

# THE EFFECTS OF DEFORESTATION AND EVICTION ON THE TRIBAL POPULATION IN INDIA

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## **ABSTRACT :**

TRIBAL PEOPLES' SURVIVAL DEPENDS ON THE LAND THEY HAVE LIVED IN HARMONY WITH FOR GENERATIONS, YET THEY ARE BEING EVICTED FROM PROTECTED AREAS IN THE NAME OF CONSERVATION. EVIDENCE IS GROWING THAT CONSERVATION ENFORCED BY THE CREATION OF PROTECTED AREAS AND POLICED BY ANTI POACHING SQUADS-LEADS TO THE EVICTION AND ABUSE OF VAST NUMBERS OF PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY TRIBAL PEOPLES, AND IS ALSO FAILING TO CHECK THE DEEPENING ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS. A NEW APPROACH IS URGENTLY NEEDED. CONSERVATION SHOULD CENTRE ON PROTECTING THE LAND RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLES TO WHOM THESE VITALLY IMPORTANT AREAS ARE HOME THE FORCED MASS DISPLACEMENT OF PEOPLE BECAUSE OF INTERFERENCE OF THE NON-TRIBE MEMBERS HAS NOT SEEN ITS HARSHEST EFFECTS AS OF YET; THEY WILL ONLY BE VISIBLE IN THE FUTURE WHERE THE LONG LASTING EFFECTS OF THE EXODUS WILL BE UNDERSTOOD BY ALL THE CONCERNED SECTIONS.

**KEYWORD :** TRIBAL, FOREST, INDIA, CONSERVATION

## **INTRODUCTION :**

INDIGENOUS FOREST PEOPLE USE THEIR LAND IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS-FOR FISHING, HUNTING, SHIFTING AGRICULTURE, THE GATHERING OF WILD FOREST PRODUCTS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES. FOR THEM, THEY FOREST IS THE VERY BASIS OF SURVIVAL AND ITS RESOURCES TO BE HARVESTED IN A SUSTAINABLE MANNER. WHEN AN EVENT LIKE DEFORESTATION TAKES PLACE IT CAN LEAD TO CONFLICT WITHIN THE ECOLOGY. THE REDUCTION OF THE CAPACITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT TO MEET SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS IS TERMED AS ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION BY THE UNITED NATIONS' INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY FOR DISASTER REDUCTION. THE HUMAN-INDUCED DEGRADATION OF DEFORESTATION LEADS TO THE TRIBAL POPULATION LOSING THEIR HOME SO THAT URBAN SPRAWL CAN INCREASE. THE TERM DEFORESTATION HAS BEEN DEFINED BY THE WWF AS THE CONVERSION OF FOREST TO TREE PLANTATIONS, AGRICULTURE PASTURE, WATER RESERVOIRS AND URBAN AREAS BUT EXCLUDES TIMBER PRODUCTION AREAS MANAGED TO ENSURE THE FOREST REGENERATES AFTER LOGGING. THIS MEANS THAT THE PRIMARY SOURCE ON WHICH TRIBAL COMMUNITIES ARE DEPENDENT TO SURVIVE IS BEING TAKEN AWAY FROM THEM IN BITS AND PIECES. THE

SOLE MEANS OF THEIR LIVELIHOOD AND THEIR ABODE IS SNATCHED AWAY FROM THEM HENCE LEADING TO THEM BEING CATEGORISED AS ENDANGERED AND IS AN ADEQUATE REASON FOR THEIR DWINPLING NUMBERS IN THEIR OWN HABITATION.

### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUEY :**

THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE PAPER ARE –

1. TO ANALYSE THE IMPACT OF DEFORESTATION AND EVICTION ON THE TRIBAL POPULATION.
2. TO STUDY THE SOCIO-ECONOMY EFFECTS ON THE TRIBAL POPULATION DUE TO VARIOUS CONSERVATION POLICIES.

