International Baccalaureate

Extended Essay

Subject: World Studies (Politics, Anthropology and economics)

Title: *Has Indian government played any significant role in the economic development of “Baiga”, an indigenous tribe from village Gogatola, Balaghat district, Madhya Pradesh- India?*

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Abstract:

Research question of this extended essay is ‘Has Indian government played any significant role in development of the Baiga, an indigenous tribe from village Gogatola, Balaghat district, Madhya Pradesh- India?’ This research was chosen because these indigenous peoples’ population is declining in an alarming rate.

In order to investigate that a survey from the village ‘Gogatola’ was carried out. Small meeting was organized so that more information about baiga’s life could be collected. Also, some interview was conducted in order to know about the projects implemented by Indian government for them and if they are helping them? In addition an interview of the director of an NGO that works for the tribal development in the Balaghat was carried out. Information of the government policies and projects those were applied for the progress of Baigas was also assembled from the Balaghat district office from Tribes development committee co-coordinators.

After looking on both the sides of the research and the responses from the baigas, it seems that Indian government has been trying hard to achieve the goal of developing the life style of the Baigas. However, due to corruption and bureaucracy development is limited. Despite the fact that there was not enough information from the government official hence it is not easy to reach conclusion directly however the information is here states that the aim to meet for developing Baigas is not meeting its best.

Abstract Word Count (233)
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Research question:

Has Indian government played any significant role in development of the Baiga, an indigenous tribe from village Gogatola, Balaghat district, Madhya Pradesh- India?

Indigenous tribes:

Defining Indigenous people is a bit inflexible because UN itself has not accepted any particular definition however it has declared some understandings through which they could be catorised into indigenous people for instance people “from” or “of the original origin” therefore one could easily state about them in reference to their location/ particular region. They have distinct culture/language. They have different social, economic or political system. ¹ There are many indigenous people who differ from indigenous people (Maya people of Mexico and Central America) and significantly are exposed to the expansion activities of the world and on the other hand there are people who are isolated in their own communities (Andaman and Nicobar’s Senthalis and Jarawa).

To estimate the population of the indigenous people around the world is difficult because of the identity and variance of the people. However, recent statistics from United Nations (UN) press release (13 September 2007) states that indigenous people all over the world make the one-third of the worlds’ poorest and suffer alarming conditions in all the countries.

Indigenous people make around 370 million of the world’s population and some 5% they constitute one third of the 900 million enormously poor rural population of the world. Daily, all over the world indigenous people face troubles like cruelty and violence, continuing assimilation policies, land assets

¹ Definition of Indigenous people by UN (22nd February 2010)
http://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:zcvH7hiTF9oJ:www.wipce2008.com/enews/pdf/wipce_fact_sheet_21-10-07.pdf+indigenous+people:+definition&hl=en&gl=in&pid=bl&srcid=ADGEESiV6aEtsvOW72m6Ml6MKoneDVVeAgMBogX8JoXH0CVGhVu89S1Gj7ycXn2XRBArYir57Umo8_raaH_2lPVQSyxLRcFv2pVfH0VleT6r3lOvnn1DLeYjPPMrq3a2cZzQMJOsCsig=AHIEbQU3rKSHSMvVj7Z8EKwLyo1kWg

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scarcity, inferiority, unequal distribution of resources, health, language, cultural survival, discrimination, vulgar activities done by the military forces, rejection of land rights.  

**Rights of the indigenous tribes:**

Since the beginning of the sixteenth century governments of most of the countries haven’t been considering about the life of the indigenous people and have been controversial towards them. In nineteenth century all the governments started to utilize their forest resources to access the investment capital for economic development and provided these to the private firms. They totally denied that indigenous people are dependent on forests instead of saving their cultural identity and life style they decided to make more profit and increase the economy.

The United Nations has its own working committee which works for the indigenous peoples’ population for their rights activities. They have some fundamentals which they mostly focus on they are as follows:

- Checks the government’s policies to make sure that they are including the protection of the human rights of the indigenous peoples’ population.

