

Tribal Charter *of* Demand



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Prologue

Generally, by Tribal Community we mean that a community which is living in a backward, far off, stringent area from a long period of time in nature and is able to keep up its fundamental features and specific lifestyle. The Tribal Community is an important part of India. Under Indian Constitution, the President of India has the right under Section 342 to announce the Tribal Community or a part of Tribal Community as Scheduled Tribe listed under a particular State via Public notice.

A big chunk of Indian society has kept an apathetic attitude towards Scheduled tribes and the developed society is considering them as social and economic burden. Probably, the biggest reason for this is that the indicators of Human Development Index of Tribal Community are not strong enough.

VAAGDHARA is working in the dense Bheel area of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat border areas between the Tribal Community from past 2 decades, can say with its own experience that the Tribal Community is not a load on developed communities of India. VAAGDHARA thinks that only after encouraging and uplifting the exclusive identification of Tribal Community, it can be made self-sustainable and regional development can be made.

The pure and exclusive lifestyle that Tribal Community is leading is being polluted by so called Government groups and professional agents under the name of development.

Taking freedom as its epitome of sustainability, it is necessary to see this community in its own nature and expectations, then only the programs and acts can be developed which can do justification with these tribes. A Democracy is required which recognizes tribal sovereignty, empowers it and can keep up its cultural purity. Such Sovereign Tribal Community needs to be created which protects its fundamental and basic tribal elements and blocks away the representation of mixed and unassimilated culture as tribal culture.

Today, we are presenting a Charter of Demand, which will Promote and Protect the social, economic, legal, and cultural heritage of Tribal people. The goal and objective of this Charter is to Provide a sustainable and continuous development to Tribal Community while keeping and maintaining its fundamental grace.

This, Tribal Charter of demands, is a campaign of seeking sovereign life in True Childhood, True Health, True Farming And True Democracy after dialogue with Tribal Community and discussing their relationship with soil, water and forest, and expects blessings from Nature and Conscious people.

Jayesh Joshi
Convener
Janjatiya Vikas Manch

Maansingh Ninama
President
Janjatiya Vikas Manch



Back to Nature

Tribal Community is Microcosm of the Macrocosm that is the Universe as both are made of the same elements. This community which carries sublime human life core values, is living a life in anxiety on the name of development and culture and slowly and gradually is moving away from its fundamental identity.

The objective of VAAGDHARA is to re align the natural rights of Tribal Community, to protect them from socio-economic injustice, to provide the right of the true childhood, livelihood, health and traditional lifestyle, which has been snatched away by the ill effects of marketization.

Change Why? Change How?

Post Independence, under the name of growth and development, we were just following the West, and the entire Indian community is still paying the price for it.

In reality, after Independence, the Tribal Community was just left as a number. On all the platforms; be it - Education, Health, Nutrition, Livelihood, social, economic, the Tribal Community has felt itself left out. The time tested life style of Tribal Community comprising of its Agriculture, animal husbandry and forest ecosystem is all messed up.

Tribal area is being caught in the clamps of marketization. The prime nature of keeping their grains protected and traditional seeds secured, is getting disrupt and dying due to administrative decisions on programs and plans of artificial nature. The main necessity is how to stop the artificial changes and to grow grains according to soil and season.

By understanding the basic requirements of the Tribal Community, the development plans, and programs

should be envisaged and accordingly budgetary allocations should be made, then only a continuous and sustainable method of development can be reached. VAAGDHARA, has joined hands with Janjatiya Vikas Manch in its working area to bring about the change that is required.

VAAGDHARA is working in central India from last 3 years with Janjatiya Vikas Manch and is conducting Tribal Sovereignty Yatra and Tribal conclave. This year in tribal conclave 5000 males and females were divided into small groups which conversed and discussed on True Farming, True Childhood, True Health and True Democracy. In this joint campaign with Janjatiya Vikas Manch, VAAGDHARA is striving for providing equal opportunities for development according to tribal culture and traditions. As per objectives, members of VAAGDHARA and Janjatiya Vikas Manch have collectively extracted the charter of demands through which they accept the role of Environment Conservator for Tribal Community.

The dream of Janjatiya Vikas Manch (Tribal Development Forum) is “in the limits of tribal culture and tradition, every person should get equal opportunity for development” and for this we seek that every individual member promises to play the important role of Environment Conservator of Tribal Community for the development of environment, society and State and will support the demands of the Charter by including them in their work and plans.



The responsibility to *Promote* and to *Protect* indigenous culture and customs was entrusted by Tribal Community on themselves by taking an oath which covered the following points

Theme 1. Sachi Kheti

- To make use of traditional practices that help in reducing input cost in agriculture, like- Halma, Hundel.
- To use organic traditional seeds, fertilizers and pesticides.
- To ensure growing of variety of traditional and seasonal crops for better use of land, labor and capital like growing small millets (Bajra, Kangni, Samba, Chinar, Godad, Kutki, Oats and Ragi).
- Every farmer would plant 5 trees of 5 types on his land so that there is no shortage of fruits, fuel and fodder.
- Rearing of different kinds of animals on farm.
- To conserve water wherever possible in Ditch, Pond, Pokher, Dam, Anicut.
- To protect our land from water slogging and soil erosion.
- To promote Micro irrigation so that water is available to tail end farmers.
- To protect forest land and thus sustain ecosystem.

