

## The Indigenous Other in India\*

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### I

This article seeks to illustrate the potential advantages of a somewhat broader extra—national, if not global—perspective for investigating India's tribal peoples' relations with the nation-state. History cannot be brushed aside as irrelevant for it is an inalienable part of India's tribal people as much as her caste-based population. A combination of historical factors has brought about this impasse of cultural identity formations, and many elements continue to impede solutions. There are positive ways in which a country can treat its indigenous peoples who are different from the dominant majority. This, in India, has been much in wanting. There are the issues of allowing unencapsulated cultures to adjust themselves to charges, and of having adjustments imposed upon them. Whatever, it is one indigenous entity which will not adapt out of

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\* This article is a preliminary to my main compilation of research work as a visiting scholar at Harvard University, USA. Prof. David Maybury-Lewis, of the Department of Anthropology, was my constant source of support in this endeavour. I also acknowledge the useful discussions I have had with my Departmental colleague, Prof. A.C. Sinha; and the inspiration I have drawn from my former teachers Prof. T.K. Oommen and Prof. Yogendra Singh, whose contributions to sociological literature are reflected in my work.

existence to dominant forces: statist formulations and structures and the so-called 'main stream'. I assert here that the Indian nation-states as an administrative territorial unit of inter-states system is essentially a result of colonialism and must, therefore, base her existence on past colonial history. It is against this very construction that India's indigenous tribals today are recognized by their resistance both to colonialism and statism. Birsa Munda and Zapu Phizo, although removed from one another in time and pace are examples of the continuity of a struggle for the survival of the Munda and Naga identity respectively. The resistance spearheaded by such men was inspired by their conviction that they must conserve their inalienable right of deciding for themselves in their terms, a future. In other words, contrary to the impressions often conveyed by India's dominant majority and the State spokesmen, the juxtapositions between the majority formation and the 'other' are not recent inventions. They are by no means unchanging historical phenomena. Historically, their relationships have revolved around a sense of differentiation and opposition, if not antipathy, of identities and purposes. Despite the fact that a theocratic process of assimilation or Sanskritization had continued, certainly most of the indigenous 'survivors' today never got encapsulated in any sense of the term. Their traditional means of opposition have not been indirect and provoked unending punitive responses from state-based powers of early times right upto the period of the colonial pax Britannica.

Today, unlike other political entities, these tribal communities of India's north-eastern frontier and tiny enclaves within the Indian Union cannot hope to take control of their nation-state. They are always to be marginals in their own lands. The crisis in contemporary India is itself a crisis in the constitutional approach (of quasi Anglo-Saxon model) to resolving one major dilemma of Indian nation-state, i.e., the relationship between the collective rights of minorities, tribal indigenous collectivities with political rights based on the principle of majority rule. Simultaneously, India is confronted by two distinct formations. One is the matured 'internal others' such as the Kashmiris and the Sikhs, and the second, the external others such as the Nagas along with other indigenous formations in various states within the Indian Union.

But here the similarity ends. In the case of the latter, the violence of colonial penetration and present-day military laws in tribal territory is definitely a positivistic approach, set under a law of nature. Thus, it is seen as a consequence of interaction in both the periods, with a people at a different stage of progress independent of its historical context. This would reveal some sort of premeditation in terms of state policy which, more often than not, works in congruence with the so-called mainstream culture. T.K. Oommen is categorical about this cognitive frame. In analysing the shifts in constructing the 'other' Oommen makes a distinction among (a) the equal others, say Bengalis vis-a-vis Punjabis; (b) the internal others, for example, the recalcitrant Sikhs; (c) the deviant others or social misfits, and (d) the outsider-unequal "who are not only cognised as inferior but also defined as external to the society". Despite cul-de-sacs in defining who constitutes the Hindu in sociological persuasion, Oommen contend that an unambiguous collective self-identity is in existence, that 83 per cent of Indian population belong to the Hindu religious collectivity. There is no doubt an ambiguity when variables such as territory, religion, caste and language are invoked to define the peoples within that collectivity; this ambiguity disappears completely, as Oommen continues when it comes to defining the non-Hindus. "They must accept unadulterated Hindu hegemony". (Oommen 1994).

