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IDENTITY AND DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITION OF THE MARGINALIZED COMMUNITY: THE TRIBES (ADIVASI) OF UTTAR PRADESH

Abstract

The present article deliberates on the demographic transition and the identity crisis of the tribal/Adivasi population in Uttar Pradesh. It evaluates how, for a very long time, there was no scheduled tribe in Uttar Pradesh. The scheduled tribe population was reflected for the first time in the census of 1971 when the notification of The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) (Uttar Pradesh) Order, 1967, included five tribal communities as scheduled tribes in Uttar Pradesh. With a population of more than eleven lakhs (Census, 2011), and if the projected population of the coming census data is considered, Uttar Pradesh would be one of the topmost states in terms of scheduled tribe population. It suggests that something was wrong in the identification process of the scheduled tribe population in Uttar Pradesh, and an authentic inclusion process was absent.

Keywords: *Adivasi, Census, Constitution, Scheduled Tribe, Uttar Pradesh*

I

The independence of India in 1947 and the adoption of the Constitution of India in 1950 accorded a new hope to the Adivasi/tribal population of the nation. However, this hope lost its impact soon as the new legal enactments in the form of the Constitution integrated a substantial Adivasi/tribal population in a new fold of rational-legal collective identity, 'Scheduled tribe', but excluded a section of the Adivasi/tribal population. A new collective identity as a scheduled tribe was created along with the individual identity as a citizen created by the constitution of India. This has led to the exclusion of tribal population groups in various states of India. This exclusion was very difficult for the state of Uttar Pradesh, where, for a very long period, not a single population group was included in the list of scheduled tribes. In the census of 1971, the scheduled tribe population was reported for the first time, too, with the inclusion of only five tribal groups.

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In Uttar Pradesh, through The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) (Uttar Pradesh) Order, 1967, five of the Adivasi communities were placed on the list of Scheduled Tribes. The convention to categorise certain groups in Indian society as tribal was established during the nineteenth century mainly by British administrators. The Scheduled Tribes attached to the Constitution of India originated in British times. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that the list reflects the demands more of administrative and political circumstances than of academic or logical rigour. As a consequence, the same groups might be treated as a tribe in one State but not in another. What is surprising is that since Independence, anthropologists have more or less accepted the list without critically examining its rationale (Beteille 2011:118-19). That is precisely what happened without taking cognisance that not a single community is placed on the list of Scheduled Tribes; the legislatures were debating on the issues of Adivasi/tribal in the Legislative Assembly. However, the intellectual class also did not notice this anomaly, and no clear objections or writings were available at that time, which supports the seriousness of the academia regarding the issue. The present article explains the demographic transition of the tribal/Adivasi population in Uttar Pradesh and evaluates how a state which reported no scheduled tribe population till 1970 and reported a minor population of scheduled tribes in the census of 1971 has reached to a point where after the coming census data would claim that Uttar Pradesh is one of the topmost states with reference to scheduled tribe population.

The term “scheduled tribes” is defined in Article 366(25) of the Constitution as ‘such tribes or tribal communities or parts of, or groups within such tribes, or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this Constitution’. Article 342 says, 1. The President may with respect to any State or Union Territory, and where it is a State, after consultation with the Governor thereof, by public notification, specify the tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities which shall for the purposes of this Constitution be deemed to be Scheduled Tribes in relation to that state or Union Territory, as the case may be. 2. Parliament may by law include in or exclude from the list of Scheduled Tribes specified in a notification issued under the said clause not be varied by any subsequent notification.

The provision puts the President and the Governor responsible for identifying tribes in that State for inclusion in the S.T.(Scheduled Tribe) category. However, there were no objective criteria in scheduling the tribes; therefore, the indicators of primitive traits, distinctive culture, geographical isolation, shyness of contact with the community at large, and backwardness of a tribe were subjective guiding points and, therefore, created some difficulties. As a result of this, a major section of the tribal population of Uttar Pradesh could not get a place in the list of scheduled tribes.