### **METHODOLOGY :**

THE PROPOSED REBEARCH IS PRIMARILY A SOCIO-ECONOMIC OR THE SUBALTERN ASPECT OF DEFORESTATION ON THE TRIBAL POPULATION. THE SOURCE MATERIALS FOR THE RESEARCH WORK ARE BOTH PRIMARY AND SECONDARY. THE METHODOLOGY ADOPTABLE FOR THIS PARTICULAR STUDY IS QUALITATIVE. PRIMARY SOURCES INCLUDE ARCHIVAL MATERIALS IN THE FORM OF FILES, REPORTS AND OTHER TESTIMONIALS, HOUSED IN THE NATIONAL, STATE AND DISTRICT ARCHIVES. SECONDARY SOURCES, IN THE FORM OF PUBLISHED BOOKS AND PAPERS ON THE AREA OF STUDY WILL BE USED. AMONG THE PUBLISHED SOURCES, BOOKS, PERIODICALS, LEALLETS, SEMINAR PAPERS, ETC. TO BE CONSULTED. THE AVAILABLE MATERIALS HAVE TO BE CRITICALLY AND LOGICALLY EXAMINE AND AS PER THEIR CREDIBILITY, OMISSION AND RETENTION HAVE TO BE DONE.

### **RESULT AND DISCUSSION :**

EFFECTS ON TRIBAL POPULATION

#### **1. FOOD**

FOOD IS A SINE QUA NONELEMENT OF HUMAN LIFE. TRIBES ARE DEPENDENT ON DIFFERENT INDIGENOUS ELEMENTSWAHICH LIVE IN THE FORESTS OR THE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES WHICH GROW IN THE FORESTS OR ON FISH IF THERE IS WATER BODY IN THE VICINITY. THE MOMENT THESE TREES ARE CUT THE ANIMALS LOSE THEIR HABITAT. THE FRUIT AND VEGETABLES BEARING TREES ARE NO MORE. THIS CREATES AN IMBALANCE IN THE STAPLE DIET OF THE TRIBES LIVING IN THAT AREA AND EVEN SOMETIMES LEADS TO STARVATION.

#### **2. WATER**

POTABLE WATER IS MOST PRIMARY ELEMENT FOR SURVIVAL. THE PROVISION OF DRINKING WATER IS NOT AVAILABLE IN URBAN AREAS LET ALONE RURAL AREAS. TRIBES HAVE TO TRAVEL DISTANCES JUST TO FETCH WATER WHICH IS TO BE USED FOR SURVIVAL DAY. DWELLING AMIDST HILLS, FORESTS, COASTAL AREAS, DESERTS. TRIBES OVER CENTURIES HAVE GAINED PRECIOUS AND VAST EXPERIENCE INCOMBATING ENVIRONMENTAL HARD SHIPS AND LEADING SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS.

#### **3. SHELTER**

THE NATIVES OF THE FORESTS ARE SEVERELY AFFECTED BY DEFORESTATION. IN ANCIENT TIMES THE PEOPLE USE TO STAY NEAR THE FOREST SO THAT THEY COULD USE AN ABUNDANCE OF NATURAL RESOURCES IN THEIR VICINITY TO SURVIVE. WITH PASSAGE OF TIME MANY MIGRATED TO FORM VILLAGES AND TOWNS AND URBAN CITIES BUT SOME STAYED BACK IN THOSE FORESTS. THOSE PEOPLE IN TODAY'S DATE ARE CALLED TRIBALS. THE FORESTS ARE THEIR HOME AND IT PROVIDES THEM

SHELTER TO STAY THEIR. WHEN OUTSIDERS GO THERE FOR WORKS LIKE MINING OR LOGGING THESE TRIBES HAVE TO SURRENDER THEIR HOMES WITHOUT PROPER EVICTION SCHEMES AND SOME ARE EVEN PERSECUTED BY THE AUTHORITIES. THE ONLY PROBLEM IS NOT THAT THEY DO NOT RECEIVE BASIC NECESSITIES FOR LIVELIHOOD BUT EVEN APART FROM THAT THEY HAVE TO FACE INNUMERABLE OBSTACLES TO SURVIVE.