- Promotes the recommendation to the United Nation’s sub commission in order to prevent the discrimination and safety of minorities on Human rights hence that promotes the help on the issues of the indigenous peoples’ population.

- Also, it focuses on the basic fundamentals i.e. to create internationals principles concerning the rights of the indigenous people population and a universal statement about the rights of the indigenous people.

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2 Indigenous population : http://www.unpo.org/content/view/10586/83/ (20th Feb 2010)

3 UN Indigenous people working committee: http://www.ciesin.columbia.edu/docs/010-000a/Year_Worlds_Indig.html (20th Feb 2010)
After looking at the indigenous rights and their cultural rights governments is trying to rectify the injustice which happened in the history. In some countries they are considering the forestry management in order to assimilate the community anxiety. Also, they have started giving more authorization to indigenous people so in that way they could help in sustainable development of forests as well as indigenous people.

As it is known that indigenous people are losing their identity as well as their cultural. In spite of the fact that the diversity of indigenous people face the general problem as other people do for instance issues dealing with existing, invading society. They go through discrimination and stress to get involved in the near societies. Also, because of the lands which are been used by the businessmen and governments in order to invest so that they could improve their economy. Therefore, there are many indigenous people who are in danger of extinction. Being from the Balaghat district and having had an opportunity to interact with baigas, I decided to focus my research on these indigenous tribes in India. The aim of my research was to find if Indian government has played any significant role in the economic development of “Baiga”, an indigenous tribe from Balaghat district, Madhya Pradesh - India

**Indian Caste system:**

The reason was choosing India is because it is a country of varieties. It has has so many religion, ‘In Indian caste system it describes the social stratification and social restrictions In the Indian subcontinent, in which social classes are defined by thousands of endogamous hereditary groups, often termed as jatis or castes’⁵. Examples of castes are SC(Scheduled Caste), ST(Scheduled Tribes), OBC(Other Backward caste) and in these areas they all are sub categorized into sub-caste for example, in Madhya Pradesh alone SC caste includes 48 sub-caste they are as follows: bhang, mehtar, katiya, mahar,

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⁵ Caste system in India, Wikipedia

chamhar, basor, khatik, holia etc. ST includes "46 sub-caste they are as follows : gond, pardhan, baiga, sonjharia, nagarchi, mana, binjhwar etc.'6

Amongst these the ST's are considered to be the lowest caste of all. They are the people who inhabit very remote places where it is hard to be in touch with rest of the world. Baiga is one such tribe in Balaghat region of Madhya Pradesh, India. Therefore I decided to if Indian government has played any significant role in the economic development of "Baiga", an indigenous tribe from Balaghat district, Madhya Pradesh- India

**Research methodology**

I was interested in this topic because I had worked with them when I was in 10th grade and in my summer vacation with my mother I went in a totally tribal area because my mother got a project to teach those Baiga students in the village and at that time hardly any vehicle could go in that place, so I went there and had a feeling of doing something about their lifestyle and since, the world came to existence this jati was there from the beginning, some of the jatis have developed however lack of awareness had lead to the vanishing of the Baiga jati, therefore I decided to research weather Indian government has played any important role in development of their jati? Therefore, I went to a village called Gogatola and went around people’s houses, I had a questionnaire which was related to their daily life for instance what food they eat, education, luxurious items etc. and in the end gathered them all and had a meeting about their life style, the problems they face, government policies provided them.

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6 Sub-caste of SC: P vibhagiya yojnayen ST development projects of Balaghat (Progress projects of ST) 20th July 2009, J.P. P and V.K. B (Co-ordinator of the committee of Tribal development Balaghat)
**Baigas: results and findings:**

'Most of the information we have on the Baigas come down from the Englishmen when in 1867, Captain Thomson briefly described them as a wild tribe. Then came Forsyth’s ‘Highlands of Central India’ who was also greatly influenced by the Baigas. But it was left to one of the greatest anthropologists of all times, Verrier Elwin to document in detail all facets of the Baiga life in his seminal contribution, ‘The Baiga’.

