

State of Adivasis in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh

What is the issue?

\n\n

Despite a significant Adivasi population, the states of Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh fail to give the needed attention to the communities.

\n\n

What is the concern?

\n\n

\n

- Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh are among the four Indian states (other than North-eastern states) with more than 20% Adivasi population.

\n

- Chhattisgarh, in fact, has an Adivasi population of more than 30%.

\n

- However, the Scheduled Tribes (STs) have hardly found a mention in the election campaigns in the two states.

\n

- Along with the Muslims, the Adivasis seem to be the main losers in “New India”.

\n

\n\n

How is Adivasis' present condition?

\n\n

\n

- In both states, the Adivasis lag behind other social groups and are losing ground, economically and educationally.

\n

- **Income** - The India Human Development Survey, in 2011-12, highlights their backwardness.

\n

- The annual per capita income of the STs in Chhattisgarh represented 51% of the per capita income of the non-STs.

\n

- This is a significant decrease from 2004-2005, when this proportion was 68%.
\n
- In Madhya Pradesh, this proportion has fallen from 65 to 55%.
\n
- Another such state is Gujarat where STs' annual per capita income represents only 35% of that of the others.
\n
- Also, in all three states, STs are poorer than SCs (Scheduled Castes).
\n
- In Gujarat, their per capita income is 45% of that of SCs; in Chhattisgarh, 58% and Madhya Pradesh, 75%.
\n
- **Education** - The appalling socio-economic condition of the Adivasis is a reflection of their lack of education.
\n
- Only 1.7% of STs in the two states are graduates.
\n
- Data suggests that quotas are not being filled in the university system as well as in the public sector.
\n
- **Economy** - The economic situation of the Adivasis is, in fact, closely related to their under-representation among salaried people.
\n
- In Chhattisgarh, only 6.2% of Adivasis are salaried.
\n
- In MP, only 3.5% were salaried in 2011-12, compared to 4.9% in 2004-05.
\n
- 34% of Adivasis in Chhattisgarh and 46% in MP are "labourers", which means that they till the land of others.
\n
- **Political representation** of Adivasis is also not in proportion to their population in the two states.
\n
- **Vulnerability** - According to the Statistical Profile of STs in India (2013), 15% of the Adivasis in the country live in MP.
\n
- But according to the Crime Bureau, more than 20% of the crimes against STs are committed in the state, including 40% of the murders.
\n

\n\n

How are they in other states?

\n\n

- \n
- The fortunes of the STs in Chhattisgarh and MP as well as in Gujarat stand in stark contrast to their conditions in South India.
- \n
- This is not because South Indian states are richer, but because they are more egalitarian.
- \n
- In Karnataka, in 2011-12, the annual per capita income of STs represents 80% of that of the other groups, up from 62% in 2004-05.
- \n
- In undivided Andhra Pradesh, it has jumped from 76% to 86% in the same period.
- \n
- In both states, the annual per capita income of STs is either equivalent to (Andhra) or more (Karnataka) than that of SCs, and even of Muslims.
- \n
- Education is a key reason for this, as the percentage of graduates among the Adivasis is 2.6% in Andhra and 3.4% in Karnataka.
- \n
- These are proportions equal to that of SCs and superior to that of Muslims.
- \n

\n\n

How are their forest rights conditions?

\n\n

- \n
- In both states, the Forest Rights Act (FRA), that provides legal rights to Adivasis over their forestlands, has not been fully implemented.
- \n
- More than 40% of them operate “marginal holdings” and their holdings are shrinking.
- \n
- MP has the largest forest cover in the country, but Adivasis here have found it very difficult to obtain land titles.
- \n
- More than 60% of the forest rights’ claims in the state have been dismissed.
- \n
- Also, FRA allows for a maximum claim of four hectares (ha).
- \n
- But the average size of the land distributed under the act in MP is about 1.45 ha.
- \n
- In Chhattisgarh, Adivasis have filed more than 8,55,000 claims over land

since 2006, but 53% of this has been rejected.

\n

- The average land distributed here is a mere 0.85 hectare, while the Adivasis are entitled to 4 ha.

\n

- In a contravention of the spirit of the FRA, Section 165 of the Chhattisgarh Land Code Act has been amended.

\n

- This is to facilitate the acquisition of tribal land by the government.

\n

- Given their proportion, social justice and inclusiveness concerns, it is fair that the governments take note of Adivasi development and empowerment seriously.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: Indian Express

\n