In each mainstream culture there are resilient subcultures, and counter-cultures as well, thereby making for its totality. But there are also juxtaposed cultures that never yielded to the "folk-elite" or "textual-contextual" dimensions of culture in Indian civilization. They have their own intrinsic cultural forms, i.e., what can be made out in the case of the Nagas, Mizos, etc. Nonetheless, a plethora of tribal studies attempted to link them up with cultures such as peasants, caste and region. There is no denying the fact that a lot of tribal groups associated, merged or had symbiotic relations with the majority collectivity sharing the cultural spaces within regional groups. The extension of the Rajput myths in northern India had the same implications for the Koches, Ahoms and the Meitheis in North-East India. Despite asymmetric extensions of ritual hegemony over tribal peoples by these regional entities, the indigenous tribal formations survived without a loss

of core values or cultural identity. An overwhelming majority of those who embraced Islam and Christianity were from the lowest rung of the social ladder, i.e., untouchables and aborigines or non-Brahmanical communities who were also the earliest inhabitants of India. Yet, this deep-rooted indignity is totally ignored and the indigenous people are perceived as the "others".

It would be an oversimplification to assume that "the other" thus constructed is a raw form of manifestation at the cultural level alone. It has been accentuated to a contentious, if not violent, level, when historically unencapsulated tribals converted to Christianity began to assert political rights. Cognitive construction of "the other" is also invariably reflected in the statist programmes by no means accidental or coincidental.

## II

Indigenous Indian tribes are survivors, located in the highlands and 'uncultured' frontiers of Indian civilisation, where they live best and are identified as such where they are found today. Most of those indigenous tribes had no compatible structures through which the emerging valley-based majority collectivity would penetrate. Even if it did, it was confined to exchange largely economic in nature, designed for mutually benefiting the concerned societies, and not for territorial expansion. No indigenous tribe lent itself to ethnocide through alien contact. The culture-bearers of the present majority collectivity entered into exchanges with more advanced tribal formations of a symbiotic nature. Some reciprocating communities like the Sutas were considered friendly, not unlike the Ahom classification of *abori* (hostile) and *bori* (friendly) Nagas, a necessary condition to keep trans-frontier (South and South Asian Valley routes open. In most instances of absorption, the tribal formations underwent a segmentary fission process. Thus it was not possible to destroy tribal polity and ideology (Chattopadhyaya 1968; Kosambi 1975).

Later on, a process of Hinduisation of tribal deities took place all over the sub-continent (Sharma 1975: 9-11; Eschmann et al. 1978). Besides, geneological fabrications made it easy for assimilation of tribal chiefs within the Brahmanical social order as members of the ruling groups having been accorded a Ksatriya

status (Kosambi, 1975). The Ahoms, Meitheis, Kacharis, et al, of North-East India came under this formulation. We notice that already during the medieval period, the Bhils of Malwa had established advanced political systems as also the Minas and the Kolis. In Chotanagpur, *parahas* (village confederacies) came up under the chiefs. In pre-colonial Naga Hills, Khonoma confederacy had been established under secular *kemevos* (big men). By the 17th century A.D., the Mundas had orbited out of the reciprocity stage of kinship form and assumed power over a large part of Chotanagpur. The Gonds of Madhya Pradesh developed an advanced form of political structure, the *gondwana*. In the eastern highlands of India, the Khasi *syiemships* evolved, closely approximated by the *anghdoms* of the Konyak Nagas. At various levels, Brahmanic and non-Brahmanic cultures impinged on each other. However, a pathy contends, this was more on account of the need for exclusiveness being developed by locally dominant social groups in relation to the 'commoner' members of the same communities by association with neighbouring Hindu kings, than reasons of religion (Pathy, 1984: 55). There was also a welter of small predatory chiefdoms, the Sailo Chiefs of the Mizos for instance, and numerous conical clan structured politics like those of the Aos, Apatanis, Lothas, and some others, down to types such as the Chencus. Unlike the kingdoms of the lowlands, it was next to impossible of the Hindu culture and society to penetrate into other political formations (Pathy, *ibid*: 56). The process of encapsulation of tribal domains was never complete even until the Mughal times. The Gondwana, Deogarh, Kherla and the Nagabansi dynasties continued their 'sovereign status'. Tributes were exacted from them by the Mughals, and they were marginally brought within the orbit of centralised politics (Jain, 1979). So also was the case of the Bhil region (Malcolm, 1880: 1-57).

