MRGINALISATION AND DEPRIVATION

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STUDIES ON MULTIPLE VULNERABILITIES

KERALA INSTITUTE OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION (KILA) is an autonomous institution of Department of Local Self Government, under the Ministry of Local Administration, Government of Kerala. As the nodal agency for the capacity building of local governments, the objective of the Institute is to undertake training, research and consultancy in matters relating to local governance and development. Apart from conducting training programmes for the local governments, within and outside the State, the Institute conducts workshops, seminars and conferences for sharing the experience of Kerala in democratic decentralisation and for learning from others for the purpose of policy making.

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INCLUDING THE EXCLUDED: COLLECTIVE ACTION AND DECENTRALISATION: AN ACCOUNT OF TWO TRIBES IN GOA

Ganesha Somayaji[*]

During the hey days of independence in India, the concerns of the first government and the framers of the Constitution were to create an atmosphere of equal opportunity for all Indian citizens to enjoy the fruits of modernity and development. However, India's diversity and inequality were proverbial. Many sections of the Indian society were so much backward due to centuries of exclusion and segregation that programmes of action for social development were like race among unequally positioned citizens. The tribes or the original inhabitants of the land constitute one such category of unequally positioned citizens due to historical, political and economic reasons. This paper is mainly concerned with including the excluded tribal communities in Goa, their collective mobilisations and the benefits of democratic decentralisation.

After clarifying the concept tribe the paper describes independent India's programmes of development of the tribes, the paper examines the concerns of the tribes of Goa and their collective action for inclusion in the list of Scheduled Tribes and their welfare programmes. The paper concludes with comparing the tribe which is a Scheduled Tribe and a tribe which has not succeeded in inclusion in the list of Scheduled Tribes.

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1. THE CONCEPT OF TRIBE

Like most aspects of tribal reality, defining a tribe remains elusive. There are contradictory views/ perspectives on conceptualising and categorising an aggregate of people living in isolation in relatively primitive conditions. While a layman's understanding of the word 'tribe' is simplistic and synonymous with savagery, primitiveness and isolation (Bara 2002:1), there is a controversy among scholars, reformers and administrators with regard to an adequate terminology for describing these people. The simplistic lay usage of tribe was borrowed by anthropologists, to describe those primitive people living in backward areas. There wasn't any necessity felt to fine tune the concept as the category of people who were denoted by this concept were easily distinguishable from the general population living in Australia and North America. But as Beteille (1977:7) points out, in India, groups corresponding closely to the anthropologist's conception of tribe have lived in long association with communities of an entirely different type. Though the nationalists accused anthropologists of creating an alien category called 'tribe', it was the colonial administrator who was responsible for this concept. Struck by the quaintness of certain people living in the interiors, in terms of their social behaviour, practices and at times even physical features, the early British found in these unusual humans, the Indian "tribe" as counterparts to those indigenous people whom they first encountered in Africa, America and Australia (Bara 2002: 121). But as mentioned above, the relation of the tribes in India with those of other parts of the country was different from those that distinguished an American tribe from non tribal Americans. Thus in the Indian context, tribe had to be more clearly defined.

In the Census Report of 1891, Baines arranged the castes according to their traditional occupations, under the category 'Forest Tribes'. Dr. Hutton, in the 1931 census substituted the term 'Primitive Tribes' for 'Forest Tribes' (Ghurye 1943: 7). Risley (1908), Elwin (1943), and Thakkar (1961) referred to them as aborigines. Most of the Indian scholars, following their British counterparts also accepted the evolutionary definition of tribe. Ghurye, however, disagreed and vociferously objected to the use of the term Adivasi for the Scheduled Tribes. "Apart from the fact that terms like 'Aborigines' or 'Adivasis' are question begging and pregnant with mischief, the fact that the

Constitution of India speaks of these people as the Scheduled Tribe renders any other designation utterly wrong (Ghurye 1963: ix). The term Scheduled Tribe is an administrative category, referring to those communities that have been 'scheduled' or listed for special treatment in compliance with the provisions of the Constitution of India.

