

Report of the National Seminar on Tribal Development in Globalized India (March 20-21, 2015)



The Department of Public Administration, Mohanlal Sukhadia University, Udaipur and Rajiv Gandhi Tribal University, Udaipur jointly organized a National Seminar on Tribal Development in Globalized India on March 20-21, 2015 at the Seminar Hall of University College of Social Sciences and Humanities, MLSU, Udaipur.

Tribal area development (TAD) is a constitutional mandate for the union and state governments in India under Schedule fifth and sixth. Since first five year plan, a number of public policy initiatives have been taken by the government for mainstreaming and holistic development of tribal communities in the country. However, the socio-cultural and politico-administrative issues of these communities are still unaddressed or unanswered so far. The waves of globalization have changed every sphere of human life, economy, polity and society at large up to a significant extent. It is very difficult to decide that, whether the Indian tribal communities should be modernized or to preserve their indigenous culture?

The seminar was an attempt to review and analyze the TAD issues especially its public policy perspective in the era of globalization and to give policy-inputs to the higher echelon of administration.

Recommendations of the Seminar

The invited speakers, paper presenters and the participants of the seminar have given the following suggestions and recommendations to the policy makers for better administration in tribal areas in India—

1. Since the 'land and forest' are the core issues for tribal area administration in India, hence it is imperative to provide land and forest rights and entitlements to the indigenous people for their ensured livelihood. Land conversion under section-90B of Rajasthan Tenancy Act, 1955 is to be reviewed, since agriculture land of the tribal communities is being converted in to residential and commercial land and then being transferred to non-tribal people.
2. Tribes Advisory Council (TAC) constituted as per para 4(1) of Schedule-V of the Constitution of India and chaired by the Governor of the State should meet regularly and its recommendations must be implemented in letter and spirit.
3. *The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006* should be implemented effectively. In Rajasthan only 30, 000 forest lease has been issued to 92.38 lakh ST population by January, 2015 and; either *Van Adhikar Samitis* (FRCs) have been abolished or they are dysfunctional.
4. Forest lease being given under the said Act are individual. No 'community-forest right' has been given so far in Rajasthan and it is found that there is a lack of co-ordination between the agencies (Forest dept, TAD and Collectorate). So a sound system of co-ordination must be ensured.
5. Customary laws of tribal community must be codified by a law commission to control the incidences like—*Moutana* (blood-money or death ransom) and *chadhotara*.
6. The creamy-layer concept in reservations for tribal population may be introduced so that the reservation benefits can be availed by the have-nots and intra-community disparities may be eliminated.
7. In order to encourage government servants to serve in tribal areas the minimum tenure of the public servants in tribal areas may be fixed, and it should be linked to the promotions.
8. An effective monitoring mechanism for effective execution of tribal welfare plans and policies must be created and accountability of the failures must be fixed to employees and departments.
9. Delimitation of various seats of public representation is to be done carefully. It has been observed that the ST reserved constituencies, in regions where the ST groups do not form an absolute majority, fail to provide political representation to maximum possible ST population.

Careful drawing of boundaries, according to local social geography, will go a long way in political empowerment of ST populations.

10. The indigenous tribal knowledge for environmental management and traditional medicines should be recognized and encouraged.
11. There must be a separate and effective legislation to control superstitions like—*Daayan pratha* etc.
12. The labourers involved in the collection of small-forest products may be insured on the lines of Madhya Pradesh.
13. The rates of the daily wages under MGNREGS should not be less than the prevalent rates for other works in the state.
14. The '*phala*' or small habitation of tribal areas must be empowered as Gramsabha.

Note: The recommendations have been submitted to the Union and State Government in April, 2015.