Indigenous Politics and Development: Understanding Political Mobilization in North-East India with Special Reference to Indigenous Struggles in Tripura

Biswaranjan Tripura

Abstract:

This study makes an attempt to unravel the emergence of political mobilization with special reference to the Indigenous struggles in Tripura during the post-colonial India from 1949 to present. The focus of the study will be to understand sociologically the politico-historical process that led to the formation of tribal resistance in post-colonial Tripura; Socio-political-economic aspirations and its contribution towards social transformation in contemporary Tripura. The tribal resistance in India is as old as the emergence of British era in the Indian sub-continent. Their acts of resistance ranged from being silent, covert and open to collective mobilization and even militancy. In post-colonial India they participated in mainstream politics to realize their rights and claims in pursuit of combating the historical injustices, alienation, marginalization and subjugation by negotiating for policies and programmes for constitutional protection. Often, the tribal political mobilization has been labelled as acts of insurgency, outfit, extremist and tribal unrest; as devoid of agency in their collective consciousness. In the light of the above discussion, this study maintains that there is an agency in tribal resistance/political mobilization. This study will investigate the following related questions such as: structure of power relations; current political contradictions, contestation, claims and negotiations between state and Indigenous politics, how far has social action through Indigenous political mobilization translated into policies and programmes for empowerment and social change.