

Technological Development And Displacement: A Menace To The Indigenous People Of Chhattisgarh

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Abstract : Technology should be an important ingredient. It may be and should be a tool for social development it is said by Aleksander Kwasniewski. Today, Chhattisgarh has huge issues about the unjust land acquisition by corporate, exploitation of water and forest resources, which are largely in direct conflict with the interests of tribal's & undermines their rights. Under these circumstances, the relevance of the predominant paradigm of development is under question. A paradigm which forces migration, displacement and evacuation of a large number of poor and villages mostly belonging to tribals and indigenous groups needs to be corrected. The low voice of tribal's in decision-making and their alienation from land and forests are central to their continued exclusion from progress and development. This study focuses on socio-economic impacts of development on tribal's life and presents the relationship of development and deprivation as a threat to these indigenous communities.

Key Words: Technology, development, displacement, migration, rehabilitation,

1 INTRODUCTION

Technology refers to the use of tools, machines, materials, techniques and sources of power to make work easier and more productive. In the contemporary era, there is, perhaps no field of human life which has not been affected by technology. Agriculture, industry, profession, health, education, art, political processes, recreation, religious activities and daily life activities all are under the influence of technology. The concept of development is closely related to technology. The nature and extent of development the human society has experienced by now are heading towards crises in future because of the irrational use of technology which are indications of several threats to life and society in the future. The sustainability of development is in question today. The development of technology, which itself is symptomatic of development, has brought about not only economic development but also radical changes in the social and cultural spheres of society. Technological advancement and development have come to a stage

where human society finds itself at a crossroads, leaving a scar to threaten human society.

2 PARADIGMS OF DEVELOPMENT

"Development induced displacement can be defined as forcing the communities and individuals out of their homes, often also their homelands, for economic development".¹

"Development is not only about minerals and natural resources and a simple 'dig and sells' proposition, but it is also about tribals and backward castes and their land and livelihood alienation. It is about poverty, backwardness and Naxalism. It is also about deforestation and biodiversity impact, water security and pollution." – Chandra Bhushan, a researcher on mineral policy.² Development-induced displacement (mostly in mining areas) refers to the resettlement of people due to interventions, often in the name of "progress," "economic development," or "technological innovation." Such resettlement destroys people's livelihood systems and their resource base and may lead to increasing poverty, vulnerability, and marginalization. The effects of development-induced displacement may be short-term and long-term.³

The process of development has been the disempowering process of Adivasi's/tribal community, depriving them of their common property resources creating issues for their livelihood, tradition and culture. Most of the development induced displacement has occurred in most populated areas intervening natural habitats of tribes. The development

caused displacement generates varied responses from different sections of the society and it also creates a different impact on the lives of people. It is generally believed that development efforts which do not leave the majority of its people worse off and promotes health, education and income could be regarded as participatory. But most of the development projects operate in the opposite direction where the majority of the project affected families have left themselves with poorly planned, badly executed, inappropriate and inadequate rehabilitation plans.

2.1 Tribes in India

Tribals are indicators of primitive traits; distinctive culture; shyness of contact with the community at large; geographical isolation; and backwardness. Tribal communities live, in various ecological and geo-climatic conditions ranging from plains and forests to hills and inaccessible areas. As per 2011 census, the tribal population of India, is 10.43 crore, constituting 8.6% of the total population. 11.3% of them live in rural areas and 2.8% in urban areas. Broadly the tribes inhabit two distinct geographical areas – Central India and the North- Eastern Area. More than half of the Scheduled Tribe population is concentrated in Central India, i.e., Madhya Pradesh (14.69%), Chhattisgarh (7.5%), Jharkhand (8.29%), Andhra Pradesh (5.7%), Maharashtra (10.08%), Orissa (9.2%), Gujarat (8.55%) and Rajasthan (8.86%).

