



## **Inequality, Injustice and India's Forgotten People**

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### **Authors' contributions**

*This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.*

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### **ABSTRACT**

It is the Boston Consulting Group's 15<sup>th</sup> annual report called '*Winning the Growth Game: Global Wealth 2015*' that has been extensively reported by the media persons in India. This report came just one year after the Global Wealth Databook 2014 from Credit Suisse wherein the picture of global inequality is presented in a more accurate and comprehensive manner. It is undisputed that over time there has been a significant decline in poverty in India. However, the same is not true about inequality. Has inequality declined with the same rate as the decline in poverty in India? As per the official data collected on all parameters of development in India the tribals are straggling way behind in terms of income, health, education, nutrition, infrastructure and governance. Tribals in India have been the receivers of injustices throughout the process of development. To exemplify, among 65 to 70 million people displaced during the development process in India 40 per cent are tribals. In India, more than 90 per cent of total coal and above 50 per cent of minerals and dams are located in the tribal regions, yet these areas have remained the least developed. In paradox to economic theory, many developed districts in India include pockets of intense backwardness. The paper argues that in India the tribals have remained excluded from the list of beneficiaries in the development process. The paper also discusses the process of marginalization of tribal in the developmental process and towards the end gives some recommendations.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Global Wealth Databook reveals some startling facts. The richest 1 per cent of Indians today own nearly half (49 per cent) of India's personal wealth [1]. The rest of us 99 per cent are left to share the remainder among ourselves [1]. And, in the remainder, the top 10 per cent of Indians own about 74 per cent or almost three-quarters of total wealth. Bottom 90 per cent of the remainder hold only about 26 per cent or only a quarter of the total wealth. Worldwide, of the 20 per cent poorest people, one in four is an Indian. As per a popular view, India should not be worried about inequality, as it is a normal progression of economic development. In an urban area expanding industries lead to the proliferation of economic activities in its 'zone of influence', that for some years increases inequality in income and development, but after reaching the threshold, this inequality gradually declines, forming an inverted 'U' of Kuznets Curve [2]. This view fits in a famous phrase of John F. Kennedy, "a rising tide lifts all boats". In a paper published in the Economic and Political Weekly, the author has suggested that to get an accurate picture of regional inequalities one needs to go beyond just States and district levels, or need to inspect sub-district or block levels [3]. At both, these levels can be found an overwhelming concentration of tribal population as well as rampant backwardness.

No doubt India has witnessed a marked drop in the poverty rate in recent times. However, the same is not the case with inequality. Can we say that along with poverty, inequality has also experienced a decline? The answer is a definite 'no'. As per the official data collected on all parameters of development in India the tribals are straggling way behind in terms of income, health, education, nutrition, infrastructure and governance. Tribals in India have been the receivers of injustices throughout the process of development. To exemplify, among 65 to 70 million people displaced during the development process in India 40 per cent are tribal [4]. In India, more than 90 per cent of total coal and above 50 per cent of minerals and dams are located in the tribal regions, yet these areas have remained the least developed. In paradox to economic theory, many developed districts in India include pockets of intense backwardness [2,5,6].

Many of the districts in India have both: most developed and most undeveloped sub-districts [3]. In a data collected for 92 districts and their sub-districts, it suggested that these sub-districts were listed in both, top 20 per cent and bottom 20 per cent of India's sub-districts [2,3]. To exemplify, in the developed districts like Thane, Vadodara, Ranchi, Vishakhapatnam and Raipur have both, some most developed and some least developed sub-districts [1]. To further illustrate, the districts Korba and Raigarh (Chhattisgarh); Valsad (Gujrat); PashchimiSingbhum and Purbi Singbhum (Jharkhand); Kendujhar, Koraput and Mayurbhanj (Odisha) have a combination of both: the most industrialised as well as most underdeveloped sub-districts [5]. Surprisingly, these underdeveloped sub-districts are formidably 'tribal'. It's clear then that the tribals have been neglected in the process of development [5,7,6].

Inequality creates the acute perception of injustice, even economists at the traditionally free-market fundamentalist International Monetary Fund, Andrew G. Berg and Jonathan D. Ostry, have recently argued that "inequality can also be destructive to growth by amplifying the risk of crisis or making it difficult for the poor to invest in education" [1]. They conclude: "reduced inequality and sustained growth may thus be two sides of the same coin" [1].

