Land Acquisition and Tribal Development in Neoliberal Eastern India

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By

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For

The Adivasis who lost their home, hearth and livelihoods

CONTENTS

PREFACE

The present book has been planned and documented chiefly on the basis of the perspectives of the Adivasis, the sons of the soil of our country. Recent sway of development has raised many voices of the Adivasis which cannot be connived anymore. The neo-colonised India is witnessing resistance from all over the country against land grabbing, flawed planning of development, and increasing poverty. The displacement and deprivation in the wake of the so-called development has taken an ugly turn with the introduction of the new LARR Act, the Mining Act, the Forest Act, and the like. The present book has tried to focus on the local movements by conducting a micro-level study in two states, i.e., Odisha and Jharkhand.

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INTRODUCTION

It is now a well-known fact that, all over the world, dispossession has come to be regarded as the inevitable and non-detachable other side of the coin called "development". Development under neoliberalism is kind of a race toward the acquisition of as much property as possible. Displacement is an obvious fall-out of development. However, this thesis has always been contested by societies, communities, and intellectuals since its birth and insisted on avoiding the destruction of human resources and natural property. Starting from trade unions, and civil rights activists—all have been tirelessly working toward providing a buffer against an increasingly tedious social security under the capitalist market system. Displacement not only takes away the taste of life but also breaks its continuity and forces people into destitution. In India, the recent years that have been marked by economic growth rates, have encountered concepts like "development" and "eminent domain" being continuously advertised in the public media, but it is a rare case of highlighting the real issues marked by depleting resources—land. Movements against land acquisition have been highlighted along with the tension revolving around land acquisition serving to attract people's attention. Land has become the most contested terrain, which has widened the gap between the haves and the have-nots.

Land acquisition affects those people whose livelihoods are based on land. With the dispossession of land, these people not only lose their economic base but also their social and cultural identity. Inequality crept around injustices perpetrated by the big fishes towards the small ones who

have been brought out of the water. The most shocking part is that India does not even have a proper Land Acquisition Act and what it has is inherited from the colonial Act of 1894. No government so far has tried to maintain proper land records, no system of deciding the value of land, no training is being imparted to conduct the acquisition and rehabilitation process, and practically no data on land titles. Our country does not even have a national map showing occupation groups, like tribes, forest dwellers, agriculturists, and the like. Displacement and exploitation of natural resources under the rubric of development are the manifestations of the power of neoliberalism in which the capital seeks neither to enlarge its manufacturing foundation nor to amplify markets but to amass land resources and gain profits.

In both Odisha and Jharkhand, with the increasing requirements of development, different areas of competition between the state or state-led-corporate sectors and the people have been doubled due to the unsustainable and uneven growth strategy and multiplied conflicts due to the paradigm of the contemporary model of development that has caused intractable ecological damage and threatened the rights of the people despite having a series of laws. The unevenness is created by the westernised model of industrialisation emanating from globalisation and liberalisation. In order to increase productivity, industrialisation, and economic development, the government has signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a number of corporate companies for initiating industrialisation based on mineral wealth in the neoliberal age. The government of Odisha signed MoUs with ninety-three companies in 2014; the steel sector leading with forty-eight. Other MoUs are: twenty-eight with the power sector; three with aluminium, and four each with cement and ports—the rest being aimed for construction of downstream units. The

MoUs have brought investments of around eight trillion USD, of which 2.15 trillion USD have already been invested. In the steel sector, only 1.09 trillion USD has been invested (*Business Standard*, 1 December 2014). In 2000-2015, the total FDI equity inflow into the state was recorded at 403 million USD, which indicated that most of the investment had been brought by the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) government. It is clear from the manner in which the POSCO India project was conducted, that Odisha's FDI situation was not satisfactory at all (*Indian Express*, 27 February 2016, New Delhi).

