. 2,356 crores, out of
which a lump sum provision of Rs. 39 crores was made for the schemes for
Backward Classes including Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, ex-criminal
tribes and other backward classes. Against this plan provision, an expenditure
of Rs.25.98 crores was incurred by the State governments on the backward
classes during the First Plan. This included an expenditure of Rs.17.36 crores
on the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes. During this period, emphasis was
given on the schemes of health, communications and housing.

The Second Five Year Plan was initiated in 1956 and a provision of
Rs.91 crores was made for all backward classes. The Scheduled Tribes were
assigned Rs.48.33 crores. Significantly, in this plan the emphasis shifted to
"economic development" (agriculture, cottage industries, forest cooperative
societies and setting up of multi-purpose tribal blocks). The establishment of
Special Multipurpose Tribal Development Blocks was a very significant step
encompassing far reaching importance.

The Third Five Year Plan renamed these blocks as Tribal Development
Blocks with the priorities for economic upliftment, education and health,
housing and communication. Allocation for the welfare of Scheduled Tribes
and development of Scheduled Areas was increased manifold. During this
plan, 415 Tribal Development Blocks were set up. Each block covered a
population of 25,000 with two-third tribal population. The schematic pattern
of earlier special Multi-Purpose Tribal Blocks was given up, though the main emphasis of the programme continued to be on economic development.

By the end of Fourth Five Year Plan, 43 per cent of tribal population was covered in 504 Tribal Development Blocks. For the further intensification of programmes, supplementing allocations were made by the Central Government, as in the past, the life of each block was extended to another five years. While the programmes were in operation, there was a renewed effort to have a fresh look at the problems of rural development and provide a "decisive thrust for achieving a breakthrough" (K.K. Srivastava, 1981).26 In this period, a number of programmes were taken up for small farmers, marginal farmers as also crash employment and rural employment schemes. With this emphasis on the rural poor some of the more backward tribal areas also received attention. The focus was now turned to individual families, a new programme of tribal development agencies was taken up by the Ministry of Agriculture which was a variant of small farmers programme.

Generally, there has been an impression that much investments have been made for tribal welfare since the First Plan. The Report of the Task Force on Development of Tribal Areas (1975) shows that the proportionate expenditure on scheduled tribes continued to diminish during the plan period. From 1 per cent of the total in the First Plan, it came down to 0.04 per cent in the Fourth Plan.

26 Ibid., p.36.
The Fifth Five Year Plan may also be termed as a landmark in the development planning for the tribal people of the country. It will be remembered for the birth and operation of the concept of a Sub-Plan for the tribal regions of a state within the overall frame of the state plan. The objective of the tribal Sub-Plan has been spelt as development of the area with focus on scheduled tribes population within the sub-plan area. The unit of planning, an Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP) comprises an aggregate of development of blocks. By the end of Fifth Plan, 18 sub-plans covering 65 per cent of the tribal population of the country had been divided into 179 projects (ITDPs). The preparation of annual sub-plan became a concurrent exercise with the state annual plans to appoint senior officers as project officers.

The long-term objectives in the Sixth Plan continue to be the same as in the Fifth Plan viz, (i) narrowing the gap between the level of development of tribal areas and others, and (ii) improving the quality of life of the tribal people. The strategy of tribal development lays emphasis on consolidation of the gains of protective measures, programmes of full employment, education and health services. The approach for development of backward areas in general is to rely, to a greater extent, on the development of agriculture village and small industries, subsidiary occupations and related services and also on the minimum needs programmes and area development

28 Ibid.
programmes. In respect of the economic programmes, the role of marketing and credit organisations such as Large Multi Purpose Cooperative Societies (LAMPS) has been re-emphasized. Precisely, the Sixth Plan objectives for tribal development are as follows:

(i) The entire tribal population, whether living in the areas of tribal concentration or outside will be covered by suitable developmental programmes;

(ii) The difference between the level of development in the tribal areas and the surrounding areas will be generally bridged by the end of the Plan and, in case of more backward tribal areas, in the course of another five years, i.e., by the end of the Seventh Five Year Plan; and

(iii) The tribal communities outside the tribal areas will be helped to attain the general level of development in the area by the end of the plan, or latest by the end of the Seventh Plan in case of more deprived communities.

The brief review of the Tribal Welfare Programmes indicates that though efforts have been made during the last fifty years to improve the lot of the tribals, enough has not been done to bring them on a par with the advanced sections of society which has been the theme of the development programmes. Both programme planning and implementation have remained stereotyped and devoid of tribal bias.