It should be noted though, that there has been an increasing number of communities seeking inclusion in the list of Scheduled Tribes in India. Given this situation, Kuppuswamy (1977: 194, cited in Rao 1992: 60) states that the problem of definition is not merely of academic concern, as it involves inclusion in the programmes initiated by the government for the scheduled tribes.

Beteille (1977: 11) states that a tribe is a society having a clear linguistic boundary and generally a well-defined political boundary. But this conception in no way provides an adequate definition of tribe. Ultimately like most definitions, a definition of tribe too would be better considered as an ideal type. In India, there is no fit between the ideal type and empirical reality. Here, all tribes are 'tribes in transition'. There is no uniform defining features that would apply to all tribes across board. Tribes are not a homogenous entity. There are differences among them. These differences not only render any universal definition impossible, but also thwart any standard classification of this category of people.

2.   TRIBAL POLICIES - A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Since the earliest times of recorded history, there has always been a coexistence of fundamentally different cultures in the Indian subcontinent. This was partly due to the great size of the sub-continent, dearth of communications and more importantly, an attitude basic to Indian ideology, which accepted variety of cultural forms as natural and immutable, and did not consider their assimilation to one dominant pattern in any way desirable.

But this did not mean that there was absolutely no interaction between the two communities. Beteille (1996: 76) stressed the "permeability of boundary between tribe and non tribe in pre colonial times. He cites examples from history to demonstrate how many tribal groups moved towards the centripetal force of the caste system. Inferring from N.K. Bose's

theory of the Hindu method of tribal absorption, he explained how the nature of caste based economy and division of labour made it possible for various tribal groups to fuse into general society. Of course, the tribals' fusion or absorption in the 'wider' caste society often landed them in the lowest position (Bara 2002: 124). Thus, during pre colonial periods the tribes were largely left to themselves, though there were, not a few examples of permeability and assimilation.

The British administration decided to categorise certain people as tribes, in keeping with their practice in Africa, Americas and Australia. The Indian tribes were confirmed as primitive and backward by such actions as creating non-regulation areas, or passing the Criminal Tribe Act, 1871 (Yang 1995). The tribal protests to this move were condemned as acts of barbarity, further confirming the existing idea of tribes.

Under British rule, however, a new situation arose. While the British ostensibly proposed a policy of non interference, this was limited largely to the realm of culture and religion. Where this policy confronted the British practice of revenue extraction, it was overlooked. The extension of a centralised administration and administrative officers who did not understand tribal system of land tenure over areas, deprived many tribal communities of their autonomy. These had the unintended effect of facilitating the alienation of tribal land to members of advanced populations. In many areas tribals, unable to resist the gradual alienation of their ancestral land, either withdrew further into hills and tracts of marginal land, or accepted the economic status of tenants or agricultural labourers on the land their forefathers had owned (Furer Haimendorf 1982: 35).

The British policy towards the tribal community thus developed into a policy of laissez faire and of segregation of tribal areas combined with a harsh application of the laws of the land, entirely unsuited to the tribes (Majumdar and Madan 1977: 274).

3. POST- COLONIAL TRIBAL POLICIES

Furer Haimendorf (1982: 313) describes how during the last years of British rule in India, there raged a passionate controversy about the policy to be adopted vis-à-vis the tribes.

This controversy revolved around the now famous Ghurye-Elwin debate. The next section briefly articulates this debate.

Tribal Policies at the Dawn of Independence: Competing Perspectives

There have been two dominant yet contradictory perspectives on tribal development in the years preceding Independence. One view, as Rao (1992: 59) explains was of those who wanted to protect the tribals from outside influences in order to prevent, what they considered tribal degeneration. This policy of segregation and isolation, a 'National Park Policy', included a system of administration that would allow the tribals to live their own life with happiness and freedom (Elwin 1939). The British officials and Western anthropologists emphasised a clear social and cultural distinction between tribals and non tribals and advocated their isolation and pointed welfare measures. This position was articulated in the views put forth by Elwin. In the 'Baiga', he advocated some sort of National Park in a 'wild and largely inaccessible' part of the country under the direct control of a Tribes Commissioner. The tribes were to be allowed to be live their lives in freedom. The freedom and authority that they enjoyed in matters governing their life was to be retained, with no outside intervention in their cultural, economic and spiritual life. 'Everything possible would be done for the progress of the tribals within the area, provided that the tribal quality of life was not impaired, tribal culture was not destroyed and tribal freedom was restored or maintained' (Elwin 1960).   Outside assistance was to be provided for economic development and education.