During the colonial expansion a number of resistance movements were precipitated. They were directed against the white men's penetration and their instruments of repression. Thus, the Santals revolted against landlords in 1855-57, 1847-76, 1882 and 1885. The Mundas took up resistance in 1789, 1808, 1811, 1818, 1820, 1832, 1857, 1887-90 and 1895-97, the Oraons in 1895-97, the Kolis in 1824, 1839 and 1844-46, the Kols in 1831-32. In the

North-East, the Jaintia rebellion, Aarong Naga (Zemi) uprising, the Nongkhlaw Syiem's war with the British, etc., are a few examples. The subalternist approach to these movements would have us understand that the symbolic rejection of higher cultures alongside militancy, served the dual purpose of defining for themselves an exclusive culture and political identity. Culture reinforces political identity of sorts and, thus, the two factors cannot be bifurcated.

The process of encapsulation of the Indian model can be discerned at two levels of abstractions: The peninsular tribes and frontier highlanders. The former had a long historical persistence of tribal "enclaves" within the Indian mainland, in spite of over a thousand years of penetration by caste society and Sanskritization process. These are not, as Omvedt rightly points out, simply remnants of a superseded historical stage, doomed to disappear eventually. Rather, they are living poles of Indian culture and society itself, representing values and styles of life suppressed and subordinated by dominant Brahmanism but meaningful and important to the oppressed groups (Omvedt 1993).

On the other hand, the frontier tribals mostly located in the North-East remained outside the reach of dominant religious systems. We take recourse to India's colonial history to discern the relationships between the Indian government and the tribes. In the Government of India Act (enforced in April 1937), Section 311, a distinction was made between British India and India. The former meant the territories under the Governor's provinces and the Chief Commissioners' provinces, whereas India was used in a wider sense to include such provinces together with princely states and tribal areas which fell within the geographical boundary of India. In the same Section of the same Act, the tribal areas were defined as the areas along the frontier of India or in Baluchistan which were not part of British India, of Burma or any Indian State, or of any foreign state.

### III

The relations between indigenous tribals and the state revolve around the fundamental asymmetry of the groups involved - a people and a state. In the Anglo-Saxon model of the Indian state,

the tribals merely constitute a small self-regulating community notified as Scheduled Tribes "for the purpose of the constitution only" that is, to identify "whom to be developed". In this sense, the categorisation of the "Scheduled Tribes" is neither an integral part of the political system nor designed to be permanent. Consequently, there has been an increasing erosion of the intrinsic rights of the tribals over their land and resources. In other words, it is a constitutional right that they enjoy by virtue of paternal dependent relations between the Indian state and the tribes therein.

Admittedly, many positive aspects cannot be denied in the creation of "tribal" states for "safeguarding" their traditional rights and customs, as in Nagaland, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, etc. They were established with extraordinary emphasis on the 'humanitarian' motives, and are considered a sort of social welfare enclaves. But militarisation and special laws have also become inseparable ingredients of maintaining such 'enclaves'. Nagaland and her people enjoy special safeguards under Article 371A of the Constitution of India. But the notion that indigenous institutions must be designed to fit into the existing system of government based on electoral politics is one thing, and working consciously articulated adjustments to recognise and accommodate their inherent right to self-governance is another matter. The aforesaid article has not addressed the main issue of collective right, i.e., it has said nothing about the development of a Naga state cast in its own traditional control system. Numerous agreements with tribal representatives, notably the Akbar Hydari Agreement of 1947 or the Sixteen-Point Agreement, projected an intention of increasing indigenous political rights. However, according to powers to indigenous bodies like the NNC or nay subsequent bodies was not the original intention. In effect, enforcement of their rights over land and resources is not to come under a native forum or institution. A full exercise of Naga rights would mean collective right over rights already in existence. This, to my mind, in the main issue that represents the single conceptual block to solving the Naga question and, by extension, the problems of other indigenous tribes.

This issue is linked with the idea of self-determination. Of late, this term has become popular among scholars and human rights activists. It is not an abstract principle among the indigenous

