
UNIT 4 TRIBAL COMMUNITIES

*A. Malathi

Contents

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 The Meaning and Definitions of Tribe
- 4.3 Spread Across Regions and Demographic Features
- 4.4 Tribal Communities: Their Social and Economic Structure
- 4.5 Denotified and Nomadic Tribes
- 4.6 Current Issues Facing Tribal Communities
- 4.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.8 Further Readings and References

4.0 OBJECTIVES

We have discussed the urban and rural communities. There are certain other communities which are quite distinct in their ways of life which is far from the modern ways of living. Hence there are certain issues related to their interaction with the other social groups as well as their coping abilities in the changing modern life. This unit is an attempt to bring an understanding of the special way of life of tribal communities and their concerns for us to address through various community development efforts. By going through this unit you would be able to

- define and describe tribal communities;
- understand and explain the social and economic features of tribal communities;
- distinguish between denotified tribes and nomadic tribes; and
- point out the major concerns of tribal communities including denotified communities

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This unit looks at the tribal communities of India. It does so by firstly looking at the position of tribes historically, the coinage of the term tribe and its various meanings, the diversity among the tribes of India, their linkages with the rest of the rural society, and their natural resource dependent livelihoods. The profile would include their economic and social aspects and the current issues of the tribal communities.

4.2 THE MEANING AND DEFINITIONS OF TRIBE

The word tribe is derived from *Tribus*, a Latin word meaning “a group”. Dictionary meanings of a tribe range from considering them as

*Dr. A. Malathi, Delhi University, Delhi

- a) any aggregate of people united by ties of descent from a common ancestor, community of customs and traditions, adherence to the same leaders, etc.,
- b) a local division of an aboriginal people,
- c) division of some other people,
- d) a class or set of persons, especially one with strong common traits or interests,
- e) a large family.

Historically tribal communities have often been understood as exotic and indicative of forbidden cultures that are ancient and need to be preserved. This has led to some of their classifications since the colonial times and their categorization into nomadic, criminal, vanvasi, adivasi etc. These terms are overridden by their inclusion in scheduled tribes list- that by itself tries to build a category of tribes known as the scheduled tribes. And also gives legitimacy to those listed as being recognized by government as such. The numerous nomenclatures provided by the sociologists, census officials and the government have only created confusion as to how should tribes be categorized, understood and treated. All these have implications for the mainstreaming of tribes that is actively being encouraged by all those concerned with tribal communities, sometimes with positive outcomes and at other times, deleterious to the very existence of tribe(s).

Robert Redfield considers tribe to be a small community and possessing characteristic features as

- i) distinctiveness: where the community begins and where it ends is apparent. This is expressed in the group consciousness of the people of the community
- ii) smallness: a compact community with a small population
- iii) homogeneity: all the persons do similar activities and have similar state of mind. All persons have similar livelihood strategies, which continue over generations,
- iv) self sufficiency: The community is self-sufficient and provides for most of the activities and needs of its people.

Majumdar 1958 defines a tribe as a 'social group with territorial affiliation , endogamous with no specialization of functions, ruled by tribal officers hereditarily 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, liberal of naturalization of ideas from alien sources, above all conscious of homogeneity of ethnic and territorial integration'.

According to S.C. Dubey (1960) 'the tribe generally refers to territorial communities living in relative isolation of hills and forests'.

Their comparative isolation, in some ways has kept them apart from the mainstream of society in the country. Partly because of this isolation and partly because of their limited world view, characterized by lack of historical depth

resulting in the early merging of history into mythology and an overall tradition orientation, they are integrated in terms of certain themes rooted in the past. These integrative themes and a special cultural focus gave them a separate cultural identity and they often possess latent or manifest value-attitude and motivational systems which are remarkably different from those of the other peoples.

Mandelbaum (1956) mentions the following characteristics of Indian tribes:-

- a) Kinship as an instrument of social bonds.
- b) A lack of hierarchy among men and groups.
- c) Absence of strong, complex and formal organization.
- d) Communitarian basis of land holding.
- e) Segmentary character.
- f) Little value on surplus accumulation on the use of capital and on market trading
Lack of distinction between form and substance of religion

In this way we can see that a tribe is a social group of people associated with

- a) homogeneity,
- b) isolation and non-assimilation,
- c) territorial-integrity,
- d) consciousness of unique identity and common culture,
- e) animism (now defunct) as an all-pervasive religion,
- f) the existence of distinctive social and political systems with an absence of exploiting classes and organized state structure,
- g) multi-functionalist kinship relations,
- h) segmentary nature of the socio-economic unit ,
- i) frequent cooperation for common goals,
- j) self-sufficiency in their distinct economy, and
- k) a common dialect, and many other attributes that seem to have remained unchanged over centuries.