The position taken by Elwin, was met with opposition. Ghurye (1943, 1989) for instance, contradicted what came to be referred to as the isolationist perspective. He proposed that tribes are backward Hindus and very much part of the mainstream. He opined that prior to the 18th century, some sort of assimilation among the tribals has been taking place. This system was upset with the arrival of the British. The sections till then not properly assimilated, appeared as if they were different from the rest (Ghurye 1943: Preface). Ghurye thus was a staunch advocate of the policy of assimilation of the tribals. Sharply critical of Elwin's isolationist stance, he drew attention to the fact that some sort of assimilation has always been a

feature of tribal life. Majumdar and Madan however, (1977: 281) caution that Ghurye perhaps overstated his case. They feel that the tribal people have a distinct culture and complete assimilation may not be possible without doing injury to them. They proposed a policy of controlled and limited assimilation. By this they implied the need and desirability of preserving useful institutions, customs and practice, though these be tribal in origin and character (1970: 281). They also suggest that attempts should be made to ruralise tribal areas so that the Indian people may be divisible into urban and rural.

Elwin reacted angrily to himself being labeled an isolationist. He argued that the scheme suggested by him was done in 1944, a time during which hardly any steps were being taken for the development of the tribals. Given this lack of initiative for tribal development, Elwin opined that his stance was justified. He nonetheless admitted that much had changed in the years since Independence. With the focus back on tribes, Elwin agrees that now his views have had to change. He castigates Ghurye for not acknowledging in as late as the 1950s, Elwin's change of stance.

Somewhere between the isolationist and assimilative policies of Ghurye and Elwin, Independent India decided its policy for tribal development.

4. Tribal Polices Adopted after 1947

The Government of India, under the leadership of Pandit Nehru adopted a policy of integration of tribals with the mainstream aiming at developing a creative adjustment between the tribes and non tribes leading to a responsible partnership. In the Constitution, there are a number of clauses and provisions that deal specifically with the interests of the Scheduled Tribes. The Constitution has committed the nation to two courses of action in respect of scheduled tribes, viz.,

1. Giving protection to their distinctive way of life.
2. Protecting them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation and discrimination and bringing them at par with the rest of the nation so that they may be integrated with the national life.

Besides enjoying the rights that all citizens and minorities have, the members of the Scheduled Tribes have been provided with Protective, Political and Developmental Safeguards.

Thus by adopting a policy of integration as well as what Nehru referred to as the Tribal Panchsheel, the Indian State has sought to deal with the complexities arising out of the tribal situation in India. Pandit Nehru (Elwin cited in Thapar 1977: 36) wrote that the avenues of tribal development should be pursued within the broad framework of five fundamental principles:

1. People should develop along the lines of their own genius and should avoid imposing anything on them. We should try to encourage in every way their own traditional arts and culture;
2. Tribal rights in land and forests should be respected;
3. We should try to train and build up a team of their own people to do the work of administration and development;
4. We should not over administer these areas or overwhelm them with a multiplicity of schemes; and
5. We should judge results, not by statistics of the amount of money spent, but by the quality of the human character that is evolved.

Nehru's stance was influenced by Elwin, who by now had tempered his stance of complete isolation. After his experience with the North Eastern Frontier Province, he modified his stance as he felt that the situation had changed after Independence. He changed his stance to neither isolation nor assimilation, but integration. While isolation aims at conscious separation of the tribe from the political and economic mainstream and assimilation tends to the tribe's partial and involuntary subservience, integration, in contrast, is a respectful merger with the mainstream, staking a claim to an equal share of power and resources as other citizens (Rath 2006: 76). Rath (2006) contends though that Elwin later reverted to his earlier stance. He believes that Elwin's stance from isolation to integration was a temporary change. Though, of course, the meaning of isolation that he referred to in the 1950s was not the same as the meaning given to the term in the colonial period. The later usage of the concept involved notions of relative isolation, in which Elwin modified Nehru's Panscheel to incorporate his notions of isolation into it.

