CHAPTER - 2

APPROACHES, PLANNING AND PROGRAMMES FOR THE TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT.
Development has entered our world with two accomplices: modern science and colonialism. From science development has inherited the belief that we go on increasing the 'power' of the human beings over the non-human cosmos for the world has enough resources to meet not only the needs but also the greed of all humans. From colonialism development has inherited the faith that those on the higher rungs of history have the right to shape the ways of life of those on the lower.

And the so-called 'tribals' of India, as history tells us, are the indigenous, autochthonous people of the land, who had been settled for long in different parts of the country before the Aryan-speaking people invaded Kabul and Indus valleys. Slowly the Aryan-speaking people spread out over large parts of the country along the plains and river valleys. Originally the indigenous people were settled on the plains and river valleys of the land; however, they were not all in the same stage of development. Many of these were still in a food-gathering economy, not knowing the use of metal - a few seem to have known the use of metal - a sort of shifting and hoe cultivation, and were perhaps on the threshold of a real food-producing economy, for instance (Singh, 1990: 10-11).
The aboriginal or indigenous people of this land were slowly pushed by the so-called 'civilized' invaders to the forest outskirts and today the modern technologies are beyond their reach. The major part of this population remain cut-off from the worthwhile contact with the society at large. Their vital needs for land and freedom of forest have remained far from being solved. Depriving the tribals of the produce of forest, their major source of livelihood is one of the most heinous crimes.

In the process of development, racially, culturally and linguistically, the mankind is proceeding towards greater homogeneity. Day by day, the old culture is dying or getting exterminated and a great segment of humanity known by various names - primitive, tribal, indigenous, aboriginal, native and so on also constitute in the broader society. Some major characteristics of these groups have been simple, premachine economy, unsophisticated rituals and social customs, lack of a script for their speech which itself is not developed, small local community organisation and homogeneity. However, today the so called 'progress' is destroying the environment as well as other peoples and cultures and that modern civilization may become victim of its own progress (Hasnain, 1983: 3).

The framers of our Constitution embodied the 'Welfare State' ideal in the new Constitution. This ideal in the Resolution on aims
and objective was moved by Nehru on 13th December, 1946 in the Constituent Assembly, which was later accepted in the Constitution by way of a 'Preamble' (The Constitution of India, 1949: 1). The relevant part of the Resolution as adopted on 22nd January 1947 includes justice, equality, freedom and provides adequate safeguards for minorities, backward and tribal areas, and depressed and other backward classes.

In her more than half century of independence, India has tremendously advanced in the fields of economic, political, cultural, nuclear, science and technologies, etc. However, still a certain sections of the society are neglected. A major chunk of the Indian population is reeling under the yoke of hunger, poverty, illiteracy, disease etc. The problems relating to tribals all over India have been reviewed and various recommendations have been made towards their solution in this regards. We have the Backward Classes Commission headed by Acharya Kalelkar, the Balvantray Mehta Committee Report, Forty-Eighth Report of the Estimates Committee of 1958-59, the Report of the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission headed by Shri U.N. Dhebar in 1961, and the Multipurpose Tribal Development Blocks by Verrier Elwin among others. There are also annual reports of the Commissioner for the Scheduled Caste and
Scheduled Tribes (now it's National Commission for SCs/STs) (Kulkarni, 1974: 333).

In order to solve the problems of the aboriginal people, the government of India has failed to provide minimum needs to them. If the tribal problems are not tackled and continue to be ignored any more, they are likely to acquire awesome proportions and may pose grave threats to the cohesion and integrity of the country. (S.C. Dube, 1983 : ix).

In the past also several panaceas were offered for the solution of the tribal problem. The rapid assimilation of the tribes into the "mainstream" of society was one among them. The protagonist of this view failed to offer a detailed blueprint of action, or explain what the mainstream was. The other extreme suggestion was for the isolation and segregation of the tribes. The past experience shows that such a policy had only perpetuated the misery and suffering of the tribals and contributed to their further degradation. Isolation could be a temporary expedient, it is no solution. Clearly the need is to go beyond segregation (Ibid: ix).

Tribals are an integral part of the Indian civilization, whereas they are debarred from the decision-making process. Keeping them
isolated any further might prove detrimental to the national economy and ecology.

**Concept and Definition of Tribe**

Although sociologists and anthropologists are very much interested in studying the primitive group, the basic questions like who are tribes? what are the criteria for considering a human group a tribe etc are not yet properly answered.

The saddest part of the story is that, so far as the concept and definition of 'tribe', is concerned the anthropologists, sociologists, social workers, administrators, academicians, and people who are involved with the tribes and their problem are not able to reach in a common conclusion. Defining the 'primitive' in the new strategy of tribal development, two concepts have been distinguished. The prior stage of economic development has been categorized as primitive tribal communities, while the lower level in the economic structure falls under the category of the more backward tribal communities. Besides the economic criterion, level of literacy has also been taken as a characteristics to identify the groups which need special attention and could be properly categorized as primitive tribal communities (Sinha and Sharma, 1977: 2-3).
During British rule, from 1917 through the 1931 census, the nomenclature referring to tribes were used as ‘aboriginal’ or ‘deprived classes’. However, these adjectives were dropped in the 1941 census and these communities were termed as Scheduled Tribes or popularly called as ‘Adivasis’. Even after that, the ambiguity could not be removed. With the passage of time, the differences on the concept and definition of a tribe have certainly narrowed down to an appreciable extent, but a theoretical discussion seems imperative to understand this problem in its proper perspectives. (Hasnain, 1983: 12).

The *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* defines ‘tribe’ as a primary aggregate of peoples living in a primitive or barbarous condition under a headman or chief. The ‘tribal society’ denotes to ‘the primitive, preliterate, simple, pre-industrial or folk society’. Distinguishing between the tribal and modern society the evolutionary writers found that the tribal society is having social but no political organisation. Actually, tribal societies are small, possess a morality, religion and world view of corresponding dimensions, their languages are unwritten, they exhibit a remarkable economy of compactness and self-sufficiency and they are supremely ethnocentric.

The *Imperial Gazetteer of India* defines a ‘tribe’ as ‘a collection of families bearing a common name, speaking a common dialect,
occupying or professing to occupy a common territory and is not usually endogamous, though originally it might have been so'.

D.N. Majumdar is of the view that a tribe is 'a social group with territorial affiliation, endogamous with no specialization of functions, ruled by tribal officers, hereditary or otherwise, united in language or dialect, recognizing social distance with other tribes or castes, without any social obloquy attaching to them, as it does in the caste structure, following tribal traditions, beliefs and customs, illiberal of naturalization of ideas from alien sources, above all conscious of homogeneity of ethnic and territorial integration'. (ibid:13).

However, in the present situation, most of the tribal groups have integrated with the non-tribal groups and the rule of their traditional authority is no more in existence. They have taken agriculture as their main occupation and in the process of development they hardly follow their tradition, belief and customs:

Although the word ‘tribe’ and ‘tribal’ are seldom used by British social anthropologists, in recent years they have been using so. Hose and MC Dougall’s The Pagan Tribes of Borneo (1912) may be seen pretty old than even Radcliffe-Brown’s Social Organisation of Australian Tribes (1931), but Forte’s two-volume classic is still widely read; it calls the Tallensi: a Trans-Volta Tribe'. Gluckman wrote about
'tribes' in the mid-1960s. Keesings' (1981) textbook is about 'The Tribal World'.