2.2 Tribe in Chhattisgarh

On 1st November 2000, Chhattisgarh, as a state was carved out of the state of Madhya Pradesh in the central part of India. It shares its boundary with Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh. According to the census 2011, it is the 16th most populated state in India. It is the 7th largest state in the country in terms of area. The total population of tribes in Chhattisgarh is 78, 22,902 (30.6%) out of which 38, 73,191 are male & 39, 49,711 are female. 36.9% resides in rural & 10% in Urban areas As per the 2001 census, there are 42 different tribes including five Primitive Tribe Groups (PTGs) comprising about 12 lakh tribal families. The five PTGs are Abujhmaria, Baiga, Birhor, Hill Korwa, and Kamar. The entire PTG population of 1.11 lakh is under the BPL category. There are 7 districts where the tribal population is more than 50%: Bijapur (80%), Narayanpur (77.4%), Dakshin Bastar Dantewada (76.9%), Jaspur (62.3%), Uttar Bastar Kanker (55.4%) & Surguja (55.1%). Whereas 6 districts have 25% - 50% tribal population; Koriya(46.2%), Korba (40.9%), Raigarh(33.8 %), Mahasamund (27.1%), Rajnandgaon (26.4%) & Dhamtari (26%).⁴

2.3 Displacement for development projects: “Rich Lands of Poor People”

Sixteen per cent of the country's coal (39,545 million tons) is to be found in the Raigarh, Surguja, Koriya and Korba districts of northern Chhattisgarh. One-fifth of the country's iron ore – about 2336 million tones averaging 68% purity is found in the Dantewada, Kanker, Rajnandgaon, Bastar and Durg districts. The Bhilai Steel Plant is one of the world's most efficient steel plants, yet it is being deliberately tripped by private players particularly Jindal Steel & Power. The Bastar region is one of the richest in mineral resources – not only in iron ore, but also perhaps a host of other unexplored minerals including limestone, bauxite, and even diamond and uranium. In terms of forest mineral wealth, it is one of the richest Indian states; has almost all the coal deposits in India, which has led to its 'power hub' strategy; All the tin ore; A fifth of iron ore in the country is here; Rich deposits of Bauxite, Limestone, Dolomite and Corundum are found in the forest belts of the State and one of the best quality iron ore deposits in the world is found in the Bailadila mines in south Chhattisgarh. These mineral-rich forest areas belong to the original inhabitants of this territory, who are mainly the Adivasis.

From Bhilai Steel plant, Gangrail, Kharkharu, Tandala, SECL, BALCO, Cement Corporation of India prominent among the public sector undertakings and over a dozen of cement plants and hundreds of other industries in private sector, each one of them had cost in terms of eviction of poor villages and procurement of agricultural land for industries operating under the control of multinational corporations like LARFARZE, KETAKI,

MONASENTO SEEDS and so on. The establishment of huge industries like Bhilai Steel Plant, its captive iron ore mines, Bailadila iron ore project, South Eastern Coal Field Ltd. and the total industrial and mining activities started in the last 5 decades have hardly helped the local people to grow. These industrial and mining activities have only forced the locals to evacuate from their ancestral land to make room for lakhs of outsiders to come, settle and grow at the cost of the local population. The problem is that these ventures are largely in direct conflict with the interests of rural mass, primarily tribals.

Various plans and projects of development have rather uprooted the local population without proper plans for their rehabilitation. The present scenario of Chhattisgarh is quite paradoxical where the majority of the rural population is striving hard for survival with no option but to migrate in search of jobs to faraway destinations. After carefully examining the nature of migration it becomes very clear that a big chunk of population which has to migrate in search of livelihood are due to marginalisation of peasants and landlessness, fragmentation of landholdings, lack of irrigational facilities resulting in less production and non-availability of employment opportunities for about 2/3 of each year, non-accessibility to forest and forest produces etc. Besides, deforestation, a well-known reason for irregular monsoons contributes significantly to the process.

2.4 Displacement for Tourism and Wildlife Reserves

The government has created the number of sanctuaries in the name of protection of wildlife in Chhattisgarh. In this process, many tribals are forced to leave their villages falling inside the sanctuaries. This has affected livelihood, identity, human rights and nature and human relationship. In Chhattisgarh, around 17 lakh acres of land has been demarcated as a protected area for wildlife conservation, people facing the threat of eviction. According to the Government source around 250 villages with a population of more than 35000 where tourism projects have been proposed (George 2004) in which majority of the population is Dalits and Adivasis.⁵ Tribals have paid the highest price of national development because their regions are resource-rich. 90 per cent of all coal and around 50 per cent of the remaining minerals are in their regions as well as the forest, water and other sources abound in their habitat. The indigenous/ tribal peoples who constituted 8% of the total population of India at the 1991 census make up 55% of the total displaced persons due to development projects up to 1990. According to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MTA), nearly 85 lakh tribals were displaced until 1990 on account of mega developmental projects like dams, mining, industries and conservation of forests etc.⁶

2.5 Objectives of the study

- To analyze socio-economic impacts of development on tribal's life
- To presents the relationship between development and deprivation as a threat to the indigenous communities.