II

The census of 1941 provides a list of tribes/Adivasi in the state of United Province. The list offers many tribes in the list. The Census of 1941 was critical because it was the last census of pre-independent India and, therefore, would act as the essential base for the forthcoming census of 1951. Prof. D.N. Mazumdar of the Department of Anthropology, University of Lucknow, was part of the 1941 census. The census report mentions many tribes in the State of Uttar Pradesh in 1941. Professor Majumdar was associated with the census to plan an ethnographic survey of the province (Saxena 2017:10).

CENSUS-1941

LIST OF TRIBES

Agaria Group	Agaria	Aheria	Kol
	Agaria	Bahelia	Korwa
	Bhuiya	Bawaria(Boriya)	Nat
	Bhuiyalar	Beria, Bengali, Bhantu	Pasi (Tarmoli)
	Cheru	Bhoksa	Saharia
	Ghasia	Dharia, Kingharia, Pawaria	Sansiya
	Khairaha	Dusadh	Saun
	Kharwar	Gidhia	Tharu
	Majhwar	Gond	
	Pankha	Habura	
	Parahiya	Kanjar	
	Patari	Khangar	

The census report 1941 also states that: 'the following selected tribes of the last census have been omitted as their numbers were very small: Badhik, Barwar, Bhil, Kaparia, Karwal, Khairwar, Kharot, Kotwar. On the other hand, the Pasi tribe has been included for the first time on account of its importance'. The census report also states that: 'The tribes shown in this table also appear under the Scheduled Caste as they were included under that category in the order in council under the government. On the other hand, the Hinduisation of these tribes has not yet advanced so far as to justify their disappearance from the list of tribes in the United Provinces. It is therefore desirable from the anthropological and other point of view that their numbers and distribution should appear separately. Hence they have been included in this table' (Census of India 1941).

POPULATION (UNITED PROVINCE) CENSUS-1941

United Province	Total Population	Tribal Population	Percentage of Tribal Population to Total Population
	55,020617	289422	0.53

This suggests that the census of 1941 included a certain number of caste groups as tribes/Adivasi in the United Province.

III

However, after independence, the situation changed altogether. With the adoption of the Indian Constitution, a new legal identity was created as a Scheduled Tribe. This legal collective identity included a substantial population of tribes/Adivasi but excluded a section of the population in the country. In Uttar Pradesh, almost all the tribal/Adivasi population was excluded from the list of scheduled tribes as notified in the notification of The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950.

However, debates and deliberations occurred in the Uttar Pradesh legislative assembly. In 1955, a list of tribes/Adivasi was presented in the house by the minister concerned about that period—the list comprised Raibareilly, Banda, Pratapgarh, Almora, Bahraich and Balia. Several tribes/Adivasi were included in the list.

ADIVASI IN UTTAR PRADESH

(District-wise List as furnished in the Uttar Pradesh Vidhan Sabha, 25 November 1955)

District	Number	Castes
1- Raibareilly	35	Vanmanush
2- Banda	10620	Gond, Kol, Mawaiya
3- Pratapgarh	2000	Mushar
4- Almora (Robertsganj and Duddhi Pattidighat, Goriphatmalaskaat, Pithouraghat)	240	Vanrawat
5- Bahraich	3031	Tharu
6- Ballia	18	Bhil
7- Mirzapur (Robertsganj and Duddhi)	82082	Kharwar, Mamiwar, Chero, Agaria, Ghasia, Bhuhar, Baiga, Dhangar, Dharikar, Bhuiyan, Baadi, Pathari, Paanikar, Kharaha, Kol, Mushar, Kaarwa, Majahi
Total	98036	

Note: These castes are not found in the other 44 districts (Uttar Pradesh Vidhan Sabha Ki Karyawahi 1955).

However, no single tribe/Adivasi community was placed on the Scheduled Tribes list. The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 did not incorporate a single tribe/Adivasi community from Uttar Pradesh.

IV

The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) (Uttar Pradesh) order, 1967 included five tribes/Adivasi communities in the list of scheduled tribes. The scheduled tribe population was counted for the first time, and therefore, in the census of 1971, the population of the scheduled tribe was reflected. The total population of scheduled tribes in 1971 was one lakh ninety thousand.

