

# Self-determination: A crucial step for Tribal Well-being (TWB).

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## Introduction:

Under the 6th Schedule(Agnihotri, 1994), the Indian Constitution gives special powers to the Governor for tribal socio-economic development as a special provision under Article-244(2) and the Article-275(1) much before the UN gave rights to self-determination under Article 1(2) of the United Nations Covenant on Human Rights (1966). In India after 7 decades of independence, the well-being of Indian tribes has been getting worse every passing year and Indian tribes have endured worse economic conditions each year, and economic inequality has reached at historic highs.

The sixth schedule of the constitutions of India contains provisions related to the Administration of Tribal Areas in the States of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram and it provides for the administration of certain tribal areas as autonomous entities. Before the provisions of the sixth schedule as provided in the Articles 244(2) and 275(1) of the Indian Constitution, it was Government of India Act-1935 which divided these areas (tracts) into “excluded” and “partially excluded” areas. The ‘excluded’ areas were an enclave or a definite tract of country inhabited by a compact tribal population while ‘partially excluded’ areas tribal population was mixed up with the rest of communities and tribal were substantially enough in number. All the power vested with Governor in respect of ‘excluded areas’ while for ‘partially excluded’ areas it was with council of ministers.

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Post-independence, a committee was set up to report the scheme for administration of these areas (eventually known as Autonomous Districts) to constitutional assembly. The committee recommended the scheme for administration of tribal areas to constitutional assembly based on three core factors viz. (1) the distinct social customs and tribal organizations of the different people as well as their religious beliefs; (2) fear of exploitation by the people of the plains on account of the latter’s superior organization and experience of business; and (3) the fear that unless suitable financial provisions were made, or powers were conferred upon the local councils themselves. The committee further, felt that assimilation of people of these areas with rest of the country would not take place by sudden breaking up of tribal institutions (Agnihotri, 1994). Its aims to safeguard the identity, culture, social customs, management of forests (not reserve forest), irrigation under the para-3, while power have been entrusted to autonomous district councils to establish primary schools, dispensaries, market, road etc under para-6, as well as revenue collection and levy of duties & taxes under para-8.

In this paper, an economic analysis of tribes has been carried out based on the two schemes of the Government of India under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs with special reference to Madhya Pradesh which comes under 5<sup>th</sup> scheduled of the constitution and an attempt has been made to understand the comparative analysis of the state of Meghalaya wherein 6<sup>th</sup> Scheduled applied as both states having same (5<sup>th</sup> Rank) ranking in multidimensional poverty across the Indian States. NITI Aayog has released the MPI Baseline report (primarily based upon three indicators, namely health, education and standard of living) based on NFHS report of 2015-16 and the head-count ratio for both Meghalaya and MP are 32.67% and 36.65% respectively (AAYOG, 2021).

## Review of literature:

The UN Declaration on the rights of Indigenous people emphasizes self-determination. It states that Indigenous people should have autonomy in governing internal local affairs as well as ways and means for financing their autonomous functions. The declaration promotes self-government as a matter of justice.

Centralisation versus Decentralisation policies for economic development of tribal and its cost benefit analysis need to review. In decentralisation approach of development have benefits of holding public officials accountable and local problem need local solution by framing local rules, regulations based on context and contents. Recently, there is wave of vocal for local in the era of ICT so that local talent may emerge out for the Glocal benefits. In centralised approach, public authority is less responsible and has less information / knowledge of local heterogeneity and diversity as well as preferences and resources. Moreover, the transaction costs of dealing with local governments tend to be lower than those of dealing with bureaucracies of centralized governments.

However, centralized control can generate benefits through scale and uniformity because a single set of rules - for example constitutions, by-laws and uniform-codes- govern private commerce. Apart from that central government have access of more fund that can be allocated to targeted areas or targeted communities for their socio-economic development at large scale.

In a reserve economy, the main advantage is that it gave tribes access to Centralized funding, and it perhaps better connected them to uniform network of union resources and potential business partners for their social as well as personal well-being in longer terms (Frye & Parker, 2021).

Subjective well-being (SWB) or happiness or life satisfaction depends upon three factors namely Basic Human Need (BHN), Foundation of Well-Being (FOW) and Opportunities. BHN centres on non-economic conditions that a society provides like sanitation, shelters and personal safety, FOW asks for –if a society offers individuals an opportunity to invest in themselves and their communities to advance their well-being that is allowing individuals to achieve a basic level of education, gain access to information and maintain lifelong health and local environment quality. Lastly, opportunity focuses on those components of social progress that affects the ability of individuals to achieve their own personal objectives, including their degree of personal rights and freedom in the context of an inclusive society with higher educational opportunity (Benjamin, Cooper, Heffetz, & Kimball, 2017).