The word 'tribe' like the term 'native', now seems to be derogatory. This is because the expressions such as primitive tribe, savage tribes were formerly used to denote people who were presumed to be low down in an imaginary hierarchy of social evolution. The difference was believed to be physical as well mental (Leach, 1989: 34).

A tribe according to Madan is a group of simple minds, occupying a concentrated area having a common language, a common government, and common action in warfare (Kattakayam, 1983: 29).

The term 'tribe' is being defined nowhere in the Constitution of India. According to Article 342, the Scheduled Tribes are "the tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities", which the President of India may specify by public notification. A tribal community possesses the following attributes: (i) as a culturally and ethnically distinct group, lives in an isolated area, (ii) it originates from one of the oldest ethnological sections of population, (iii) they are not Hindus and although they are treated as Hindus, they do not exactly fit in the Hindu caste hierarchy, and (iv)
usually this group is economically and educationally backward (Hasan, 1971:1).

While defining the term 'tribe' and dealing with certain features of a tribe in Indian situation, T.B. Naik gives the following ideal-typical criteria for a tribe. These are: comparative geographical isolation, psychological conservation, politically organised, customary laws, economically backwardness, the least functional interdependence and culturally adoption of a common dialect (Naik, 1968:85-86).

Robert Redfield defines tribe as “little communities”. According to G.W.B. Huntingford, a tribe is a group united by a common name in which the members take a pride by a common language, by a common territory, and by feeling that all who do not share this name are outsiders, 'enemies' in fact. Lucy Mair defines a tribe as an independent political division of a population with a common culture.

The above discussion shows that, it is very difficult to define a tribe or tribal society and obtain a standard or universally accepted definition. Keeping in view the regional connotation of the concept of tribe, it is appropriate to define a tribe which suits to the characteristics of a particular tribe of that particular region. To define it in Indian context, anthropologists hardly gave much attention to the
problem of creating a definition of tribal society except F.G. Bailey, who distinguished between the tribes and castes in India.

So, one has to accept that tribe or tribal society cannot be defined in one word or even in a sentence. Before defining tribe, one should be well aware of the characteristics of the tribes. Usually, a tribal group is isolated from other group of the society, economically backward and use primitive means of exploiting natural resources, having common dialect, ruled by their own customary law even if they are politically not organised, do not fall under the Hindu caste hierarchy, peculiarities of religious belief and rituals. Perhaps these simple minded people wanted to be isolated because they are exploited by the outsiders whom they treat as their enemies.

In India we have different tribal groups, it is not easy to classify them because of the multiplicity of factors and complexity of problems involved. However, various state governments and the Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes tried to suggest some characteristics to distinguish the 'aboriginals' from the rest of population. Taking these characteristics into consideration, the tribes of India may be classified on the basis of their (a) territorial distribution (b) linguistic affiliation, (c) physical and racial characteristics, (d) occupation or economy, (e) cultural contact and (f) religious beliefs. (Hasnain, 1983: 19).
Tribal Demography in India

In spite of the rich material available on India’s tribal population in the anthropological survey of India and the census of India, the tribal demography is a neglected field of population studies in India. The planners and policymakers have recognized the basic problems of the tribal communities. However, there is no continuous dialogue between scholars and administrators on the critical issue of demography and development in terms of the tribal population. Since there is great diversity in the social, economic, and demographic characteristics of various tribes in India, it is not possible to treat the tribal population as a homogeneous group.

There have been numerous studies from the anthropological point of view, however, purely demographic studies on tribal population are still rare. The census of India does present separate tables on the population of the Scheduled Tribes, however, it does not permit a detailed study of individual tribal communities. Nevertheless, is it possible to have a demographic picture of the tribal population even on the basis of existing limited data in the censuses.

India has one of the largest concentrations of tribal population in the world. According to 1941 census, there were 2.97 crores tribal population which was reduced to 1.79 crores in 1947, after the
partition of the country. As per the census report of 1951, the tribal population was about 1.91 crores, which was 5.36 per cent of the total population of the country. In 1961 it rose to 2.99 crores (6.87 per cent), in 1971, 3.8 crores (6.94 per cent), and in 1981, 5.38 crores (7.58 per cent). As per 1991 census, Scheduled Tribe population was about 6.78 crores in different States/Union Territories in India (excluding Jammu and Kashmir), constituting 8.08 per cent of the total population of about 83.86 crores. The percentage of the Scheduled Tribes (STs) has originally increased from 7.58 per cent in 1981 to 8.08 per cent in 1991. The ST population has increased by 25.67 per cent during the decade 1981-91. This growth rate is more than the growth of the total population of the country which was about 23.79 per cent (Verma, 1995: 8).

There are about 550 tribes and sub-tribes in different parts of India. Ethnologists have classified tribes of India into four major groups: (1) the tribes of North-Eastern Frontier Agency (NEFA) and Eastern India belong to the Mongoloid ethnic stock, (2) the tribes of Bihar and Orissa are Proto-Australoids, (3) the tribes of western and central Himalayas are Mediterranean Nordic and (4) the tribes of south India have strain of Australoid, Negroid, and Alpine. (Mehta, 1991: 17).
The Scheduled Tribes population in some of the States and Union Territories is predominant. In Mizoram, tribal population constitute 94.75 per cent of the total population, Lakshadweep - 93.5 per cent, Nagaland - 87.70 per cent, Meghalaya - 85.53 per cent, Dadra and Nagar Haveli - 79.99 per cent, Arunachal Pradesh - 63.66 per cent, Manipur - 34.41 per cent, Tripura - 30.95 per cent, Madhya Pradesh - 23.27 per cent, Orissa - 22.21 per cent, Gujarat - 14.92 per cent, Assam - 12.82 per cent and Rajasthan - 12.44 per cent. In terms of absolute numbers, the ST population was 153.99 lakhs in Madhya Pradesh, 73.18 lakhs in Maharashtra - 70.32 lakhs in Rajasthan, 42.00 lakhs in Andhra Pradesh, - 38.09 lakhs in West Bengal, - 28.74 lakhs in Assam, - 19.16 lakhs in Karnataka, 15.18 lakhs in Meghalaya and 10.16 lakhs in Nagaland. All other States and Union Territories together had a little over 40.00 lakhs ST population. There has been absolutely no ST population recognized in Haryana, Punjab, Chandigarh, Delhi and Pondicherry (Verma, 1995: 89).

Among the STs, the most numerically populated are the Gonds of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh, who constitute 74.48 lakhs (as per 1981 census), the Bhils of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh (55.27 lakhs), and the Santhals of Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal and Tripura (42.61 lakhs). The smallest tribe community which is being receiving considerable
attention at the national level, is Andamanese, with the strength of only 28. (Mehta, 1991: 17).

The Agarias, Baigas, Binjhwars, Dhanwars, Gonds, Halwas, Khairwars, Kodakus, Karwas, Majhwars, Nagesias, Oraons, Pandos, Pradhans etc, are the important tribal groups in Madhya Pradesh, especially in Chhatisgarh region. Nagas are seen in Nagaland, Sherdukpenbs (Mahayana) and Khamtis (Hinayana) in Arunachal Pradesh and Gaddi tribes in Himachal Pradesh. The major tribes figure in Orissa are: Savaras, Kondhs, Bhuyans, Parajas, Gadabas, Koyas, Gonds, Kharias, Santhals, Bandas, etc. Kurichyas in Kerala, Khasis in Meghalaya, Mahadev Kolis in Maharashtra, Santhals in Bihar and West Bengal, Chenchus in Andhra Pradesh, Todas in Tamil Nadu, Lepachas in Mizoram and Lodhas in West Bengal are the major tribal groups in India.