The concept of homogeneity and equality among the tribes has been challenged by social scientists. It has been found that there is considerable inequality in term of economic and political rights related to the control of marriage, exchange of allied goods and the redistribution process. There is enormous diversity within the tribes of India.

The tribes are said to live in exclusion and isolation of other communities but the historical relations of the tribes and non-tribes from time immemorial is often forgotten.

Many of the definitions of tribes are thus problematic; hence social scientists have conveniently used the officially recognized Scheduled Tribes to categorize tribes. The constitution of India in its article 342(i) provides that the President of India with due consultation with the governors of the states may designate the tribe and tribal communities or parts of groups within tribes or tribal

communities to be Scheduled Tribes for each state. This juridical terminology has received uncritical acceptance. Hence both for social workers and social scientists the term is practically synonymous with the list of those communities listed in the Scheduled Tribes.

The definitions of tribes continue to characterize certain categories of pre-literate cultures covering a wide range of forms of social organizational and levels of techno-economic development. In understanding tribes, social workers draw upon a variety of contributions drawn from sociology, anthropology, history and political economy.

Given social workers’ desire for changing the condition of the communities towards self-reliance with social justice perspectives, tribes are conceived in two ways firstly as irrational and traditional with the need to make them, modern and rational; and second as ones who are exploited and vulnerable.

However attempts to integrate them with the mainstream are done without clarifying what that mainstream is. As pointed out by Pariyaram M Chacko, there are many areas of tribal life which the mainstream non-tribals can profitably assimilate such as the notions of wealth, of gender, equality, of sex and marriage and of the principle of non-interference.

Common Features between a Tribe and a Caste

However such features are not just the characteristic of tribes but also of castes. Further there is also tremendous variability among tribes. Hence other attempts to define tribes consider them as a stage in the social and cultural evolution. Also with respect to their economic life, the production and consumption among the tribes is household based and unlike peasants they are not part of a wider economic, political, and social network. This could be resolved by considering the tribes and castes as belonging to one continuum. The tribes have a segmentary, egalitarian system and are not mutually inter-dependent, while castes are in a system of organic solidarity. They have direct access to land and no intermediary is involved between them and land.

Tribes are always understood in comparison to mainstream civilizations –that it may fight, serve, mimic, or adopt but cannot ignore. In India it has been found that tribes have been transforming themselves into larger entity of the caste system; others have become Christians or Muslims. There is further a change in their economic life – that is a change in the livelihoods- from hunting and gathering to peasantry, and in modern times become wage labourers in plantations, mining, and other industries. There is a **changing notion of tribe- which has to be the frame work for understanding tribes.**

Check Your Progress 1

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1) Define a tribe. Trace the historical evolution of the concept of a tribe.

.....

.....

.....

.....

2) Write in about ten lines the main features of a tribe.

.....
.....
.....
.....

4.3 SPREAD ACROSS REGIONS AND DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES

The tribal communities are spread in all regions of the East, West, North and South of India with varying altitudes, terrain and resources. This means that each tribe has a different history, ecology and political economy and socio-cultural complexities. Further there is contiguity of the spread both within India and the neighbouring countries. Some of the Scheduled Tribes within the borders of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram have their counterparts across the borders of China, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia.

Tribals constitute only 8% of the population but occupy nearly 20% of the geographical area, which contains over 70% of the minerals and the bulk of forests and water resources.