All these three are non-economic factors are essential namely Health, Education and Livelihood opportunities. According to World Health Organisation (WHO), health is *a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity*, similarly education as a *merit good* which means it not only benefits to individual but society at large while livelihood means of making a living which include social justice, culture, identity and dignity apart from life sustaining support. Peter and Stern Developed Social Progress Index (SPI) which focuses exclusively on these three core dimensions of social progress such as BHN calls for –does a country provide for its people’s most essential need? FOW talks about individual and communities well-being on sustainable way while opportunity is calls for realisation of potential of all, whether is there opportunity for all individuals?

SPI and SWB have common dimensions’ health, education and livelihood for that framework have devised under SPI. The analysis of public policies under SPI framework will give the direction of social progress as well as social well-being in order to recommend the choice of self-determination (decentralisation) or centralisation or existing mix system.

### Methodology:

The study has relied in the Secondary data available on the Dashboard of Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MOTA), government of India for the available years that is 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 as well as the list of district wherein the scheme / programmes under Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Tribal Sub-Scheme(TSS) during 2019-20 and onwards as well as the budgetary allocation done by Centre under Article-275(1) of the constitution of India for the same period of years.

Sector wise data has been analysed mainly education including Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS), livelihoods and Health for both the schemes (a) SCA to TSS and (b) U/A-275(1). The herein compared sector specific for both the state of Meghalaya and Madhya Pradesh (MP) because both figures in the same Multi-Dimensional Poverty-Index (MPI) rank as per NITI Ayog, Meghalaya’s socio-economic development is governed under 6<sup>th</sup> schedule of constitution of India that is decentralised approach while MP not. Allocation of grant under provision Article 275(1) at the constitution of India. The objective of this Article to provide fund as grants-in-aid to "bridge the gap between ST population and others by accelerating development of STs by ensuring human resource development by enhancing their education & health services, Skill development, Connectivity’s, Agriculture Animal husband any, Fisheries, dairy and other primary sector, income generating schemes also state government shall ensure that overall 33% of women beneficiaries. The criteria for allocation of fund (i) 2/3<sup>rd</sup> weightage to the proportion of ST population in the state as per latest census to total ST population, (ii) 1/3<sup>rd</sup> weightage to proportion of tribal dominated areas that is districts where tribal population more than or equal to 25%. Fund is allotted in two phases in first phase 90% and in second phase 10%.

Guidelines for programmes /Activities. under Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Tribal sub-scheme (TSS) vide No. 18015/03/2019-TSP dt 17.9.19. Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India. MOTA has been undertaking various endeavours for socio-economic development of STs through schemes on education, infrastructure and livelihood etc. TSP now called as Schedule Tribe component (STC) at central level is a dedicated source of funding tribal development across the country.

The qualitative analysis is being done based on the above schemes and data available on dashboard of MOTA (<https://dashboard.tribal.gov.in/>). So that socio-economic development in terms of health, education and livelihood is measured for assessing SWB and Social progress of the tribes of Meghalaya and Madhya Pradesh. According to census-2011, MP have 7.26 cores total population out of which ST population 1.53 cores, in percentage term it is 21.09%. Similarly, Meghalaya have 0.3 crore total populations out of which 0.26 crore are STs that is 86.15%.

**Data Analysis:**

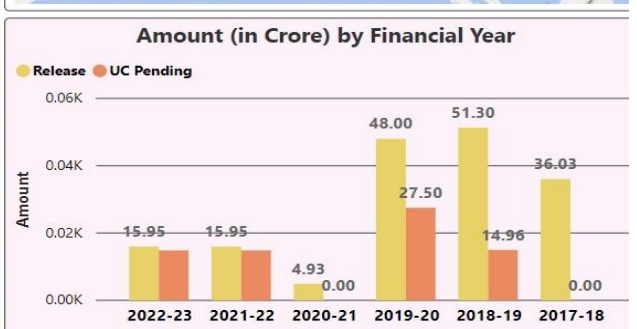
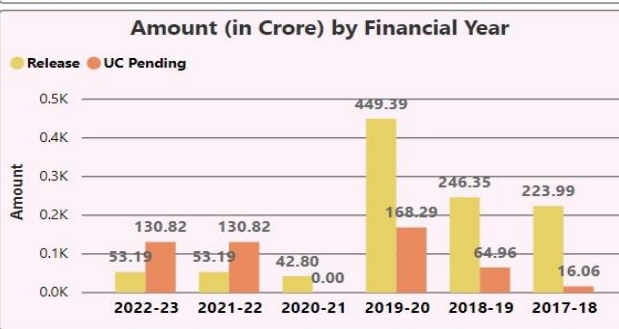
The list of Districts under the schemes of both the states:

Sr No.	Name of State	District name	No. of Households (HHs)	Total Population	Total population of ST	% ST
1	MP	Singrauli	243925	1178273	383994	32.59
2		Alirajpur	123800	728999	648638	88.98
3		Khargone	367988	1873046	730169	38.98
4		Sidhi	238448	1127033	313304	27.80
5		Burhanpur	146341	757847	230095	30.36
6		Jhabua	194157	1025048	891818	87.00
7		Umaria	145024	644758	300687	46.64
8		Khandwa	266655	1310061	459122	35.05
9		Shahdol	251452	1066063	476008	44.65
10		Ratlam	296683	1455069	409865	28.17
11		Anuppur	170715	749237	358543	47.85
12		Betul	329832	1575362	667018	42.34
13		Harda	113379	570465	159678	27.99
14		Chhindwara	443361	2090922	769778	36.82
15		Barwani	243277	1385881	962145	69.42
16		Seoni	314767	1379131	519856	37.69
17		Dindori	169630	704524	455789	64.69
18		Mandla	250146	1054905	610528	57.88
19		Dhar	425914	2185793	1222814	55.94
	Total		<b>4735494</b>	<b>22862417</b>	<b>10569849</b>	<b>46.23</b>
20	Meghalaya	West Khasi Hill	48424	287781	283784	98.61
21		East Garo Hills	29724	161926	154038	95.13
22		Jaintia Hills	45272	272185	257941	94.77
23		South Garo Hills	24527	142334	134237	94.31
24		Ri-Bhoi	46872	258840	230081	88.89
25		East Khasi Hills	164046	825922	661158	80.05
26	West Garo Hills	94359	496586	358371	72.17	
	Total		<b>453224</b>	<b>2445574</b>	<b>2079610</b>	<b>85.03</b>