**Tribe, Forest and Forest Policy**

For the mankind forest has been a unique gift since time immemorial. From the very beginning of civilisation man has been fully dependent upon forest for his livelihood and survival. The basic needs like food, shelter and clothes for man were met with forest. Man satisfied his hunger with fruits, roots, flowers, leaves etc, available in this forest. He took shelter in caves situated amidst the forest or upon
branches of trees or under the shadow of big trees. He wore leaves or
tree bark to cover his body. In this way man survived for million of
years.

The relationship between the tribal people and the forest goes
back to the times immemorial. Forests have been sufficiently
sustaining their inhabitants. They enjoyed the freedom of using the
forests in whatever way they liked, in such an extent that they have
developed a conviction that they belong to the forests and forests
belong to them. Hence, any move to restrict this freedom has always
been resented by the tribal people (Hasnain, 1983: 90).

Today the term Jangali is being used for uncouth or uncivilised,
however, the real meaning is forest dweller. Traditionally, the tribals
were closely associated with forests and there are some who even
today spend the greater part of their lives in the proximity of trees
(Haimendorf, 1982: 79).

There has been a symbiotic relationship between the forest eco-
system and the tribals living within that, so that both are
interdependent to a great extent. The anthropologists and the social
researchers have often proved that the tribal economy, material
culture, values, belief systems and social organizations are oriented
neatly so as to suit to their forest environment completely and
perfectly. The tribal culture and forest ecosystem are so intensely knit together that one of them is inconceivable without the other (Mishra, 1989: 63).

The geological surveys discovered various minerals in the Indian forests, Botanical surveys found important flora, and realising the importance of expensive timber, the British Government started thinking of forest management. Also the Imperial Government realised that complete deforestation was not very far and Indian forests were to meet the long term future demands of timber and other forest produces. Seeing the forest as an inexhaustible source of durable as well as ornamental timbers the British Government brought the forests under their control. In order to prepare shipyards and make transportation possible the valuable timbers of nearby seas were cut down. Felling down of valuable timbers for making furniture of various kinds and using them in palatial buildings created for their dwelling. The main objective of working out a forest policy was to supply timbers especially teak and saal to meet the needs of British shipyards, cantonments and other urban cities. (Singh et al., 1998: 150).

So far as the administration of forest is concerned, tribal cultures bear sufficient proof that tribals ruled the forest. Their culture testifies that they protected the forest. During prehistoric
period tribals enjoyed the benefit of forest without any outside interference and restriction. In the vedic age the vedic Aryans spread their religion throughout the territory of India without disturbing or snatching away the rights and privileges of tribals over the forest. Tribals were followers of vedic seers and they helped the Aryans in their Tapasya in deep forest. During the periods of epic also the tribals were masters of the forest, using the produce according to their wishes without outside interference over their right. During the Buddhist period, the great kings like Chandragupta Maurya and Ashok never deprived the tribals from their rights over forest. The Hindu kings also never tried to prohibit or limit the right and ownership of tribals over forest and their produce. During the Medieval period, Todarmal, the Revenue Minister of Great Mughal King Akbar, implemented land tax. However, this did not deprive the tribals from their traditional right and ownership over the forest (ibid: 149-50).

The history of forest legislation in India begins with a memorandum issued by the British in 1855 which was later replaced by the Forest Act of 1865. A further amendment to this Act in 1878 divided the forests into reserve, protected and village forests. (Fernandes, et. al., 1988:24).
In 1864, Sir Dietrich Brandis, the first Inspector General of Forests was appointed and Forest Departments were created in various parts of India with the objective of regenerating the forest resources. The first Indian Forest Act was passed by the Supreme Legislative Council in 1865 authorizing the British Government in India to declare forests and wastelands as Government Resource Forest. This legislation recognized some collective rights of tribal communities, however, their right and authority were badly affected. In reaction to this legislation a number of insurrections or revolts like Garo, Kaya and Khond revolts took place but, because of their weak force and indifferent attitude of plainsmen it could not be continued for a long time (Singh et al., 1998: 151). With the enactment of revised Indian Forest Act of 1878 the situation of tribals again deteriorated and the process of tribal alienation from their natural habitat was further aggravated. The state claimed its authority over the utilisation of forest and demarcating valuable treats of forest for railways and other purposes. The customary use of the forests by the tribals was based on ‘rights’; however, in the new act it was made ‘privilege’ and that the ‘privilege’ was only exercised at the mercy of the local forest officials. There was the loss of community ownership which was enjoyed by the tribals since generations and the ownership was vested with the British Government in India, although there were
some so called 'third class' or 'village' forests. All these developments shattered the bond and severed the tie between the forest and tribals and a rise in discontent against the government. The tribal unrests of 1916 and 1921 in Garhwal and Kumaon and around that time in middle India bear the testimony of the tribal ill-feeling on the issue of their alienation (Mishra, 1989: 67).

The first forest policy of British India was promulgated in 1894. In the light of the commercial exploitation and revenue degradation since 1954, this policy sought to lay stress primarily on environmental observation and only secondarily on revenue and other commercial requirements. (Fernandes et. al, 1988: 24). The forest policy of 1894 came into being as a result of the report submitted by Dr. Voelcker, a German expert, who was invited by the British Government of India to examine the situation of Indian agriculture and forest. The new policy defined forest as:

"The sole object with which the state forest are administered is the public benefits...., the cardinal principles to be observed is that the rights and privileges of individuals must be limited, otherwise than for their own benefit, only in such degree as is absolutely necessary to secure that advantages" (Bhowmick, 1981: 33).

The forest policy of 1894 classified forests into four categories:-
(i) Forests, the preservation of which was essential on climatic or physical grounds;

(ii) Forest, which afforded a supply of valuable timber for commercial purposes;

(iii) Minor forests; and

(iv) Pasture lands (Hasnain, 1983: 91).

The tribal economy was badly affected by the forest rules. Collection of fuel, fodder, bamboos for basketing, jhum cultivation etc, all were declared illegal. The tribals were deprived completely from their traditional rights and ownership over the forests and their rights were considered not as rights but privileges (Singh et al, 1998: 151).

The post-independence forest policy in India essentially derives its root from the policies of 1878, was amended many of times in 1890, 1891, 1901, 1911, 1914, 1918 and 1920, till a comprehensive Indian Forest Act was formulated in 1927. State monopoly on right over forests at the expense of the tribal communities was legitimised in the name of 'national interest'. (Mishra, 1989:68).

The free India constituted a central board of forestry, under chairmanship of the Union Agriculture Minister with the objective of providing guidelines to state governments in the formulation of plans for land use in forestry. The Government of India revised the policy of 1894 in 1952, taking into consideration of four things, i.e.,
(i) Growth of population put relentless pressure on forests and wasteland to secure more land for agriculture;

(ii) The importance of forests in mitigating the rigours of climatic conditions had come to be better understood;

(iii) The importance of forests in the economic field, such as the development of agriculture, industry and communications was better understood; and

(iv) The two great world wars brought to the fore the hitherto unsuspected dependence of national defence on forests (Hasnain, 1983: 91-92).