THE CONSTITUTION (SCHEDULED TRIBES (UTTAR PRADESH) ORDER, 1967

S.N.	Scheduled Tribe	Total Population (Census 1971)
1	Bhotia	199000
2	Buksa	
3	Jaunsari	
4	Raji	
5	Tharu	

Therefore, in the 1971 census report, the scheduled tribe population was visible for the first time. The facilities and opportunities reserved for the scheduled tribe were available to this population group after this. Earlier to 1971, the population was with the identity of Adivasi/tribe but was not recognised as a scheduled tribe. However, the inclusion of Buksa in the list of scheduled tribes in 1967 in Uttar Pradesh has a cycle with several identities associated with this community. The case of the Buksa and Pankha community and their inclusion in the list of Scheduled Tribes is full of discrepancies. At different intervals, these communities were assigned different identities, creating a dilemma for these communities regarding their identity. The change regarding their identity is presented as a case study.

Buksa: In the census of 1961, it was decided to take up the ethnographic study of selected communities and Buksa was one of them. Census organisation has undertaken detailed ethnographic studies concerning Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes of India.

Through this ethnographic study, a monograph was published by the Office of the Registrar General (Ethnographic Study No. 13, 1961). An ethnographic study of the Buksas was also done. 'The Bhoksas or Buksas were first included in the category of Scheduled Castes in Uttar Pradesh in 1950 (vide President's order of 1950), but the community was deleted from the list of Scheduled Castes in 1956 and placed under the category of 'Other Backward Classes'. The Backward Classes Commission (1954) had, however, earlier recommended the inclusion of Bhoksa or Buksa in the list of Scheduled Tribes instead of being treated as a Scheduled Caste' (Ibid).

In May 1965, the Buksa Parisad presented a memorandum to the then Social Welfare Minister of U.P. The memorandum drew attention to the

difficulties and atrocities they faced after the country's independence. It also added that it was the earnest desire of the Parishad that under the Constitution of India, their community should be declared as a Scheduled Tribe, and the government should adopt suitable measures for their rapid progress(Ibid). The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes)(Uttar Pradesh) Order of 1967 included five Adivasi communities on the list of Scheduled Tribes, and the Buksa was one of them.

Pankha: The Panica/Panka/Pankha community case is an excellent example to show the inability of the government machinery to do justice to this community. The identity of this community has been questioned many times since independence; however, it was placed on the list of the scheduled tribes from Uttar Pradesh in 2002.

Panika/Panka/Pankha community was placed on the list of tribes in the census of 1941. However, after independence, the community was placed in the scheduled caste category by the notification of The Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950. The community was placed on the list of tribes/ Adivasis furnished by the Minister in 1955 in Vidhan Sabha. The report of the Advisory Committee on the Revision of the List of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes (1965), known as Lokur Committee, examined the claims proposed by the Government of Uttar Pradesh and M.L.A Shri Ram Pyare to include this community in the list of Scheduled Tribe was rejected on the ground that there is no evidence to show that they possessed tribal characteristics. According to the Committee, they, however, suffered from untouchability; it was, therefore, decided to retain them in the list of Scheduled Castes. The notification of 1967 regarding scheduled tribe communities in Uttar Pradesh also did not include this community in the list of Scheduled Tribe. The identity of this community has been questioned many times since independence; however, it was placed on the list of the scheduled tribes from Uttar Pradesh in 2002.

SCHEDULED TRIBES IN UTTAR PRADESH (CENSUS 2011)

S.N.	Name of the Scheduled Tribe	Population	S.No.	Name of the Scheduled Tribe	Population
1.	Bhotia	5196	9.	Parahiya	901
2.	Buksa	4710	10.	Baiga	30006
3.	Jaunsari	3720	11.	Pankha	24862
4.	Raji	1295	12.	Agariya	105291
5.	Tharu	105291	13.	Patari	105291
6.	Gond (Gond, Dhuriya Nag, Ojha, Pathari, Raj Gond)	569035	14.	Chero	105291

7.	Kharwar	149946	15.	Bhuiya	15599
8.	Saharya (Lautpur)	70634			

Total: 1134273

The communities assigned the scheduled tribe status in 2002 are confined to a few districts. Therefore, a mobilization is there to include these communities in the other districts also. The case of Gonds explains the situation very clearly. In post-Independent India, Gonds were not only denied tribal recognition but put in the scheduled caste category, and that too was in just a couple of districts around the Kaimur Range in Sonbhadra and Mirzapur. In the rest of UP, they were put in the general category in 1950. Only after 26 years of a long struggle did Parliament accept the Gonds and Koris as a scheduled caste throughout U.P in 1976. Gonds and its five sub-castes were recognised as a scheduled tribe in 13 districts of eastern UP in 2002; subsequently, in the year 2022, four more districts were recognised(Verma 2013). However, in many other districts, the Gond people are fighting to get the status of a scheduled tribe.