There was a time when the displacement of the Adivasis was mainly because of the non-Adivasi alienation, but currently, the Indian state is characterised by subservience to the big capital, as well as the single biggest exploiters of the Adivasi means of livelihood. The twin forces of the privatisation and statisation of land and natural resources lead to dispossession. Adivasi assimilation has always been aimed at building a culturally homogeneous, political entity and absorbing them into the "mainstream", thus discouraging the tribal people from presenting themselves as an ethnological collectivity. This is called ethnocide. Sanskritisation has tried to make societies in conformity with the colonial legacies that once defined Indian society as a whole (Roy Burman 2006). When ethnocide is internalised by the Adivasis, a sense of inferiority and self-denigration gives birth to certain feelings of disappointment and insecurity which gradually become widespread (Stavenhagen 2013: 65-88). However, the history of the Adivasis has always been looked down upon either as "Maoist" or as a mere peasant revolt from the perspective of the reservation policy. There was almost no attempt to understand the socio-economic and political structure of the Adivasi society in order to analyse its struggle for democratic rights and autonomy. This present book

tries to delineate the expression of the Adivasis when they got alienated from the larger society. It attempts to uncover the reactions of the Adivasis when they were separated from their land, natural resources, culture, and habitat. How did they respond to structural oppression? How are they still fighting for equality and social justice? What role do the agencies play in these reactions against displacement? The present study also tries to understand the nexus between the politics and immanent violence in the movement against dispossession and land alienation.

Adivasis are being forced to desert their subsistence economy by the forces of "development", which has caused the massive displacement of indigenous populations. In the modern economy, the Adivasis are unable to adjust themselves as they are ill-equipped to climb up the social ladder, and thus, fall behind the existing labour market. They are currently at the backstage of the occupational hierarchy and employment graphs. After Independence, India's ultimate goal was to achieve economic growth at a homogenous speed which was facilitated by heavy industrialisation, mining, dam building, and the production of capital goods and infrastructure. According to Padhi and Panigrahi:

> "… the establishment of mega-projects in tribal regions has encroached on tribal people's age-old lands and thereby displaced them. These projects have (had) an immense impact on their lives and livelihoods. They include hydroelectric-cum-irrigation projects like Hirakud (1948), Balimela (1963), Machhkund (1949), Upper Kolab (1978), Indravati (1978), Mandira, Rengali (1973) and Subarnarekha; mineral-based industries like Rourkela Steel Plant (1950), National Aluminium Company at Angul (1985), Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (1962); the bauxite mining project at Koraput (1981) and projects on cement, iron, dolomite and limestone. A cursory calculation shows that, since Independence, Odisha has set up 190

such projects, which have deforested 24,124 hectares of forest land, the basic source of livelihoods of the tribal people." (Principal Conservator of Forest Office, Government of Odisha, 1999) (Padhi 2011:21).

Undoubtedly the costs of development and its accelerating speed were borne by the poorest of the poor, the Adivasis. When jobs were created, it was found that those who sacrificed their land and livelihoods were deprived because they were illiterate and ignorant about the modern wage labour market system and that was why they were integrated as an unskilled labour force. Thus, those who are displaced remain marginalised in the labour market and suffer from double vulnerability. The outsiders were given priced jobs and these technologically advanced migrants flooded the unexplored resource-rich areas and displaced the indigenous people. The Adivasis were pushed to the bottom of the occupational hierarchy. They were forced to work in adverse situations and were fated to live on the edge of the modern big-fat capitalist economy as mere peripheral appendages serving the mainstream. With the introduction of commercialised agriculture, energy, and capital-intensive industrialisation and increasing economic growth, poor Adivasis lost their traditional occupations such as shifting cultivation and subsistence agriculture. Informal sectors have economic insecurities and persistent risks of losing jobs. This sector also includes unsatisfactory working conditions, maltreatment, lack of healthcare, social security measures, under-remunerative and devoid of any safety measures at the workplace. The Adivasis who do perform informal work in the formal sectors are outside the purview of the labour legislation laws or any sort of trade union activities. On 25 January 2001, K.R. Narayanan rightly observed that mining poses a great threat to the livelihoods and survival of the Adivasis.

