

Trapped in the Development Wrap : The Case of the Project Affected Parjas of the Indravati River Valley in Orissa, India

Deepak Kumar Behera and Srikant Patel

Department of Anthropology, Sambalpur University, Sambalpur 768 019, Orissa, India

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ABSTRACT The paper presents some of the preliminary findings of our study on the impact of a mega dam project on the indigenous parjas of Kalahandi district of Orissa, India. The Upper Indravati Hydro-Electricity Project (UIHEP) is a multipurpose river dam project in tribal Orissa. Admittedly our data are sparse, however, those certainly give us indication about the impact of a dam project on the indigenous people. The paper raises a few basic issues concerning the indigenous parjas — a major tribal group affected by the said project. 1. How far the parjas can thrive in the changing environment? 2. To what extent they enjoy their basic human rights? 3. How has the said project affected the quality of life of the parjas? 4. What is the impact of the project on their traditional economy? Based upon our analysis, it is concluded that the indigenous people should have fundamental and inalienable rights and access over their environment and natural resources.

Many a country has marvelled at the positive aspects of various development projects. Particularly, in the third world countries, the natural resource bases are tapped indiscriminately through construction of mega development projects in order to make up the shortfall in development and catch up with other developed countries of the world. There has been reckless extraction of natural resources by industrial and commercial concerns in collusion with technobureaucratic apparatus of the state (Behera, 1993 : 256). However, we fail to realize that many a time development, either spontaneous or induced, brings not only benefits; but often causes social disruption. Many planners and policymakers find it difficult to recognize this double impact precisely when it matters : when

a development plan is being designed (Cernea, 1985 : 188). On the other hand, in order to justify the construction of a mega development project, its wider implications on the people and the environment are deliberately undermined and its lower costs and higher benefits are highlighted. The irony is that people who suffers the mayhem and bear the brunt of development most are least benefited and the fruits of development are reaped by someone else.

Forced displacement is one of the profound social disruptions that accompanies a development project. Involuntary resettlement has been a companion of development throughout history, indelibly written into the evolution of industrial as well as developed countries (Cernea, 1994 : 46). The spate of such unsustainable development project not only evicts people but also sounds the death knell for the valuable repositories of biological wealth and age old social network. Hence eviction of large number of people, damage to the environment and social disruption caused by the so-called development projects call for resettlement of the oustees, resurrection of the environment and reconstruction of the social fabric. In order to successfully mitigate the above problems it requires the imaginative anticipation of planners, policymakers and the executors. However, most of the development projects seldom have a rehabilitation policy to amicably mitigate the problems of the oustees and regenerate the environmental losses. Most often the rehabilitation policy is appended to the body of the project design in mid-stream like an after thought graft. It is a strange paradox that the so-called planned development deals with the resettlement issues in unplanned, haphazardous and ad-hoc manners and thereby pauperize and impoverish a large section of people. The whole exercise of resettlement and rehabilitation melts down to a chimera when it is not treated

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as a development programme but as a dubious business deal.

In British and independent India people were displaced by the government to make way for development projects. During the colonial rule lands were acquired for the purpose of construction of roads, railway lines, schools, hospitals and for exploitation of minerals (Report of the Commissioner of SC and ST, 1990). Since the land acquired was less and availability of alternative lands was more it was easier to relocate and rehabilitate the oustees. Like all other developing countries, post independent India saw to massive infrastructure development, through industrial, power generation, mining and water management projects. Hence, volume of development related displacement also increased in India after independence. Unfortunately, all the heavy industries, power generation-cum-irrigation projects and large scale minings had to be undertaken in backward areas, which were inhabited by our tribal people in concentrated zones (Mahapatra, 1994 : 37). Though construction of development projects in the backward areas proves costly for the indigenous people it is definitely a profitable proposition in terms of economy.