3 METHODOLOGIES

The study is based on descriptive research design. The research is done by reviewing the secondary data collected from various sources like books, existing research studies, archives of government records and various bibliographical sources.

3.1 Importance of the study

Development of any nation is important and plays a significant role in determining the economy and its position globally but it does not mean that it should be at the cost of human life or the environment. Encroaching lands and displacing people from their land, reserving and restricting forest areas and making people deprived of their forest rights is injustice and violation of human rights as well. In this scenario studies must be conducted to study and investigate the problems people suffer due to displacement, to analyze the lacunas in the resettlement and rehabilitation process and to present the pro-community development model. The indigenous community posse's cultural, traditional and ethnic knowledge which is the heritage of any country, they must be involved in the development process but with the sustained approach, uprooting is not the viable solution. Protection

and promotion of such a community is the responsibility of the government of India. This study is a meagre contribution to acknowledge the implications of technological advancement in form of the development process that Chhattisgarh tribes are facing and to which extent different legislations are feasible for protection and promotion of tribals human right.

3.2 Legislative Framework ensuring tribal's right

The Constitution of India has made an exclusive provision in its fifth schedule for administration of tribal areas. Under this schedule, the governor or a Tribal Advisory Council has been given several powers to make provisions for the administration of tribal areas. He can repeal or amend any Act of parliament or the state legislature or any existing law if he thinks them to be detrimental to the interests of the tribals (Mukul, 1997). Article 46 of the constitution places an obligation upon States to promote the interests of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation. It must be mentioned that displacement of tribals from their lands amounts to a violation of the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution as it deprives them of control and ownership of natural resources and land essential for their way of life.

The Panchayat Bill 1996 named PESA gives protection and ownership right to Gram Sabha against any kind of discriminatory provision in tribal areas. The Gram Sabha will approve the plans and programmes for social and economic development before they are taken for execution in tribal areas. Likewise, the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution administers the tribal areas in the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram as autonomous regions.⁷

The Land Acquisition Act 1894 is the statutory statement of the State's power of eminent domain which empowers the State with ultimate control over land within its territory. It denies to the person from whom the land is acquired the right to exercise choice as to whether to part with the land or not as long as the acquisition is avowedly for a public purpose.⁸ both development and conservation are intricately on the doctrine of eminent domain. In its classification sense, eminent domain means the power of the state to take over private land for a public purpose. Compensation changes the nature of this takes over from appropriation to acquisition. This doctrine is embedded in the Land Acquisition Act 1894, and over the time jurisprudence has developed around the text and use of a law which privileges the power of the State while making it more or less vulnerable to challenge under the law.⁹ Indian Government under doctrine of "eminent domain" acquired land of individual persons for 'greater good' and 'development' purposes, as result of which millions of people become displaced from their homes.¹⁰ At international level it is viewed as violation of human rights. Limitations of different laws for welfare and development of the SC/STs have been mentioned below:

3.3 Displacement and Deprivation: Threat to Tribal's

A special dimension of the problem of displacement, resettlement and rehabilitation in India has prevailed in a large proportion of tribals among those displaced. Tribal cultures are distinct from those of the groups belonging to the modern economy. They are also marginalized from the mainstream of the political system and vulnerable to exploitation. The special needs of tribals have not been taken into the account in past resettlement plans and policies and the tribal encounter with the modern economy through displacement have mostly resulted in material impoverishment and social disintegration.¹²

Community Resources are central to tribal culture and survival unlike the mindset prevalent in the modern society, tribals do not view land and forests as merely economic commodities; for them these are at the centre of their culture and identity. Traditionally they have built their economic, social and political systems and developed sustainable management systems around them. Basic to their culture is equity i.e. ensuring that every family gets enough for its needs. Secondly, the resources are treated as renewable i.e. used according to need and preserved for posterity. Thirdly, women enjoy relatively higher status as a productive member of the family working in the community-owned land and forests. Under the Land Acquisition Law of 1894, the community resources are labelled common

property resources (CPR) which are not owned by individuals (and can be acquired by the authorities without compensation to the community). Once these resources are lost, a tribal woman ceases to be an economic asset. If jobs and land are given, they are in the name of men. So power passes from her to the man and his son. She is reduced to being only a housewife and gets confined in the kitchen. With it also her social status suffers. Then children start suffering.