The Union Cabinet has approved including the Gond community residing in 13 districts of Uttar Pradesh in 2002 in the Scheduled Tribe list. However, in 2022, the Gond caste group was recognised as a Scheduled Tribe in seventeen districts of Uttar Pradesh. The list includes the five subcategories of the Gond community: Dhuria, Nayak, Ojha, Pathari, and Rajgond.

RECOGNITION OF SCHEDULED TRIBE STATUS TO GOND COMMUNITY

GOND	SUBCASTES OF GOND	The district of the State where recognised (2022)	The district of the State where recognised (2022)
	Dhuria	Thirteen Districts	Seventeen Districts
	Nayak		
	Ojha		
	Pathari		
	Raj Gond		

A HISTORICAL COMPARATIVE ACCOUNT OF TRIBES IN UTTAR PRADESH

1941 CENSUS (LIST OF TRIBES)	1955 (LIST OF ADIVASI AS FURNISHED IN U.P ASSEMBLY)	1971 CENSUS (LIST OF SCHEDULED TRIBES)	2011 CENSUS (LIST OF SCHEDULED TRIBE)
Agaria Group Agaria, Aheria, Kol Agaria, Bahelia, Korwa, Bhuiya, Bawaria(Boriya), Nat, Bhuiyalar, Beria, Bengali, Bhantu,Pasi(Tarmoli), Cheru Bhoksa, Saharia,Ghasia Dharia,Kingharia, Pawaria, Sansiya Khairaha, Dusadh, Saun Kharwar, Gidhia, Tharu, Majhwar, Gond, Pankha, Habura, Parahiya, Kanjar Patari, Khangar	Tharu, Gond,Kharwar, Baiga,BhoPannikar,Patari, Chero, Bhuiya, Vanmanush	Bhotia, Buksa, Jaunsari, Raji, Tharu	Bhotia, Buksa, Jaunsari, Raji, Tharu, Gond(Gond, Dhuriya Nag, Ojha, Pathari, Raj Gond), Kharwar, Saharya, Parahiya, Baiga, Pankha, Agariya, Patari, Chero, Bhuiya,
289422	98036	199000	1134273

Almost all the scheduled tribes in Uttar Pradesh, which are visible in the 2011 census, were present in the 1941 census under the list of tribes. This means that the policymakers took nearly sixty years to realise the fact that a significant section of the population from Uttar Pradesh was excluded from the list of scheduled tribes. The tribes Bhotia, Raji, Jaunsari were not there in the census of 1941, they were incorporated in the list of scheduled tribe through the notification of 1967. The Baiga tribe was not on the list of the 1941 census, but it was on the list furnished by the Minister in the year 1955 in the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly. Later on, Baiga was also incorporated into the list of Scheduled tribes through the notification of 2002.

Almost all the tribes/Adivasi are now incorporated in the list of scheduled tribe which were listed in the year 1955 in the list furnished by the Minister in the U.P Legislative Assembly. Only exception was the tribe Vanmanush, which could not get a place in the list of scheduled tribe. However, according to Das (2004) the Raji tribe is also mentioned with other names such as Ban Rawat, Ban Raji or Ban Manush, therefore almost all the tribes mentioned in the list of 1955 are included in the list of scheduled tribe.

A section of tribes listed in the census of 1941, were incorporated in the list of Denotified and Nomadic tribes list for example, the Nats. The Kol tribe listed in the census of 1941, is mobilized in different parts of Uttar Pradesh to attain the status of scheduled tribe.