The so-called development has brought about the uprooting and dismemberment of social, moral and economic webs of indigenous life built over generation. It has caused irreparable damage to the indigenous people. It has made these people who have been marginalized and pushed to the periphery of society to pay the cost of rich and powerful people's urge and craze for development. The irony is that the cost is paid by the people who are least able to afford it and who will benefit the least from the fruits of development.

For relocation and compensation of the displaced tribals it is easier to strike a deal with them and the project authorities most of the time emerge successful without facing much resistance. Often the allocated compensation for the oustees is so nominal that the cost incurred by the project in providing logistics to the skilled workers is much more than the cost of rehabilitation of the oustees. Some times the tribals are not aware of the criticality of the long term impact of development projects and are

mystified with the construction of large structures and queer heavy machines deployed for the construction. The wage earning they make in the form of hard cash during the course of construction acts as incentives and generates project loyalty among the tribals. Moreover, the historical experience of always being in a losing situation kills the spirit and hopes of the tribals and rarely we find any indigenous anti-project movement among them. All these keep them mum and make them the scape goat for the development projects. Hence, the mushrooming growth of such development projects in the domain of the indigenous tribal people as a deliberate move by the government is not always inconsequential.

In India alone, till 1990 there are 2,13,00,000 displaced people by one or the other development projects (Fernandes, 1994 : 24). Undoubtedly, a vast majority of them are tribals. Out of a total of 74,10,000 displaced tribals, only 24.9 per cent have been rehabilitated and a staggering 75.03 per cent displaced tribals await rehabilitation (Fernandes, 1991). The working group on Development and Welfare of Schedule Tribes during Eighth Five-year Plan (1990-95) reports that out of the 16.94 lakh person displaced by 110 projects studied, 8.14 lakh (48 per cent) were tribal (Thukral, 1992 : 8). The tribals have traditionally lived within a self-sufficient subsistence economy that depend on the natural resources. They have relatively less exposure to the economy outside their region. Except in the North-East and parts of Chotanagpur literacy among them is extremely low. As a result they can not hope to get many jobs in the new project. If they do get some jobs, they are bound to be of the unskilled and temporary, even daily wage category (Fernandes, 1997).

Disposition of indigenous people to make way for mammoth capital intensive development projects has become a distressingly routine phenomenon. However, it is reasonable to hold that though disposition of indigenous people in India had begun during the colonial era, the criticality of their survival is essentially a post-colonial phenomenon (Mahapatra, 1994 : 13).

Today, with a more liberalized economy one finds many of the multinationals jostling with

each other in India. The inroads of the multinationals are in fact a potential threat to the defenseless indigenous people whose rights and privileges are likely to be sacrificed at the altar of corporate interest. Since these multinationals do not owe their allegiance to the land and have no sense of belonging to the country, they can not empathize with the people affected by the so-called development projects.

Food is the single most essential commodity for the survival of men. In order to increase the production of food the construction of dams and for that matter development of water resource is of prime importance. However, in dam construction irrigation is often clumped with energy generation in the form of hydel electricity and a means to arrest floods. Therefore, we find a burgeoning of multipurpose dam projects in developing countries. In order to be a multipurpose dam, a dam has to be large enough to generate electricity. It is obvious that a large dam would inundate more land and in turn displace more number of people. The number of dam related project oustees in China is more than 10 million (Chao Liang, 1990), and in India it is 14 million (Fernandes, 1991). Apart from this, there are many more oustees who do not essentially figure in government documents. While food is an essential commodity for all human being, electricity mostly caters to the need of the industries and the privileged class of people. The function of flood control by dams is a myth. Big irrigation works which are meant to arrest flood, have not proved half as beneficial as they were supposed to be. In India the total area subject to flooding has doubled from 20 million hectares in 1971 to 40 million hectares in 1981 (D'Monte, 1985 : 14). Further, perennial irrigation does not simply eradicate poverty. In the face of unequal distribution of land it leads to polarization of the agrarian classes. It put more emphasis on the production of cash crops at the cost of food crops to generate surplus to meet the escalating cost of investment and also to meet the demand of the industries (Glodsmith and Hildyard, 1984 : 181-191). Particularly in dam related development project the indigenous tribal people are side tracked when it comes to sharing of the benefits. Various dam projects might have helped irrigate large tracts of land

belonging mostly to medium and big farmers. But to the indigenous tribals this has only meant the pain of being uprooted from their home land with little concern for their rehabilitation. The adverse impact of such project on the eco-system and the consequent deprivation and disturbance suffered by certain indigenous people are often lightly dismissed as "price for development" (Ratha and Behera, 1990 : 10).