People should not advocate for development at the cost of the environment and the indigenous people of the country.

This has been supported by a recent report published in *The Statesman* in August 2019, which has reported that 16 states, like Maharashtra, Tripura, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Goa, West Bengal, Assam, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, and others, have accepted the Supreme Court ruling that has sanctioned orders against the Adivasis and Traditional Forest Dwellers who were ousted from the forest land because the state governments denied their rights over the forest land. The government has rejected more or less 11.8 lakh claims of the Scheduled Tribes over forest land to date and orders for displacement have also been issued to "free" lakhs of hectares of forest land. These state governments have now confessed that there were gross irregularities on the part of the authorities in dealing with the claims on "extraneous" and "incorrect" grounds and conceded to reviewing the orders. They have also accepted that the information regarding the rejection of claims was not given to the claimants (*The Statesman*, 12 August 2019).

Land grabbing for development projects has been one of the most burning issues in India since its Independence. Loss of livelihoods, restricted access to resources, a depleting financial base, dearth of public policy, loopholes of laws and unabated marginalisation contributed to the growing inequality and injustice to the Adivasis.[1] At a macro-economic level, infrastructure development requires land acquisition, for example, roads, bridges, and railways which are unavoidable. But when it comes to the micro-economy, it causes the displacement of vulnerable communities. With the introduction of the Five-Year Plan, land acquisition for industrialisation became a regular feature of the state and the absence of a proper resettlement and rehabilitation policy made the situation even

worse. The government planned to give the oustees an insignificant amount of money with which nothing could be achieved. Sometimes the displaced went unpaid. Nehru once vividly said that the Adivasis need to sacrifice for the greater good. This was an early phase of the history of land grabbing. After this, liberalisation came on board in 1991, which was fraught with anti-dam and anti-displacement struggles like the Narmada Bachao Andolan and Chipko Movement, which got huge support from the civil society comprised of NGOs, media, and activists. With time, the demands of proper resettlement and rehabilitation started coming to the fore (Sathe 2011: 151-55). With the growing discontent among marginalised people, the state has taken a back seat and realised that there is no place for violence in development. Both print and social media also play a crucial role in recording the incidents of such violent displacement by bulldozers during land grabbing, as happened in Singur and Nandigram. Thus, it is expected that the state should take a more inclusive stand as people are not protesting development, but instead, are protesting how land is being grabbed without proper rehabilitation. People do agree to give land but in exchange for a dignified amount of compensation, be it a job, land or cash money (Sathe 2016: 52-58).

As per the 2001 Census, cultivation is the main occupation of 44.7 percent of the Adivasis as compared to 31.65 percent overall, while 36.7 percent of them earn their living as agricultural labourers. This percentage is 26.55 with respect to the country. In the non-farm sector, employment is scant—5.76 percent in construction, 4.8 percent in manufacturing, 2.8 percent in trade, and 1.88 percent in transport and communication. As per the National Sample Survey (NSS), 35.5 percent of Adivasi households were without access to land for cultivation in 2003. Furthermore, the Adivasi landholdings are, by and large, of poor quality with low

productive capacity and mostly concentrated in the arid agricultural region. That is why food insecurity and droughts are so common in Adivasi regions and incidents of starvation deaths are often reported. This unequal consequence causes the annihilation of agricultural land and dispossesses people as a natural corollary. The immediate victim is the poorest of the poor—the Adivasis, who are pushed to the edge. The endless misery, mental trauma, and suffering due to the eviction, hurt their emotions and sentiments and numbed them with fatigue. The gradual loss of hope and despair make their lives uncertain and miserable. They started believing that they have to survive on whatever they have been offered as compensation; if anything at all.