peoples, but a practical extension of historical necessity, to preserve and survive. As such, its interpretation found among present-day militant organisations will be misleading. The crisis in Indian society is itself a crisis in the constitutional approach to resolving one major dilemma of simultaneous challenges given by two distinct formations: one is the 'matured internal others' and the other is the marginalised yet traditionally unencapsulated peoples. It is important, therefore, to discriminate between these two types of assertions. The basic principle underlying this self-determination is the inherent power and authority of the indigenous tribal politics that always existed and never at any point of time relinquished. Again, an individual tribal member is subjected to his respective tribal laws, despite the fact that 'tribe' in administrative parlance is merely a category, a matter of statistical aggregate identified by attributes. But since most of the benefits and disabilities enjoyed by them stem from their membership in a self-governing entity, as a 'group' in sociological sense, therefore, collective right and use becomes paramount and indivisible. In other words, the conception of a tribal 'person' is individual between code and substance, as opposed to the Anglo-Saxon individual, atomistic and reinforced by enfranchisement to pursue his rights. Corollary to this is the unfortunate dilution of native power structure through enfranchisement at all levels of government, designed to usher in democratic forms of governance, as though democracy is an alien concept to indigenous systems. In Nagaland or Meghalaya, tribals exist within political units by virtue of the statist formula and not by the logic of inherent right to government. It is not held here that representivity at any level—District Council, electoral constituencies, etc.—is enimical to them. It is that representivity poses problems for collective indigenous identity, if it is assigned political status rather than an achieved state of status in their own cast. They all belonged to reserved constituencies for SC/ST. This paradox of representivity stems from the basic legal concept of the nation-state. This is where our idea of self-determination would be located, defined and recast to address the issue of collective legitimate authority of indigenous tribals.

The idea of indigenous government at the moment remains at the level of a value-notion at least in a majority of tribal groups.

But this is not so in the case of the Nagas. They have, cultural and land rights, customary law and usages acknowledged as the basis for preservation *albeit* an indigenous instrument of control. The central issue here is not preservation of culture in its narrow sense. If it were, the native polity, representivity, land and mineral resources would not be a problem. Their culture in the broad sense is inseparable from the land, polity and kinship relations. Because, their culture is not merely the sum total of the varieties of menhirs, *Bos frontalis*, spears and expressions or even languages. It is of no use to ignore the fact that land, polity and kinship are not autonomous to each other. Instead it could have recognised indigenous governments with jurisdiction over their own 'territories' but within the nation-state. A model close to this was a part of the Akbar Hydari Agreement with the NNC in 1947. Initially the NNC proposed an idea of having broader issues linked with the Union of India, and not with Burma or China, or with any other nation-state. Thus, the Agreement envisaged, among other things, an indigenous form of tribal government under the NNC. But later on, the state went back on its words, claiming that such specific agreements drawn up had no legal standing, nor were binding on the state. Thus, the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution was promulgated undermining a number of indigenous institutions. It devalued the remarkable Khasi syiemships which were considered as native states then. A very belated study by a three-member commission of the government on the functioning of elected District Autonomous Councils of Assam had noted the marginalisation of indigenous decision-making bodies. These Councils are, at any rate, transitory in nature, and 'developmental' in perspective. As such, they have failed to address the core issues involved. Since autonomous councils are not reflective of indigenous politics, wherever they are accepted in principle as dictated by political expediency, they have simply not taken off. Irked by the delay in implementation of the Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council the age-old Jharkhand tribal lands will be embroiled again; some may think that it provides evidence of the perfidy. This only serves to heighten the peoples' sense of collective consciousness of being distinct but certainly not a feeling of alienation from the mainstream.

Development is invariably associated with these autonomous councils, more in the line of municipalities. Here none of the traditional criteria such as polity and solidarity or cultural affiliations are associated. This mismatched plan, inimical to the people, is amply testified by B.D. Sharma (1984) as simply inapplicable to traditionally bound tribal areas. These plans are invariably influenced by bureaucratic self-interests and by states' definition of tribal 'interests'. Coming as it is from a different paradigmatic view, Pathy gives a critical evaluation of the often quoted Article 46 of the Indian Constitution which reads:

The state shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.

Here he contends that an autonomy of the state, over and above the classes in society, is unimaginable in both historical and logical sense. Further, quoting N.K. Bose's observations, Pathy continues: "One particular section among the people cannot be freed from all forms of exploitation as long as their co-workers who do not belong to their caste or tribe continue in their old conditions" (1984: 166-68). In a different phraseology, differentiation being a constant factor, the indigenous tribals must then emerge as fully developed individuals through their district councils, or institutions provided for, but on the deathbed of their own social institutions and culture.