Against the backdrop, the present paper focuses on the dam related displacement and its overall impact on the environment and indigenous tribal people. It deals with the oustees of the Upper Indravati Multipurpose Dam Project in Orissa (India).

Upper Indravati Hydro-Electric Project

The Upper Indravati Hydro-Electricity Project (UIHEP) is a large multipurpose river development project in Orissa (Indian). It creates a reservoir of 110 square kilometers formed by 4 dams and eight dykes and an extensive irrigation complex. The project has been designed keeping in view two basic objectives : (I) to provide irrigation water for 109,300 hectares (later revised in 1994 to 128,000 hectares) of agricultural land in the watershed of Hati river in adjacent Mahanadi river basin and (II) to provide 600 megawatt of electric power to be supplied to the grid of the Orissa State Electricity Board (OSEB).

Project History

Investigation of the Upper Indravati Project commenced in 1959. The approval by the Union Planning Commission for execution of the project was delayed until a decision was reached in 1977 regarding equitable distribution of water resources by the Krishna-Godavari Commission. The Union Planning Commission approved the project in 1978 and the Environmental Appraisal Committee of the Department of Science and Technology provided environmental clearance for the project in 1979 (Final Environmental Assessment Report of HECIL, 1994). However, full fledged construction work started in 1985 after obtaining assistance from the World Bank. The construction faced a set back in the year 1991 due to damage caused by heavy flooding in July. A large

number of lives (mostly tribal indigenous people) were lost, the damaged to the project was immense and the neighbouring villages suffered immeasurably (Das, 1992:5). Whether it was due to a snag in the project design or irresponsibility on the part of the engineers could not be known. A name sake enquiry was conducted and things moved merrily as before.

Benefit and Loss as Claimed by the Government

In terms of benefit there would be 600 megawatt of electricity and irrigation of 1.28 lakh hectares of agricultural land in the command area located in the perennially drought prone Kalahandi district. It will increase the agricultural production and consequently employment opportunities and growth in service sector. It has given regular gainful employment to about 248 persons among the displaced families in various posts of the project. As a matter of policy decision, major resettlement clusters formed by displaced families will be electrified by Orissa State Electricity Board. The impounding of water in the reservoir will create enormous fishery (capture fishery) potential. Displaced families relocated in the periphery of the reservoir sites will be able to take this profession as a major source of livelihood. Efforts will be made to link this to shrimp and fish culture project under World Bank sponsored programme. The only loss felt by the government is the displacement of 17,000 people due to the formation of reservoir [Report of the Resettlement and Rehabilitation Unit Khatiguda (hereafter RRU), 1995: 3]. However, the Orissa Kurshak Mahasangh and Indravati Gana Sangharsha Parishad put the figure at 30,000 in Kalahandi and undivided Koraput districts taken together. Moreover, the project has acquired 32,530.87 acres of land _ 17,191.97 acres and 15,388.90 acres from districts of Kalahandi and undivided Koraput respectively (RRU, 1995: 4). The details of the various types of land is given below:

	<i>Kalahandi</i>	<i>Koraput</i>
Private land	11,619.58 acres	8,193.26 acres
Forest land	906.34 acres	2,983.19 acres
Govt/Revenue land	4,612.05 acres	4,162.45 acres
Total	17,191.97 acres	15,388.90 acres
	GT = 32,530.87 acres	

In total the project will affect 97 villages _ 44 from undivided Koraput and 53 from Kalahandi district. Out of these 31 villages from Koraput and 34 from Kalahandi district will be directly affected and submerged by the impounding of water. In order to make way for the project the evacuation of the targeted people was undertaken in 4 annual phases. The first phase of evacuation started in 1989.

OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The paper raises some basic issues concerning the indigenous parjas _ a major tribal group affected by the said project.

1. How far the parjas can thrive in the changing environment?
2. To what extent parjas enjoy their rights and privileges in the present scenario?
3. How has the said project affected the quality of life of the parjas?
4. What is the impact of the mega dam project on the traditional economy of the parjas?

Data were collected both from primary and secondary sources. A survey was conducted by the researchers covering some clusters/villages namely Sanchattarang, Dimrimasca, Lepespas, and Naringihola in the catchment of the reservoir in the district of Kalahandi. Interview, observation and case study methods were used for the collection of data. Local NGOs, activists and government officials in the resettlement and rehabilitation unit of Khatiguda were interviewed to supplement our data. Secondary data, wherever available, were collected in order to supplement our analysis. Admittedly, our data are sparse, however, those certainly give us enough indication about the impact of a mega dam project on the indigenous people.

The Parjas

For centuries the river Indravati has sustained the indigenous parjas on its bank, both materially and spiritually. They still eke out a simple living within their natural habitat and solve their day-to-day problems indigenously without much outside intervention. They always crave for a wholesome and ecologically balanced environment. Some of the cultural practices of this community contribute significantly to

maintain the rich biodiversity of the region. Some totemic emblems are worn as charms and even tattooed on the body. Ceremonies are performed to ensure the increase of totemic species. Substantial part of the oral traditions – myths, legends, folktales, folklores, etc. – reaffirms the concern of the tribe to conserve the natural resources of its neighbourhood (Behera, 1993 : 257). Thus the forest dwelling tribe has a culture geared to keep a balance between their own needs and the environmental imperatives (Macleod, 1936; Geertz, 1983; Gadgil, 1985, 1989; Gadgil and Iyer, 1989). Hence the parjas would not kill a pregnant deer or a rabbit and their cultural practices forbid them from using any forest fruits before it is ready. For example, mangoes are never plucked until and unless the *Amnuu* Ceremony is performed. One of our respondents reported that their community would castigate a person if he plucks the early cobs of maize before performing the *Jannahamara* ritual. Certain zones of their habitat is considered sacred due to the presence of their deities, gods, demigods, goddesses, etc. and the region is held in apex esteem revealing the growths and undergrowths therein as sacred groves. It is forbidden to cut trees and plants from the abode of the gods and goddesses. However, with the improvement in means of communication and the consequent exposure of this region to the outer world, many non-tribals have arrived here to infringe on the natural habitat and resources of the indigenous parjas. Probably, the simplicity of the parjas and the natural bounty are the important determinants for their migration. Soon the parjas fell an easy prey to the evil design of these non-tribals. The Sundhis, the Paikas and the Schedule Castes constitute the main non-tribal stock of the Indravati valley. The Sundhis are basically liquor vendors who make a lot of booty both in cash and kind by addicting the parjas. The paikas, who were warriors and later became businessmen, exploit the indigenous parjas by exchanging cheap consumable articles like salts for pulses, millets and valuable forest produce. All the non-tribal migrants have come here with a view to maximize profit at the cost of the parjas and their habitat. While, the non-tribals maximize profit at the cost of environmental degradation

by greed and graft, the indigenous parjas are held responsible for deforestation, soil erosion, air pollution, etc. due to their creed and craft. The scenario is non-better even after the intervention of the state. Initially the Orissa Forest Development Corporation and the Tribal Development Cooperatives Corporation had exclusive rights for a number of NTFPs. But since 1990 individual companies have been given collection rights for 29 NTFPs. There is no check on the price paid by them to the tribals (Indian Express, 21 Sept., 1995). Further it is unfortunate to note that state power is monopolized to support traders and industries in providing them highly subsidized raw materials from the forest. It is an irony that a group of people, who considered themselves to be the rightful owners of the entire resource base in these areas, have almost no rights even when they are employed to work the same resources (Sharma, 1978 : 75). Hence, though the tribals collect forest produce, they are not the real beneficiaries.