The growth of a powerful civil society, associated with a lively mass media, contributed to the cause of the struggle against neoliberal forces of development and land grabbing; giving a new voice to the conflicts of interests (Majumdar 2008: 1008-14). Resistance is not a mono-dimensional act and helps connect various forces. The complexities and interrelations have to be understood in terms of the social history of resistance. Tribals are fighting to survive in changing surroundings when they get displaced and rehabilitated in a completely different area. Their traditional means of livelihood were replaced with work in the unorganised sectors. Their adaptation to this changing situation needs to be analysed as a part of their survival strategy which embodies protest. These strategies are going through the subversion of their identities, such as ecological, religious, and cultural (Pati 2017: 23-47).

One of the greatest paradoxes of development is the number of victims it has produced and as development projects are based on the nature of space, displacement of the human population becomes unavoidable. But the question is how can development produce victims? Who are these

victims and how have they been victimised? Who are the perpetrators? Public projects have not been paying for or internalising the "negative externalities". It is pertinent to note that environmental and cultural costs are intangible and therefore cannot be quantified, which is why development-related losses to communities, especially Adivasi and peasants, are unmeasured and thereby unfulfilled. In our country, environmental preservation is essential for survival along with the tribal mode of resource use. So, the most crucial question remains, who should be the upholder of the resource base? Should it be the state or the intelligentsia? Is it unrestricted control of the resource base or are there some other means to control natural wealth? (Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes 1990: 260) Therefore, the question remains, can development be "destructive"? Apparently, this is a contradiction and cannot coexist simultaneously with development, because true development should be constructive.

Therefore, land acquisition is a process by which the state and private companies acquire private property for "public purpose" without the prior informed consent of the land owner. This is completely different from the market purchase of land. Here, the question remains: can public purpose be changed before the final declaration or after the acquisition of land? Can vacant/surplus land be diverted to other purposes, including private purposes, after completion of the project? What is to be done with the entire land if it cannot be used for the original purpose? Should the land go to the original owners? Does over-acquisition and change of original purpose mean misuse of the power of eminent domain? These areas of conflict need to be resolved. In India, the concept of public purpose, which is more akin to its broader American counterpart "public benefit", continues to expand, also posing a threat to private property. However, the

greatest threat posed by this expansion and frequent invocation of the clause to acquire property for large public projects is, apart from private property, to acquire common property. This is the most serious kind of threat since it hits the poor and resource-dependent people directly, and fatally (Dias 2012: 90, 100).

The missing alternatives have made the Adivasis compelled to fight for their survival, which is interlinked with the land alienation problem. Their coping mechanism has been challenged by the mighty neoliberal state. Their voice of resistance is not as unsound as in the colonial era. Land grabbing can be analysed in both broader and narrower terms. In narrower terms, it means the loss of personal land holdings and livelihoods. In broader terms, it means the alienation of communal property and way of life of an entire habitat. Land grabbing by an individual can be categorised into four parts: urban land alienation, rural land alienation, tribal land alienation, and non-tribal land alienation (Ekka 2011: 60). Besides, tribal land rights are also important in this regard, such as with the advent of reserved forest, the *dongar* or swidden cultivation land, faulty land reform acts, porous survey and settlement systems have become responsible for the poor access to land resources. Provisions of the reserved forest caused severe protests in Odisha as *podu* was not recognised. The forest lands were not brought under the survey and the ownership rights of the cultivators were not recognised. This was the reason the Adivasis were often accused of being encroachers of government land. The government has not taken any initiative to identify the landless tribals or redistribute land to the landless. A large stretch of forest in Odisha was declared protected for the construction of sanctuaries and national parks. This led to the lifelong misery of the Adivasis, who could not collect minor forest products and were forced to accept the restrictions on entering the forest.

Tribal grievances have given rise to an insurgency in a lot of areas. They are being victimised by the insurgency and counterinsurgency forces. It has marred the aspirations of the local Adivasis who are not only fighting against the violation of their customary rights but also against the destruction of their institutions and practices which are immanent to their identity (Hebbar 2018: 61-85). This process of the criminalisation of the poor Adivasis caused their dissatisfaction, which was translated into gory violence and conflicts (Kumar 2011: 40-49).