Demographic Distribution

The population of Scheduled Tribes number only 19 million people distributed among 212 communities in the 1951 census. Their strength has increased to 38 and 52 million in 1971 and 1981 census. As per 2001 census, the Scheduled Tribes population is 84.32 million, constituting over 8.2 percent of the country's population. Some tribes were temporarily accommodated in the other backward classes' category. In 1950 there were 212 and in the year 2003, there are 533 tribes as per notified schedule under Article 342 with largest of them being in Orissa (62). Of the 698 scheduled tribes, seventy five are considered as primitive tribes. They are considered more backward than scheduled tribes and continue to live in pre-agricultural stage having very low literacy rates. The listing of tribes in the schedule depends on whether synonyms and sub-tribes are treated separately or not. There are also variations in the size of the communities, from 31 people of Jarwa to over 7 million Gonds. The numerically small tribal communities comprising of less than 1000 people are Andamanese, Onges and Toda etc. On the other hand, tribes like the Bhil, Santhals, Oraon, Munda, Mina, Khond and Saora and the like had more than 1 million population each.

The demographic and geographic spread has implications for the policies and programmes they are subject to as well as their social and economic life. For example large population of a tribe means that it is spread over a number of states and therefore the same group is treated differently by different state policies and development programmes which influences its social and economic structure. Also they may be educated in the language of the state in which they reside – these have far reaching implications for questions of identity and entity of the tribal communities.

Let us consider the social and economic structure of tribal communities now.

4.4 TRIBAL COMMUNITIES: THEIR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

a) Social Structure

The social structure is unique for each tribe. This comes with the way the family is organized, the customs and beliefs and the place of habitation, racial and linguistic features.

There is a wide variation across the communities with respect to the above. There are also wide variations with regard to the particular social institutions that characterize all communities such as their family, marriage and kinship relations as also their particular modes of economy, that are much dependent on the ecological conditions of living. Further the relationship of the community with the nature and the kind of rituals associated with it is another facet that distinguishes them from other communities.

The social life of the tribals revolves round the various activities for common existence by sharing in common activities under the bonds of relationship. Each tribe has its own structure and organization. As the tribals form a small community of their own in a particular territory their relations are direct and intimate. By no means such patterns of relations are sacrosanct or unchanging. They are subject to the influences from changes in the ecological condition or in the nature of relationship with other communities or within their own. Thus the social structure is of dynamic nature.

The social life of Indian tribes can be said to have a design with the individual forming families, families forming lineages, lineages in sub-clans or sub-local groups and sub-clans in clans or local group and clans in phratries or territorial groups phratries in moieties; moieties in sub-tribes and finally sub-tribes making up the tribe. In this social design the smallest unit is the individual who forms the minimum or the smallest group like family or household. The smaller groups are combined into a larger one through several levels of incorporation. It is not necessary that all the above social units exist in every tribe

Family

The Family is the basic social and economic unit. There are well established roles for the various members of the family that are closely related to their authority and power within their social group. The economic, political, ritual rights are also associated with the development of the family. The various tribal communities differ with respect to the nature of authority within the family and the group; the nature of relations with outsiders; the kind of work allocation and distribution within the families, the ritual and secular power exercised and so on. All of this is dependent on the habitats they live in – that is the natural living conditions and their relationship with it.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) What is a tribal social structure? What is the basic social design among the tribal communities in India?

.....
.....
.....
.....

- 2) Explain the significance of authority of the family in tribal social structure.

.....
.....
.....
.....

b) Economic Structure

In India tribals belong to different economic stages, from food-gathering to industrial labor which presents their overlapping economic stage in the broader framework of the stages of economy. A tribe is usually considered as an economically independent group of people, having their own specific economy and thus having a living, pattern of labour, division of labour and specialization, gift and ceremonial exchange, trade and barter, credit and value, wealth, consumption norms, capital formation, land tenure and good-tangible and intangible –economic status. All these are significant markers for a special tribal economy in the broader set-up of Indian economy. The interdependence between the cultural, social life and the natural surroundings is of great significance in understanding tribal economy.

The economic life of the tribal communities has to be seen in the light of non-monetary aspects that influence their living conditions. They have a very simple technology which fits in well with their ecological surroundings and self-dependent nature. Their economy can be said to be of subsistence type in which there is assurance of subsistence livelihood to all the persons in the community. This is achieved through the social determinations of labour and land allocation and the social right to receive emergency material in times of need. Thus there is a strong and persistent social control of production and distribution. They follow what is known as “**marginal economy**”. This refers to the practice of different types of occupation at one time by a group of people for their livelihood. That is a tribe can indulge in all kinds of occupations to eke out its subsistence such as hunting, food gathering, shifting cultivation, fishing, domestication of animals, horticulture, and also some artisan work like production of crafts and other items required by other communities in rural areas. The complexity of economic subsistence is indicated by the combination of activities that they indulge in.