#### IV

Alongside the globalization of world economy, a certain degree of voluntary limitation of state sovereignty is envisaged. There is also an emerging concern, almost alarmist, as to the nature of cultural adoption or of a global mainstream culture of Western persuasion overtaking India. The indigenous tribal cultures have a right to survive as much as 'mainstream' culture in this context. Culture, to my mind, is not simply folklores, dances, costumes, art, literature, customs and food; it is about how people make sense of this world and what they do to adapt to it. A

cultural pluralism is not only pragmatic but morally justified. But if a mainstream culture of dominant collectivity is the goal alongside a positivist statist structure, it means forcing people to abandon their specificities. This argument enjoins what Oommen (1986) had contended that, through cultural expansionism, the dominant collectivity attempts to assimilate all the other collectivities; but India cannot hope to build an authentic nation-state by creating a cultural mainstream reducing numerous collectivities of the periphery to the status of marginals. We can only have a nation-state with multiple cultural centres (Oommen, 1986).

At another level of extrapolation, Yogendra Singh observes the implications of the exteriority of global change taking place in and around us. Though creative domains of the culture lie in the spontaneous and innovative responses, both at individual and collective levels, and cannot be strait jacketed as it were, a cultural policy is in keeping with the changing times. But such a policy 'must take into account the need to enrich and protect local, regional cultural values, practices and identities in the process of the exposure to mega-institutions of mass communication and marketization' and puts an emphasis on plurality, identity and continuity as essential elements for quality cultural development and social change in India (Singh, 1994).

## V

The concerns of indigenous people of their rights have increasingly caught the attention of international forums, notably the United Nations. What exactly is an indigenous population?<sup>1</sup>

Since the early 1950's the International Labour Organization had been using the terms indigenous and tribal populations. This prompted certain governments in South Asia, in particular Bangladesh and India, to take the view that the UN discussion on this question has no relevance to them since it would be impossible to describe any one population group as more indigenous. The official position reads:<sup>2</sup>

It will be appreciated that in an ancient racial melting pot like India, no sociologists, historians or anthropologists are in a position to say with any degree

of certainty that the scheduled tribes are the only indigenous populations. Further, there is no certainty as to who displaced whom and which of the races in India are today descendants of the conquered or the conqueror.

This was an observation made on a working definition (which contained two parts) which was later adopted by the UN working group on indigenous populations when it was formed in 1982.<sup>3</sup> The first part reads:

Indigenous populations are composed of the existing descendants of the peoples who inhabit the present territory of a country wholly or partially at the time when persons of different culture or ethnic origin arrived there from other parts of the world, overcome them and, by conquest, settlement or other means, reduced them to a non-dominant or colonial situation; who today live more in conformity with their particular social, economic and cultural customs and traditions than with the institutions of the country of which they now form a part, under a State structure which incorporates mainly the national, social and cultural characteristics of other segments of the population which are predominant.

The second part makes the position of Indian tribes more clear which reads:

Although they have not suffered conquest or colonization, isolated or marginal groups existing in the country should also be regarded as covered by the notion of 'indigenous populations' for the following reasons:

- (a) They are descendants of groups which were in the territory of the country at the time when other groups of different cultures or ethnic origins arrived there;
- (b) Precisely because of their isolation from other segments of the country's population they have

preserved almost intact the customs and traditions of their ancestors which are similar to those characterized as indigenous;

- (c) They are, even if only formally, placed under a state structure which incorporates national, social and cultural characteristics alien to theirs.

As of now in the UN, a working group on indigenous populations is reviewing national developments and identifying new international standard. Issues pertaining to indigenous, aboriginal or tribals are frequently debated in international human rights meetings under other agenda items, that include rights relating to the administration of justice, religious intolerance, economic, social and cultural issues, development and self-determination. The Vienna Declaration of 1993 drawn up by the World Conference on Human Rights reads:

The World Conference recognises the inherent dignity and the unique contribution of indigenous people to the development and plurality of society and strongly reaffirms the commitment of the international community to their economic, social and cultural well-being and their enjoyment of the fruits of sustainable development .... States should, in accordance with international law take concerted positive steps, to ensure respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people and recognize the value and diversity of their distinct identities, cultures and social organization.