### **SOLUTION :**

INDIA HAS THE SECOND LARGEST TRIBAL CONCENTRATION IN THE WORLD. THE DATA AUTOMATICALLY PUTS A LOT OF RESPONSIBILITY ON THE AUTHORITIES TO MAKE SURE THAT THE LAWS ARE PROPERLY FORMULATED AND ENFORCED. IT HAS BEEN REASONABLY ESTABLISHED THAT THE PRACTICE OF DEFORESTATION HAS LED TO LAND DEGRADATION WHICH HAS LED TO THE TRIBAL HABITAT DISAPPEARING FURTHER AFFECTING CULTURAL VALUES HENCE GIVING ENOUGH REASON FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION. A FEW OF THE IMMEDIATE SOLUTIONS WHICH COULD BE ADOPTED BY THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS ARE LISTED DOWN.

THE ONLY WAY POSSIBLE TO SAVE THE LIFESTYLE OF THE TRIBAL COMMUNITY IS BY PROTECTING THEM AND GIVING THEM THE RIGHTS WHICH THEY HAVE BEEN ALLOTTED. A PROPER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EXISTING LAWS CAN CHANGE THE CURRENT STATUS QUO OF THE INDIGENOUS GROUPS. ALTHOUGH THE CURRENT LAWS HAVE FLAWS IN THEM BUT THOSE CAN BE AMENDED WITH TIME. FOR THE TIME BEING IF THE RIGHTS ACCORDED TO THEM UNDER THE CONSTITUTION AND STATE AND CENTRAL LAWS ARE AWARDED THEIR STATUS CAN BE UPLIFTED.

THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS CAN ALSO FORM AUTONOMOUS TRIBAL COUNCILS SO THAT THE TRIBAL PEOPLE CAN LOOK AFTER THEMSELVES WHILE KEEPING THEIR TRADITIONS AND CULTURE FREE FROM OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE. THE COUNCILS BE ANSWERABLE TO CENTRE, SO THAT WOULD GIVE THEM DISCRETIONARY POWERS TO HANDLE THE MATTERS AS PER THEIR CIRCUMSTANCES.

ANOTHER OPTION WHICH COULD BE IMPLEMENTED BY THE GOVERNMENT IS BY OFFERING TAX BEARS TO THE COMPANIES WHO HELP IN THE UPLIFTMENT OF THE TRIBAL COMMUNITY IN THEIR VICINITY. SINCE ONE OF THE REASONS DEFORESTATION TAKES PLACE IS THE SETTING UP OF INDUSTRIES AND FACETORIES ON THESE SITES THE MINIMAL THEY COULD DO IS OFFER COMPENSATION AND PROVIDE THEM WITH A FACILITY OF RELOCATION. IF THE COMPANY IS SUCCESSFUL IN DOING SO THEY COULD BE OFFERED A TAX BREAK IF NOT THEN CHARGED WITH A PENALTY FOR THE SAME.

### **CONCLUSION :**

THE TRIBAL COMMUNITY OF THE COUNTRY IS FACING A GREAT THREAT OF EXTINCTION AS IT IS FORCED TO LEAVE THEIR HOMES AND FACE DISPLACEMENT IN THE NAME OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. HUMANS HARM THE ECOLOGY OF NATURE BY INDULGING IN PRACTICES LIKE DEFORESTATION. EVEN THOUGH THESE PRACTICES ARE REGULATED BY LAW ON PAPER BUT IN REALITY THE LAWS ARE NOT ENFORCED OBJECTIVELY. THIS HAS LED TO THEM BEING TRAPPED IN A CYCLE OF ABUSE SINCE THEIR RIGHTS ARE VIOLATED AND THEY CAN NOT APPROACH THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES FOR THE REDRESSAL OF THE SAME. ABOVE THIS THEY ARE ALSO ECONOMICALLY BACKWARD SO THEY DO NOT EVEN HAVE THE FINANCIAL ABILITY TO RESETTLE OR FIND JOBS TO FEND THEIR NEEDS. SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT IS KEY TO THE SUSTAINABLE RURAL LIVELIHOOD. THERE HAS TO BE A HARMONIOUS BALANCE BETWEEN CONSERVATION OF FOREST AND DEVELOPMENT OF TRIBAL COMMUNITIES THROUGH LIVELIHOOD SECURITY. SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD OF TRIBAL COMMUNITY IS INCREASINGLY LINKED TO ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION OF THE CONCERNED STUDIES.

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