## 2. FOREST-POVERTY RELATIONSHIP IN TRIBAL REGIONS OF INDIA

There is a close relationship between forests tribal and poverty [8,9,10,11,12,13,14]. Approximately one-fourth of the world's poor and 90% of the poorest rely significantly on forests for their livelihoods [15,16,17]. Forest biodiversity, via NTFPs, plays an important role in affecting poverty issues for marginalized, forest-dependent communities, particularly tribal [8,9,18]. NTFPs contribute to livelihood outcomes, including food security, health and well being, and income [19]. These resources are critical for the socially and economically most marginalized people, who are the main actors in NTFP extraction and may provide them with the only source of personal income [20].

India state of forest report [21], presents the data on forest cover and shows that the total forest cover in country is about 78.29 million ha, constituting 23.81 per cent of the geographical

area of the country, out of which 12.06% is very dense forest (more than 70% crown density), 46.35% is moderately dense forest (40% to 70% crown density), and the remaining 41.59% is open forest (10% to 40% crown density). Report further states that in country Forest cover has more or less stabilized since the 1980s [22,23,24,25,26,27,28]. The enactment of proactive forest conservation policies and Acts, for example, India's Forest Conservation Act, 1980, and changes in management approaches from 'timber' to 'forest ecosystem' during the last few decades have curbed deforestation and promoted conservation and sustainable management of the forest. However, the decline of natural forest due to several factors, what Rai and Soni 2019 [10,11,12] called "power, greed and politics", remains a major concern of forest management.

India has a huge population (275 million to 350 million) living close to the forest, around 1.73 lakh villages in rural India located in and around forests, with their livelihoods critically linked to the forest ecosystem [11,16,23,24]. Therefore, with such a huge population and extensive dependence pattern, any overexploitation and unsustainable harvest practice can potentially degrade forest [12]. Study on forest-poverty relationships [for example 10,11,12,13] shows that a significant percentage of India's tribal population lives in these forest-fringe regions. Further studies suggests [for example 28,29,30,31,32,33] that these tribal communities not just collect forest products for their own consumption but also for commercial sale, the income from these forest products for households living in and around forest constitutes 40 to 60 per cent of their total income.

Hence these income generation activities provide employment opportunities to the poor households and make forests an important contributor to the rural economy in the forested landscapes in the country [10,11,12]. The penury, dependency on forest and lack of any other alternative employment opportunity in these forest fringe areas opportunities often make these people resort to over-exploitation of forest resources [12,34]. The collection of firewood for sale in the market, though it is illegal, is also rampant in many parts of the forest fringe areas of the country and constitutes the source of livelihood for 11% of the population [35]. However, many other forest products have been sustainably harvested by forest dwellers for

many years, and are a constant source of livelihood for local communities [12]. Agriculture and livestock are two other major sources of livelihoods in the forest fringe areas, which in turn depend extensively on the forest for various inputs [11]. Open grazing in the forest is the conventional rearing practices for local communities and this has an adverse impact on growing stock as well as regeneration capacity of the forest when there is overgrazing due to increasing livestock. ICFRE (2001) [36] estimates suggest that India's forest support 270 million cattle for grazing against its carrying capacity of 30 million. The incidence of grazing is estimated to be affecting 78% of India's forests of which 18% are highly affected with the remaining 31% and 29% medium and low respectively [16,23]. The large livestock population also results in a huge collection of tree fodder, which affects the forest quality adversely. The annual requirement of dry and green fodder is estimated to be 569 MT and 1025 MT respectively against the availability of 385 MT and 356 MT [37]. This explains the pressure on India's forest from the livestock sector and its contribution to the state of degradation of forests in human-dominated landscapes of the country.

Agricultural systems in the forested regions also inextricably related to the forest ecosystem. Farmers collect many important materials from the forest for agricultural implements and fencing the agricultural fields, leaf litter for manure, herbs, and medicinal plants to deal with pests and so on. The agriculture in India is predominantly subsistence and crop production highly vulnerable due to weather conditions and wildlife attack. Shifting cultivation that is still being practised in some regions of the country contributes to forest degradation. With increased crop cycles and declining fallow period in shifting cultivation practices in recent decades the impact of traditional agricultural practice is more severe. Different estimates for the area under shifting cultivation ranges from 5 million ha to 11.6 million ha involving 3 to 26 million people in 16 different states in the country [23]. The practice is more prominent in northeastern states.