The indigenous peoples<sup>4</sup> supported by the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) insist on being called 'peoples' rather than populations. But state governments associate this term with self-determination and by implication, seeking right of independence. The former again prefers the term indigenous 'territories'<sup>5</sup> over 'lands' to describe their claims which are construed as demand for sovereignty. Although statist definitions still hold sway, the core idea of the right of indigenous peoples has obtained international currency. Moreover, an international

competency over the rights has been clinched; earlier it was an exclusive domain of state sovereignty. A cluster of related rights are now being discussed; some are already resolved. These rights include political, religious, cultural, educational, land and resource, treaty rights, right of a self-defined indigenous community. All these will determine the terms of delimiting statist interpretation. One concept that creates intense acrimonious debate now is the term self-determination.<sup>6</sup> Opposition to this term is often argued in terms of State sovereignty and national integrity, terms which invoke absolutism. It suggests the indivisible quality of a nation. In discussions of self-determination, the utility of the ideal is accepted, but the perceived threat to the nation-state is a major sticky point. This threat perception is often placed in opposition to the claim of self-determination. Then the question becomes not whether pluralism can be accommodated but whether the state can tolerate separation or secession.

This demand for self-determination is an extreme political expression of cultural identity. However, demand of a state for every people is a practical impossibility. But the concept gaining currency at the level of indigenous tribals must not engender an alarmist perspective. The term is a relative one. New political forms which offer autonomy, but not sovereignty, are difficult to formulate, since any new solution bears the burden of achieving acceptance without a history to give its legitimacy. But this should not generate a conservatism in solutions as most of the tribal movements in India and elsewhere recognise alternative possibilities in their demands for new institutional arrangements. Once this point is clear, achieving a plural/multi-cultural society is not a distant possibility.

**TABLE 1. List of Administrative Units having Tribal Population Under in the Seven Tribal Regions in India**

**I. CENTRAL SOUTHERN REGION**

1. Madhya Pradesh (Southern) (i) Bastar (ii) Durg (iii) Rajnandgaon (iv) Raipur (v) Mandla (vi) Balaghat (vii) Seoni (viii) Jabalpur (ix) Narsinghapur (x) Chhindwara (xi) Betul and (xii) Hoshangabad
2. Maharashtra (Eastern) (i) Bhandara (ii) Chandrapur (iii) Nagpur (iv) Wardha (v) Yevatal (vi) Amravati (vii) Akola (viii) Nanded (ix) Parbhani and (x) Osmanabad
3. Orissa (Southern) (i) Koraput (ii) Puri (iii) Ganjam (iv) Kandhamal (v) Bolangir (vi) Baudh Khondmal (vii) Dhenkanal and (viii) Cuttack
4. Andhra Pradesh

**II. CENTRAL NORTHERN REGION**

1. Madhya Pradesh (Eastern) (i) Surguja (ii) Raigarh (iii) Bilaspur (iv) Sidhi (v) Shahdol (vi) Satna (vii) Rewa (viii) Sagar (ix) Damoh (x) Panna (xi) Chhattarpur and (xii) Tikamgarh
2. Orissa (Northern) (i) Sambalpur (ii) Sundergarh (iii) Keonjhar (iv) Mayurbhanj and (v) Balasore
3. Bihar
4. West Bengal (Western) (i) Malda (ii) Murshidabad (iii) Nadia (iv) 24 Parganas (v) Howrah (vi) Calcutta (vii) Hooghly (viii) Burdwan (ix) Birbhum (x) Bankura (xi) Midnapore and (xii) Purulia

**III. WESTERN REGION**

1. Madhya Pradesh (Western) (i) Bhind (ii) Morena (iii) Gwalior (iv) Datia (v) Shivpuri (vi) Guna (vii) Vidisha (viii) Raisen (ix) Sehore

(x) Bhopal (xi) Raigarh (xii) Shajapur  
(xiii) Ujjain (xiv) Dewas (xv) Khan-  
dwa (xvi) Indore (xvii) Khargone  
(xviii) Dhar (xix) Jhabua (xx) Ratlam  
and (xxi) Mandasaur

2. Maharashtra (Western)

(i) Buldhana (ii) Sholapur (iii) Sangli  
(iv) Jalgaon (v) Dhulia (vi) Auran-  
gabad (vii) Ahmednagar (viii) Poona  
(ix) Ratnagiri (x) Kolhapur  
(xi) Kolaba (xii) Thane (xiii) Nasik  
(xiv) Greater Bombay (xv) Bhir and  
(xvi) Satara