The tribals who once regarded themselves as lords of the forest were through a deliberate process of law, turned into subjects and placed on the mercy of the forest officials. The traditional rights of the tribals were no longer recognised as rights. In 1894 it became rights and privileges and in 1952 they became 'rights and concessions', which disturbed and shattered the tribal life. The old forest policy of 1894 was to some extent better than the New Forest Policy of 1952. The differences are as follows:

1. The release of forest lands for cultivation subject to certain safeguards was there in old policy whereas, the new policy withdrew this concession.

2. The old policy had left a margin for the supply of the villagers' requirements from the outlying areas in the
reserved forest and the new policy decided to have village forest for this purpose.

3. Free grazing of cattle in the forests was there in old policy whereas the new policy has brought it under control.

4. The old policy did not touch the private forests of the tribals, the new policy has placed restrictions on them.

5. The new policy made one important concession. It admitted that while it was emphatically opposed to shifting cultivation, persuasive and not coercive measures should be used in a soft missionary, rather than in an authoritarian manner, to attempt to wean the tribals from their traditional methods (Bhowmick, 1981: 34-35).

The report of the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribe Commission (Dhebar Commission) 1961 recommended for the reconsideration of 1952 Policy keeping in view the rights of the tribals; however, this recommendation was never accepted for implementation. Both the Dhebar Commission and Shilu Ao Committee suggested for the improvement of the living condition of the tribal and development of the forests. Collection of forest products, processing of minor forest products for the employment of the tribals, local use of major forest products, marketing of raw materials by the tribals, formation of Forest Labourers' Cooperative Society and Cooperative Finance and Development Corporation were also suggested by the Commissions (ibid:35-36).
The suffering of tribals did not end here. On 25th August 1980 the Central Board of Forestry finalised a draft for new forest policy, where state governments were empowered to declare any land as forest through notification, which contains trees, plants, vegetation, pasture land or any other land. It is obvious that a state government can declare even land having no tree and vegetation as forest. The Bill proposed to give rights to the state government to impose duty on timbers, charge levy on other forest produce, to appoint any person, company, corporation or cooperative society for the trade and transport of all forest produce and the order of the state government cannot be questioned in the court of law. The forest officials were empowered to act as magistrates and arrest any person without warrant on a reasonable suspicion and no legal procedure can be launched against a forest official. Under the proposed Bill all offences committed are cognizable, including causal activities like walking in the forest and picking up of flowers.

However, because of the opposition from all sections of the people, Government of India dropped the Bill and in October 1981 the Ministry of Agriculture constituted the Choudhury Commission to review the right and concession in forest areas, which submitted its reports in 1984. The report recommended for the abolition of traditional rights of tribal and rural people and the establishment of
department by the state government to provide minor forest produce, fuel and fodder to the forest-dwellers (Singh et. al, 1998: 153-54).

In the reports of National Commission of Agriculture, 1976, the Draft Indian Forest Bill, 1980 and Choudhury Commission 1981, the forest-dwellers have been distrusted and power has been centralized in the State Government. However, the report of the Roy Burman Commission 1982 held responsible of deforestation to the industrialization process and not to the tribals who have established cultural relationship with the forest materials. It was of the opinion that only forest-dwellers can protect the interest of forest and not the forest departments (ibid: 155).

A Draft on National Forest Policy was prepared in 1987 emphasizing upon maintenance of environmental stability, conservation of the natural heritage, checking soil erosion, increasing the tree covers, meeting the need of people’s fuel, timber, requirement of minor forest produce, encouraging efficient use of forest produce and creating a massive people’s movement around afforestation. It put emphasis on the covering the one third territory under the tree including one third in the hilly regions. The policy suggested not to use agricultural lands for forestry and stated that the need of people and nation be satisfied keeping environmental stability and ecological balance in mind. The policy did not highlight the reason behind the
deforestation, however, strongly felt the need for stopping it. It restricted the indiscriminate destruction of the forest even for the projects such as, dams, reservoirs, mining etc. It also suggested for the replacement of contractors by institutions like labour cooperatives and government cooperatives.

Tribals are always blamed for the deforestation, whereas the real enemies of forests and tribals are the contractors. The poor tribals do not have trucks not even a bullock cart to carry the logs home clandestinely or to the market for sale. Always the contractors do this destroying the forest indiscriminately and making the tribals the scape-goats by their manipulation and influence, thus making them victims.

In order to ameliorate the economic conditions of the forest based communities, developmental programmes like social forestry, farm forestry, forest villages are being implemented. However, in social forestry, plants having commercial value are being planted, where forest dwellers do not get minor forest produce. One major problem today is that there is no land ceiling for plantation as a result more and more plantation is taking place in agricultural lands. And all these commercial plantations by the contractors in the tribal lands are in no way going to help the tribals. Therefore, there is the need of
a national forest policy, which should be more rational and humane so as to cater adequately to the needs of the tribal population.

**TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The concept of 'development administration' emerged in the wake of decolonisation of the third world countries after the second world war. These countries felt the need for their speedy socio-economic reconstruction. Since independence, India has been pursuing the goals of nation-building and socio-economic development. Even during freedom struggle the leaders raised the issue of social reconstruction and planned development of the economy to remove abject poverty, ill health and illiteracy.

As the planners and the administrators realised the essence of the development of the entire society and because of the influence of social anthropology on administration, the concept of 'tribal development' got special reference. The objective of the social anthropologists was to detribalize the tribes, to forge strong alliance with the mainstream population and not to keep them as 'museum specimen'.

The credit of tribal development goes to the British because they initiated the development administration in the inaccessible hilly regions. It is believed that, during the Imperial Maurya days special
attention was to be paid by the Crown Prince and there was a separate Minister in the cabinet known as *Ant Mahatya*. (Sinha, 1981: 65). The Rock Edicts of Ashoka the Great are witness to this and so are the large number of epigraphical and literary evidences. During the medieval period the Mughals followed tolerant policy towards the tribals, because of certain auxiliary constraints, their geographical isolation and inadequate means of communication. (Rajeeva, 1989: 75). However, the modern principles of administration were first brought to the tribals by the British in India. None of the social and political thinkers and leaders like Aurobindo Ghosh, Bipin Chander Pal, Ranade, Gokhle and Tilak were alive to the problems of tribals. However, Gandhiji incorporated the issues of tribal upliftment in the programme of his freedom struggle.

From the beginning the tribal people were adverse to the aliens and the strangers. The British came into contact with these people at a later stage of their colonial rule in India. Many of the Christian Missionaries and individuals ventured upon the tribal territories and met with different fates. Williamson and Gargson were killed together with 42 of their followers in 1911 by *Adis*. Even before, Father Crick was killed in 1854. H.M. Grove, an early tea planter went to the hills of Apa Tani in 1889 and got along very well with the tribals, but was driven out of Apa Tani after few years. In 1894 J.F. Needham was
appointed to study the languages and politics of the tribals and also tried to have their goodwill by sympathy and contact. Later on the works of Miri Mission in Northern Subansari in 1911 and the expeditions of Dr. C. Von Furer Haimendorf in 1944 to the upper Kamla Valley and beyond helped to win their goodwill. Gradually the tribal people realized that the aliens and missionaries were not hostile to them. (Ibid, 83-84).

Realizing the explosive potentialities of the tribals in any national movement, the British initiated the policy of segregation, segregating the tribal people and their places of habitation were maintained as prohibited area. The colonial administration allowed only to its staff and Christian Missionaries to function in the tribal areas (Singh, 1982).