It is important to mention that land is a part of dignity for the subaltern people and it gives them the necessary support base. Land has a very crucial impact on the livelihoods of the Adivasis. It is its reserve value that makes people possess it as much as they can (Shah 2018: 213). According to Prathama Banerjee, Dalits have successfully articulated themselves as a political subject through political representation, but Adivasis have yet to do that. They are much more in favour of political autonomy (Banerjee 2016: 1-23). Land alienation affects the Adivasis more than the Dalits. Tribals fall prey to moneylenders and dishonest traders for various reasons, like poverty, backwardness, and superstitions. When the tribal areas started opening up to the outsiders, called *dikus*, the land was transferred from the Adivasis to the *dikus*, as the Adivasis were illiterate and could easily be hoodwinked. They were made to sign papers that they could not read and thus implicated in the vortex of loans that they were unable to pay. With the introduction of the LPG, the neoliberal state started land grabbing in the name of development and industrialisation, aiming to "civilise" the "savages". The women bear the brunt of displacement the most. They are hit worst by the loss of livelihoods. The threats of development-induced-displacement made the Adivasis even more insecure and vulnerable.

The difference in the treatment of Adivasis and non-Adivasis has been brought out in a report entitled *India and the Rights of Indigenous People Report* published in 2011. The report was prepared by the Asia Indigenous Peoples' Pact with the support of the International Labour Organisation. It has been pointed out that minerals found in tribal regions contribute to more than half of the national mineral production. The report estimated that an overwhelming number of mines are situated in the tribal areas. In 1991, out of the 4,175 mines in the country, 3,500 were in tribal areas. Another estimate states that between 1950 and 1991 at least 2,600,000 (26 lakhs) people were displaced by mining projects of which only 25 percent received any rehabilitation (Sankar 2016: 238).

The Working Group on Development of Scheduled Tribes set up during the Seventh Five-Year Plan made the following observations:

"While the problem of displacement upsets not only the tribal population but also the general population who come within the submergence of acquisition area, there are some basic points of difference in the type of difficulties faced by the two communities. The most important one relates to cultural aspects of life. While the kinship of the general population is spread far and wide, that is not true of the tribal groups whose habitation may be confined only to certain specific areas. Any unsettlement in the case of the latter, therefore, deals a far more crushing blow to their socio-economic life than in case of the former. Secondly, on account of low educational level and a tradition of a life of comparative exclusiveness and isolation, the scheduled tribes find adjustment more difficult in an alien location. The third important reason for which displacement is felt more acutely by the scheduled tribes than by the general population is that the former depend for their living including trade, profession and calling, on roots and fruits, minor forest produce, forest raw materials, game and birds and the natural surrounding and endowment, far more than the general

population. The rehabilitation programmes of the displaced families taken up in various states generally do not take into account this particular aspect of the tribal displacement. Finally, the scheduled tribes being economically the weakest of all communities find it harder than others to settle on new avocations on a different site or settlement." (Mahapatra 1998: 178).

It is a well-known fact that land is the most important component of any kind of development project. That is why the approach of any government towards tribal development can be assessed through its policy regarding tribal land. One of the most crucial issues in any scheme for tribal development is land. Hence, the attitude of any government toward tribal development can best be assessed through its attitude toward tribal land. The present book aims to investigate the causes of tribal movements due to displacement in recent times. Eastern India, especially Odisha and Jharkhand, is fraught with many ethnic movements that can be taken as crucial examples to dissect the attitude of the government towards the tribal people. Verrier Elwin in his *A Philosophy for NEFA* (1949) observed that:

"...the first cause of their (tribals) depression was the loss of their land and forests. This affected the tribes and the tribal enervating organism that it had no interior resistance against infection by a score of other serious evils.…To the tribal mind, the government's attitude to land and forests is as important as any scheme for development or education" (Elwin 1964: 62).