Theme 2. Sacha Bachpan

- Parents to send their children to Anganwari and school.
- Children should be provided balance diet of fruits, green leafy vegetables and pulses.
- Education to be given to both boys and girls.
- To stop child marriage and child migration.
- Child helpline number 1098 to be made popular.

Theme 3. Sacha Loktantra

- To ensure youth and female participation in Gram Panchayat and gram Chaupals to strengthen social, cultural, democratic and economic systems.

- To make smooth communication among different strata of community so that there are no gaps in service delivery and information about schemes and programs is percolate below.
- To promote traditional system of problem solving and belief on the head of the tribe.
- Practices like Bhanjgada to be promoted.
- To protect society from corruption.

Theme 4. Sacha Swasthya

- To revive faith on traditional healing system of Guni and increase use of herbal medicines and treatments.
- To use home remedies and make Health committees at gram panchayat level.
- To develop kitchen garden for sustaining nutritional needs of the family at no cost.
- To use local, seasonal grains and Naturally processed oil.
- To save youth from addiction of drugs, alcohol, tobacco.

Provisions required from stakeholders: Charter of demand

Certain points came out during the community dialogue and after consensus from the larger group of Tribal Community it was decided to put these points in front of the stakeholders without whose intervention the real growth and sustainable development of Tribal Community cannot be made:



Theme 1. Sachi Kheti

- The major chunk of schematic provision of expenditure on agriculture by GoR is for irrigated agriculture however, 75% of tribal agriculture is rain-fed and thus small and tail-end farmers are not able to get any benefits. So, proper financial provisions to be made for traditional farming.
- Government Programs and schemes should focus to strengthen and revive the indigenous seeds of the community.
- To strengthen the value and supply chain by announcing special schemes.
- To provide an open market to sell the produce at competent and fair prices.
- To establish a system of district level advisory and control mechanism.
- To provide training to the farmers on how to use their plants and animals for medicinal purposes.
- Animal Management training and ways to protect indigenous pure breeds to be provided to Tribal Community.
- Immunization in animals to be ensured and veterinary clinics to be opened and made functional.
- The water of tribal area should be sent outside only after ensuring that community of that catchment area is not water deprived.
- Government to make “Zero Soil Erosion” policy as it is a major issue in tribal area which makes land infertile and thus forces tribal people to migrate for jobs.
- To start new schemes and programs like ‘Soil Conservation Scheme’, ‘Mahi Valley Development Program’, ‘Jaisamand Catchment Area Conservation’, ‘Development Program Of Desert Based Tribals’, ‘Forest Area Development Program.’
- For ensuring production on land, Government to ensure that no one keeps his land uncultivated for more than 5 years. Punishment and takeover of land by Government should be levied so as to ensure increase in cultivation in tribal areas.

Theme 2. Sacha Bachpan

- Anganwadi and Kastoorba Gandhi School should be established in every village.
- Availability of adequate teachers in school and quality education should be safeguarded.
- Residential senior secondary schools should be opened so that the higher education does not break due to increase in distance of institution from home especially for girls.
- Availability of sports material to be ensured and designated playground should be made.
- Employment to educated youth should be guaranteed.
- Strict rules for stopping child marriages and child migration.
- Skill enhancement programs and vocational trainings to be provided.
- Child Welfare Committees to be constituted at Block levels to strengthen DCWC (District Child Welfare Committee).
- Periodic increase in grant provided to Orphans and to children born out of Nata Pratha under Palanhar scheme.

Theme 3. Sacha Swasthya

- Government to establish Indigenous clinics where Guni can practice.
- Ayurvedic Medicine shops at village level to be opened.
- Information portal to be made available for nutritional and seasonal vegetables and grains.
- Sale of local grains and unrefined oil at ration shops.
- Training for identification and use of herbs should be planned at local level.
- Strict follow up of COTPA and De-addiction camps.
- Restricted rules of sale of alcohol and other habit forming drugs.
- National Nutritional Program to be launched under which traditional food and indigenous grains are given importance. A community based Seed Management System may be developed.

Theme 4. Sacha Loktantra

- The minimum indicators required for meeting SDG should be set up for tribal areas and their rigorous mentoring program to be launched.
- Programs for cultivating local leadership skills should be launched so that tribal youth can be brought in Democratic mainstream envisioned in our constitution.
- While developing policies, schemes, programs and projects for tribals, Government should take care that they should not negatively affect tribal culture and traditions.
- Seamless transfer of information of schemes till Panchayat level should be ensured.
- Policies that all service providing vendors in tribal region should be from within the state and their head offices within the state only, so as to have control on such service providers.
- Submission of application for NREGA scheme should be removed and people with job card should get 100 days employment or else unemployment allowance.
- The tribal family be given the title of 'Nature Conserver' and a certain allowance to be given to them as they are doing a big task of conserving the natural ecosystem.
- For the development, social justice and self-Governance in Tribal Community the implementation of PESA law (Extension to Scheduled Areas Act 1996) should be ensured.
- Under Forest Land Right Bill, Special Courts for forest rights should be established at local level for generating quick decisions. Other than Forest officers, different stakeholders should also be made a part of this forum as forest department is one of the party itself. For controlling deforestation, this is one of the most important step.