After the death of both Nehru and Elwin in 1964, for at least two decades, the Indian nation state was inspired by Nehru in it's approach towards tribal development. But Nehru's zeal for industrialisation is an attempt to replicate the successes of the West, led to large-scale displacement and alterations in every aspect of tribal reality. Today, the tribal discourse has grown beyond the isolationism and integration thesis to include identity struggle, mobilisation, political empowerment and economic development. All these issues were sought to be addressed through the ideal of self rule. The notion of self rule, which was initiated during the colonial period, was seen by tribal communities to be a panacea to all their problems. The mobilisations, movements and armed conflict that the tribal communities have engaged in to further this end have resulted in institutional arrangements such as the formation of separate States and "The Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act. Though Article 40 of the Constitution provides that the State Government should enable the Panchayats to function as local self Governments, this end has been plagued with a number of problems. The Constitutional (73rd Amendment) Act 1992 was passed. This Act enabled the local bodies to function as institutions of self governance both in planning and implementation of development programmes. This Act extends Panchayats to nine tribal states, namely Andhra Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand and Orrisa. But this rule extends only to areas known as the 5th Schedule of the Indian Constitution. Those areas which lie outside this schedule come under the purview of the 73rd Amendment.

Notwithstanding the efforts at including the tribes in the national mainstream, tribal development is an elusive reality. The 2001 census put the number of persons belonging to Scheduled Tribes in India at 84.3 million which is 8.2 per cent of the total population. There were about 60 major tribal groups accounting for about 80 per cent of the total tribal population of India in 1991. Presently the Indian tribal reality is elusive due to factors such as the varying nature of tribal and non-tribal relationship, diverse levels of economic development, regional character of the process of tribalisation and obliteration of the geographical boundary between the tribal and non tribal areas (Somayaji 2002: 209). Sinha (1972) remarks that "the major roots of tribal solidarity movements may be traced to their ecological-cultural isolation, economic backwardness and

feelings of frustration about a lowly status vis-à-vis the advanced sections. Also the drive for industrialisation and modernisation has badly affected the tribals, who have been ousted out of their lands, to meet the demands of new projects. Further, the higher proportion of the Scheduled Tribe population (32.69 per cent) engaged in agricultural wage labour compared to the general population (25.74 per cent), indicates the livelihood vulnerability of tribal peoples and the problems caused by land deprivation and dependence on marginal, low-productivity land.

Tribal communities also suffer deprivation with regard to a crucial source of human capital - education. For example, in 1991, as against the national average of 52 per cent, the literacy rate of Scheduled Tribes was around 29.60 per cent. More strikingly, more than 80 per cent of Scheduled Tribe women are illiterate (Planning Commission 2000).

5.   TRIBAL COLLECTIVE MOBILISATION IN GOA

Ever since joining the Indian nation-state, Goa, now one of the small states of India, is experiencing political mobilisations among the tribes for inclusion in the main stream of development through obtaining Scheduled Tribe (ST) status. There had been discontent among the four tribal categories, the Kunbi, Velip, Gauda, and Dhangar. The first three are now included in the list of STs but the struggle of the last continues. We will now trace the emergence and course of tribal discontent in Goa.

According to Singh (2000) one of the central features of tribal movements in India is the fact that the tribal struggles were revolts against the State.   Bhardwaj (1977) says that the tribal movements in India took shape since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Writings by sociologists and anthropologists focussed on micro and macro tribal movements. The writings of Ghurye and Fuchs deal with tribal movements having an all India focus (macro), while Elwin, Vidyarthi, Sachchidanand, Edward Roy and others focus on tribal movements at the local (micro) level.