Baigas are the people who are sub-caste of ST, they live in the jungle areas where there is hardly any sort of comfort, they are totally dependent on natural resources for example trees, land, water sources and so many. Their main occupations is making Bamboo products and sell them another one is labouring, some of them do farming to earn their livelihood. They have different kinds of food which they dig it from the jungle and cook it at home it is some kind of root and they eat the mushroom which grows on bamboo trees and eat rice which is known as Kutki. In the field of education they really do not think that it is helpful at all, therefore their children do not go to schools, however there are some exceptions who had sent their children to school. Government has tried to support them by providing some job programs. Baigas are legendary drinkers, they make liquor from a fruit named as Mauha and they smoke tobacco rolled in a plant’s leaf known as Tendu patta.

There houses are mostly made up of soil and wood their roofs are covered with dry plant’s branches and leaves however some of them use tiles made of soil to cover their roofs. They did not have any sorts of comforts in the beginning however many of them have started consuming some utilities for example radio, mp3 players etc. As they do not really like doing any work or labouring until it comes to starving then they look for the labouring and which is why their income is very low.

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Information of Baigas, Countercurrents
http://www.countercurrents.org/ksharma261007.htm
Date accessed: 10.8.09
1. **Baigas Occupations**

There occupations mostly depends on season, in summer most of the bamboo plants gets matured and hence it is easy to make products of it however in rainy season bamboo is in its first stage so they cannot use it to make any product, same as labouring if contractor is getting projects and contracts then only they get an opportunity to earn money.

Baigas main occupation is dependent on bamboos trees which has three stages of life according to baigas in the first stage (Karla) it is the growing stage, in this stage this bamboo plant could be cooked and eaten, second stage (Mohila) in this stage bamboo has reached in its half life and half matured a bit hard and getting harder to achieve the third stage (Pakiva) which is totally matured and hardest. They make bamboos products according to their stage for example they make tokna (basket), chatai (mats), dalla, super, chhatodi, chadi (sticks) etc. In its second stage and in its third stage they make stuffs like sofas, chairs, decorative products, beds etc. By making these all and selling them in cities and merchants they get low prices for them which is hard to fulfill the house's necessities, farming is another occupation in which they grow corns, rice, kutki, kodo etc. they consume all the grown materials in farms however they sell a bit of it and they sell the mushrooms which grows on bamboo tree and they make chips (Baichandi) of one special root which is found in jungles.

Labouring is one of their main occupation, they work under contractors of houses, roads. They do not go for the jobs which government provides them only some of them go for that instead of going there they cut the trees and sell the wood to merchants and other people this is how they make money.

Generally one house's monthly income is around Rs.2000 to Rs.3000 they do not have any bank balance because they spend their money in drinking liquor until the money finishes.

Therefore, their economic condition is very bad because whatever they earn by any of the source they spend it outrageously drinking liquor.
2. **Food and Living standards**

Baigas have a typical food they eat rice, kutki and kodo which are kinds of rice they also drink pej which is some kind of rice soup, they are not interested in chapattis, they eat the first stage of bamboo plant (Kaela), they also cook the newly born leafs of the plant *chirot*. As they have cattles for example cow, buffaloes, goat, hens, cocks and pigs, which sometimes become their meal especially on the occasion of marriage or festival. They do fishing. They look for the roots in the jungles which they boil and cook, sometimes they peel it in a thin chips shaped and keep them outside to dry and after drying they enjoy eating it. They eat mushrooms which grow on bamboo, wood.

As they have a low income which the men use to buy liquor instead of investing it on family this is why living standards are not really much they do not have well manufactured houses they have small huts and hardly any utilities stuff however some of them have developed their living standards and use radio, mp3 player. Government has provided them electricity in low prices.

In their houses they do not really have special weapons normally they keep *kulhadi* (Axe), *hasiya* (sickle), *khurpi* (used to scratch), *basula* (used to give shapes to bamboo), *faudo* (spade), *kudali*, *nangar*, *gatari* these are the some objects which they use for farming purpose as well, they are not skilled neither qualified in this field.