The Parjas Under the Shadow of Development

At this juncture, the construction of the multipurpose dam project on the Indravati river has compounded to the agony of the indigenous people. It has uprooted 17000 people from their lands and occupation. The worst affected of them are the parjas. While the problem of displacement upsets not only the tribal population but also the general population who came within the submergence or acquisition area, there are some basic points of difference in type of difficulties faced by the two communities. The most important one relates to the cultural aspect of life. While the kinship of the general population is spread far and wide, this is not true of the tribal groups whose habitation is largely confined only to certain specific areas (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1984 : 178). Hence, when the oustees of upper Indravati were given the option to choose their own relocation site they did not move far from the submergence area and settled around the fringe of the reservoir. Some 560 clusters were created consisting of various sizes and distributed over 19 blocks (RRU, 1995: 22). A total of 5271.10 acres of land was identified for 5343 families for resettlement and

rehabilitation in the command area. The government provided them 2.5 acres of non-irrigated or 1.25 acres of irrigated land. Though the project was conceived in 1959 and the construction work began in 1985 and there is still no dead line for its completion. At this pace it is evident that it may not be completed and function even by the end of this century. Because of corruption and irregularities by some officials and contractors and delay in execution, the project cost has escalated from US \$ 1150 thousand (Rs.400 crores) to US \$ 4600 thousand (Rs.1600 crores) alleged Harjinder Singh, Youth Congress leader (Indian Express, 8 Aug, 1996).

The people in the submergible area were evacuated in four phases. The 4 (1) notice was issued to the inhabitants of 65 submergible villages during 1981-87 and the evacuation work started in 1989. 10.68 per cent evacuation took place in 1989, 16.85 per cent in 1990, 21.68 per cent in 1991 and 38.02 per cent in 1992. Although no evacuation was planned in 1993, 9 per cent evacuation took place in that year (RRU, 1995 : 22). Importantly, the tribals were the first to displace by the authorities and they got evacuated without resisting.

As a general precondition to evacuation and resettlement the displaced persons should have been resettled in the command area. But in Upper Indravati Project resettlement and rehabilitation package adopted an innovative way by giving the oustees an opportunity to choose their relocation sites (RRU, 1995 : 3). It is significant to note that the oustees chose to relocate themselves near the fringe of the reservoir. They did not opt to relocate themselves in the command area due to various reasons. Firstly, the catchment of the Indravati reservoir is traversed by many streams locally called as *jholas*. *Jholas* are perennial water sources for the parjas, near which they cultivate all the year round. Secondly, the lands on both sides of Indravati river are very fertile on which plain rice and a variety of vegetables are grown. Thirdly, irrigation in the command area is a thing of distant future. For more than a decade they would have to wait for their compensatory land to be irrigated and no common property resources or any compensatory forest was

available to support them. They would have been left to fend for themselves. If it is forest land, the law gives no rights whatever to the people even though they might have used it as their livelihood for several generations (Singh, 1989 : 92). For poor people, particularly for landless and otherwise assetless, loss of access to non-individual, common property assets belonging to communities that are relocated (forested land, water-bodies, grazing lands, etc.) represents a cause of income and livelihood deterioration that is systematically overlooked and typically uncompensated in government scheme (Cernea, 1995 : 267). Thus many indigenous parjas could not claim title to the land they had tilled for generation, because it was not listed as revenue land (it was usually forest land, either reserved or protected). Little or no thought was given as to how these landless oustees would be rehabilitated. As a result, they were provided with minimum compensatory land in the command area. The land provided to the oustees in the command area was insufficient and unsuitable to raise crops and the basic amenities like drinking water were inadequate, reports the Indian Express (Mar. 4, 1993).

