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Pains of Development: the Lyrical Expressions

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The usual idea of development is that the life should be equipped with better infrastructure and living quality. Almost all state Governments focus upon the so called development in the tribal area. The Scheduled tribes are given a portion of reservation in almost all educational institutions. Many a places also see preferred attitude in employment too. The outer shells of tribal belts are changing for the developed society.

The questions are always asked by the tribal: who are called tribals? Who are called wanderers/ what is the difference between wanderers and tribal? Who are called developed? What is the criterion of assessing developed society? Is tribal developing as per their needs/ demands and requirements? This development is far mismatched with the real necessities of the tribal.

Emotions turn high when someone not belonging to tribal world categorizes tribes into developed or underdeveloped world. There are differentiations among happiness but pain has no differed state. This is proved after studying a number of tribal writings, which amazingly echo the same feelings.

Assorting the literary writings from 10 languages and about 30 writers, this paper presents the pains of development the tribal world is facing.

Let's look into first into the so called terminology of globalization. For last ten to fifteen years this word has become quite popular. Everyone wants to become globalized. Its interesting that India was globalised forever. E.g. Mundari language which is one of the popular tribal language was developed near Australia. African Sidi tribe is living in a vast area of Gujarat. Parsis entry into India is part of this globalization only.

Then the question is if tribes are so globalised then where is the problem? The problem is that all those who run towards ports , have to cross these tribal areas where the tribal are supposed to give them protection but they have no right to collect any tax for looking after their well being.

History has moved on, major tribes created their kingdoms and then their states. But the mini tribes remained within their lands, waiting for a line on the map which would belong to them. Today tribal are forced to rush towards cities or cities are developed in tribal areas in the name of development. Their Lyrics have shown how farfetched can be the road of development.

A poem written in Dungri Bhili reflects the pain in general:

A Different Bharath : Bhagwandas Patel

I am sleeping with blind eyes on arrow bed like Dritrashtra

I try to hold wind in my fist

A fire burns into my eyes

Gautam Rishi has stayed back like a lock of my hair

My hands have become oxen

My heart is Gandhari of war....

In another poem in Vadi Language see the pathos after government has acquired their land by deceit. :

Rise Now: Parvat Vadi

...tribal lives by jungles

It worships the nature

Why should you cut the jungles?

...had we cut the jungle, wouldn't we be living in good houses?

Why then we didn't cut the jungles ourselves?

Why did our grandfathers belonged to jungle?

Look how machines have come down in our villages!

We get the employment here only!

Big machines, tractors and computers have arrived

....

Do we have a right to live or not ?

Yes we do have a right na !

But its only on paper!

Now what do we do?

Why do we ask this?

Lets mix this paper with land

We don't have any fathers to protect us

Now we beg in our own houses

Rise now

Hold my finger

Lets be forgotten in history

And let us be written in stories!

Discarding the modern education system Manjul Rathwa writes in Rathwi language:

Backyard

Backyard is our University

We performed

Sang epics

Experienced the beauties of the world

...I learnt lessons from my backyard

Started living life....

And Rahul Rathwa's poem **We Know** in Rathwi language depicts how strong is their knowledge system:

'we know from he eggs of the ants

How early shall it rain

...when the grain is ready

And in the same language Subhash Isai attacks the so called developed tribal:

Good we educated him

He became big sahib

He was taught in village when he was child

And when became young
He was sent to city
He learnt and became big sahib
We spent a lot
Ransomed our land
Ate once in a day
Thought son would earn a lot
When we are old , he would bring money and I would rest

But now
He is a big sahib
He doesn't come home
Because he is ashamed
He doesn't send money
Why
He is a big Saheb

In another poem he satirizes elections:

What does election bring?
Liquor, green leaves of money
Two days intoxications
Then
Back to square one

A poem written in Chaudhry Language Rekha Chaudhry writes:

People are happy

Development is here

But is tribal happy?

Does anyone understand his heart?

What is our development?

One rollingpin, one hut

What's our property?

Bucket/ utensil, mattress,

That's all?

Then what is development?

The dreams are shattered when in the name of education a farmer's son is carried away to the city where he turns into a laborer. The owner becomes a servant but the fraternity thinks that this is the real development as the boy at least lives in a town!

A number of lyrics put forth this demystification of development. The poems written by a number of tribal poets voice their discontent upon this pseudo development ideas of the society.

The present paper shall quote a number of such lyrics which portray the anguish and pain of the modern tribal society.