### **3. INDIAN FORESTS, RURAL POOR AND TRIBAL SOCIETY**

As we have already discussed in previous paragraphs, India has the largest number of poor in the world, many of whom depend directly or

indirectly on forests for a living [38,39]. Poverty, as well as large and expanding human and livestock populations, puts unrelenting pressure on the forests of India [39]. The consequence is severe degradation of the country's forest resources [39]. Agricultural intensification in India has impacted positively in many ways, particularly by reducing pressure on marginal forest lands. On the other hand, India's fast-growing population, urbanization and industrialisation are putting tremendous pressure on forest ecosystem [40]. The continue increasing human and livestock population, poverty and shrinking natural resource base are responsible for the tremendous pressure on existing land and forest cover [40]. The major problem in India is not the forest-related laws and policy, rather its implementation on the ground. Though India has well-defined and well-articulated forest policies it lacks a proper strategy to meet the demands for forest and its products from the forest ecosystem [40].

Since independence, India has experienced three policy phases i.e. industrial forestry, social forestry and protection and, now after looking at tremendous pressure and demand on forest resources India should provide a balance of all these three policy phases. Majority of tribal population in India i.e. more than 68 million [40], lives in forest areas and constitutes the most disadvantaged section of society based on income, literacy, health and lack of access to technical, economic and social services [1].

Although India is the seventh-largest country in the world, it holds only 1.8 per cent of the world's forests [40]. But the pressures on those forests are extremely high. India's large and rapidly growing human and livestock populations (one billion and 450 million, respectively) are the heaviest contributors to the unabated degradation of India's forest resources [40]. If we see the recent data it clearly shows that world's largest number of poor live in India, many of whom depend directly or indirectly on the country's forest resources for a living [40]. Shrinking common property resource areas, which declined by 30 to 50 per cent between 1950 and 1980 [41], also contributed to increased pressure on the land and forests by the landless. Add to these factors the country's steady increase in demand for industrial wood products, and one would

expect to see a rapid decline in India's forest resources.

Forests are an important gift of nature for the well being of mankind. Forests constitute some of the richest natural resources. In India, a large section of the population still depends on the forest for their existence. It was estimated that forests constitute an important source of livelihood for more than 375 million people directly and indirectly [40]. Poverty in rural India is generally linked to inadequate arable land [42] or its low productivity [14]. Naturally, in the case of weaker sections, that too in the absence of land, forest-related livelihoods become important [14]. Collection from forests such as fuelwood and Non-Timber Wood Products (NTWPs) and their contribution to per capita income in rural areas particularly for marginalized communities living adjacent to forests largely remain unaccounted and unnoticed. Tribal women are major actors in the forestry sector throughout the developing world. Most widely recognised is that women (and children) are the primary collectors of fuel and fodder for home consumption and for sale in urban markets. This alone gives women a major role in managing and conserving these forest resources.

#### **4. DISPLACEMENTS OF THE TRIBALS IN THE NAME OF DEVELOPMENT**

Displacement of tribal communities in the name of development-related projects is one of the most social disruptive processes happening all over the country [14:6923; 43:33]. Studies [for example 44] suggests that Tribal community constitute about 8 per cent of the country's total population, and 40 per cent of these total tribal population have been displaced by large dams since independence. Cernea's [45] study further suggests that these displaced tribal populations get 'no' or the 'least' benefits from these development projects. Rather, Rai and Soni [14] study further suggests that 'their living conditions deteriorate as a result of this displacement' [14:6923]. Our records suggest that the situation of resettled and rehabilitated people, who have lost their life and livelihood due to large scale development projects, is dismal, and, Nilsen concludes his study by stating that, 'this is the main reason why development-induced displacement more often than not entails impoverishment [44:102].

Our experience further suggests that the development related large scale projects directly and indirectly benefited other sections of the society, particularly Politician, contractors, project officers, urban and elite classes, State, landlords and bureaucrats etc. The destitute of the marginal group, particularly Tribal peasants stand in stark contrast to the enrichment of the groups, the capitalist elite farmers, as a result of the construction of mega dams [44 page103].