VI

The population of scheduled tribes in Uttar Pradesh has transitioned several times. Therefore, a state with no scheduled tribe population till 1970 reflects a population of more than eleven lakhs in 2011. If the projected population of the next census is considered, Uttar Pradesh may attain a position of ten of the topmost states in terms of scheduled tribe population.

SCHEDULED TRIBE POPULATION AND POPULATION GROWTH IN UTTAR PRADESH

Year	Scheduled Tribe Population	Decadal Growth Rate (in percentage)	
1971	1,99,000	—	In the year 2001, the decadal Growth rate declined because a population of 2,56,129 counted as a part of Uttarakhand, a new state that came into existence in 2000.
1981	2,33,000	17	
1991	2,87,901	23	
2001	1,07,963	-62	
2011	11,34,273	950	

Source: Census Reports

After recognising five tribal communities through the notification of 1967, the census of 1971, for the first time, counted the Scheduled Tribe population of the state. From that period, if one looks at the decadal growth rate of the population, one may observe that the decadal growth rate of the population is 17% between 1971-1981. It increased to 23% between 1981-91. The population growth rate declined from 1991-2001 to 62%. However, this decline in population growth rate is not due to any demographic shift but to the fact that a new state was carved out from Uttar Pradesh, and a substantial scheduled tribe population became the new state's share.

However, the population increased substantially and showed a population growth rate of 950% during the period 2001-2011. The main reason is incorporating many scheduled caste groups into the scheduled tribe category. In addition, in 2022, the Gond tribe, which was recognised in certain districts of Uttar Pradesh, was recognised in more districts. Therefore, it indicates that along with the natural growth rate of the population, the coming census may notice an increase in the growth rate of the Scheduled Tribe population in the state as the Gond tribe is recognised in more districts.

There are three timeframes to understand the transition for the Scheduled Tribe population in Uttar Pradesh: 1950-70, 1971-2000 and 2011. From 1950-1970, the Scheduled Tribes population was zero; in the Years 1971-2000, the Scheduled Tribes population was 1.07lakh; in the year 2011, the Scheduled Tribes population was 1134273. However, the household Scheduled Tribe data and the data about the number of married couples per household suggest that the Scheduled Tribe population doubled the number shown in the census of 2011 (Verma 2013:50-51). In 2002-03, seventeen tribal communities, categorised as Scheduled Caste (S.C.) by the Act of Parliament, are now included in the list of Scheduled Tribe. Similarly, in 2022, the Gond community, along with its five sub-groups, was given the status of Scheduled Tribe in seventeen districts of Uttar Pradesh. It indicates a substantial shift of population in favour

of Scheduled Tribes. The demographic shift in future may create a conflict of interest. The present benefit of reservation, which is substantially in the favour of Scheduled Caste in the state, may shift towards Scheduled Tribes. It may create some conflict of interest between the two categories, the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe.

VII

The state, which, after independence, was without any Scheduled Tribe, now has the abode of several tribes with a population of more than eleven lakhs. The coming census may record an increase in population growth that will put Uttar Pradesh in the top ten states with respect to scheduled tribe population. The processes and procedures to provide justice to the population group by ensuring their identity as the scheduled tribe are tough. The rational-legal frame devised by the democratic state created a crisis for this population group in Uttar Pradesh. Now, the same rational legal frame tests their patience by incorporating them one by one into the scheduled tribe fold.

The formal-legal enactments in the form of the Constitution of India created an inclusionary frame by endowing every individual, irrespective of caste and creed, a citizen status to all residing in the geographical space called India. However, at the same time, the Constitution of India has created another inclusionary frame by recognising the collective identities in the form of Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, and Backward Class. But these collective identities, particularly the identity of the Scheduled Tribe, could not incorporate all the tribal population; therefore, an injustice was done to a significant subaltern population. Therefore, after independence, several communities could not be included in the collective identity frame of Scheduled Tribe which was created for their welfare. This exclusion is visible in the form of not recognising any community or collectivity as a Scheduled Tribe in Uttar Pradesh. Therefore, if one looks at the population profile of Uttar Pradesh till the census of 1971, there is no Scheduled tribe population. The tribal discourse in Uttar Pradesh ignored the tribes and their marginalities, and therefore, their identity, demography and welfare could not be ascertained by the government.

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