In the Indravati river valley the parjas practise a multilateral mode of economy. The products from the land are enough to support them for 8 to 9 months and during the lean period which lasts for about 3 months, they depend on the forest. They also raise livestock, collect non-timber forest produce and worked as agricultural labourer. Each component of their composite economy supplements and complements one another. Moreover, opportunity for wage earning due to the construction work of the project is plenty. On the other hand there was a dearth of alternative viable economy in the command area. Though the present arrangement of relocating the parjas near the reservoir was carried out with a view to minimize the psychological trauma and provide them an access to cultivate their ancestral land in the reservoir area, its long term criticality was never given due consideration. Once there is impounding of water and the entire land is submerged in the reservoir, the pressure on the forested land on the hill's slope would increase.

The authorities are already skeptic about the Swidden cultivation practised by the parjas on the hills, which they now think would cause heavy soil erosion and siltation of the reservoir and impede the function of the dam. This speaks about the appalling state of preparedness and shortsightedness of the project authorities.

Though, there is a marked concern shown by the government on shifting cultivation practised by the poor parjas, mining operations in this regions have gained momentum regardless of their disastrous ecological impact on the environment. The Bauxite mines at Baphlamali in the catchment is 10 kilometers away from the reservoir. The mining operation here, will not only contribute to the siltation of the reservoir but also engulf large chunk of lands and forest wealths. However, no concrete steps have been taken by the government to stop the mining operation. Such complacent attitude towards development projects and step motherly treatment to the indigenous people by the government has been the order of the day in all under-developed and developing countries.

In contrast to the situation in the West, the people of the Third World, struggling to survive in the face of relentless population pressure, are collectively more tempted, impelled almost, to ignore the clean signals of what looks like impending economic disasters. They continue to mine the soil, to level the forests, to pollute rivers and lakes and in other ways to undermine their ecological-support system (Mishan, 1993 : 97).

Interestingly, the parjas of this region contribute least to the economic-disasters. Their mode of tapping the natural resources is eco-friendly. Environment is the livelihood of the communities who depend on the natural resources. They see nature from their perspective; take flora, fauna, air and water not in isolation as the naturalists do but as parts of an ecosystem with human community at its centre (Fernandes, 1995 : 193). Traditionally parjas economies made marginal demands on their habitat. Their attitude towards the natural resources was one of respect due to a sacred gift. The so-called development has adversely affected their traditional knowledge of resource conservation. Under the changing circumstances, the age old

technical know-hows no longer produce the desired results. Extension of outside administration and impact of non-tribal, however, have brought in a change in their attitude. Heavy demand of minor forest produce from the non-tribal and the growing cash needs of the parjas have now intensified the process of deforestation. The forest resources gradually fail to cater to various needs of the parjas. The constructive dependence of the parjas on the forest is now slowly replaced by the destructive dependence. In recent time it has become a pattern to picture the parjas as the destroyers of natural resources of national interest.

The project authorities now plan to discourage shifting cultivation (locally known as *podu*) in the catchment of Upper Indravati project. Once, the parjas are prevented from practising shifting cultivation and the construction works of the project is over, they would remain neither fish nor flesh. There is a hue and cry among the so-called scientists about the shifting cultivation practised by the parjas in the catchment of Upper Indravati Project. They are yet to realize that it is a part of their culture. They not only produce crops through shifting cultivation but many of their rituals, festivals and gods and goddesses are associated with it. For an onlooker, a shifting cultivation site will give a forlorn look, denuded, eroded, gaping rocks, low return of labour, etc. However, the invisible and intangible environment can only be seen and felt by a parja alone.