They do not have many materials in their houses for bedding not even utensils, they use utensils of soil, they sleep in the mats which they prepare with bamboo and they have beds of bamboo, as they have been living in jungles they are adopted to it and nature has given them a gift of immunity for normal diseases, and if anyone gets caught by any disease they use medicinal plants to cure the disease.

"In the earlier days, they did not wear many clothes but partly due to cooking from government officials and partly due to the tribal tendency to adopt new things, they started wearing clothes that cover most of their body. However, there are still to be found many such members who show an utter disdain for clothes and prefer just a langoti or a lugra (women’s garment). The Baigas never wear any nose ornament which was surprising because tribal groups are known to adorn ornaments. The Baigan
women use tattoos for ornamental significance and many an elaborate design can be found on the baiga that they feel make them look beautiful.\footnote{Clothing Style, Countercurrents \url{http://www.countercurrents.org/sharma261007.htm}}

3. **Education:**

Early baiga people were not educated at all however as the new generation came to existence their parents did not really suggest them to study or to go schools they want their children to help them in their work that is why after 16 years children start helping their parents in farming and bamboo work therefore, most of them study until 6th grade and hardly some of them manage to finish their high school. They do not really plan for the jobs by studying; they look forward to help their parents and how to take responsibilities. If a boy comes to a age of 16 then he gets married to a girl of age 10 year old, then they start their life.


1. **Janani Suraksha Yojana:** This program was to decrease the infant and maternal mortality rates and also to increase the delivery in the institutions specially for the people who were below poverty line.\footnote{Date accessed : 12.8.09}

2. **Free of Cost School Uniform:** Under this scheme free school dresses were provided to the primary class students of ST and SC people. This scheme encourages girls to carry on the education.

3. **Old age and social security Pension scheme:** This scheme helps the people who are 60 years old or more than that, divorced/ widowed women who are 18 years old or more than that.
4. **National Maternity benefit scheme**: This scheme helps those women who are 18 years old or more than that, is below poverty line and has only one child.

5. **Prime Minister Rojgar Yojna (PMRY)**: It is a scheme by through which 7 lakhs small projects are established by which government wants to provide jobs to at least a million people. It includes jobs in industry, factories and in business method.

6. **Remote village Electrification Program**: This project is for the remote places where there is no electricity therefore government want to help the people by providing energy sources like solar energy lamps, wind mills, small hydro powers, hybrid system etc.

7. **Indira awas yojna**: Most important aim of this scheme is to provide accommodation to the rural people who are below poverty line.

8. **Solar photovoltaic program**: This scheme’s main aim is to provide some conventional sources of energy like solar lamps in replacement of kerosene oil lamps to conserve the conventional sources of energy also to save the electricity they have started to provide the solar street lights and solar home lightings.

9. **Sarva siksha abhiyan mission**: In this program promotion of the primary schools takes place.

10. **Scholarship for studying abroad**: Each year 10 scholarship are provided to tribal students who are interested in doing their research/post graduation after PhD.

11. **World food program**: The most important aim of this project is to eradicate hunger and food insecurity from the rural areas.

12. **School of excellence for SC (Scheduled caste) and ST (Scheduled Tribes)**: Meritorious students of SC and ST, government provides good education to them of the district level and also provides computer facilities with good hostel services.

13. **Kanya saksharta prothasan yojna**: Aim is to reduce the number of tribal girls who drop out from school and to encourage them to join the school and carry on with the studies.
14. **Hostel facilities in Delhi for Tribal students studying in the universities and colleges**: Madhya Pradesh government provides free water/ housing and electric facilities and Rs 2000 as pocket money and scholarship according to their performances.

15. **Group marriage Scheme of ST and SC Welfare department**: To eradicate the dowry system and unessential costs government provides Rs 5000 to each pair tribal pair.

16. **Schemes for laborers**: Aim is to provide the financial help to the labors and their families.

17. **Pre- metric and Post metric hostels and stipend for tribals**: It provides facilities of room/ water supply to the tribal meritorious students.

