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## TRIBAL ISSUES IN INDIA: A STUDY

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**Abstract:** *The tribal of India are faced with a number of problems among which the following are noted. The tribal of India are in a way physically separated from the rest of population. It is problematic for them to establish relationships with others, and hence, socially they are far away from the civilized world. This kind of physical as well as social separation or privacy has contributed to various other problems. The tribal culture is entirely different from the way of life of the civilized people. The tribal fail to comprehend the civilized people, their customs and practices, principles and outlooks and so on. They are apprehensive towards the civilized people. They are clinging obstinately to their customs and behaviors.*

**Keywords:** *Tribal Problems, Civilised People, British Rule, Customs and Traditions*

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### INTRODUCTION

During the British rule, some foreign Christian missionaries made an effort to propagate their religion in some of the tribal areas, mostly in the North-Eastern provinces. They even tried to enforce their culture on them. The cultural gap between the civilized and the tribal people is approaching in the way of the assimilation and integration of the tribal people into the mainstream of the countrywide life of India.

### DISCUSSION

The tribal have their own social difficulties also. They are old-style and custom-bound. They have converted the victims of superstitious beliefs, outmoded and meaningless observances and harmful routines. Child marriage, infanticide, homicide, animal sacrifice, exchange of wives, black magic and other harmful practices are still found between them. They trust in ghosts and spirits. They have keen desire to maintain all these practices in general, and their distinct tribal character. Hence it is said that the tribal are the tribesmen first, the tribesmen last and the tribesmen all the time.

The tribal societies are economically the poorest people of India. Mainstream of them live below the poverty line. The tribal economy is based on farming of the simplest type. The chief economic difficulties of the tribal are explained below.

(i) **Exploitation:** The innocence, illiteracy and helplessness of the tribal are exploited by the strangers. The British policy, in specific, had led to ruthless exploitation of the tribal in numerous ways as it favored the zamindars, landlords, money-lenders, forest contractors and excise, revenue and police officers.

(ii) **Unprofitable Agriculture:** About 90% of the tribal are busy in farming and most of them are landless and practice shifting agriculture. They necessity to be helped in adopting new methods of farming. The tribal possess uneconomic holdings because of which their crop yield is very less. A very small proportion of the population contributes in occupational happenings in the secondary and tertiary sectors.

(iii) **Problems of land ownership:** A good percentage of the land in the tribal areas has been legally transferred to non-tribal. Tribal request that this land should be reverted to them. In fact the tribal had earlier enjoyed much freedom to use the forest and hunt their animals. They are passionately devoted to the forests for they believe that their gods, spirits live in forests. The tribal who are “deprived” of their rights to the land and forest have reacted sharply to the limitations imposed by the government on their old-style rights.

(iv) **Unemployment and Underemployment:** A huge number of tribal young men and women are either unemployed or underemployed. They are unfortunate for they are not able to get jobs that can keep them engaged throughout the year. They require to be helped in finding secondary source of income by emerging animal husbandry, poultry farming, handicrafts, handloom weaving, etc.

### CONCLUSION

The “divide and rule” strategy adopted by the British did a lot of injury to the tribal community of India. The British had covered their administrative patterns in tribal areas and deprived the tribal of their old-style methods of interacting with individuals. The “Criminal Tribes Act” which the British had presented gave an impression that the tribal were either “criminals” or “anti-social beings”.

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