The problems of tribes were considered as law and order problem for the government. The colonial power sought to have the knowledge of tribal culture for the perpetuation of domination, required cheap labour power for the plantations and soldiers for its army. The colonial policy towards land and forest disturbed the lifelong bond of the tribals and engendered widespread revolts in these areas. Some of them like the Khond rebellion of 1846, Santal revolt of 1855, the powerful movement by the zeliaangs (living in
Manipur and the North Cachar Hills of Assam and Nagaland in 1931 and Kuki rebellion (1917-19) are worth mentioning (Kabui, 1982: 53).

The post-independence policies of India treated the tribes as homogeneous and backward. Their social relationship was assumed as unstructured unit of production and consumption. The tribes men were conceived as self-sufficient and autonomous communities without penetration of external trade and commerce in which there is no room for structures of exploitation and social contradiction to exist. This trend of understanding influenced the model makers to formulate initial schemes and programmes (Pathy, 1982: 23-24). Declaring a few particular areas of tribal concentration as scheduled areas and tribal areas is a clear manifestation of the policy of isolation.

Verrier Elwin was in favour of keeping the tribals away from the mainstream people. He suggested for the establishment of a sort of 'National Park', marking out a large area. Comparing the life of Baigas in a forest village practising shifting cultivation with a village having contact with the plains people he found that in the former, tribal life had retained its vitality and the people were happy and vigorous. On the other hand, in the later, they were timid and of poor physique and their life and tradition had begun to appear ludicrous. Hence he
concluded "And once that point is reached, there is no hope for the tribe" (Ghurye, 1963: 144).

Nehru was opposed to the treating of tribals as anthropological specimen and was also same time opposed to the over administration of the tribal region. He had a strong appreciation of tribal culture. A.V. Thakkar, a close associate of Gandhiji, vehemently criticized the theory of 'isolationism'. He thought that the policy of isolation would be proved dangerous from the national solidarity point of view.

The policy of assimilation was for complete assimilation of the tribals with the rest of Indian people. It rules out any special treatment to the tribals, advocates complete absorption of tribal culture, customs and traditions in the mainstream and suggests abolition of constitutional safeguards and end of special measures for their welfare. The protagonist are of the view that special measures for the tribes and development according to their own traditions and culture will promote separatist tendencies among them and it might pose threat to country's unity and integrity (Hasan, 1971: 5).

The policy of assimilation was followed by various religious organisations in order to spread values of their respective religions. The supporters of this policy probably view the tribal life as inferior in quality. In their view the tribal religions should be replaced by better
ideals of Christianity or Hinduism: the superstitions should go; tribal
dress should be replaced, etc. The existence of the tribes and tribal
ways of life are regarded as less important than the existence of the
civilized world (Rajeeva, 1989: 87).

A.V. Thakkar was in favour of opening of good roads to tribal
areas to exploit the rich mineral and other natural resources. He
believed that in this process the tribes would be economically better
off, and socially, contact with the advanced people of the plains would
profit them. To him, separatism and isolation seem to be dangerous
theories, and they strike at the root of national solidarity (Ghurye,

Renowned social scientists, prominent public men and political
thinkers advocated the 'policy of integration', who project the idea of
integration of the tribal people in the Indian society. In their view,
isolation of tribals is not a good sign for national interest. The tribal
communities should grow and develop according to their genius in a
country like India where there is no standard culture, a land of
heterogeneous cultures. They maintain that the unity of India lies in
its diverse cultures whose harmonious development and blending will
ultimately lead to emergence of a 'composite national culture'.
Nehru recognized the shortcomings of the policies of isolation and assimilation and was of the view that the ideal thing would be to bring the good things of the modern world to the tribal people in such a way that they will not destroy their traditional way of life, but will activate and develop all that is good in them. He was of the view that, "we must let them feel that we come to give and not to take something away from them"; 'our well meant efforts to improve them should not give them grievous injuries', he said (Rajeev, 1989: 89).

B.K. Roy Burman suggests certain cardinal points for the development of tribal societies on the basis of a national strategy. Minimal harmony with the physical environment and social environment and minimal corporation of technology and science are the vital aspects of the strategy. The tribal people should participate in nation building activities through their cultural resilience and identity crystallization. Though their areas to be integrated for the purpose of social mobilization and distributive justice, its autonomy and the sovereignty of the individuals are to be respected.

Nehru strongly supported a comprise policy which was advocated by Verrier Elwin and which is known as the "Policy of Middle Path". Elwin felt that, "we should lay much greater stress on the possibility of the tribal people helping us. Let us teach them that their own culture, their own arts are precious things that we respect
and need. When they feel they can make a contribution to their
country, they will feel part of it; this is therefore an important aspect
of their integration" (Hasan, 1971: 8).

Nehru was against the over administration of tribal areas. To
him, the overtone of development should be pursued within broad
framework of the five fundamental principles, otherwise known as the
'Tribal Panchasheel':

(i) People should develop along the lines of their own genius and we
should avoid imposing anything on them. We should try to
encourage in every way their own traditional arts and culture.

(ii) Tribal rights to land and forests should be respected.

(iii) We should try to train and built up a team of their own people to
do the work of administration and development. Some technical
personnel from outside will no doubt, be needed, especially in the
beginning. But we should avoid introducing too many outsiders
into tribal territory.

(iv) We should not over administer these areas or overwhelm them
with multiplicity of schemes. We should rather work through,
and not in rivalry to, their own social and cultural institutions.

(v) We should judge results, not by statistics or the amount of
money spent, but by the quality of human character that is
evolved (Vidyarthi and Rai, 1985: 419).

Confronting the view of integration, Elwin says that, "how can
we develop the tribes along the lines of their own genius, when they
have not got any genius?"

Assuming the position of tribes at various socio-economic
phases of development the objective of tribal development policy is
suggested to bring a progressive advancement of the tribals with an accent on their integration and putting them on an equal footing within a reasonable distance of time. L.P. Vidyarthi recommends the integration of the tribes in regional and national setting *(Ibid: 419-20)*.

As India is a land of villages, the prominent leaders of Indian freedom struggle indicated that the major task of independent India would be to take democracy at the grassroots level to involve the rural masses, especially the downtrodden, in the task of national reconstruction. Soon after independence, the concern of the government for the life, liberty and prosperity of the rural people was reflected in various measures adopted by it to better their lot.

On the basis of Indo-US Operational Agreement, Community Development (CD) programme was initiated on 2nd October 1952. However, it was not the first ever programme on rural reconstruction in India. There were many such programmes evolved from time to time, of course not for entire country. These were Shriniketan, a rural reconstruction programme, initiated by Tagore in 1921; F.L. Brayne’s Gurgaon Project (1920); Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) and Christian Churches jointly started ‘Manthandam Project; Gandhian constructive programme was started in 1920 at Sevagram and later at Wardha in 1938; Rural Development programme, a Governmental programme was initiated in 1935-36; Etawah Pilot
Project of 1948; W.H. Wiser’s India village service in UP in 1948; towards the end of 1946, Firkha Development Scheme was launched by the Government of Madras; based on Gandhian principle, the Sarvodaya scheme was initiated by Bombay state, later on worked under the guidance of Vinobha Bhave and JP. Narayan etc. (Dayal, 1966: 7).

