

## CHAPTER - 2

### **Naxal Problems and States of Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribe**

The continuing violence on the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, its nature and the response of the law and order machinery represents deep-rooted fault lines in our society and demands multi-faceted action as a nation. The SC & ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989 is a recognition of the inability of the general laws to address specific protection needs of excluded and highly marginalized communities. This 'Report Card' on its implementation during last 20 years once again reflects how dominant ideology, social systems and practices continue to undermine its implementation and thereby defies its laudable purpose and objective. At the outset, the law enforcing machinery refuses to register the crimes under the provisions of this Act. <sup>1</sup>In fact, the data from 1995 to 2007 (as analyzed in the report) show that at the end of the trial only 4.6% of the total cases brought to the court in a year (2007) materialized in conviction. Data reveals that on an average of 93 crimes are registered in a day. It is clear that the registration is minuscule as against the actual violence occurring against the members of these communities. The nature of some of these cases – naked parading of women, murder for building inter-caste relationships, social and economic boycott for protesting/breaking caste/social norms. punishments to a whole community for the dereliction of an individual, crimes by the law enforcing and administrative machinery on the members of the community, the neglect and collusion with the perpetrators reflects continuing frame of the caste system operative in our society, and its hold in our democratic and administrative systems.”<sup>2</sup>

The Scheduled Tribe population of India is almost 50 percent less (67, 758, 000,) than the SC population of India, constituting 8.08 percent of the country’s total population. The picture here is quite interesting. In sharp contrast to SCs, a number of States/Union Territories have extraordinarily high concentrations of tribal population (i.e. tribal population as proportion of total population of the States/Union Territories (henceforward UTs). These States/UTs are: Mizoram (94.75%) with a population of only 654,000; Lakshadweep (93.15%) with a meagre population of 48,000; Nagaland (87.70%) with a population of 1,061,000; Meghalaya (85.53%) with a population of 1,518,000; Dadra and Nagar Haveli (78.89%) with a population of 109,000; and Arunachal Pradesh (63.66%) with a population of 550,000. <sup>3</sup>Then there is a steep drop with Manipur (34.41%) having a population of

632,000; Tripura (30.95%) with a population of 853,000. These eight States/UTs having tribal concentrations varying from 30.95% to 94.75% , have a total population of 5.5m, which is only 8.1 percent of the total tribal population of the country. Conspicuously, in the most populous tribal States, the concentration of ST population is very much lower, though substantially higher than the national proportion.<sup>4</sup> The largest tribal population is in Madhya Pradesh (15.4m) constituting 23.27 percent of the population of the State and 22.73 percent of the tribal population of the country. This is followed by Maharashtra (7.3m), Orissa (7.0m), Bihar (6.6m), Gujarat (6.1m), Rajasthan (5.5m), Andhra Pradesh (4.2m), West Bengal (3.8m) and Assam (2.9m). Finally, the States/UTs with the highest number of tribal communities are : Orissa (62); Karnataka and Maharashtra (49); Madhya Pradesh (46); West Bengal (38), Tamil .<sup>5</sup>

## **Scheduled Tribes**

The Constitution of India, Article 366 defines Scheduled Tribes as "such tribes or tribal communities or part of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be the scheduled Tribes (STs) for the purposes of this Constitution". In Article 342, the procedure to be followed for specification of a scheduled tribe is prescribed. However, it does not contain the criterion for the specification of any community as scheduled tribe. An often used criterion is based on attributes such as:

- Geographical isolation – they live in cloistered, exclusive, remote and inhospitable areas such as hills and forests.
- Backwardness – their livelihood is based on primitive agriculture, a low-value closed economy with a low level of technology that leads to their poverty. They have low levels of literacy and health.
- Distinctive culture, language and religion – communities have developed their own distinctive culture, language and religion.
- Shyness of contact – they have a marginal degree of contact with other cultures and people.<sup>6</sup>

## **Geographical Overview**

There is a substantial list of Scheduled Tribes in India recognized as tribal under the Constitution of India. Tribal people constitute 8.2% of the nation's total population, over 84 million people according to the 2001 census. One concentration lives in a belt along

the Himalayas stretching through Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand in the west, to Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Manipur, and Nagaland in the northeast. In the northeastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland, more than 90% of the population is tribal. However, in the remaining northeast states of Assam, Manipur, Sikkim, and Tripura, tribal peoples form between 20 and 30% of the population.<sup>7</sup>