While the model of development instead of bridging the gulf between the tribes and the general society has brought in despair leading to growing unrest in the tribal society. It is also

true that the tribal society in Goa witnessed some volume of discontent in the recent past. The nature of discontent has by and large assumed the shape of a social movement. There have been tribal movements in different parts of the country centred on several issues. Several scholars have studied and documented the struggles going on around the tribal communities. It is imperative at this juncture to understand the nature of tribal struggle vis-a-vis the state of Goa in the recent past.

The Goan tribal communities until the turn of the century were recognised a part of the Other Backward Classes (OBC). In fact, before getting included into the fold of the Scheduled Tribes, the tribal scene by and large did not in any way manifest any form of a radical protest or discontent in the form of a movement. It is however, ironical and unfortunate to say that tribal unrest surfaced in a more audible manner in the State after the recognition of the communities as Scheduled Tribes.

The genesis of the movement took shape with the reservation proposition of the community. The issue of inclusion of the communities into the list of Scheduled Tribes had well begun soon after Liberation. The agenda of inclusion of the tribals meant that the community possessed a unique ethnic identity and were to be regarded as the original settlers of the land. Gaude (2009) mentions that Shri Vasu Paik Gaonkar forwarded a bill in the year 1980 in the Goa Legislative Assembly to notify the communities as Scheduled Tribes, but some members of the legislative members resented to the move and were therefore included in the list of the other backward classes (OBC).

The initial phase of the movement was significant for two things; one was that the tribals became consciously aware of their origins and secondly, this phase did not manifest any rebellion or any protest movement by the tribals.

The long pressing demand of recognising the communities as 'Scheduled Tribes' got ultimately fulfilled with the concerted efforts of the leaders of the respective tribal communities in the year 2003. It was to be considered as a major breakthrough in the realisation of tribal emancipation in the years to come. Until this period, the welfare of these tribal communities in the State remained silent.

The constitutional recognition brought an array of hope among the community members. It was presumed that the fruits of constitutional recognition would bring emancipation among the tribal masses. However, to their dismay, the period from 2003 until 2010 too manifested a major lag in terms of the overall welfare of the tribal communities. The aspirations of the tribal masses remained unresolved for a long period even after getting the official recognition of the ST's in the year 2003. It did not bring much improvement in the socio economic condition of the community. During this phase the tribal society became more vigilant of the passive interest shown to them by the government.

The insensibility of the government apparently compelled the pan tribal society in Goa to protect and promote their collective interests through the formation of tribal associations. As Shah (2004, p. 106) points out, no movements are spontaneous but have organisational aspects, the tribal movement in Goa was precisely structured with the help of organisational support. The prominent among them are the Gawda Kunbi Velip Dhangar (GAKUVED) and the United Tribal Association Alliance (UTAA). In fact, until the turn of the century GAKUVED helped in organising the tribal voice. The organisational base even became stronger with the formation of UTAA in the recent years. The hard work of locating the communities into the list of Scheduled Tribes is mainly attributed to the GAKUVED. The UTAA on the other hand took up the campaign to mobilise support from the tribal masses along with the other tribal organisations in the state. The tribal communities used these tribal forums to organise and articulate themselves in staging their livelihood issues before the state. The UTAA was established in the year 2004, and has been the most active among them and was projected as an umbrella organisation for the different tribal communities in the state of Goa. Fernandez (2014, p. 98) calls the formation of UTAA, a new avatar, as it provided a platform for eight different tribal organisation to come together. Some of these are:

1. Gomantak Gaud Maratha Samaj led by Yeshwant Gawade;
2. Tribal welfare association led by Dr. Kashinath Jalmi;
3. Gawda, Kunbi, Velip, Dhangar Federation led by Anand Gawade;

4. All Goa Scheduled Tribes Union led by Namdev Fatarpekar;
5. Tribes of Goa led by Peter Gama;
6. Gomantak Velip Samaj Sangh led by Prakash S. Velip;
7. Taleigao Tribal Welfare led by Narayan Kuttikar; and
8. Gaud Jamat Mahasangh-Goa led by Shrikant Palsarkar.

The UTAA has been focussing and sensitising about tribal issues vigorously through public propaganda. The organisational base of UTAA assumed larger significance than the other tribal associations in the state. The organisation gained a good support from leaders coming from the educational, political, legal and business field. Moreover, the educated tribal youth in the State were able to augment a healthy support to the organisational base.