The Planning Commission was established in March 1950, which based its entire programme of village development by specifying that “Community Development is the method and Rural Extension the agency through which the Five Year Plan seeks to initiate a process of transformation of the social and economic life of the village” (Planning Commission, First Five Year Plan, 1951: 223).

The National Extension Service (NES) scheme was started in October 1953, on the recommendations of the ‘Grow More Food Enquiry Committee 1952’ (Madan and Madan, 1983: 10). In 1954, opening of new CD blocks were given up and was decided that those NES blocks where people showed some interest in their own work would be converted into CD blocks. The entire country was covered by the CD which applied equally to the tribal areas as well. However, the tribals have not been able to keep pace with other communities and other areas, specially in matters of economic development.
The level of development among the tribals varies from community to community depending on their degree of isolation and the inaccessible nature of the areas. As the tribal areas needed special treatment, a few Special Multipurpose Tribal development (SMPT) blocks were launched in 1954, covering a few blocks (Tripathy, 1985: 870).

The SMPT Block was the first systematic effort for the development of tribal areas. 43 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 concentration. The administrative structure of these blocks was patterned after the CD blocks but additional allotments were made to these blocks by Tribal Welfare Departments. Certain other modifications made in the NES setup to undertake multi-sided development of compact tribal areas distinguish these blocks from other CD blocks. These modifications were:

(i) It was more intensive and the area and population covered was much less than normal blocks;

(ii) Financial contribution from the people was stopped and labour contribution was encouraged;

(iii) The benefits given to the tribals were encouraged; and

(iv) Specially trained personnel were deployed for these areas (Rao, 1988: 33).
The Balvantray Mehta Committee\(^1\) stresses the people's participation and asked the government to release adequate grants in aid for the backward tribal regions. The committee suggested for the setting up of three tier governing system at village, block and district level, and this panchayats be constituted on elective basis ensuring adequate representation from women and SC and ST members (Government of India, 1957: 15).

Another committee was constituted under Verrier Elwin in 1957 to go into various aspects of the programmes under SMPT blocks. Based on the Elwin report recommendations, the SMPT blocks were converted into Tribal Development Blocks (TDBs) from Third Plan onwards. In addition to these SMPT Blocks converted into TD Blocks, more TD Blocks were also started to cover many tribal areas. By the end of Third Five Year Plan, the programme expanded, covering all the areas with more than two-third tribal concentration. About 38 per cent of the total tribal population of the country were covered State-wise List of TDBs by the end of Third Plan is given below:

\(^1\) Balvantray Mehta Committee was constituted in 1957 by the Home Ministry. The Team was assigned with the study of Community Projects and National Extension Service.
Table 2.1: Tribal Development Blocks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State/Union Territory</th>
<th>No. of TD Blocks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam, Meghalaya &amp; Mizoram</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>20 (all sub-block)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orissa</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dadra &amp; Nagar Haveli</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>504</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


During the Third Plan, TD Blocks were originated on the general pattern of community development blocks, aiming at rapid improvement in socio-economic standard of the tribals. Here the priorities were made for economic upliftment, education, health, housing and communication. The guideline prescribed for 60 per cent
funds for economic development, 25 per cent for communication and 15 per cent for social service.

To go into more detail on the condition of tribal people and tribal areas, Government of India appointed a commission namely - the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission. The report was submitted to the government, but the government did not give any attention, except the extension of TD blocks for another five years. Meanwhile the Planning Commission constituted another Study Team on 26th October 1966 under the chairmanship of Shri P. Shilu Ao.

During the Fourth Plan, after the recommendation of Shilu Ao Committee, an approach to develop specific target groups and areas like small farmers, marginal farmers, agricultural labourers, drought prone area etc. was conceived. Accordingly, few pilot projects were set up with an aim to develop tribal areas by integrating various programmes implemented under general sectors and tribal welfare pulling together all resources for the project area and put under central sector with a provision of Rs. 12 crores.

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2. The Study Team on Tribal Development Programme was headed by P. Shilu Ao with other members like - L.M. Shrikant and B. Mehta. B. Mehta was later replaced by T. Sivasankar. The Team submitted its report in 1969.
In between, the Planning Commission constituted the Task Force in 1972, headed by L.P. Vidyarthi to study the development of tribal areas. The same year a Working Group on personnel policy for the tribal areas under the chairmanship of R.N. Haldipur was constituted. Several other groups and teams were to go into problems of tribal area cooperatives, rural indebtedness, land alienation, excise policy etc. As a result, a new strategy of tribal development took birth as Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) within the broad framework of the state and central plan.

Tribals have been always treated as backward communities and money has been poured like anything without any vision and long term strategy. The plans and programmes never tried to make the tribes self-reliant. So, they always depended upon the government Schemes/programme and could not compete with the mainstream people. The programme should be aimed at the confidence-building among the tribes.
STRATEGY OF THE TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

The evolution of the strategy of tribal development can be perceived at three levels; at the level of (1) colonial administration, (2) tribal welfare and (3) tribal development leading towards tribal integration.

Although the British came into contact with the tribal people towards the end of 18th century, the real attention could be drawn only in the end of 19th and early 20th century. The British chalked out the strategy to foster the process of administration, which would ensure the restoration of law and order as well as extraction of resources available in tribal regions. In the process, the tribals were compelled to submit their resources and labour power for the promotion of imperial interests. Administrative extension, economic integration, development of means of communications and fast growing population, exposed the tribal population to non-tribal influences. Modern market forces shattered the tribal economic insularity. The rapacious mercenary forces leased out by the agencies of money lenders, traders, contractors, even officials dislocated and alienated the tribal economy resulting in land alienation and dispossession, bonded labour, indebtedness, slavery and other forms of exploitation (Rajeeva, 1989: 76). At the cultural front, the British
Planners followed the policy of cultural segregation by which the participation of the tribal people in the anti-colonial struggle could be throttled. After independence tribals were given their due status. All India organizations like Bharatiya Adimjati Sevak Sangh were formed to look after and promote the interests of the tribes. The Constitution of India incorporates special clauses for creation of the Scheduled Tribe as well as Scheduled Areas for their intensive development. They are provided with special representation in legislatures and reservations in government services and educational institutions. Thus, the strategy in the post independence India was undertaken to provide a package of welfare measures for the upliftment of tribals, to bring them at par with the people of plains. It was visualized for a short span of time in order to push the tribal people a little ahead so that they would shake hands with the forces of competition.

Because of the large scale feelings of hostility, discontentment and even open rebellions among the tribals against the system, the policy of direct interference of the British Administration into the socio-political affairs of the tribals was subsequently reviewed. The leading figures of the tribal communities were taken into confidence to suppress all possible tribal revolts. The leaders were granted special benefit for their habitual obedience to British Rule. The so called 'turbulent tribes' were dealt with seriously for the smooth functioning
of administration. The hereditary tribal chiefs were restored to the position of judges of the jurisdiction of tribal people (Hasnain, 1983: 145).

The reason behind the policy of segregation was that, the task of administering the tribal areas was difficult and unrewarding. Also, the motive of British was to establish a gulf between the tribals and the plains men. It was the belief of the British that the tribal people were better and happier in their own traditional environment (Rajeeva, 1989: 85).

As mentioned earlier, in the independent India, Verrier Elwin proposed to keep the non-tribals away from the tribals for greater happiness and freedom. He was opposed to the break up of tribal life by missionaries of any religion. Keeping in view the tribal culture and maintaining their freedom, development work or the progress should be taken up. Their contact with outside world should be minimized and all types of arrangements should be made to market the tribal produce. (Ghurye, 1963: 144). The objective was to keep the tribals isolated from the mainstream society.