The struggle against land grabbing on the one hand and resistance against violation of customary laws on the other are interrelated. The notion of the preservation of tribal culture arises from the concept of evading tribal customs and practices that champion community ownership

and land control from which the state aims to alienate the tribals. The Adivasis have long remained isolated from the so-called "mainstream" society and somehow succeeded in keeping their social organisation, economy, and culture intact. But with the assimilation theory, they have been forcefully or involuntarily integrated with the dominant society, which has eventually caused their identity crisis. These eternal differences have been termed a "cultural bomb" by Ngugi wa Thiongó. He said that the impact of the cultural bomb is to destroy a people's faith in their names, language, environment, the heritage of struggle, unity, capacities, and ultimately in themselves. He has also reiterated that the most important thing is that it uses language as the most crucial vehicle to arrest the soul or conscience (Thiong'o 2005: 3, 9).

In the aftermath of the World War II and, especially with the development of Fordism, neoclassicalism flourished around the economics of the firm and henceforth the dominance of ideas of efficiency, productivity, and profit margins. The idea of the market and the resurgence of the famous invisible hand as proposed by Adam Smith firmly established a regime of capital led by greed and selfishness, casting aside any and every claim that challenged its profit margins. Amy Chua in *World on Fire* has written that the neoliberal capital is the rebirth of colonialism, where a global capital replaces local people, misuses their assets and livelihoods, marginalises them, and diminishes a large portion of humanity into mere proletarians working for hours together to lead a dignified life as consumers. While colonialism fought on the might of the superiority of European civilisation, a neoliberal capital sets the world on fire because of the logical and technological rationality of promoting economic development and growth (Somayaji 2013: 1-2).

The current research attempts to investigate the strategies used by corporate companies to have access to land for the extraction of resources in Odisha and Jharkhand, where a large part of the Adivasi land is legally termed as inalienable and deedless commons. The research concludes that even policy reforms have welcomed mere decorative changes in mineral policies which are not adequate in order to protect the tribal interest. It has suggested that there must be an alternative vision for mineral ownership that could completely overhaul the provisions of revenue sharing in favour of the poor (Lahiri-Dutt 2012: 39-45). Other than industrialisation, mining, dam building, and urbanisation, the causes of displacement depend on many other things, like tribal illiteracy, poverty, middlemen pressure, government indifference, and the like. When the British understood the force of the tribal movements, they enacted laws to placate the rebels. Some of them were the Bombay Land Revenue Code (Section 73 A), the Central Provinces Land Alienation Act of 1916, the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act of 1908, the Bihar Tenancy Act of 1885, and many other acts that made tribal land inalienable. The Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, or PESA, of 1996 has provisions for the non-acquisition of tribal land, but the land is still being taken away from the poor and ignorant Adivasis for coal mining and industrialisation. However, the creation of "wastelands" and land patterns are not the only things that are changed by mining and this causes the occupational and physical displacement of tribals as well. From 1950 to 1995, more than ten lakh people were displaced in the wake of coal mining (Bhushan 2008: 164), but this data does not completely demonstrate how far-reaching the issues are, as there are no official figures for mining-induced displacement. With the introduction of the open-cut mines, the scenario gets complicated. The term "mine-affected villagers" is dichotomous as well. Villages that are

situated outside this lease area are generally eliminated even though they often get affected by the mines (Lahiri-Dutt 2012).