Another concentration lives in the hilly areas of central India (Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and, to a lesser extent, Andhra Pradesh); in this belt, which is bounded by the Narmada River to the north and the Godavari River to the southeast, tribal peoples occupy the slopes of the region's mountains. Other tribal, including the Santhals, live in Jharkhand and West Bengal. Central Indian states have the country's largest tribes, and, taken as a whole, roughly 75% of the total tribal population live there, although the tribal population their accounts for only around 10% of the region's total population. are smaller numbers of tribal people in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala in south India; in western India in Gujarat and Rajasthan, and in the union territories of Lakshadweep and the Andaman Islands and Nicobar Islands. About one percent of the populations of Kerala and Tamil Nadu are tribal, whereas about six percent in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka are members of tribes.<sup>8</sup>

### **Naxal Problem and States of Schedule Castes/ ST**

As many as 455 people (255 civilians and 200 security personnel) have been killed in Naxal violence in 2009 (till June-end, and the killings continue), reveal figures released by the Home Ministry. The Naxal-infested States of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand accounted for 60 per cent of the total deaths in the country in this period.<sup>9</sup> The figures also reveal that Chhattisgarh is the State worst-hit by Naxal violence. In the last three years, the State had topped the list. In 2008, 242 of the total 721 Naxal-related deaths in the country were reported from the State. In 2007, 369 out of 1,565 Naxal-related deaths in the country were reported from Chhattisgarh, and in 2006, 388 out of 678 deaths.<sup>10</sup> The Naxals, in January-June 2009 period, attacked 56 economic targets. The increasing frequency, with which the Naxals have been hitting economic targets, is alarming. The corresponding figures for the years 2006, 2007, and 2008 were 71, 80, and 109, respectively.<sup>11</sup>

## **Integrated Action Plan to Develop Tribal and backward Districts in LWE Areas**

This assessment should temper the popular view both in India and abroad that ‘development’ of poor districts is the solution to the Maoist conflict, particularly when no distinction is made for the specific needs of SC/ST communities, or when development in practice takes the form of industrial expansion instead of social service provision. Driven to maximize mining output, Delhi has been under tremendous industrial and political pressures since 1991 to not only maintain existing mining projects, but rapidly expand into mineral-rich SC/ST populated lands. To wit, the states of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand were specifically created in 2000 in order to be ‘safe zones’ for the tribal populations residing within.<sup>12</sup> Instead, they became the focal point of the conflict zone while remaining mining havens – suggesting that elements of horizontal inequality may be fueling conflict, not the vertical inequality measures that dominate headlines and qualitative narratives. And while most government scholars and policymakers continue to believe that military success is ‘just around the corner’ (Routray 2010), our data which indicates conflict events and deaths are increasing year-on-year suggests otherwise.<sup>13</sup> With reflection on the fact that mining production has more than doubled since 2006, future research will reassess the relationship between mining, SC/ST communities and conflict to assess whether these ties are either more nuanced than our initial results have shown, or whether changes over time have stronger explanatory value.<sup>14</sup> Future research will employ more updated data, as some of the most significant districts of post-2005 industrial expansion have also been the most violent (including areas of southern Chhattisgarh, southern Jharkhand, and southeastern Orissa). This may suggest that it is not a lack of development that riggers conflict, but the inverse—a ramping up of industrial development without safeguards to prevent against corruption or other abuses draws conflict actors as they transit from opportunity- to incentive-based decision making.

### **Naxalism: Threats to Indian State and Democracy**

A brief review of the 64 years of independent India would show the following Flash points that may at any time ring the bell of alarm for the state and Democracy:

1. Dynastic political tradition
2. Racist exploitation of untouchables

3. Discriminatory treatment of religious minorities
4. Unfriendly attitude towards countries of the region
5. India's hegemonic and aggressive stance in the region
6. Abominable condition of society's backward sections
7. Rising expenditure on defense<sup>15</sup>
8. Increasing deprivations of the poor majority
9. The poor have no access to health, education and other basic Necessities. Unemployment is growing.
10. Expending all energies on acquiring traditional and non-traditional weapons in mad pursuit of domination in the region.
11. Separatist movements growing sense of insecurity among religious minorities
13. Growing polarization at the international level at the end of the Cold War and since.<sup>16</sup>

