

Abstract

Tribal Development Administration in India: A Case Study of District Poonch in Jammu and Kashmir

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Development has become a primary thrust of modern governments. Development of marginalized communities has gained impetus over the years. The tribal development administration started in the pre-independence era in India but the development of tribals in India had not taken place adequately and effectively. The tribal development administration was shaped after the independence especially after the framing of the Constitution. Tribal development administration has been shaped with a focus on allowing tribals to maintain control and have access to natural resources and assuring socio-economic development.

There are 12 Scheduled Tribes in Jammu and Kashmir and they constitute 11.9 percent of the total population of the state. Tribal development administration in Jammu and Kashmir started in 1989 with the declaration of several communities as the STs. It started much later than other states across India. It started when the policies and approaches for tribal development had already evolved at the national level and institutional framework for tribal development had also evolved. Tribal development started amid conflict in Jammu and Kashmir when security and law and order were priorities. It also had to deal with difficult geographical terrain especially in those areas where tribals live.

Poonch district is the remotest and border district in Jammu and Kashmir. It shares border with Pakistan and has a difficult geographical terrain. It has several tribal groups and a significant population of two main tribal groups in Jammu and Kashmir- Gujjars and Bakerwals. The population of the STs in the district constitutes 36.93 per cent of the total population of the district. Tribal mostly are pastoral and transhumance has been a way of life. The socio-economic and educational conditions in the district have been poor compared to other districts. STs in Poonch are socio-economically and educationally even more backward compared to other communities.

This brings into focus the importance of tribal development administration. It is an efficient tribal development administration which works over and above the general administration that has the capacity to ensure political, socio-economic and cultural development of tribals. There can't be any inclusive development till marginalized communities like tribals are developed. It becomes even more incumbent in remotest areas like Poonch in Jammu and Kashmir where development faces additional challenges such as difficult geographical terrain and the conflict.

The study aims to understand the tribal development administration in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir. The aim is to understand how tribal development administration has evolved since 1989 and ensured empowerment of the STs in one of the remotest districts in India. To understand tribal development administration in Poonch, it is important to understand it within the larger framework of tribal development administration in India and tribal development administration at the state level. District Poonch is a case study to understand how tribal development administration works at the grassroots level. The study seeks to analyze tribal development administration framework

at the national level through historical background, through the analysis of various debates about tribal development, through the study of FYPs and major policies like Tribal Sub Plan. At the State level, apart from historical background of tribal development administration, there would be study of tribal development structure, policies and challenges. In Poonch, there will be a case study of tribal development administration. It would study both aspects of tribal development administration- 'development of administration' and 'administration of development'. The first aspect would involve study of tribal development administration structure and its functioning in Poonch. The second aspect involves development of various areas of tribal life by analyzing implementation of various tribal welfare schemes. It would analyze various schemes for promotion of socio-economic development of STs in Poonch. It would understand economic and livelihoods status among the STs in Poonch and educational status among them. It would also seek to analyze political and cultural development among the STs in Poonch. Impact of conflict on working of both these aspects of tribal development also forms part of the study.

Keywords: Administration, Development, Education, Tribal, Structure