There was a time when the tribals used to live in a homogeneous and egalitarian society with a distinctive socio-cultural order of their own. Later, they were brought under the control of the non-tribals through the "civilising mission". The domination and subjugation of colonial rule came through the modernisation of discourse which was imposed on them via different laws and regulations. Colonialism is defined as the vehicle of development which has been responsible for bringing the Adivasis to a comparatively suitable subsistence economy from a life torn apart by abject poverty. Before industrialisation, there were inequalities and conflicts in Indian society, but low population density and unrestricted use of ordinary property resources ensured some sort of security for the poor who could earn a minimum of subsistence living. But colonial policies criticised the disadvantaged and it was due to its interventions that divided the communities, exploited, deprived, and impoverished them. Thus, the unequal distribution of wealth contributed to land alienation. Tribals who were evicted were forced to migrate to other places in search of work, causing a burden on the labour market, and available and limited resources, thereby giving birth to social conflicts (Parasuraman 1999: 38).

According to David Arnold, British rule brought about tremendous changes to all colonial policies. It affected the existing social structure of the country. The cultivable lands were brought under colonial rule. The Adivasis, who were isolated were also included in the colonial administration. Their lands were encroached and non-Adivasis were helped penetrate the hills and the forest to exploit natural resources. This undermined the tribal traditional economy and culture (Arnold 1982). The penetration of the non-tribals into the tribal areas was sponsored and

encouraged by the colonial rulers in order to serve the interest of the British industrialisation. Otherwise, there was no valid explanation as to why the non-Adivasis should, all of a sudden, start encroaching on Adivasi land, something they never did in the past. The newly implemented colonial land policies were qualitatively different from the existing land tenure system among the tribals (Shah 1990: 91). The colonial rule paved the way for the commercialisation of the resources that the tribal societies had treated and known to be their community holdings. During the two hundred years of colonial rule in India, there were more or less seventy major tribal revolts (Raghavaiah 1971).

The mid-twentieth century saw the transition of the newly independent global Southern neoliberal states and the older imperial nations as the powerful global North. This transition does not indicate that colonialism is gone, but the new imperialist nations have orchestrated new avenues by which financial capitalism can subjugate the global South with internal colonialism. Gradually, the domination of semi-colonies through internal and external trade along with the active participation of the nationalist patriarchal elites, brought minimum risk factors of resistance rather than armed annexation.

It is worth mentioning that with the introduction of the structural adjustment programme in 1991, the Indian economy was reduced to a neoliberal dependency. With the growing dissatisfaction and discontentment among the people of the fourth world, i.e., the Adivasis standing against socio-political exclusion, the negotiation of locations, identities, and positionalities concerning the violence of neoliberalism has become a crucial aspect of their agency and resistance.

It is generally believed in the development of literature, that the neoliberal era impacted and influenced the notion of development in the

1970s and it caused an ideological shift in the global South during the
1980s in order to achieve development at any cost (Hoben 2008: 71-88).
This concept of neoliberal development is inseparable from the concept of
good governance, progress, and economic growth. It uses foreign aid as a
necessary medium of resource mobilisation to fulfill its requirements
(Hayter 1971). This perspective influences the understanding of
mainstream development policies. Besides, there are other theories in
which neoliberal development is being criticised by postcolonial critics.
The principal aspect of this criticism was the advent of neoliberalism,
which has impacted the thinking of development and policy making
(Hydén 2011: 130-55). Neoliberal development has also been criticised for
being a mainstream project of modernity that results in gross violation of
human rights and creates inequalities among communities, and within
communities themselves (Kothari 2006: 118-36). Zubairu Wai (2007)
argues that the historical root of development lies in the European
Enlightenment of the eighteenth century through the theory of progress
(Wai 2007: 71-98). The Eurocentric concept of progress is connected with
the concept of modernity, which ascribes the understanding of
neoliberalism and what should be neoliberal development per se. For
instance, European modernity ascribes centrism to democracy and national
economic growth that precipitates political and economic development and
rejects projects like community development (Pieterse 1991: 5-29). This
makes us see the concept of European modernity in the light of
neoliberalism and ergo neoliberal development as a whole. The World
Bank and IMF foster and advance neoliberal ideas with global outreach
and local discrepancies (Kothari 2006: 118-36). They tend to promote
global governance along with foreign aid. Through the eyes of an imperial
theorist, we may see the deconstruction of neoliberal development and the