Cernea [45] study on 'displacement due to large dams' shows that around 16 to 38 million people displaced only due to large dams and half of them are tribal. Further study suggests that:

- (1) Due to Hirakund dam (1948-57) 249 villages in Sambalpur district (Orissa) and 36 villages in Raigarh district (Chhattisgarh), in total 22,144 families or a population of 1.1 lakh, families displaced where the tribal population alone constituted 18.3 per cent of the total affected people [43,46].
- (2) Due to Bargi dam (1974-90), 162 villages in the three districts of Madhya Pradesh affected namely Mandla, Seoni and Jabalpur, out of which 82 villages were completely submerged [43]. Here out of the total displaced population, tribal alone constituted 43 per cent [2];
- (3) Sardar Sarovar Dam displaced total 45,000 families from 192 villages of Madhya Pradesh, 33 of Maharashtra, and 19 of Gujarat [43]. Out of the total population here around 56 per cent population that was affected was tribal population [45;47]
- (4) In Orissa, because of Ib river dam project around 80,000 tribal population have been displaced [48:95]
- (5) In Chhattisgarh, due to 10 major dam projects and 38 medium dam projects, a total of 511 villages were affected negatively [49].
- (6) In Jharkhand due to Dam related projects, between 1951 to 1990, around 16, 400, 000 people have been displaced and out of this 75.2% of the displaced persons were tribals [48:25]. Out of these displaced people, only 4,100,000 people have been rehabilitated and 12,300,000 were left without rehabilitation [48:95]. Overall, 75 % people left without rehabilitation [48: 95].

The World Commission report 2000 shows some stunning facts on tribal displacement due to dam-related projects for example: due to Curzon dam in Gujrat 100 per cent tribal population of that area have been displaced; due to Maheshwar dam in Madhya Pradesh state 60 percent of tribal population have been displaced; due to Chandil dam in Bihar around 87 per cent of the total tribal population have been displaced; due to Keolkar dam in Bihar 88 per cent tribal population have been displaced; due to Mohibajaj Sagar dam in Rajasthan around 77 per cent of the total population have been displaced; due to Polbharam dam in Andhra Pradesh state around 53 per cent tribal population have been displaced; due to Upper Indravati dam in Orissa around 90 per cent of the total tribal population have displaced; due to Ichhapalli dam in Himachal Pradesh around 77 per cent of the tribal population have been displaced [50].

Establishment of industries is another area where the threat of the tribals' extinction has had a traumatic past. The three states of India i.e. Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Orissa, has the maximum occurrence of both natural resources as well as the displacement [45]. For example in Orissa thirty-three villages (2,503, 524 acres of land) had been uprooted by the Orissa government in 1954 to set up the steel plant of Rourkela, and further thirty-one villages (1,192, 398 acres of land) had been uprooted for the construction of Mandira dam in 1956-57 [49]. Recently around 400-600 villages have been uprooted in Sundergarh district of Orissa due to sixty sponge iron factory, and around 20,000 tribal from 82 villages have been displaced due to Utkal Alumina International Limited (UAIL) plants of kashipur in Rayagada [49].

Second example comes from Jharkhand: In Jharkhand state due to mining-related projects 2,550,000 people and due to industry related projects around 1,250,000 people have been displaced; the starking fact is that Nearly 29.6 % of those displaced by mining industries are tribals; Out of 1,250,000 people only 3, 75, 000 people have been rehabilitated and 8,75,000 have been left without rehabilitation in industry related projects and out of 2,550,000 people in mining-related projects only 630,000 people have been rehabilitated and 1,920,000 were left without rehabilitation [48:95].