### **Condition of adivasis, dalits and women:**

The Dalits and the Adivasis form majority of the supporters of the movement. Their unrest and rebellious instincts have surfaced due to years of inequality, lack of opportunities, low education, and political marginalisation. In case of dalits the list of grievances go further with absence of self-governance, forest policy, excise policy, land related issues, multifaceted forms of exploitation, cultural humiliation, political marginalisation, land alienation, forced evictions from land, and displacement. Subjugation of women is also one of the reasons behind popular unrest in the rural hinterlands. These disparities have led to many demands like waiving off all private loans taken by the community, reservation for women in the private sector, equal property right act for women, stringent punishment to those who exploit or try to hurt tribal sentiments.<sup>17</sup>

### **Causes of Naxal Popularity**

Why is the Naxal Movement gaining popularity? To find an answer to this question and to know why people in droves are joining the mass movement, the following factors come to the fore:

In Bihar and other backward states, the common people have totally lost faith in India's traditional politics and the electoral system. In their view this system is designed only to perpetuate and protect the interests of the advantaged classes and has no other purpose.<sup>18</sup> The smallest fry and the meanest soul in the world which the Naxalite have created is given due

respect and nobody is treated derisively but is called and addressed as a ‘comrade’. For centuries these people had been yearning to hear these words of respect, this is one of the reasons why the movement is gaining popularity. It can be said that the common Indian is joining the movement for two reasons:

- 1) Social equity
- 2) Social security against the high handedness of the rich landed class. It is interesting to note that many high caste Hindus also have no other option but to support the movement for the sake of their own safety.<sup>19</sup>

### **The ‘Affected District’ Database**

The Ministry of Home Affairs of the Government of India by 2011 had listed 83 Left Wing Extremist affected districts spread across 9 states of the country. It highlighted 35 ‘focus’ districts’ as the worst affected and marked them out for intensive development under a ‘control, hold and build’ strategy.<sup>20</sup> This article focuses on those 35 districts. It offers a cursory, through revealing analysis of the websites districts. Such analysis suggests level of detailed knowledge of the district administrators to produce useful resources for their citizens, while extracting rudimentary data for each of the districts helps us to gain a basic understanding of their levels of development. The quality and detail of websites vary considerably, and from such difference, we may begin to ask which districts are more electronically present than others- and why. Websites do not equate to effective administration; but a poorly developed website may suggest that a district has a limited capacity.<sup>21</sup> Further research into such districts would be revealing. When analysts seek reason for the spread of Maoist influence, inept or deficient local administration is often seen as important cause. The first variables are demographic while the latter three indicates levels of development in the district.<sup>22</sup> They there by tie this argument with the hypothesis that lack of development is a main cause of left wing extremist influence. Since the Maoist insurgency is said to have gained momentum by aligning its interests with small- scale tribal uprisings and by tapping into the dissatisfaction of tribal populations, we can see the movement having more of a presence in district where Schedule Tribes are a significant percentage of the population. Our database shows that 24 of the 35 LWE worst affected districts have information on the percentage of STs on their websites. Out of these 24 districts, 14, situated in the states of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Orissa, have STs comprising more than a quarter of their total district population.

The other three variables – the number of primary schools, primary health centers, and the length of metal led roads- suggest levels of development in these districts. The number of primary schools in a district is, by itself, not particularly revealing. But such numbers do begin to paint a picture when presented as a ratio of the number of people to one primary school and so anything above this means the district education system is performing more poorly than the national system because more than 1,800 people are served by one primary school. The above analysis was carried out only for those districts that had data for these variables on their websites. From this analysis of the websites, it is worth pointing out that in an era when efficient e- governance is believed to have far- reaching benefits a number of districts still do not have even basic information on their websites. This leads to an analysis of what the missing numbers indicate.<sup>23</sup>

Bijapur district and Narayanpur district of Chhattisgarh were carved out of Dantewada and Bastar districts respectively in 2007. Despite it being four years since they were formed, neither district has a website yet. Almost all other district websites have the 2001 census population figure, except Aurangabad in Bihar which has very little information, and in April 2011 the site had not been updated since November 2010. It has figures only for population but it is organized messily and divide any total population figure.

## END NOTES

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