3. Rajasthan

4. Gujarat

5. Dadra and Nagar Haveli

6. Goa, Daman and Diu

IV. NORTH-EASTERN REGION

1. Arunachal Pradesh

2. Assam

3. Meghalaya

4. Manipur

5. Nagaland

6. Tripura

7. West Bengal (North)

(i) Darjeeling (ii) Jalpaiguri (iii) Co-  
och-Bihar and (iv) West Dinajpur

V. NORTH-WESTERN REGION

1. Uttar Pradesh

2. Himachal Pradesh

VI. SOUTHERN POCKETS

1. Tamil Nadu

2. Kerala

3. Mysore

VII. OCEANIC GROUPS

1. Andaman & Nicobar Islands

2. Lakshadweep Islands

TABLE 2. Major Tribal Communities and their Population in 1971

Sl. No.	Scheduled Tribe	State/U.T. where scheduled	Population
1		2	3
1.	Billala, Bhil, Patelia	Gujarat	15,01,756
		Madhya Pradesh	16,18,786
		Maharashtra	6,78,882
		Rajasthan	14,31,021
		Others	914
			<b>52,31,359</b>
2.	Koya, Gond	Andhra Pradesh	4,42,715
		Bihar	48,869
		Madhya Pradesh	37,69,547
		Maharashtra	3,31,841
		Orissa	5,58,435
		Others	2,224
			<b>51,53,631</b>
3.	Santal	Bihar	18,01,304
		Orissa	4,52,953
		Tripura	2,222
		West Bengal	13,76,980
		Others	36,33,459
4.	Oraon	Bihar	8,76,218
		Madhya Pradesh	3,70,652
		Orissa	1,64,619
		West Bengal	2,91,173
		Others	1
			<b>17,02,663</b>
5.	Mina	Madhya Pradesh	1,182
		Rajasthan	15,37,142
			<b>15,38,324</b>
6.	Munda	Bihar	7,23,166
		Orissa	2,22,117
		West Bengal	1,98,701
		Others	19,354
			<b>11,63,338</b>

1	2	3
7. Khond, Kondh	Andhra Pradesh	34,375
	Orissa	8,69,965
	Others	7,495
		<b>9,11,835</b>
8. Boro	Assam	<b>6,10,459</b>
9. Kolidhor, Koli Koli Malhar, Koli Mahada	Gujarat	59,825
	Maharashtra	4,82,996
	Others	4,460
		<b>5,47,281</b>
10. Ho	Bihar	5,05,172
	Orissa	31,916
	West Bengal	1,038
		<b>5,38,126</b>
11. Savar, Saora, Sewar	Andhra Pradesh	81,227
	Madhya Pradesh	87,333
	Orissa	3,42,757
	Others	8,545
		<b>5,19,862</b>
12. Khasi, Khasia	Meghalaya	4,56,674
	Others	7,195
		<b>4,63,869</b>
13. Varli	Gujarat	1,26,108
	Maharashtra	2,93,931
	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	41,017
	Others	493
		<b>4,61,549</b>
14. Kol, Kolha, Kolaha	Madhya Pradesh	1,37,743
	Maharashtra	58
	Orissa	3,22,815
		<b>4,60,616</b>
15. Naga	Nagaland	4,45,266
	Others	9,355
		<b>4,54,621</b>

1	2	3
16. Kokni, Kokna	Gujarat	1,46,768
	Maharashtra	2,64,009
	Others	10,106
		<b>4,20,883</b>
17. Kawar	Madhya Pradesh	4,10,743
	Others	6,996
		<b>4,17,739</b>
18. Dubla	Gujarat	3,88,589
	Maharashtra	12,474
	Others	7,163
		<b>4,08,226</b>
19. Gamit	Gujarat	2,76,591
	Maharashtra	1,28,831
	Others	9
		<b>4,05,431</b>
20. Dhodia	Gujarat	3,58,773
	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	10,270
	Others	9,936
		<b>3,78,979</b>
21. Garo	Meghalaya	3,24,197
	Others	12,718
		<b>3,36,915</b>
22. Naikda	Gujarat	2,34,999
	Mysore (Karnataka)	68,632
	Others	9,387
		<b>3,13,018</b>
23. Shabar, Lodha	Orissa	2,44,235
	West Bengal	45,906
		<b>2,90,141</b>
24. Korku	Madhya Pradesh	2,07,912
	Maharashtra	67,742
		<b>2,75,654</b>