On the other hand, the objective of the policy of assimilation or detribalisation was to bring all the communities of the country together. Also the policy was for the abolition of special privileges
given to the tribals. Thus, the objective of integrating the tribal with the rest of the society was proposed to be related mainly to the equalization of opportunities for development. However, the strategy cannot work unless the tribals are brought at par with the mainstream people before leaving them in the open competition. So, the main objective of the policy of integration was to integrate the tribal people, socially, culturally and politically, with the rest of the society. The dominant ideological trend of the policy of integration is to absorb the smaller and undifferentiated nationalities, groups or communities into the broader social spectrum by forcing them to retain the lowest rank and position in the social system (Pathy, 1982: 28-29). This is how the dominant classes of dominant nationalities and linguistic groups perpetuate their 'cultural hegemony'.

Criticizing the policy of isolation nationalists emphasized the participatory role of tribals in various levels of politics, administration and nation-building. To promote the integration of tribals with the rest of India, the Constitution provided special safeguards and facilities to this weaker section by way of 'protective discrimination' for a period of ten years. This time period has been extending subsequently.

The Planning Commission placed emphasis on the development of village panchayats and village cooperatives to grow as the main
village agencies for development. The Community Development programme was initiated in 1952 with the objective of securing fullest development of the area through increasing food and agricultural production. The CD programme also worked for the promotion of education, health and introduction of new skills and occupations so that the programme as a whole can lift the rural community to higher levels of economic organisation and arouse enthusiasm for new knowledge and improved ways of life.

People's participation got a greater emphasis in CD programme. To make it a meaningful, the strategy was to evolve a common core of values and communicate to all the sections of the society through education of masses and folk media.

According to Douglas Ensminger, the broad objective of CD and NES programme "was to assist each village in planning and carrying out an integrated, multi-phased family and village plan directed toward increasing agriculture productions, improving existing village crafts and organising new one; providing minimum essential health services and improving health practices, providing required educational facilities for children and an adult education programme, providing recreational facilities and programmes, improving housing and family living conditions and providing programmes for village women and youth" (Madan and Madan, 1983: 10-11).
Other than agriculture, communication, education, health, social welfare, cottage industries, etc, the CD programme was to cover the development of village organisation for all kinds of activities, and to create a responsible and responsive leadership. The CD programme was to change the outlook of the people to become self-reliant, responsive citizens capable and willing to participate effectively and with knowledge and understanding, in the building of a new India.

The activities taken up for tribal development in the First Plan was confined to the heads of economic development, communication, education, public health and housing. The SMPT Blocks were opened with a special and heavy allotment of Rs. 27 lakhs for five year. Larger amounts were made available for irrigation, soil conservation, communication etc.

The object of SMPT Blocks in the Second Plan was to bring about a rapid improvement in the economic and social standards of tribal people by supplementing the provisions available under the normal community development budget, in specially underdeveloped but compact areas. (Report of the Commission for SC/ST, 1969-70: 33). The main objective of SMPT blocks were to create a progressive outlook in the tribal economy and achieve higher levels of material and cultural development.
Various developmental schemes taken up under the SMPT Blocks did not yield desired results. In order to pinpoint the lacunae and suggest a better alternative, a committee was constituted in 1959 under Verrier Elwin to go into various aspects of the programme. The reason behind the constitution of Balvantray Mehta committee 1957 was to go through the CD and NES programmes in the country and to find out the suitable method to make it more effective.

Both the CD and TD blocks gave importance to the 'area development' rather 'people's development'. The benefit of the development could not reach to the people. The objective of appointing the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission 1961, under the chairmanship of U.N. Dhebar was to review the tribal scene.

The objectives of constituting the Study Team was to study:

(a) The problem and needs of the tribal communities in each state;

(b) Appraise the working of tribal development programmes, specially during the Third Five Year Plan;

(c) Ascertain how far the schemes formulated so far have enabled the tribal communities to secure an adequate share in the benefits accruing from the general development programme;

(d) Make detailed recommendations regarding the lines on which the schemes should be oriented in the Fourth Plan to accelerate progress; and

(e) Suggest measures for strengthening the administrative machinery and harnessing tribal leadership and institutions so as to ensure their fullest participation in the tasks of economic and social development (Government of India, 1969: 1).
The official evaluation of strategies were explained in terms of low receptivity of tribals and other social backwardness, the exploitation by the outsiders and middle men and lack of financial fund. It is equally important to analyse the strategies and their performance by looking into the relevance of ideological perception of the planners at subsequent phases of tribal development projects. One has to examine the practical implementation of tribal development programmes and the administrative arrangements for the evaluation of the strategies.

**IMPLEMENTATION OF TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES**

The British administration kept the tribals isolated from the rest of Indian masses. The tribals were isolated and their places of habitation were declared as prohibited area. Thus, the alien rulers and Christian missionaries were the only people who had access to the tribal areas in the initial stages.

As the British declared prohibited areas to the largely concentrated area of tribals, the tribals living outside these areas could not be protected. The progress of these scattered tribal population was presumed as by product of general development strategy of Indian planning. The general fund was not utilised for the developmental work among the tribes; rather the fund 'for tribal
welfare’ was kept reserved. It reveals the trend of financial segregation (Vidyarthi and Rai, 1985: 416).

Nehru was opposed to the treating of tribals as anthropological specimen and at the same time not in favour of allowing tribals to be engulfed by the masses. He strictly regulated the entry of outsiders, looking for a gradual change, which is to be worked out by the tribal people. His policy of moderation viewed the tribals as passive recipient of the benefits. Nehru’s idea of protecting communal life among tribal communities failed, as the system of production led towards an individualistic and mechanical form of communal life.

Complete isolation of tribals was not possible. Even if they were isolated from governmental forces, tribals were exploited by landlord and zamindars, robbed by money lenders, cheated by merchants and their culture was largely destroyed by foreign missionaries.

The process of 'civilizing' the tribals as rapidly as possible was taken care of by policy of 'assimilation'. This policy was followed for the development of the tribals in most parts of the world. It was proved dangerous as it created a sense of inferiority among the tribal people. The policy was proved wrong as the tribals do not constitute a single nationality so, the concept of ‘self-determination’ can not be propagated.
The approach for development of the tribal people along the lines of their own genius without anything imposed on them from outside is contained in the first principle of Panchasheel evolved by Nehru. It was later supported by the Dhebar Commission and Shilu Ao Committee. These two bodies recommended gradual socio-economic development of tribals with a view to integrating them with the rest of the community on an equal footing within a reasonable period of time (Singh, 1994: 27).

The area of cooperation is vital for social integration. The institutions functioning in the tribal areas should be related to the social structure, cultural factors, productive forces and productive relations existing in the tribal communities concerned and in the areas inhabited by them. The formulation of the five year plans are strongly concerned with the consolidation of the forces of integration in the wide spectrum of Indian society. The policy was to strive to the formation of egalitarian social order, where tribals would play the role in constructing a society based on equality, justice and freedom.

