

TRIBAL CARE IN MADHYA PRADESH AND HOMOEOPATHY

Vishnu Saxena*

Introduction

Tribes are an integral part of the Indian Civilisation. Next to Africa, India has the largest tribal population in the world. Tribal people constitute seven percent of the total Indian Population. They are one of the earliest inhabitants of the country and have contributed to the variety and richness of its cultural forms.

There are 425 pockets of schedule tribes in India. Planning for tribal developments has now become concurrent exercise with the planning at the state and the national level.

As per the census of 1981 the total population of Madhya Pradesh was 52,178,844, of which the schedule tribes were 11,987,031. The schedule tribes, therefore, constitute 22.97 percent of state's total population. This population of the schedule tribes in Madhya Pradesh is the largest tribal population in the whole country. Bastar District lies in the southern zone of Madhya Pradesh and is having largest concentration of tribal population, and the tribals form 68.20 percent of the total population. In Madhya Pradesh, there are 45 districts having concentration of tribal population. Bastar district is having a population of 1,24,9197 followed by Kharagone 7,05,424, Raigarh 7,00,122, Bilaspur 6,90,842, Jhabua 6,63,796, Shahdol 6,38,219, Mandla 6,26,155, and Chhindwara 4,11,478 as per 1981 census. On the other hand Bhand is having the minimum tribal population of 1277 tribals only. There are 56 different types of tribes found in Madhya Pradesh. The Tribes of Bastar are Gond, Halba, Bhattra, Maria, Bison-horn Maria, Hill Maria, Dorla, Dhurwa and Gadba.

In Bastar about 19.65 percent of area is sown. However, since the population is sparse, per capita net area sown is 0.46 hectare. Percentage of area irrigated to total area under crop is only 1 percentage while of double cropped area to net area sown is 5.20 percent. The double cropped area shows great variation because it depends almost entirely on rainfall in September/October. The river provides irrigation facilities for cultivation other than the annual rainfall ranging from 140 to 160 cm. The Bailadila is the highest peak of Bastar district, being about 4000 feet above sea level. The main crop in Bastar is rice followed by oil seeds and pulses. In hilly areas maximum paddy is grown. Cultivation practices are not

yet advanced. Paddy is generally sown by broadcasting and agricultural implements are of primitive type, shifting cultivation is in vogue in Abujmarh area of Bastar. Since the lands of tribal people are situated in hilly areas and they can raise only one crop because of lack of irrigation, a holding of less than 10 acres land is uneconomical. Therefore, the majority of tribal people have uneconomic land holdings. In Bastar, turmeric grows almost wild. Nearly half of the area of seed potato cultivated by the state is located in tribal region, and there is still provision to increase the cultivation of potato if supply of seeds, marketing and cold storage facilities are provided.

Economy:- In Bastar the economy of the tribals has certain peculiar features. Production is mainly for home consumption. A small surplus of agricultural and forest produce is used for purchasing commodities like salt, kerosene oil, cloth and other articles of daily requirements. Barter system is still present amongst the tribals. There are three major projects, D.B.K. Railway Line, Basladila Iron-ore Mines and Danda Karanya Development project. The significance of these projects in relation to the tribals has to be analysed carefully to understand their reaction to forced and rapid change and to plan the future course of development. The construction of D.B.K. Railway Line exposed the area to outside world while other projects brought in a large number of outsiders in Bastar District. The tribals of Bastar are also engaged in the raising of the tussar silkworm, and it's a source of additional income to them.

Education :- Majority of the tribals are illiterate since there were no schools or institutions to provide them education in their tribal pockets. It is only after independence that the problems of tribals were studied and the Government of India considered the magnitude of the problem of illiteracy and its effect on the socio-economic life of the tribals. The Sub-Plan lays great emphasis on the consolidation of the existing institutions besides the opening of school in new areas.

Development of Tribals In Madhya Pradesh

During the First Plan an amount of Rs. 343.04 lakhs was spent on tribal development in the four regions of State i.e. Maha Kaushal, Madhya Bharat, Vindhya Pradesh and Bhopal.