Also they may have linkages with other rural communities and their economy. Thus, some of the tribes practice settled agriculture, and are in touch with the other communities. They supply honey, medicinal plants, toys, baskets etc in exchange for grains, cereals, clothes, etc. Thus they follow a basket of livelihoods that is dependent upon the ecological cycle of the area they inhabit.

The mode of production in tribal economy is traditional, indigenous and culturally predominant. This needs to be understood in its structural arrangements and enforced rules for the acquisition and production of material items and services in the context of their cultural, social and natural living conditions. Further there are no class divisions within the tribes as the production relations are governed by the social arrangements. They are culturally a social unit, with being an enterpriser and worker as well as producer and consumer, all at the same time. The system of distribution is linked to the barter system or mutual exchange.

Some of the elements of this economic system are seen to be

- a) Small economy- smallness of scale which is the fundamental characteristic of tribal communities- the resources, goods and service transactions take place within a small geographical area and within a community of persons numbered in hundreds or thousands. Further one or two good crops are considered staple and produced in bulk. Within the small framework of the tribe and a relatively small number of goods and services are produced and acquired.
- b) Use of simple technology compared to the industrialized economies – may be made by the producer himself or herself or acquired from others for a small sum. This also means that large-scale production processes are ruled out.
- c) Geographical and cultural isolation- in that they are self-contained and have very little transaction with outside communities in a majority of tribal communities.
- d) The profit motive is usually absent, and the role of an incentive is fulfilled by a sense of mutual obligation, sharing and solidarity.
- e) Cooperative and collective endeavors are emphasized

Interdependence of Tribes and Non-tribal Communities

The functional relationship between tribes or within tribes or tribal people and non-tribal of the tribal villages or the region is characterized by interdependence quite similar to the *Jajmani* system. Under the system each caste group, within a village is expected to provide certain standardized service to the people of other castes. The head of the family who is served by an individual is known as his Jajman while the man who performs the service is known as the *Kamin* of Jajman. The Jajman pays his Kamin in cash or kind on a daily monthly or yearly basis.

For example in the Jaunsar Bawar there is a typical interdependence seen in the agriculturalist, the artisan and the community servant and the free professional of the area. They help each other out. The *Koltas* till the lands of the Brahmans and Rajputs (khasas) for years together on some annual or periodical agreements and on payment. The *Bohars* make iron implements for agriculturists. The drummer *Bajgis* or *Dhakis* are an indispensable artisan community in Jaunsar-

Bawar. Their services are required in the temple on communal and ceremonial occasions.

The Economic Institution of Dhangar

This institution facilitates the agriculturalist activity. One gets the agricultural labour ryotwaris for cultivating one's own vast land. The person who is employed by a big landowner is commonly known as **Dhangar** in tribal Bihar. **Dhangar** is a most familiar word for the tribes like the **Oraon, Minda** and **HO**.

In tribal Bihar the big landowners keep agricultural labour land the year round. A labourer is engaged the month of *magh* on annual basis. Apart from annual payment in cash or in kind he is provided with food and a roof. From the day he is engaged he becomes a family member of the employer and gets the same social privileges. There is no difference in status between the employer and his *Dhangar* or agricultural labourer. He can even marry the land owner's daughter or sister if he belongs to a different clan. Generally the *Dhangars* are drawn from the same village.

Thus Tribals practice a mixed economy. The economic system of any Indian tribe cannot be exclusively placed in a particular typology in its strict sense. The fact that a tribe uses all available means to eke out its subsistence and combines minor forest produce collection with cultivation or shifting cultivation, simple cultivation with food collection indicates the complex economy of these people.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) What are the basic features of a tribal economy?
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
- 2) What do you mean by subsistence economy? Illustrate with examples from your region.
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
- 3) What are the ways in which tribal communities are related to other communities? Explain with an example.
.....
.....
.....
.....

4.5 DENOTIFIED AND NOMADIC TRIBES

De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes and Banjara communities constitute the most vulnerable and disadvantaged sections of the Indian society. Some of these communities were identified as 'Criminal Tribes' (which included both castes as well as tribes) in pre-independent India. Although the Criminal Tribes Act, 1871 was repealed soon after Independence, persons belonging to these communities are still viewed by society as habitually criminals.