The first effort at socio-economic development commenced with Community Development programmes. CD programmes envisaged united efforts of governmental authorities and the people with a view to improvement of the economic, social and cultural conditions of the community. The concept was extended to the tribal areas in the belief
that the benefits of socio-economic development would accrue to the bottom layers of the people in a trickle down effect. But it was realised that the tribals in tribal areas needed special care and protection and their coverage by CD Blocks would not serve the purpose. Hence, SMPT Blocks were established in some tribal parts of the country in 1954 (*Ibid*, 27-28).

As the tribal people were lagging behind the non-tribals, the fruit of CD Blocks could not reach to them. So, SMPT Blocks were started to cater the specific needs of the tribals. The Elwin Committee found that the programme did not yield desired results. However, the committee felt that it can be improved. So, it made some recommendations as per its observations, as follows:

(a) Though the programme 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 serious attempt to relate the programme and the way of doing things to the tribal background, etc.

The report elaborately discussed the detail of the staffing pattern and made the suggestion for appointment of a forest extension officer and more tribal representation in such schemes and not to make frequent transfers of staff. After examining the problems of land and agriculture, it suggested to distribute the land to tribals and to
find out some alternatives to shifting cultivation. It also suggested to improve the basic infrastructure facilities like communication, health services, drinking water, education, social education and establishment of Ashram type of schools. The committee critically evaluated the women's programme and suggested the appointment of sensitive Mukhya Sevika and Gram Sevikas for implementation of social and educative programmes for the tribal women and their greater involvement in the programme. The committee also suggested for the improvement of rural arts and crafts among the tribal folk and setting up of colonies for tribes. After looking after the problems of indebtedness, bondage vis-à-vis money landers, it suggested to establish cooperative societies for providing them with loans and agricultural inputs in times of need. The Elwin Committee strongly felt the necessity of introducing the Panchayati Raj bodies. The Committee suggested the state governments to take care of the tribals for their upliftment and proper rehabilitation by adopting appropriate administrative measures. It also recommended to teach the tribal dialect to the Block Development Officers for easy understanding of their problem (Bhowmick, 1981: 55).

-After evaluating the functioning of CD Blocks and NES, the Study Team headed by Shri Balvantray Mehta suggested the following measures for the Tribal areas:
(i) Like other blocks, budget for development work in tribal areas should be for 6 years.

(ii) Right type of personnel with sympathy and understanding for the tribal people should be selected, preferably local people.

(iii) The recruited personnel should acquire knowledge of the dialect, customs and ways of life of the people and ways of life of the people among whom they work.

(iv) The community development staff in the tribal areas should work in an atmosphere and in a manner consonant with the tribal traditions.

(v) Efforts should be made to induce the people in tribal areas to take up settled cultivation wherever possible.

(vi) Subsidies for housing, supplying necessary agricultural credit should be stressed.

(vii) Programmes like irrigation, reclamation, communication and soil conservation should be taken up to provide employment to the unemployed or under-employed tribals.

(viii) Starting training centers for rural arts and crafts with necessary modifications to suit local conditions, indigenous talent and raw materials available in the area.

(ix) Giving priority to communication improving the existing bridle paths and approach roads, constructing small bridges and culverts etc.

(x) In order to narrow the gulf between the educated and uneducated, the system of education should be of basic type.

(xi) As regards people's participation the matching contribution should be reduced below the normally prevalent in non-tribal areas.

(xii) There should be a proper coordination between various departments working for tribal development.

(Government of India, 1957: 53-56).
An integrated schematic budget for Rs. 27 lakhs was provided for each SMPT block to be spent in a period of five years. The promotion and demotion of a Block Development Officer was determined to what extent he was able to achieve the targets fixed for different sectors of the tribal development projects. Most of the funds were utilised in constructing buildings and roads which were not of immediate benefit to the tribals. Thus, the SMPT blocks became more a construction programme and less an extension programme. Book-keeping and management of funds and materials took most of the time of the BDOs and there was hardly any time left to devote to motivate the tribals and disseminate improved ideas among them. The result has been that throughout the implementation of the SMPT development programme great emphasis was laid on spending money and achieving physical targets, and relatively little emphasis on evolution of quality of character and human development (Patnaik and Bose, 1976: 6).

As per the recommendations of the Elwin Report, SMPT Blocks were converted to Tribal Development Blocks (TDBs) however, it did not reflect the need of tribals properly. The main reason of the shortcoming of the programme was the relatively small size of the tribal blocks which could not accommodate schemes like soil
conservation, major and medium irrigation, secondary and technical education (Singh, 1981: 129).

Both the CD and TD blocks were multi-sectoral in approach and both were mainly developmental in outlook lacking in specific administrative perspective and organisation to take care of the special needs of the tribal population. Both neglected the protective aspects of the tribals requirement. No doubt, education and economic prosperity made progress, the gap between the general community and the tribal community became wider than before. The TD Block approach was an improvement over the general block development approach in that it attempted to focus was diffused so far as specific problems of tribal population and groups was concerned. (Tripathy, 1985: 871). Both the programmes gave importance to the area development. However, area development by itself will not be sufficient; it should have proceeded in consonance with the development of the people of those regions so that benefits of the development would have diffused as widely as possible.

The SC and ST Commission observed that the comprehensive provisions under the Fifth Schedule and other articles were not adequately utilised for tribal development. It recommended for extension of coverage by tribal development blocks and to take urgent measures for protection particularly in relation to land, forest, excise
and market. It called for comprehensive legislation to cover all tribals living within the scheduled areas and outside, and a simple administrative system for tribal areas (Sharma, 1977: 522).

However, the government did not take any interest to implement the recommendations, and constituted another study team under P. Shilu Ao in 1966, which submitted its report in 1969. Even after this, government hardly paid any attention. It was during the Fourth Plan, six pilot projects were started in 1971-72 in four districts. These were (1) one in Srikakulam (Andhra Pradesh), (2) one in Singhbhum (Bihar), (3) 2 in Bastar (Madhya Pradesh) and (4) one in Koraput and one in Ganjam (both in Orissa). Later on two more projects were included in Keonjhar and Phulbani of Orissa.

The Pilot experiment with the tribal development agency was not a cent-percent success as the agencies confined to agricultural programmes and development of arterial roads; however, they provided valuable insight into deficiencies on planning and administration both organizational and financial. They suggested that mere grounding of a special administrative frame was not enough unless a coordinated approach to the tribal programmes at a sufficiently high level is taken and methodologies are devised to ensure flow of funds into several sectors, both regulatory and
developmental, concerning tribals and not merely to a few specified sectors under a fragmented sectoral approach (Tripathy, 1985: 872).

Having perceived that the 'trickle-down' theory did not work in the Fourth Plan period, target-group-oriented programmes were started. Around the end of sixties and the beginning of the seventies, a violent political movement swept the tribal areas of the country, called 'Naxalite movement' (Singh, 1994: 28). It had its epicentre in the Naxalbari region in North Bengal and traversed the tribal areas of the country in a north-eastern south-western direction, encompassing tribal areas of Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala. This led to new thinking of planned development of tribal people and tribal region.

Meanwhile, the Planning Commission constituted the task force in 1972, headed by L.P. Vidyarthi to study the development of tribal areas. The same year a working group on Personnel Policy for the Tribal areas under the chairmanship of R.N. Haldipur was constituted. Several other groups and teams were to go into problems of tribal area cooperatives, rural indebtedness, land alienation, excise policy etc. As a result, a new strategy of tribal development took birth as Tribal sub-plan (TSP) within the broad framework of the state and the central plan. Details about the TSP have been discussed in the next chapter.