1	2	3
25. Kharia	Bihar	1,27,002
	Madhya Pradesh	23,228
	Maharashtra	3,827
	Orissa	1,20,483
		<b>2,74,540</b>
26. Miri	Assam	2,59,551
27. Mizo, Lushai	Assam	2,42,689
	Others	14,265
		<b>2,56,954</b>
28. Tripuri	Tripura	2,50,545
29. Kachari, Dimassa Sonwal	Assam	2,37,963
	Mizoram	5,163
		<b>2,43,126</b>
30. Yenadis	Andhra Pradesh	2,39,403
31. Saharia	Madhya Pradesh	2,05,427
	Rajasthan	26,939
		<b>2,32,366</b>
32. Parja, Paraja, Porja	Andhra Pradesh	12,357
	Orissa	2,06,699
	Others	8,394
		<b>2,27,450</b>
33. Bharia, Bhumiya	Madhya Pradesh	1,47,071
	Maharashtra	61,900
	Others	11
		<b>2,08,982</b>
34. Kisan	Bihar	16,903
	Orissa	1,80,025
	West Bengal	716
		<b>1,97,644</b>
35. Kharwar, Khariwar	Bihar	1,39,212
	Madhya Pradesh	62,909
	Others	3,368
		<b>2,05,489</b>

1	2	3
36. Bhattada	Orissa	1,94,842
37. Konda, Dora, Dhora, Kapu, Reddi	Andhra Pradesh Others	1,82,459 10,602 1,93,061
38. Tathawa	Gujarat Others	1,92,648 172 1,92,820
39. Dhanka	Gujarat Maharashtra Others	1,38,585 53,649 157 1,92,391
40. Bhuiya	Orissa	1,88,212
41. Mikir	Assam Others	1,77,195 5,596 1,82,791
42. Halba, Halbi	Madhya Pradesh Maharashtra	1,73,374 7,205 1,80,579
43. Baiga	Bihar Madhya Pradesh Others	1,807 1,76,934 99 1,78,840
44. Thakur	Maharashtra	1,78,805
45. Choudhari	Gujarat	1,77,155
46. Yerukulas	Andhra Pradesh	1,62,560
47. Malayali	Tamil Nadu	1,59,426
48. Kathodi	Gujarat Maharashtra Others	2,939 1,46,785 579 1,50,303

1	2	3
49. Rabha	Assam West Bengal	1,38,630 2,466 <b>1,41,096</b>
50. Sagali	Andhra Pradesh	<b>1,32,464</b>
51. Mahli, Mahali	Bihar Orissa West Bengal	74,452 9,617 48,245 <b>1,32,314</b>
52. Pardhan	Andhra Pradesh Madhya Pradesh Maharashtra	11,407 69,633 50,910 <b>1,31,950</b>
53. Bathudi	Bihar Orissa	880 1,30,792 <b>1,31,672</b>
54. Lohara, Lohra	Bihar West Bengal	1,16,828 2,388 <b>1,19,216</b>
55. Kora	Bihar Orissa West Bengal	20,804 3,961 93,586 <b>1,18,351</b>
56. Irular	Kerala Tamil Nadu	14,852 89,025 <b>1,03,877</b>

Notes:

1. Indigenous and tribal representatives claimed preference to 'peoples' that 'populations' in their context is degrading and reflect neither reality nor their conceptualization of themselves. There is a terminological flux in the UN system.
2. Government of India, Comments and observations with regard to the country monograph on India. Statement to the UN Working Group on Indigenous Population, August 1983.
3. UNESCO, Commission on Human Rights, Preliminary report on the study of the problem of discrimination against indigenous populations, Chapter II Para 17(E/CN.4/Sub.2/L. 566).
4. The ILO Conference which met to revise the 'paternalistic' convention 107 in 1989, compromised on the use of 'peoples' on condition that 'It is understood by the committee that the use of the term 'peoples' in this convention has no implications as regards the right to self-determination as understood in international law. *Report of the Committee on Convention 107*, published in ILO, *Provisional Record*, No. 25/7 Para 81, 76th Session, 1989.
5. In the ILO again, the concept 'territories' (Art. 13(2)) was deemed to apply to provisions governing right to participate in the use, management and, 'wherever possible' to benefits of appurtenant natural resources (Art. 15)... clearly falling short of indigenous demands *supra* at 25/3-4, Para 14.; 25/16-23 Para 109-163.
6. The concept of self-determination first appeared in an international legal instrument in the declaration on granting independence to colonial countries and peoples. The declaration which was adopted in the UN General Assembly in 1960 declares that: "All peoples have the right to self-determination, by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development". General Assembly Resolutions, 1514, GAOR 15th Session, Supp. No. 16, at 66-67, U.N. DOC A/4684, 1960.

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