The terms 'de-notified' and 'nomadic' do not belong to the same typology as the former term is legal and the latter ecological. The communities which were notified as criminal during the British rule and which were de-notified after independence are called de-notified tribes. However, as some of the de-notified communities were nomadic and vice versa, they are usually considered together.

As they are constantly on the move, they do not have any domicile. Though many of them have now begun to settle down, traditionally they did not possess land rights or house titles. As a result, they are deprived not only of welfare programmes, but also of citizenry rights. They were not considered untouchables but occupied lowermost positions in the social hierarchy.

The Denotified and Nomadic tribes make up about 60 million of India's population. There are 313 Nomadic Tribes and 198 Denotified Tribes.

Denotified tribes or Ex-Criminal Tribes are the tribes that were originally listed under the Criminal Tribes Act in 1871, as "addicted to the systematic commission of non-bailable offences." Once a tribe became "notified" as criminal, all its members were required to register with the local magistrate, failing which they would be charged with a crime under the Indian Penal Code. The British authorities listed them separately by creating a category of criminal castes or tribes. By this act, the government wanted to certify that communities have criminal tendencies, which are inculcated from birth onwards, and second, once a criminal, he or she is a criminal always.

The grouping of all such tribes in various parts of the country as one is questionable, as it ignores the fact that they differ from each other in their codes of conduct, modes of signs which they use to convey information to the people. They are considered as caste groups that have failed to adjust themselves to new conditions and have fallen into anti-social activities.

The lack of free social intercourse denies these criminally habituated people an opportunity to reclaim themselves. Further their socialization and continued isolation is reinforced by the social security within their communities. The problems of segregation was manifested in their being isolated and not having social interaction with the mainstream society – hence denial of the normal processes of social change, secondly they were suffering from fear psychosis-fear of police reprisal etc. raids by police etc. This led them to suspect everyone. Mutual distrust was the order of the day. Thirdly their family life suffered as they were jailed frequently and were away from their families. This also led them to experience deprivation of love and affection that are due to human beings and violation of their rights as human beings.

The Criminal Tribes Act of 1952 repealed the notification, i.e. 'de-notified' - the tribal communities. This act was however replaced by a series of Habitual Offenders Acts that asked police to investigate a suspect's criminal tendencies and whether his occupation is "conducive to settled way of life." The denotified tribes were reclassified as habitual offenders in 1959.

In order to acquire a comprehensive picture of the situation of these communities and to suggest action for their socio-economic development, a National Commission for De-notified Tribes, Nomadic Tribes and Semi-Nomadic Tribes was set up in 2005 whose report was submitted recently to the Prime Minister. In the Eleventh Plan, special attention is to be accorded to the well-being of these groups as per the recommendations of the Commission.

Despite these there are still some old issues plaguing these communities. Some of these are:

- a) Classification and enumeration of denotified and nomadic tribes, thereby providing constitutional safeguards and covering them under the Prevention of Atrocities Act (1989).
- b) Strict scrutiny of the caste certificates of DNTs and penalization of bogus DNTs.
- c) Sensitization of the police force by information dissemination and in-service training, and setting up of special cells (in collaboration with NGOs) for legal aid and counseling, especially for women.
- d) Free and compulsory education to genuine DNT children till at least they are up to higher secondary level.

Check Your Progress 4

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) Who are denotified tribes? Explain the difference between denotified and nomadic tribes.

.....
.....
.....
.....

- 2) What are the deleterious effects of Criminal Tribes Act? How do you intend to deal with such effects in improving the status of this group of people.

.....
.....
.....
.....

- 3) What are the current issues facing denotified tribes?

.....
.....
.....

4.6 CURRENT ISSUES FACING TRIBAL COMMUNITIES

Tribals are at the bottom of social and political ladder in India. In Post-independent India, the requirements of planned development brought with them the spectre of dams, mines, industries and roads on tribal lands. The major issues facing them are

Land Alienation

They were alienated from their land from colonial times. Their lands were taken away in the name of development, or by money lenders for loan recovery. Also reserving forests in the name of conservation also meant that tribals were kept away from their habitats and livelihood base. The expansion of railways in India heavily devastated the forest resources in India. In Andhra Pradesh, for instance, the non-tribals own half of the tribal land. In Orissa 54% of land of tribals is lost to non-tribals through indebtedness, mortgage and forcible occupation.