18. **Asylum Schools Scheme for Tribal Education**: Aim is to provide the education to the students of primary and middle level.

19. **Deen dayal Mobile hospital yojna**: The aim is to provide the medical services in the remote places for tribals.

20. **Deen Dayal Antyodaya Upchar Yojna**: The aim is to provide full health services to the people who live below poverty line, they get hospitalized and they get security coverage.

21. **Tribal colony development scheme**: Basic aim is to provide the fundamental facilities like water, electricity, road, drainage system, taps, pumps etc.

22. **Craftsman Training Scheme**: Important aim is to reduce the unemployment among the rural population by training them in the crafting and other forest related work. Skills are been taught which are good enough to get a job in industries/ factories.

23. **Taza Jal Jan Krishi Vikash Scheme**: Increase in the production of fisheries and to provide the subsidies to the rural.

24. **Vivekananda Samuh beema yojna, 2006**: Basic aim is to provide the financial help and security through the Vivekananda samuh beema yojna.
25. Prime Minister Gram Sadak yojna: The aim is to connect all the villages and remote places to each other as well as to the cities. 11

Above projects were implemented to all of the people that included Baigas however, when asked in interview they also told that there are some subsidies which were specially for the Baigas for example Land subsidy; each family was provided 3.5 acre of land for farming, Madhya Pradesh have also started them providing ration in low prices. To encourage them for farming government have started to provide the seeds in low prices also the equipment needed for farming also students who have graduated from their high school then they have a chance to get a job.

Discussion:

From the interview taken the information about the Baiga tribes and how they earn their lively hood, how they are dependent on the forests for their living. It was evident from the Baigas people that they suffer with many troubles like land issues, deforestation, food scarcity, lack of resources etc. These problems have led to a significant decline in their populations. Governments of central India as well as Madhya Pradesh state government is trying to save these tribes by providing them subsidies, benefits and profits through government projects. Baiga people have received the help and had a positive effect in their income; many people still have queries about the projects which have been implemented. It seems that all the money kept away from their reach of the goal and they were raising a question saying where do the projects go? They strongly suspect that corruption is the prime cause of limiting development. When asked ‘How do you like the government projects?’ Most of them said projects which are established by the government are not effective, it does not involve the concerned people and hence these projects are not reaching their goals. The effort from the government side seems to be not enough to put everything together. Therefore, despite the fact that the reason proves some affects on their economy however in reality it’s not been reaching to its best.

11 PM gram Gram sadak yojna:
http://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:2935BOaLQlIGJcr4d.bhJ.nlc.in/Circulars/PMGSY_Workshop.pdf+pradhan+mantri+gram+sadak+yojana+tenders&h=en&gl=in&pid=AQ6EE315S61QoNh_tVid+1uL9QLe+TIL2eUwvUwOP1Ey43CDH+S0nuJsp6yf4DxrMQG2JKSagye7eHTbuuySeOWbIYTm9dUNvLCYVA6GMS- (19 Feb 2010)
**Evaluation:**

While doing this research there might have gone some inaccuracy in some parts, the most important limitation of the research is that I could not collect the information from the other side i.e. from the government official side hence I could not conclude it in this essay because it is very important to see both the sides of the coin, hence to improve the essay I should have taken proper care of following tips. If more personal interview could have taken then the judgment by the people could have been perfect. I could have got different comments and suggestions from them. When the survey was taken then the questionnaire was more about their life living being about the policies and their consequences instead. Instead of taking the survey of only 20 people I should have taken at least half a village’s survey then it would have helped in concluding. These all contributed in changing the conclusion of the research. If those errors would have been reduced then the research would have been much more reliable.
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3 UN indigenous people working committee: http://www.ciesin.columbia.edu/docs/010-000a/Year_Worlds_Indig.html (20th Feb 2010)

4 Issues and concerns:


5 Issues and concerns:


6 Sub-caste of SC: P vibhagiya yojnayen ST development projects of Balaghat (Progress projects of ST) 20th July 2009, J.P. P and V.K. B (Co-ordinator of the committee of Tribal development Balaghat)
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