Consequently, even the little that has been invested in tribal welfare could not percolate to the intended beneficiaries in its entirety. In spite of the
recommendations of the expert committees and commissions (e.g. Elwin and Dhebar), the programmes failed to give the expected results, due to the following reasons:

(1) Introduction of stereotyped programmes without relevance to the felt needs of the tribals.
(2) Failure of the planners to take cognizance of variations from region to region and from tribe to tribe.
(3) Varied levels of comprehension and mobilisation of economic, natural and human resources.
(4) Different levels of receptivity of the beneficiaries and varigated capabilities of tribal leadership.
(5) Ill-suited administrative structure and incapable personnel resulting in confused decision making and lack of initiative.
(6) Ineffective implementation of protective measures due to lack of proper implementation machinery resulting in dilution of development effort.

The ultimate result of such defective planning and implementation is the emergence of an undulating socio-economic situation in which certain tribal groups and areas have progressed while others remained static. Therefore, any strategy for the development of tribal groups should in future aim at:

(i) removal of disparities between one tribal group and another, and
(ii) Bridging the gap between the tribal and the non-tribal. For this purpose the development problem of the tribals is to be tackled at regional level by broadly categorizing the tribal areas into:

(a) Areas which are exclusively inhabited by the scheduled tribes.
(b) Areas predominantly inhabited by the tribals but with sizable non-tribal populations living amidst them.
(c) Areas predominantly inhabited by non-tribals with a sizable component of tribals.

(d) Areas where tribals are found dispersed in small groups amidst non-tribals.

The development of dispersed tribal at district level is to be tackled on a different footing. For such groups, amenity schemes like drinking water wells and medical facilities can be provided on a small group basis while school and similar other programmes are to be organised along with the needs of other populations with special provisions for the tribal students both in securing seats and providing teaching and residential facilities.²⁹ However, programmes like agriculture and allied development activities are to be planned on a family basis. It is neither desirable nor possible to evolve area development schemes for these groups.

Paucity of funds is another serious drawback hampering the tempo of development which is sometimes resulting in incomplete works giving rise to doubts on the sincerity of the effort of the government in promoting tribal welfare. It is imperative to tap the general sector resources by specifically earmarking funds, especially for area development of dispersed tribal populations living in plain areas as the meager funds of the weaker sections sector can’t bear the huge burden. The weaker section resources may be exclusively harnessed for removing the constraints which are responsible for their slow progress. This is essential in view of the past experience of poor flow of general sectors funds in spite of the directive that the weaker section

²⁹ Ibid.
sector funds are only supplementary to the funds earmarked from the general sector and not meant for supplanting the latter.

Further, the welfare programmes so far implemented at micro-level by taking a block as development unit couldn’t be geared up to the optimal utilization of the natural and human resources of the area as the blocks is too small a unit to permit economic exploitation of the resources. Similarly, the development of large-scale infrastructural facilities is also stifled due to the meager financial and technical resources of the block.

It is, therefore, imperative to carve out larger units of development comprising a number of blocks endowed with common mineral, water, agriculture, forest and other resource potentialities which could be profitably exploited for the benefit of the area and the people. However, the caring out of such development areas should be undertaken only after a thorough investigation into the resource potentialities and feasibility of their economic exploitation. Besides working out the details of the infrastructural facilities required for the exploitation of these resources. However, the interest of the local population should receive their due attention in the programme, planning of the area.

Besides availability of funds and implementation of development programmes, it is also essential to strengthen the insulatory measures for preventing the tribals from outside exploitation and the consequent dilution of development benefits as they percolator to the tribals.\textsuperscript{30} Though the existing

\textsuperscript{30} S.G. Deogaonkar, Tribal Administration and Development, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, 1994, pp. 11-17.
protective legislations in states like Andhra Pradesh are comprehensive and fool-proof on paper, the desired protection isn’t ensured to the expected level. Several factors like absence of initiative and zeal on the part of the official machinery, vast political influence wielded by the non-tribals coupled with indifferent attitude of the tribals and ignorance of the existing protective legislature contributed for their effectiveness in practice.\(^{31}\) The answer to this situation lies in involving the tribal leaders themselves directly and effectively in the implementation of these protective measures constituting area committees, consisting of trustworthy traditional leaders selected by the agent to the government with some statutory power delegated to them under the provision of the regulations, may be worth trying. Such a system was in vague in the tribal areas regulation, which in essence embodied the salient features of the various protective legislations now being enforced in Andhra Pradesh. However, the official machinery will continue to act as catalyst, in the deliberations of these committees in the capacity of advisers. Besides these committees in turn can also supplement the decision making activities of the elected leaders of the statutory bodies like panchayats.

In the name of tribal development a lot of money has been spent during the last several plans but when accounting was made at the end of the last period of the safeguards to the tribals in the constitution, it was found that actual benefits trickling down to the tribals haven’t been consistent with the

\(^{31}\) Ibid.
promise we have made. Unfortunately, the developmental programmes for tribal areas didn’t yield the desired results.

In a scathing attack on the failure of tribal development programme, Ratha (1981) declares that tribal development results in widening the gap between the tribals and non-tribals in the area and in all probability made the tribal exploitation more effective and organised. It becomes more ironical when we come across such thoughtless promises, as given in the Draft Sixth Plan, that all the problems of the tribal people can be solved by the end of 1989.