The Gawada, Kunbi, Velip and Dhangar Federation (GAKUVED) and the United Tribal Association Alliance (UTAA) became more active. They put forth their demands by launching protest movements before the State Government aiming towards the general welfare of the tribes. Despite statehood given to Jharkhand in November 2000 we notice an increase in protest movements. It was hoped to bring rapid changes in favour of the populace but the new policies did not favour the adivasis. Before losing all rights to their land and resources the tribals articulated protests by building alliances with NGOs and people's movements (Rao, 2003, p. 4084).

Among the many demands, the tribals primarily demanded for the establishment of an autonomous tribal department to address and tackle the peculiar problems of the tribal communities. Detailed further is the list of the demands proposed by the UTAA before the government:

1. To set up ST commission;
2. Implementation of the Tribal Forest Act;
3. Fill up the backlog of vacancies in direct recruitment as well as promotions;
4. Implement the twelve per cent political reservation in the assembly;
5. Ban on selling of land belonging to ST community to non-ST community;
6. Setting up a high-level committee to look into implementation of demands of ST committee;

7. Setting of ST finance and Development Corporation, ST commission, independent tribal department and tribal ministry decides planning authority for ST community;
8. Simplifying the procedure for obtaining caste certificate;
9. Providing 12 per cent political representation for ST and notifying of tribal area in the State;
10. Increasing the monthly pension of rupees 1000 to rupees 3000 for widows of the community; and
11. Doubling the pension to senior citizens.

The initiative undertaken by the UTAA culminated in the launching of a pan tribal movement in the State. Singh (2005) observes that the tribals of late have become proactive and assert their self identity by participating in struggles irrespective of their isolated domiciles. Symbolically the movement brought in a consciousness of a common identity among the tribal members. The movement was facilitated by several factors. In the first instance, since the issues addressed were of a general nature, it facilitated in mobilising support from all the tribal communities from the different parts of Goa. The type of character of tribal unrest in Goa was not essentially from a particular tribal community or a large homogeneous land owning community who have a relatively a strong economic base as Singh mentions (2004: 105). In fact, the movement drew support from different tribals groups from the State, irrespective of religious divides. The protest movements were joined in large numbers by Hindu and Catholic community as well. Secondly, the state of Goa being small in terms of its area, it easily facilitated in mobilising the different communities from the nook and corner of the State. Tribal masses from the remotest of the locations took part in the movement despite geographical considerations. As mentioned earlier, the modus operandi of UTAA of collective propaganda helped the movement to integrate the members across the state throughout the movement.

The official recognition of the tribal communities in the year 2003 as belonging to the Scheduled Tribes has evolved a sense of solidarity through the framework of such associations such as the UTAA. It brought about a collective radical mobilisation by raising socio-political awareness and participation among the tribal masses in the recent times through conventions. Conventions were organised in the different talukas to create awareness among the community members. These conventions

brought the tribals together from the different parts of the State. The conventions sensitized and highlighted some pressing issues pertaining to the overall welfare of the tribal society. The leaders of the association urged the tribal community members to consolidate and add solidarity to the tribal movement.

The association took up the cause of the tribals to achieve their long awaited demands. The UTAA led by the president Mr. Prakash Velip and other members played an important role in launching a State wide movement. The members in one of the conventions appealed before the government to consider the demands put up by the association. It also set a deadline and threatened to launch an agitation across the State if the government had failed to do so. The leaders appealed before the people from the community to join hands to show strength to the government and co operate with the association (The Navhind Times, 2011).