The land alienation often is a result of ignorance of tribals in getting their land recorded properly, negligence of officials involved and sometimes sheer corruption in evicting the tribals from their lands. The mining industry in Goa undermined the tribal rights to cultivate by getting these lands on lease. Also polluting both land and soil and the rivers make it impossible for tribals to continue their subsistence livelihoods.

Poverty Among Tribals

Majority of tribes live under poverty line. Currently, the tribal communities live in the most food insecure areas.

Tribals and Indebtedness

Tribals are heavily indebted to the local money lenders because of their poverty.

Loss of access to Non Timber Forest Produce (NTFP)s deforestation, preference for man-made plantations in place of mixed forests, regulatory framework, diversion of NTFPs and forests to industries, nationalization of NTFPs, and exploitation by government agencies and contractors in marketing of NTFPs, has meant loss of livelihood base for the tribal communities.

Displacement

Tribals are displaced from their livelihoods due to projects like large irrigation dams, hydroelectric projects, open cast and underground coal mines, super thermal power plants and mineral-based industrial units. In the name of development, tribals are displaced from their traditional habitats and livelihoods with little or no rehabilitation, and are rendered destitute and poor. In these large development projects, tribals lose their land not only to the project authorities, but even to non-tribal outsiders who converge into these areas and corner both the land and the new economic opportunities in commerce and petty industry.

Shifting Cultivation

Tribal communities practice shifting cultivation, a customary practice they have been engaged in through generations. This is becoming difficult with less and less forest land bring available to the communities.

Poor Quality of Governance

There is poor quality of governance that afflicts the tribal areas. Programme delivery has deteriorated everywhere in India, but more so in tribal areas. There is often a transfer of posts from tribal regions to non-tribal regions.

Cultural Problems

Due to contact with other cultures, the tribal culture is undergoing a revolutionary change. This has meant a degeneration of tribal life and tribal arts such as dance, music and different types of craft, and have also raised questions of preserving cultural identity.

Lack of Sensitivity in Dealing with Upsurge of Tribal Anger against the Exploitative System

The dwindling resource base of the tribal people in the shape of loss of land, restriction on access to forest produce and lack of opportunities for reasonable wage employment and money lending have caused hardships to tribal people. Significantly, development processes have interfered in many cases with traditional tribal institutional structure and ethos and have produced negative results. The development process in many tribal areas, instead of providing succor, has been instrumental in causing numerous disadvantages, prominent among them being displacement and loss of land, the tribal's main resource base. Notwithstanding the fact that the State Governments have enacted laws/regulations to control/prohibit transfer of land to non-tribals, land alienation still continues.

The various state policies and development interventions have left the tribal communities alienated from their natural resource base and pauperized them due to loss of land.

Education

Educationally the tribal population is at different levels of development but overall the formal education has made very little impact on tribal groups.

Check Your Progress 5

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) What are the major issues facing tribal communities now? Discuss any one of them in detail.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

4.7 LET US SUM UP

We have seen that tribal communities are special groups of people who have distinct way of life depending on their relationship with nature, with distinct habitat social and economic life. No tribes are similar. In addition to these features we have also seen some specific features pertaining to the denotified and nomadic tribes. These tribes have been falsely and unjustly categorized as criminal tribes by the British administration. Hence they have been subject to lot of hardship through segregation with the help of criminal tribes act. After independence this law was repealed and there have been numerous efforts at their rehabilitation.

We have also seen that these special features make them vulnerable to the changing demands of modern day living. Their habitats and their life are not as free as they used to be. Their living is mediated by the forces external to their communities. Their natural livelihood base can be taken away and they can easily become destitute. Centuries of exploitation of natural resources has shaken their ecological base.

4.8 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

1. B.B. Kumar(1998) *The tribal societies of India* Omsons Publications New Delhi
2. L.P Vidyarthi and Binay Kumar Rai (1976) *The Tribal Culture of India* Concept Publishing company New Delhi
3. Buddadeb Chaudhuri (Ed) 1992) *Tribal Transformation in India* Vol. III Inter-India Publications New Delhi.
4. Chacko, Pariyaram M. (ed 2005.) *Tribal communities and Social Change*, Sage Publications, New Delhi