Moreover, in shifting cultivation they have a multiple cropping pattern. They mostly grow a variety of minor millets, pulses, maize along with their staple diet mandia. Not only does a parja relish the above food but also he propitiates his gods, goddesses and ancestors by offering the produce from shifting cultivation. Multiple cropping pattern of cultivation insures his return against pests, droughts, etc. As all the crops do not ripe at one time he reaps the crops phase wise and thereby is assured of food for a longer period of time. Above all, the parjas are more concerned about the quality of food grains rather than the quantity. They give due impetus to reproduction more than production. Particularly, in shifting cultivation the biodiversity of the soil is maintained. The earthworm and

arthropod takes care of the fertility and aeration of the soil. The local variety of crops are pest resistant. As a results application of fertilizers and pesticides are non existence which reduces the cost of production and maintains the quality of food grains. On the other hand, canal irrigated cultivation requires high yielding variety of seeds which are not resistant to the local pest and application of substantial amount of pesticides is a must to save the crop. All this results in the escalation of the cost of production. Moreover, canal irrigation leads to water logging and salinizations of the soil. Water logging in the command area has become a Catch-22 menace (Lavania and Prajapati, 1991 : 13). The application of pesticides which also has toxic side effect on human being kills the biodiversity of the soil. The law of marginal returns in terms of production operates in the long run in canal irrigated cultivation.

Often, government is grossly mistaken to consider the whole exercise as an engineering work. As a compensatory measure, the government should ensure that at least the quality of life of the oustees be maintained, if not improved. However, relative marginalization often begins long before the actual displacement; for instance, when lands are condemned for future flooding and are implicitly devalued, new public and private infrastructural investments are prohibited, and the expansion of social services is undercut (Cernea, 1995 : 266). It means though the actual evacuation in case of Upper Indravati Hydro-electricity project first took place in 1989, the people came into the ambit of deprivation from the time of its conception, way back in 1959. Mega development brings along with it many external elements into the construction sites. The indigenous tribals are in fact the worst sufferers at the hands of the outsiders. The latter use, misuse and abuse the simple and innocent tribals – the onslaught however is frequent and common with their women. The construction works in Upper Indravati project has attracted many outsiders from the east Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh and Ganjam district of Orissa. The parjas are a cheap source of labour for the migrated contractors. At the hands of the these unscrupulous contractors the parjas have been

severely manipulated ever since the construction work started. They are grossly underpaid and their women frequently raped at the construction site. The growing need of cash has forced many parja women to take to prostitution. Today there is a rampant prostitution in this area, a parja woman has learned the art of using sex as a commodity and she can be bought with trinkets. The local market is monopolized by the intruders. They buy the local produce from the indigenous people at throw away prices while they sell their goods to them at a very high price. An interesting feature of the development project is that it greatly influences the local market, there is a sharp hike in the price of essential commodities which impinge on the indigenous tribals. They have limited buying capacity and due to the hike in the price they are forced to lead a life without some of the much needed commodities. The outsiders exchange fancy goods of the modern society with "valuable" commodities of the traditional community. The new migrant goes about covetous eye assessing what can be taken to the best of his advantage. Thus, the valuable timber and the tribal lands may be purchased for a song : on the other hand a fancy item like transistor radio may be sold for a fortune (Sharma, 1978 : 98). The same process starts with greater acumen with the emergence of a development project. Moreover, there is a rise in the incidence of diseases and diseases unheard of in the past are slowly taking roots. Once the reservoir is impounded to full capacity it will lead to waterlogging and diseases like malaria, guinea worms, encephalitis, schistosomiasis, etc. would show a sharp rise in the graph.

It is unfortunate to note that compensation of the displaced indigenous people is viewed by the government exclusively from economic point of view. Human beings can not be reduced to mere economics. Their culture, social and psychological links and needs get shattered when they are displaced. No amount of economic help can remove the pain caused in the process of displacement. Reductioning compensation to pure economics tentamounts to degrading human being. In practice, however, not even the economic rehabilitation of the project affected people was taken seriously.