The long awaited unfulfilled demands forced the tribal communities launched a radical protest at Balli in the Quepem taluka under the banner of UTAA. The agitation received an overwhelming response of over six thousand tribal men, especially from the talukas from the south district of the State. The agitation turned out violent paralysing the road and rail connectivity for several hours causing inconvenience for transportation along the National Highway 17. The outrage of the tribals was demonstrated by damaging and burning vehicles prompting the police to open lathi charge leaving many injured. What turned out to be rather more unfortunate during the protest was the death of two young Velip boys ruthlessly burnt by some group of non tribal men by setting fire to a go down of cashew seeds (The Navhind Times, 2011). The annoyed UTAA activists along with their leaders demanded for a judicial inquiry into the incident, however, subsequently asked the government to order for a probe done by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). The government however, finally decided to investigate to conduct a judicial probe. Accordingly a judicial commission named as the Shah Commission was appointed to study the Balli riot. After receiving a detailed report from the Shah Commission the State government decided to transfer the case to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), as demanded earlier by UTAA. The agitation bounced back on the tribals as their two key tribal leaders were detained in judicial custody for

more than a month period. Following the incident, the UTAA members observed a day long hunger agitation as a mark of respect to the departed souls, this was later followed by a dharna in the capital city as a protest against the ruling government. The family members of the deceased UTAA activists resisted to claim their dead bodies until the culprits were appropriately traced and arrested. Meanwhile, realising the faulty assurances made by the government the leaders of the UTAA expressed that they would continue with the movement until their rightful demands are fulfilled. After a span of almost two months of the Balli incident, considering the delay in the realisation of tribal demands the organisation progressed further by threatening the government in deciding to organise a 'jail bharo andolan' pressing their demands hard and also to demand the release of their tribal leaders (The Navhind Times, 2011). However, talks with the bureaucracy forced them to hold a peaceful demonstration instead. During this time the tribals suffered yet another big blow when their three important forefront vibrant leaders were arrested and were kept in police custody. The consistent failures and dissuasion techniques adopted by the government finally compelled the activists to take to the street which was joined by over five thousand UTAA activists (Gomantak Times, 2011). The peaceful demonstration of the activists appealed before the government to release their jailed leaders and punish the murderers who burnt the two tribal men and warned the government of further intensifying their struggle. The detained tribal leaders were later released from judicial and police custodies. Meanwhile, very recently it is learnt that the 21 tribal persons charge sheeted by the CBI have been found discharged from the Balli riot by the district court (The Navhind Times, 2015).

Tribal leadership and organisations

The demand for the inclusion of the tribes in Goa into the fold of Scheduled Tribes started in the 1960s. Goa did produce eminent leaders since liberation, especially from the marginalised sections of the society. The leadership qualities particularly were noted among some legislators as well as some social workers who took up the cause of tribes. Shri Jiva Gaonkar, belonging to Velip community from Canacona was the first nominated tribal member to the legislative assembly. In the year 1966-67, Shri Jiva Gaonkar moved a resolution in the

assembly asking for the inclusion of the tribal communities in Goa in the list of Scheduled Tribe. Shri Gaonkar was soon joined by tribal legislators from other talukas. Shri Krishna Bandodkar was the first elected MLA from the constituency of Madkai for the Goa legislative assembly. In fact, Shri Krishna Bandodkar was an organisational pioneer of tribes in Goa. He was instrumental in the founding of the Gomantak Gaud Maratha Samaj in the year 1962. Shri Dhulo Kuttikar from Quepem, Shri Vasu Paik Gaonkar from Canacona, Shri Kashinath Jalmi from Priol, Shri Mama Cardoz from Margao, Antonio Gaonkar from Raia and Shri Prakash Velip from Quepem dominated the tribal leadership campaign as members of Goa Legislative Assembly in the 1980s. The effort of Shri Vasu Paik Gaonkar warrants special attention as he played an important role in bringing the community into the fold of OBC. In fact, the Gawda, Kunbi Velip and the Dhangar communities were listed as OBC's in the year 1987. It is interesting to note that the Goa legislature in the year 1985 brought five tribal legislators together.