S.K Sharma (1981) comes out with another shocking thesis for the failure of the government programmes for tribal development. According to him, some of the serious foreign observers maintain that Government of India has not only failed to encourage the development of the tribals but has actively maintained their underdevelopment.

There are other studies which point out the laws and programmes have failed because of the power of non-tribal landlords and the non-involvement of tribals in the development process. If all these factors are taken into consideration, one can find out that no new programmes have been implemented to successfully overcome these problems.

The Shilu Ao Team on Tribal Development Programme has also expressed the view that the results achieved haven’t been commensurate with the expenditure incurred, and that much money has been wasted on schemes which have failed largely because of the failure of planners to take into
account the stages of development of the tribals for whom they are intended and the conditions obtaining in the areas where they are to be implemented.

The resources had been wasted on grandiose schemes of colonisation, housing, co-operation, etc., which had largely failed and had conferred no tangible benefits on the tribals. Failure of housing schemes is an instance in point. Tiled houses, involving considerable expenditure of public funds, constructed in the midst of forests on stereotyped lines have either remained untenanted or abounded soon after construction because of the erroneous assumptions of the planners that what is good for the people in the plains should be equally good and acceptable to the tribals. If housing schemes have failed, colonisation schemes have fared no better. More money has been wasted on these schemes. In one of the more important states which the team visited, the failure was so complete that colonisation schemes were completely excluded from the Third Five Year Plan. The waste could have been avoided if planning had been preceded by a socio-economic survey to help the planners with the data concerning the felt needs of the tribals and the conditions obtaining in the regions which they inhabit. Among some other factor responsible for the unsatisfactory results of the tribal development programmes are:

(i) The delay in the implementation of considered recommendations made by the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission and their high level bodies in the past to protect the rights of the tribals has worsened the position which these recommendations were intended to
correct while the failure to pay attention to and profit by their advice on matters pertaining to the formulations and implementation of tribal development programmes has resulted in the failure of ambitious schemes and consequent waste of valuable resources.

(ii) No conscious attempt has been made by any of the state governments, with the exception of Andhra Pradesh, to ensure that the tribals receive a reasonable share of the benefits from the general development programmes to which they, as citizens of the state, are legitimately entitled. Broadly speaking, the planners in the state have proceeded on the basis that the special provision is the only provision available to finance tribal development programmes.

(iii) Development effort instead of correcting the existing imbalance as between tribe and tribe has widened it as the benefits of the schemes undertaken have largely accrued to the more progressive sections amongst them.

(iv) The tribal development blocks failed to get any significant support from the general development programmes including community development programmes.

(v) The schemes formulated for these blocks weren’t adopted to the felt needs of the specific areas.

It is increasingly felt that the administrative machinery should be geared up to meet the development demands of the tribals. In view of the acceptance of the integrated approach with the block as the micro-level
development unit, it may not be necessary at block-level as the various subject-matter specialists have to participate. However, it is at the district level that the weakest link lines. The tribal welfare officer is well versed in human engineering with adequate and technically qualified staff, here is necessary to identify the bottlenecks and find suitable solutions to the tribals problem. At state level, the Director of Tribal Welfare with similar staff as suggested for the district level should guide and supervise the development programmes. Further, a committees for tribal development comprising the heads of departments, the planning secretary, the finance secretary and the revenue secretary with a senior member of the board of revenue as Chairman and the Director, Tribal Welfare, as its secretary and convenor should be constituted for each state with the main object of finalising district wise, the tribal development programmes and periodically reviewing the progress of their implementation. The administrative set up is also responsible for the unsatisfactory performance of tribal development programmes. When a number of departments, each providing its own particular of the other, come into existence, the tribal people are forced to run from pillar to post to get what they need.

Multiplicity of agencies has resulted in diffusion of responsibility, inadequate control, lack of co-ordination and from the people's angle, difficulty in identifying the officials concerned with specific programmes. The pattern of administrative organisation will have to be worked out in detail for achieving functional co-ordination and efficiency. Delegation of authority,
specificity of responsibility and adequate flexibility should be built into the system so as to enable the implementing authority to effect changes in the ongoing programmes on the basis of concurrent evaluation. As a result of historical reasons, the administrative structure in tribal areas has continued to lack simplicity and thereby defying comprehension of the tribals and has failed to evoke substantial response from them.

Finally, it is important to notice that it is the human element that makes or mars the development of any region or group. Steps should therefore, be taken to improve the quality of the development functionary, both official and non-official, working at various levels, by drawing special programmes of training so as to improve the performance of the official executive and decision-making capacity of the tribal leader. For this purpose, the training programmes of the various Tribal Research and Training Institutes are to be so evolved as to cater to the needs of both types of research by these institutions should be communicated to the planners and administrators to help them implement the plans.