**Total Release and UC Pending (in Crores)**



**Total Release and UC Pending (in Crores)**



Madhya Pradesh

Meghalaya

Fig.1: Grant Under the Article-275(1) for Madhya Pradesh Vs Meghalaya

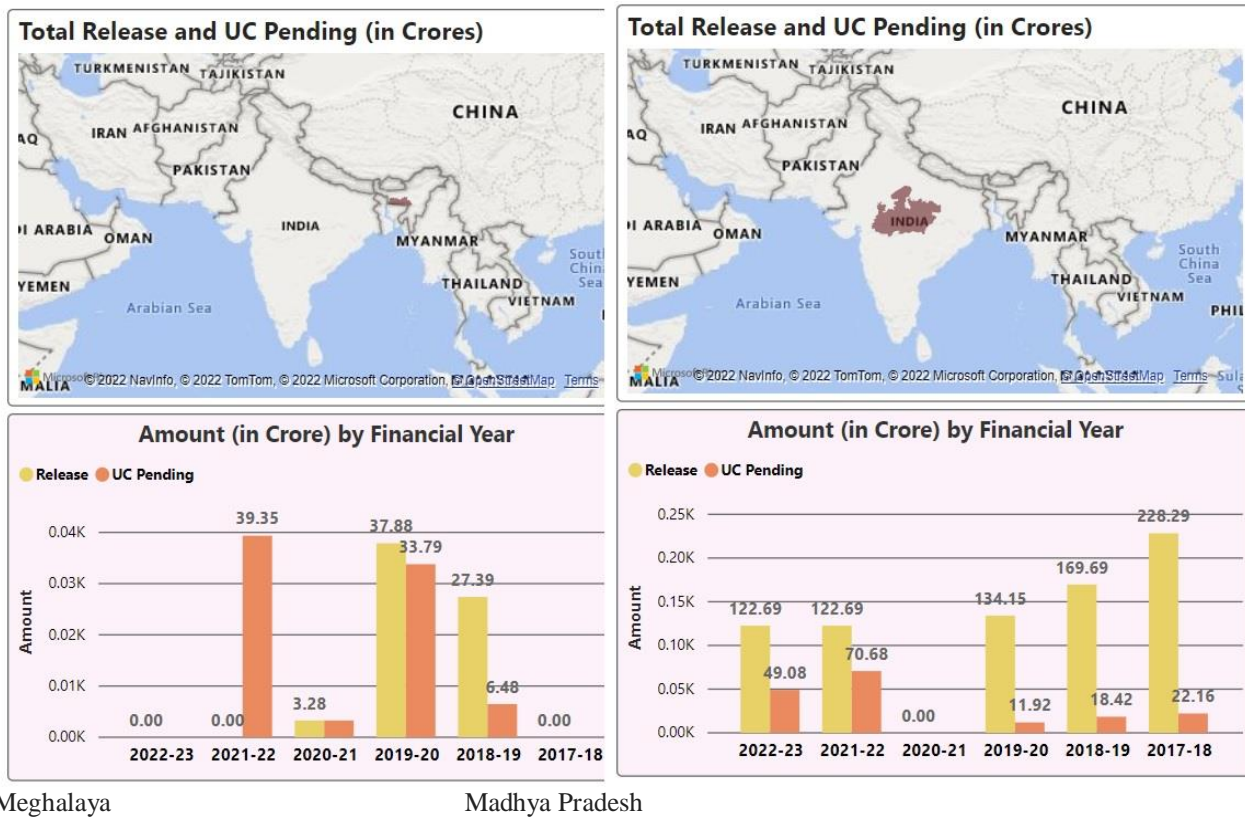


Fig.2: Grant under the scheme SCA to TSS for Meghalaya and Madhya Pradesh (declining trend in MP)

Sr No.	State	Financial Year	Amount (in crores)
1	MP	2017-18	223.99
2	MP	2018-19	246.35
3	MP	2019-20	449.39
4	Meghalaya	2017-18	36.03
5	Meghalaya	2018-19	51.30
6	Meghalaya	2019-20	48.00

Table 1: Grant sanctioned under Article-275 (1)

Sr No.	State	Financial Year	Amount (in crores)
1	MP	2017-18	228.29
2	MP	2018-19	169.69
3	MP	2019-20	134.15
4	Meghalaya	2017-18	NA
5	Meghalaya	2018-19	NA
6	Meghalaya	2019-20	37.88

Table 2: Grant under the SCA to TSS scheme

**Data analysis:**



Based on the fund allocated to Meghalaya during 2019-20 under SCA to TSS was total Rs 37.88 crores and the breakup of this total fund for three core sectors like livelihood (10 cr), health (3.9cr) and eco-tourism (11cr) while under the Article 275 (1) for the same year was Rs.48.00 crores and the sector wise break up for Education (4.3 cr), Health (1.3 crore) and livelihood (22cr). The total beneficiaries' population of Meghalaya is 2079610. If we add both funds of health sector and divide by total ST population of the state, we can find the per capita fund available for health sector for the financial year 2019-20 is Rs 25/- per person while for Madhya Pradesh is Rs.24/- per person per years.

Similarly, education Sector is further breakup will give us clear picture about the intended utility of the fund like in Madhya Pradesh got Rs 424crores under article 275(1) in which Rs267.84 crores allotted for EMRS, Rs 136.32 crores for Infrastructure, Rs 20.0 crore for income generation scheme, Rs 2.04 for toilets and Rs 12 crore for digital literacy while for Meghalaya whole Rs 4.3crores given for education infrastructure. Accordingly, education sector per capita allotment of combined fund under both the scheme for the year 2019-20 for Meghalaya is Rs 21/- per person per year while for MP its around Rs.569/- per person per year.

Now the third aspect of social progress or subjective well-being is livelihood, the total allocated under the both scheme for the year 2019-20 is Rs 22 crore for Meghalaya, and for Madhya Pradesh is Rs. 20 crore allocated under Article 275 (1).Budgetary per capita support for Meghalaya and Madhya Pradesh are Rs. 106/- and Rs 19/- per person per year respectively.

The tribal sub plan scheme introduced in fifth five-year plane on the recommendation of expert committee headed by S C Dubey in 1972 for rapid socio economic development of tribes and tribal areas. Now 50 years are over, and review of scheme must be carried out to assess its rapidness of development and the insufficiency of fund. We have seen both centralised as well as mixed approach under the 6<sup>th</sup> scheduled areas the conditions of the three core element of well-being are still missing even after expiry of five decades.

#### Conclusion:

**United Nations** call for right to self-determination in place of centralized or decentralized approach seems to be best possible solution for speedy development of tribes in respect of Health, Education, Livelihood as well as assimilation with so-called mainstream. As 6<sup>th</sup> Schedule of the Constitution of India intended to give autonomy in the subject matter of governance of tribes of Meghalaya, and similarly for tribes of MP under 5<sup>th</sup> Schedule, not with the intention of isolating them from modern society, but to allow a gradual assimilation without destroying their socio-economic-cultural identity.

**Recommendation:** Let tribes devise the best strategy for their own well-being and what is the best possible way is a matter of further research, however, we personally feel that one-time assets transfer in order to overcome their survival sufferings, instead of funding of projects and providing free-feeding of their basic needs because financial assistance in two or three digits of sums per person will not be going to work, even we continue such schemes for hundreds of years. It is time to acknowledge their need and aspiration at local level.

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