The third example comes from Chhattisgarh state. The highly critical issue in the recent time

has been Special Economic Zone Act, 2005, the aim of which was to accelerate industrialization through foreign direct investments (FDI), that was supposed to provide employment opportunities to a large number of people [51]. But our ground experience suggests a different story; in reality, SEZ has become a tool to remove the tribals from their lands. In this region, Adivasi's land has been given to big business houses for mining and other industries [52]. Official data suggests that 65,000 ha. The land area has already been clear for industrial and mining purpose, and many Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) have been signed for further clearance. The sum total of MoUs signed in the state of Chhattisgarh alone is 745, the highest in the country [52]. According to a report of Committee on Agrarian Relations about 3, 50, 000 tribals, or half the population of Dantewada has been displaced from the district. If we look into data study suggests that since 1990 the displacement of marginalised groups of people, particularly tribals, has become an additional source, as economic activity increasingly uprooted people from their lands and soil [51]. In Bastar region of Chhattisgarh, before 2005, 8775 new factories were established and further Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) for an investment of Rs. 17,000 crores were signed in 2005 for the proposed Tata and Essar steel plant [53]. Also, there were three steel plants set-up in the offing, owned by the Tata, Essar and NDMC which uprooted many tribal villages [53].

Uprooting deprives of the vital sustenance of the tribal who are dependent on natural resources for their survival and finally their long term sustainability is also endangered [43:10]. The displacement alienates the tribal from their common property resources particularly land, forests and water, what Water Commission on Dam report concludes: "despite the massive investment in water resource management and particularly in dams, billions of children, women and men in rural areas lack access to the most basic water and sanitation services" [51].

Various reports on rehabilitation and resettlement of displaced people, from different evictions sites, suggest that in a large number of cases about 75% of people are never resettled [for e.g. 2,43, 49,51,53]. It has been observed that non-recognition of tribal over common property resources and restrictions on their use, alienating them from the means of production, denial of due entitlement of labour, distressed payment of

wages, and misappropriation of funds, have kept the tribal labour in the deprivation, poverty, penury, hunger and starvation [43:15; 14:6926].

The major effect of this development-induced displacement is that the Adivasis feel delude and disillusioned by the State, which in turn leads to tribal unrest and rebel, in the form of lobbying and Dharnas etc. Some example of tribal unrest and movement in the form of lobbying are: Khedut Mazdoor Sangh Jai Adivasi Yuva Shakti in Madhya Pradesh state, Niyamgiri Suraksha Samiti in Orissa state, Narmada Dharangrasta Samiti, Maharashtra Rajya Adivasi Bachao Abhiyan and Sarvahara Jan Andolan in Maharashtra state, Jharkhand Disom Party, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and Adivasi Sengel Abhiyan in Jharkhand state, and Bharat Jakat Majhi Pargana Mahal, a collective of some 6.4 million Santhals across West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa and Assam, are some of the examples of tribal outfits [14:6926, 54,43:15]. Jharkhand presents a classic case of tribal rebellious when recently around two hundred tribal villages in Khunti District have put up stone plaques having provisions of PESA, 2006 inscribed on them at the entrance of villages [14:6927]. The movement called as 'Pathalgadi' or 'Pathalgarhi' movement, which declares that Gram Sabha is the sovereign authority and that the tribals do not recognise Central or State Government, though they abide by the Constitution of India [14:6927].

Further Rai and Soni (2018) [14] study shows that recently the Dongriya Kondh tribe of Niyamgiri hills in Orissa have won the legal battle against the Vedanta group, and saved their "Niyam Raja" the mountain rich in bauxite resources, which the Vedanta group wanted to acquire for mining purposes [14:6927].

## 5. TRIBAL INCLUSION THROUGH PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE

What then are the elements of a vision of development much more inclusive and empowering of those left out? First, the pattern and idea of development need to change. The current pattern of development and growth is not inclusive. Rather instead of jobless growth or only GDP growth, our focus should be more on inclusive growth. For example, if we compare the industry or service sector with the enterprise sector we can say that the faster growth for the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises segment

will generate more per capita income and employment opportunities and is, therefore, more inclusive than growth largely driven by extractive industries or the service sector [55].

Further, if we look into the current status of India's forest ecosystem and poverty, the study suggests that the poorest regions of India are also the most eco-fragile [55]. Looking at the current ecosystem status if we want to improve the status of tribal through their increased per capita income we need to offer them a range of sustainable livelihoods including income from agriculture, forest and forest products. Forest and forest products, particularly Non-wood forest products, which is estimated to run into several million dollars, of which only a minuscule fraction accrues to the tribal communities, can create many opportunities including huge income-generation and biodiversity conservation in tribal-dominated forest areas of the country.

