

Orissa's highland clearances: The reality gap in R & R*

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There is clearly an institutionalized attitude of neglect towards the displaced people. For example, no record of the number of people displaced is maintained. Such attitudes prevent the bureaucratic mindset from understanding the enormity of what is involved when tribal people, stripped of their land, are forcibly dumped to unlivable places euphemistically called resettlement colonies. Often it is this lack of understanding that gives rise to strong resistance to projects. In addition, the disjunction between policy and practice is almost total. The aim of all resettlement policies is developmental, to see that the living standards of affected people improve, but this seldom happens. Most often, impoverishment is the lot of those forced to relocate. The respect for human rights of tribal people requires that stringent steps be taken to avoid displacement, that no further displacement takes place until those previously displaced are properly resettled, that the process of consultation be real, not a ritual, and that only those officials be put in charge of resettlement who are properly trained and have an understanding of tribal life and culture.

THE PHENOMENON OF DISPLACEMENT

Bhagaban Majhi, one of the leaders of the Kashipur movement against the Utkal alumina project, questions mainstream ideas about development in the light of the grim reality of displacement.

“We have sought an explanation from the government about people who have already been displaced in the name of development. How

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many have been properly rehabilitated? You have not provided them with jobs; you have not rehabilitated them at all. How can you again displace more people? Where will you relocate them and what jobs will you give them? You tell us first. The government has failed to answer our questions. Our fundamental question is: how can we survive if our lands are taken away from us? We are tribal farmers. We are earthworms [*matiro poko*]. Like fishes that die when taken out of water, a cultivator dies when his land is taken away from him. So we won't leave our land. We want permanent development" (A. and S. Das 2005).

How do mobile phones, wide roads, cars and skyscrapers represent development if they only benefit the rich? (Majhi 2005) All over Orissa, people are resisting displacement, where before they gave into the terror and acquiesced. Today's generations have witnessed the wretched conditions of people displaced by numerous projects, in Bhagaban's case in southwest Orissa, by the upper Kolab and Indravati reservoirs and Nalco's refinery in particular.

Our aim in this paper is to draw attention to a number of very grave aspects of what is termed "development-induced displacement" – aspects neglected by much of the literature, because they are not subject to measurement. There is a tendency in social science to give importance only to *chrematist* (monetary) values, at the expense of a broader sense of well-being. For various reasons, many aspects of displacement are hard to measure and define. With some aspects this is because of an institutionalized attitude of neglect towards displaced people – for example, no reliable statistics have been kept either of the number of people displaced by most projects or of what happens to them in following years (Fernandes 2008 p.90). Effects of displacement are often especially dire when communities are dislodged from regions of exceptionally rich biodiversity, which they have adapted to and helped maintain over generations, as is the case in many areas of Orissa. Maps of India's mineral deposits, rivers and forests highlight the very areas richest in traditional cultures (Sunil in A. and S. Das 2006). Hence the resource curse: natural resource abundance becomes a curse for inhabitants displaced by mining and dams (Ross 1999).

Other vital aspects of the displacement process can only be understood if people are prepared to open their hearts and minds to other ways of being. Measurement has little place here. The *social construction of reality* in tribal culture is worlds away from mainstream culture, and it is a real challenge for the bureaucratic, technology-focused mindset which guides development

projects to comprehend the enormity of what is involved when tribal people are uprooted from their land and villages to a resettlement colony.

It is precisely because of this reality gap that resistance to projects is so intense, so the people who manage projects and resettlement would benefit greatly from trying to understand it. What follows is drawn from the insights of social anthropology, and based in an intimate knowledge of the realities on the ground in project areas – among people already displaced, and among people resisting displacement now, as well as in areas where traditional social structures still exist and displacement is still only a distant threat.

In this first section we make a holistic appraisal of the phenomenon of displacement taking place in Orissa — its historical roots, and an overview of what actually happens. In the next section we examine an alarming disjunction between policy and practice that lies at the heart of the displacement trauma, and explains why Resettlement and Rehabilitation schemes almost always fail to raise the living standards of displaced people. In the third section, we look at what is happening in terms of Cultural Genocide - the extinction of people's communities and social structure – which largely explains why they fight so strenuously to resist displacement. In the next three sections, we examine the clash of belief systems and attitudes to Law underlying displacement – the gap between different actors' realities of life and outlook, taking stock of the impoverishment experienced by Project-Affected Persons, before drawing our conclusions in a final section.

Future historians of Orissa are likely to look at the last 60 years, 1948-2008, as a period of mass dispossession of communities who lived and worked on the land since time immemorial - an extinction of vibrant cultures by industrialists and planners focused on accelerating growth through industrialization, without a proper appreciation of what they are destroying.

Displacement arises out of a clash of ideologies. On one side, the value systems of traditional cultures, where relationships with land and community are more important than money. On the other, an ideology of industrialization-as-development, in which market forces and swift financial profit override other values.