In addition to the tribal organisations such as the UTAA, GAKUVED and the Gomantak Gaud Maratha Samaj the State has also witnessed several other tribal associations in the recent past. It was in fact difficult to ascertain the precise number of registered tribal organisation in the State due to its large number. A number of tribal organisations have been formed in the state considering some religious, regional and political attributes. Some tribal communities have been formed by tribals at the level of taluka, while some at the level of villages. Some have formed associations having affiliation to political parties. As the tribal society is divided between the Hindus and the Catholics, one finds associations exclusively organised around religious outfits. Shri Luis Alex Cardozo, an active tribal leader from the Salcete taluka was actively involved in mobilising the Catholic Gawda Community. He worked as the minister, Department of Social Welfare, Government of Goa and was elected for three consecutive terms from 1989 to 2002. In the 1980s, Shri Cardozo formed the Gawda Vikas Mandal (GVM) and also worked as the president of the GVM. As a Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Shri Cardozo stressed on the need for education for the tribes. He was instrumental in starting the Goa State Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Castes Finance Development Corporation Limited. Shri. Deu

Mandrekar, (MLA) from the Pernem constituency was appointed as the first chairman of the commission. Yet another commission started by Shri Cardozo was the Goa State Backward Commission in the year 1994. Advocate Shri Guru Shirodkar was appointed as the chairman of the commission. The Gawda Vikas Mandal did not find much favour from the community members. He then founded another tribal association named as Salcete Scheduled Tribe Association in the year 1995. He applauds the efforts of tribal community members such as Sebastiao Miranda, late John Raikar, Rosario Gomes, Antonio Francisco Fernandes, Late Antonio Gaonkar and others for their efforts in taking up tribal issues. Fernandes (2014, p. 81), while portraying the life of tribal leader Antonio Francisco Fernandes, also highlights the role played by Emidio D'costa, Camilo Matheus and Luizinho Faleiro in bringing an awakening among the tribal masses. The Contemporary tribal leadership campaign is actively shouldered by leaders like Ramesh Tawadka, Shri Ganesh Gaonkar, Shri Vasudev Meng Gaonkar, Babuso Gaonkar, Peter Gama, Antonio Vaz, Govind Gaude and others.

A couple of months ago, yet another organisational endeavour undertaken by a group of tribal leaders in the State is of integrating the Goan tribes with pan Indian tribal forum. The tribal community in the district of south Goa has witnessed the inauguration of the Goa Adivasi Vikas Parishad in September 2015. The former minister and president of UTAA, Shri Prakash Velip is believed to be instrumental in this novel organisational endeavour. The Goa Adivasi Vikas Parishad has been formed as one of its branches of Akhil Bharatiya Adivasi Vikas Parishad. The Akhil Bharatiya Adivasi Vikas Parishad in the country is considered as a pan Indian forum of the tribals. The Akhil Bharatiya Adivasi Vikas Parishad having branches in majority of states and union territories of India claims to be a non political organisation aiming for the empowerment of the tribal masses. The broad objective of forming the state unit of Goa Adivasi Vikas Parishad is to resolve some of the tribal issues unsettled by the state. The Akhil Bharatiya Adivasi Vikas Parishad avows to address issues pertaining to the tribes before the government at the state as well as the centre. The Parishad intends to reach out to the tribal masses and wishes to expand its institutional base. The leaders of the Parishad have unitedly appealed before the tribal masses in the State to become

members keeping aside their regional or religious differences. Considering the nature of tribal situation and the problems faced by them, the Goa unit has outlined a number of objectives aiming towards the general welfare of the tribes. It seeks to collaborate with the national Parishad in resolving the desired and timely issues of the community at regular intervals.

6. EXCLUDED FROM THE ST STATUS AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

The struggle of the Dhangars to be included in the list of Scheduled Tribes continues. The Government of Goa is now earmarked huge sums of money for the development of the Scheduled Tribes. Through panchayats several developmental and welfare schemes are being implemented. However, one can notice the glaring disparity and discontent. In one of my recent visits to the hamlets inhabited by the Velips, Gaonkars, and the Kunbis on the one hand and the hamlets inhabited by the Dhangars I discerned these disparities. Participation in local self governance as Panchs and Sarpanchs the leaders of ST categories are prospering whereas the Dhangars deprived of the special schemes of the government for the Scheduled Tribes. The livelihood patterns of the Dhangars make it difficult for their economic development. Being a pastoral people, majority of the Dhangars shift their habitat in search of fodder for their cattle. Except for the settled Dhangars, others cannot permanently belong to one Village Panchayat.

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