The compensation received by the parjas was utilized in buying agricultural land in places far away from their place of relocation. Hence, these lands are lying untilled and barren. Meanwhile, some of their land have been encroached and misappropriated by the previous owners of the land. Therefore, some of the parjas have already started selling their newly brought land to the immigrants. Despite the existence of Land Acquisition Act a sizable agricultural land has already been transferred from the parjas to the agriculturalist immigrants from Andhra Pradesh. Once the irrigation project starts operating, the later would take maximum advantage of the situation because of their earlier exposure to canal irrigation. The Parjas, because of their low level of investment capacity, has to switch over from agriculture to some other occupations. Once, the authority puts a ban on shifting cultivation, the parjas will be virtually rendered landless and will be compelled to migrate to adjacent urban centres to work as daily wage earners. In fact, migration of the parjas have already started and parja men and children can be found working in the hotels in Nowrangpur and Bhawanipatna. Thus, we see occupational displacement of the Parjas besides their physical displacement. This migration has resulted in many female-headed households. As a result the work load of the parja female folk has increased many folds. Along with direct displacement by the project, large scale indirect displacement is also foreseen. Estimates of the indirect displacement is not known and can not be made (Parasuraman, 1994 : 4). In fact some of them who have already been displaced will suffer a double displacement due to the lackadaisical approach by the authorities towards resettlement and rehabilitation of the oustees.

If proper measures are not adopted, the oustees of Upper Indravati Project, particularly parjas, would be flooding the nearby urban centres in Orissa and Andhra Pradesh, significantly contributing to the growth of slums in these regions. A study showed that around 65 per cent of the slum dwellers in country's major cities belong to Schedule Castes and Tribes who have been forced to leave their villages due to developmental schemes such as Green Revolution,

dams, mines, industrial infrastructure, etc. which have displaced the local inhabitants without proper compensation and rehabilitation (de souza, 1981 : 183). Voices, protesting against the current modes of development are forcefully resisted and their unable to arrest the present pattern of open-ended growth (Jain, 1995 : 315). Whatever little antiproject movement that was shown by the oustees of UIHEP was stopped with a heavy hand by the authorities.

It was marked during the field work that the significant amount of importance has been given to construction of an engineering marvel but there was a dearth of zeal and enthusiasm so far as rehabilitation of the oustees are concerned. The attitude of the authority towards the powerless parjas has been an apathetic one and reveals a lack of sense of involvement. While, the resettlement and rehabilitation package went many modifications during course of resettlement it grossly failed in its execution to ameliorate the sufferings of the indigenous parjas. The settlement and rehabilitation of all those displaced by the project have not been properly considered or adequately addressed.

It is a pity that though India can boast of many dam projects yet we have learned very little from the precedence in terms of resettlement and rehabilitation of its oustees. We are yet to realize that it a myth as well as a crime to try to tame the oustees through piecemeal measures based solely on financial compensation. It was found that the project is lacking in meeting environmental consideration. The history of the environmental aspect of Upper Indravati Project is the history of non-compliance. The nature and magnitude of environmental problems and solution remain elusive. The environmental amelioration remains grossly inadequate.

Because of environmental degradation and depletion of natural resources, the parjas' traditional knowledge and skills of resources conservation is fast disappearing from this planet. The younger generation parjas are no more interested to acquire those knowledge and skills from the elderly people of their community as they do not find those useful in the fast changing environment. Thus, in the absence of any written language of the community, the knowledge

base is in the process of extinction. The Hazra Engineering Company International LP suggests some remedial measures to alleviate the problems of the oustees and environment, which would require a huge sum of money, many times more than the actual cost of construction of the project. Even if the measures recommended by the Hazra Engineering Company is carried out, the cost would ultimately borne by the common men. If a complete and adequate assessment of the social and environmental cost has been made in initial stages, the cost-benefit ratio of the project would have altered. Thus the dam project has sacrificed the legitimate rights and interest of the indigenous parjas just because they are not organized and politically not equipped to fight back.

The survival and sustainable development of the indigenous people depend on a system of self-development based upon their own creative force, corporate productive resources and cognitive structures, where the jerms of dynamic are defined by the concerned people themselves. The indigenous people should have fundamental and inalienable rights and access over their environment and natural resources. Of course such a holistic ecologically sustainable and culturally specific model of development will be against the current top-down technocratic and neo-colonial mode of development.

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