The effects of the displacement spill over generations in many ways such as loss of traditional means of employment (livelihood), change of environment, disrupted community life and relationship, marginalization, a profound psychological trauma. It destroys the existing modes of production affects kinship and impoverishment and threatens the cultural identity of tribal and ethnic minorities. Besides, forced resettlement tends to be associated with increased socio-cultural and psychological stresses and higher morbidity and mortality rates. Population displacement, therefore, disrupts economic and socio-cultural structures. People who are displaced undergo tremendous stress as they lose productivity process-land otherwise in the adjustment process.

Another important, impact of displacement is the problem of scheduling and certification. The displaced people are generally not rehabilitated in the form of home and land but by money. Very few are given land in the new areas, which creates conflict with the already existing groups. They are not recognized as tribal in the areas of they do not have the certificate of proof of residence in the new place and thus lose their tribal identity.¹³ Much more such consequences lead to the requirement of legislation to addresses not only the issue of compensation but also resettlement, rehabilitation and participation in negotiation and resettling the displaced poor, remote and economically disadvantaged is not always an easy task.

Uprooted people generally migrate to cities and take shelter in the slum. These avail themselves as cheap labour in the market, losing their identity, culture, tradition and values. Many are forced to live an inhuman life without basic sanitation, health, education facilities. It is a man-made tragedy that has made a large number of people homeless and deprived in the region.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS WITH CONCLUSION

In spite of various protective and welfare laws made by the government for the welfare of tribals, the Governmental agencies have been acquiring the tribal lands in the name of national interest in contravention to all the Constitutional Provisions. The protective laws of the tribal areas are being manipulated where the legal access to tribal lands and resources is denied. The impact is that huge issues, about the unjust land acquisition by corporate, and exploitation of water and forest resources, which are undermining the rights of the tribals. The land acquisition act of 1894 is heavily in favour of big industries, business houses and has ignored the fundamental rights of the poor and local communities. The compensation package offered is unjust and inadequate in sustaining life. The process is time taking and many cases are pending.

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs must undertake an immediate extensive project-wise survey of the number of displaced as well as affected tribals across the country. It should order a fact-finding inquiry as to why tribal laws such as The PESA, 1996 and The Forest Rights Act of 2006 remain subservient to other laws and come up with suitable amendments to make them un-breakable in the Schedule V and VI areas. The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes needs to be reconstituted with eminent jurists and tribal/social activists on its panel and given full authority to function as a "real" constitutional enquiry commission with legal authority. Its findings should remain outside the purview of courts, except the apex Court.

Two 'Rs' Rehabilitation and Resettlement of the displaced communities requires an integrated approach following psycho-socio-economic indicators essential for adjustments and coping with the changes and transformation in the life of displaced people. Infrastructure development and meeting the requirements of the increasing population are issues of concern, but what benefit these displaced community people get of these development projects, these needs rethinking the development process, which asks for

ensuring inclusive and discrimination-free development without violating any body's human rights. It's the moral responsibility of the government or the agency displacing community people: first to plan for resettlement with community participation, generate employment and livelihood opportunities to each family, do develop basic amenities and other social services for education, health, infrastructure, electricity, irrigation facilities etc. The way heritage and culture of primitive community are getting destroyed and intervention of external agencies for the sake of development does not cost worth at all for their civilization. Tribes have rich knowledge about natural medicines, based on minor forest products and resources these people are happy and live satisfying life enjoying their cultural identity, what they need is the development of basic services and infrastructure for their mainstreaming with society and accommodate them with their present requirement. Uprooting them and displacing them from their roots is not lawful and for the betterment at all. Philosophy of 'holistic development' must be followed where each section of society has equal right to develop and live in a favourable environment without disturbing the ecological balance.

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