Along with this we also need to consider the rights of the tribal people and the complete restructuring of their relationship with the land and forest. Further, the focus should be given on improving health and education facilities in backward districts. Globally, India spends among the lowest share of its national income on public provision of health and education [55]. Health and education are the sectors in most urgent need of State reforms. We need to equip our most marginalised tribal people with the skills demanded by a rapidly changing economy.

The most important thing that this marginalized section of the society and excluded regions need is 'just participatory governance', where Panchayati Raj institutions, including the gram sabha, can be empowered and activated for participation and also "last citizens" can be involved in decisions that affect their lives, such as taking their consent while acquiring land for an avowed public purpose [56,57,50].

Under capitalism, inequality does not decline automatically. In a country like India, the 'Kuznets Curve' remains mere daydreaming if the right programmes and policies are not in place [1]. Take the example of the developed world: for example in the case of Europe and America inequality did decline when the appropriate policy framework was adopted during the so-called golden age of capitalism in the mid-20th century [1]. These mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century

decades saw the emergence of what economist and diplomat John Kenneth Galbraith termed "countervailing power" [1]. And it is the unravelling of this balancing power and a shift towards free-market fundamentalism that led to the rise in inequality after 1980 [1].

In India sustainability has to be at the core of our development strategy. State and policymakers in India should recognize the dire need of redefining the core meaning of reforms so as to make the reforms pro-poor rather than pro-corporate. Without these reforms, inequality in India will continue to accelerate and create critical situations, threatening the very survival of the delicate fabric of Indian democracy.

## 6. CONCLUSION

In India, the planning process has not been fruitful to all sections of Indian society. Particularly, it has not been able to integrate the tribals in the mainstream of development. The tribal people have not been made part of decision-making body while deciding on the development process in the country, even at the time when development process had a direct 'negative' impact on the lives of the tribals. As has been already discussed the construction of dams and other development projects related displacements and rehabilitation, allocation of resources, cost-benefit analysis, and environmental impact assessment are some of the instances where the tribals have never been given a place in decision-making body, even when such projects severely affected these people. The government of India considers the development an exclusive domain of administration, howbeit, in a democratic set up like India, the development needs to be more 'inclusive', more 'people-oriented' and more 'participatory'. Considering the fact of the historical vulnerability of tribals in India, the Constitution makers incorporated some special provisions in the Constitution ensuring safety and security of these people. Article 46 of the Constitution requires that 'the State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of scheduled tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation. Sixth Schedule in the Constitution makes specific provisions for the administration of tribal areas in the States of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram. Not only this, Article 338A, which was inserted in the Constitution later on provides for the establishment of a National Commission for

scheduled tribes to investigate and monitor all matters relating to safeguards provided for the tribals, to inquire into specific complaints relating to their rights, to participate and advice on the planning process of socio-economic development of tribes, to make recommendations and to discharge such functions in relation to the protection, welfare and development and advancement of the tribals etc. Despite all these safeguards in the Constitution, the State has not been able to ensure and improve the socio-economic conditions of these people. In reverse, the State in the guise of 'development' has led to their further marginalization.

Displacement and forced relocation are the products of mining, dams, bio-reserves and other development-related projects. Displacement, relocation and resettlement are much more than a question of sheer numbers. These are the very serious and complex issues relating to governance, participation, transparency, accountability, resettlement goals and human rights. To be uprooted from a place is always a painful experience for people, hence, the decision relating to displacement and relocation etc. must be taken where it is indispensable.

The following are some of the recommendations that may be kept in mind at the time a development project necessitates displacement and relocation: The displacement in the first place must be unacceptable. In the cases where it becomes necessary, it must be voluntary and not forceful. The consent of the affected parties must be obtained where displacement is voluntary. This consent must be "free, informed prior consent". The emphasis is given on 'informed prior' consent, as it is necessary for the people to have full knowledge about the necessity of the project, its alternatives or unavoidability, and the rationale behind the displacement. Then only the people will be in the position to give voluntary consent to such a project.

Every time the provisions of specific legislation such as Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 must be complied with. Moreover, the project affected people must be such placed as they can enjoy the fruits of the project. The project must leave these people in a better or at least the same condition as before. Lastly, and more importantly, a National Displacement and a Rehabilitation Act must be enacted in place of mere policy, and a commission in the same regards must be set up.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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