* Research Officer (Tribals), Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy New Delhi.

During the Second Plan a sum of Rs. 499.47 lakhs was spent. Besides this, the total expenditure in the state on centrally sponsored schemes amounted to Rs. 373.48 lakhs.

During the Third Plan a provision for Rs. 800 lakhs was made out of which Rs. 603.43 were spent.

During the Fourth Plan a total provision for Rs. 1050 lakhs was made for tribal areas.

During fifth Five Year Plan (Tribal Sub Plan) Rs. 205.7936 crores and supplement assistance to the extent of Rs. 50 crores was provided by Government of India.

Life Style And Culture Of Tribals

Most of the tribals are half naked i.e. they only cover their private parts only. They are mostly below the poverty line and therefore there is no standard of living for them, they use earthen pots or aluminium pots for cooking etc. Majority of the tribals are illiterate and they do not want to educate their children either. They prefer that they should earn as daily wage workers for poverty reasons. The tribals believe in early marriage and do not follow family planning. The tribal villages are composed of few hamlets (paras). Most of the time the distinction of paras is as Patel paras, school paras etc. It has been observed that 'Gond' settle separately and 'Harijans' are allowed to settle on the other side of the village. Some times there is "Youth organisation" where some unmarried boys and girls of different paras (hamlets) get together at night and sing songs, dance and sleep there only, this is known as 'GHOTAL'. No married persons are allowed on this occasion. Every tribal village consists of Sarpanch, Panch, Patel and Kotwar. Kotwar is supposed to be the police representative. Kotwar and Patel work as a link between the public and the Government. Most of the tribals of the villages take bath in river and tanks and also use this water for kitchen and drinking purposes. The animals are also allowed at the same place for bathing, drinking etc.

FOOD HABITS: Rice, wheat, bajra, and jowar.

Vegetarian: Rice, page, pulse, bhaji, barbatti, cabbage, cauliflower, bean, potato, tomato, ladyfinger, bitter gourd, radish, torai, bonda, rochai, brinjal, papaya, pumpkin, methi, kunduru, onion, imli and spinach etc.

Non-Vegetarian: Meat, fish, chicken, mutton, pig, pigeon, duck, mouse, birds and Chutney of red-ant.

Folk-lore Claims & Beliefs

The tribals first approach the magician for advise and treatment. They like to take folk-lore treatment, but they

do not know the details of folk-lore because there is only one folk-lore person, who represents this treatment for the people of 2-3 villages and he does not disclose the folk-lore, as it is his trade secret.

Following, are some plants/herbs growing in the area which are used for treatment of various illnesses but most of the people do not know the use of plants/herbs by name for a particular illness and use without knowing the name of them and say that, this plant/herb is used in this illness.

1. Anwala : It is used to cure constipation, colic and to improve digestive system.

2. Harra: It is used to cure constipation, colic and to improve digestive system.

3. Babool : It's gum is used for women after delivery to strengthen the loin region and also for general weakness.

4. Neem : It's bark and leaves are used in various types of skin affections such as itching, boils etc.

5. Mahua :It's oil is used for newly born children for massage.

6. Mango-tree: It's stem's juice is applied in dysentery and few drops of it's root's juice are instilled in eyes in conjunctivitis.

7. Tulsi : It's leaves are used for cough, cold and catarrh.

8. Sulphi: It is used to improve digestive system and also to prevent heat stroke.

9. Peepal: It's leaves are boiled and the extracted juice is instilled in ear for otitis media.

10. Karanji : It is used in skin affections, particularly in boils.

11. Sarroka: It's stem's juice is applied as a local application to relieve pain in pyorrhoea alveoli.

12. Biodhic: Few drops of it's root's juice are instilled in nose and mouth in snake bite. It's root is grinded, then boiled by adding required quantity of water, then decanted and used in worm infestation.

13. Sihado: It's outer covering is crushed, then kept for one hour and mixed with milk and then used for dysentery.

14. Dondora: It is used in menstrual disorders.

15. Resana : It's root is used in rheumatism and osteo-arthritis

16. Neilgiri: It is used for arthralgia and myalgia.

17. Akashmunga : It is used in epilepsy , arthritis, leucorrhoea and hypertension.

18. Timara : It's leaves are mixed with the clove, black pepper and sugar, and used in syphilis.

19. Amba: It is used in dysentery, scorpion bite and as a blood purifier.

20. Had Birla: It's pulp is made and applied in fracture of bones for the purpose of union.

HERBS

21. Adarak : It is used in cough, cold and bronchitis.

22. Basab: It's leaves are mixed with the leaves of tulsī and juice is extracted, then mixed with honey and used in cough & bronchitis.

23. Nagin-jari: It's roots are rubbed with the help of water and used as a local application in the snake bite and it's root is also grinded for oral use.

24. Papaya: Raw papaya is used in dog bites.

25. Onion: It's juice is extracted and used orally in epileptic bouts and the juice is applied locally on forehead and palms of hands to relieve the attack.

26. Patar Kuchi: The juice of it's leaves is extracted mixed with jaggery and used for oxyuriasis and ascariasis.

27. Tendu : It's seeds are used in amoebiasis.

SHRUBS

28. Chiraita: It's decoction is used in malarial fever.

29. Gubhilate: It's leave's juice is instilled in the nose to cure headache.

30. Podina: It's syrup is used for the prevention of heat stroke and in gastric troubles.

31. Tikhur: It is used in dysentery & healing of wounds.

32. Kattiyya: It's seeds are used in eczema.

33. Patalhumhada: It's fruit is grinded and boiled, then kept for some time and used in marasmus.

34. Bhachkattiyya: It's seeds are grinded and made into paste with the help of water and used as a local application on the boils to cure them.

Medical Aid And Homoeopathy

In order to provide medical aid to the tribals of Madhya Pradesh, the Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy established one Clinical Research Unit (Tribal) in July 1984 at village Bastar in Bastar district which is 18 km. from Jagdalpur. The main objective of

this unit was to undertake door to door survey of the tribal population, to collect data in respect of the diseases from which tribal population suffers and also to provide them medicines at their door step, and also to collect data for social habits, customs and belief, marital status, availability of medical facilities, natural resources, medicinal plants and their folk-lore claims etc.

This unit covered 1,38,332 tribals w.e.f. July 1984 to 31st March 1992 in door to door survey and this covered 157 tribal villages within a radius of 40-50 km. The Council has also provided a jeep so that door to door survey can be achieved as there is no public transport available for the tribal villages.

In the out patient department of the unit at Bastar 34,646 patients were treated for different type of diseases such as Rheumatism, Malaria, Diseases of the upper respiratory tract infection, Gastro-intestinal diseases, Atopic Dermatitis, Dysmenorrhoea and Leucorrhoea etc. In the initial stage of the establishment of the unit the tribals were not accepting Homoeopathic medicines, gradually they accepted and developed faith in Homoeopathic treatment. The results of treatment given to the tribal are quite encouraging but there is poor follow up of the cases as the tribals do not believe in follow up once they are relieved of their sufferings. Diseases like Malaria, Rheumatism and Gastro-intestinal diseases are more during rainy season than any other season of the year.

Since this unit has covered 157 villages in door to door survey, and they have identified the most prevalent diseases, this unit has been assigned Drug-related Research Assignments w.e.f. 1988-89 onwards, The staff of the Unit is also visiting the tribal pockets to treat the tribal patients, usually the tribal expects that doctor should visit their village on fixed days and they do not want to lose their wages as most of them are daily wage workers.

References

1. Ajit Raizada Tribal Development in Madhya Pradesh
2. H.L. Shukla-Tribal Heritage of Madhya Pradesh
3. H.L. Shukla-Tribal History.
4. Director of Tribal Welfare (Govt. of Madhya Pradesh): Bulletin of Tribal Research Institute, Chhindwara.
5. Annual Reports of the Clinical Research Unit (T), Bastar.