The particular phase we are in now is marked by traumatic events that symbolize a struggle by communities to put a stop to this trend and avoid being displaced, while on the other side, deals for new projects accelerate

even further the pressure to acquire more farmland for industrial projects. The police firings that killed tribal people at Maikanch village in December 2000, and Kalinganagar industrial area in January 2006, are key symbols of this struggle in Orissa. Cultivators look on industrial projects that lower their standard of living and destroy their communities as the opposite of real development. While "anti-development" is what those promoting industrialization and their foreign investors call farmers who take a stand against displacing projects.

Dispossessing vast numbers of people from their land in the name of development is a phenomenon that has accelerated rapidly since India's Independence. Displacement during colonial times has a hidden, unrecorded history. Numerous communities were displaced by tea plantations in Assam, Kerala and present Bangladesh. In Orissa, British demands for increased revenue from the land caused the eviction of thousands of tribal people from their territories (Currie 2000, Padel 2000). It is significant that the legal apparatus for displacement was put in place during colonial times, with the Permanent Settlement (1793) and the Land Acquisition Act (1894). W.W.Hunter expressed succinctly the set of values which many British rulers saw as their main legacy to India:

"It is by what we have implanted in the living people, rather than what we have built upon the dead earth, that our name will survive. The permanent aspect of British Rule in India is the growth of Private Rights."

"By a wise limitation of our state ownership we have raised up a permanent Proprietary Body, composed of mutually hostile classes; but each of which, from the grand seigneurs down to the Resident Husbandsmen, holds its lands under documents issued by British officials." (Hunter 1872 pp.201, 277, quoted in Padel 2001 p.80)

This divide and rule legacy of British colonialism is bearing fruit now, in internal colonialism carried out through large-scale privatisation of resources, and takeovers of huge tracts of cultivated land, by mining and construction companies, in Orissa and neighbouring states. The ideology of industrialization sweeping Orissa now stems from the same essential belief system that motivated the Industrial Revolution in Britain, the USA, the USSR, China and other countries. It is well to bear this history in mind. A collective forgetting of what was done and said in preceding centuries leads to a compounding of past mistakes and mistaken belief systems.

In fact, the modern pattern of displacing people from their land to make the land more profitable was set far away from India. European colonists exterminated indigenous tribes all over America and Australia, and forced survivors to cede their land and move to reservations, where a policy of detribalization was imposed. This pattern is also embedded in the history of the colonizing countries themselves. In Britain, the Enclosure Acts between 1760 and 1840 started a process of privatizing land that evicted small-scale farmers in vast numbers all over the British Isles – a precedent for the land-grabs by the already-rich going on in Orissa right now, that are reducing the already-poor to a poverty worse than anything they knew before. Orissa today witnesses the same kinds of injustice, and very similar justifications, to those evident in 18th and 19th century Britain. Understanding these deeply embedded patterns gives a clearer view on the whole issue of R & R.

Britain's remote northern areas suffered a particular trauma known as the Highland Clearances. The Scottish clans lived a highly traditional life based on small-scale crofting in the highlands and islands, characterized by a distinctive culture and an independent spirit. During the 19th century, English rulers persuaded the Scottish lairds (zamindars) to make their land more profitable by expelling these crofters in huge numbers – just as they persuaded Rajas in Orissa around the same time. Intellectuals of the “Edinburgh Enlightenment” painted a picture of these crofters as sunk in poverty and warfare, their stone houses as dirty hovels, and their lifestyle as backward and uneconomic. Using this justification, hundreds of communities were permanently erased, and thousands of people died from starvation and disease (Prebble 1969). Of those that survived, many had to become factory workers. Thousands emigrated to Britain's colonies, in America, Australia and South Africa, where they displaced the natives just as they had been displaced themselves. Many served in the army in various outreaches of the British empire, including India. The Kond areas of west Orissa that are now the scene of invasion by aluminium companies were forced under British rule by a series of Scottish highland officers, named Macpherson, Campbell, MacVicar, and McNeill (Padel 2000).

The Highland Clearances in Scotland cleared people from the land and erased communities, but also cleared forests and farmland to make way for sheep and plantations of foreign trees for timber and paper. Another phase of clearances started in the early 20th century when some of the world's first dams were built to generate hydro-power for aluminium smelters. These reservoirs fill valleys emptied of their people. The water level is low and a sterile gap of at least 30 feet separates the water from

land vegetation. Even back in 1910, when about a third of the world's aluminium was being produced in Scotland, a union leader contrasted the British aluminium company's picture of its main smelter enclave as a "Garden of Eden", with the "misery and degradation" which workers endured (Perchard 2008/2009). Then as now, this included a high incidence of industrial diseases among smelter workers, whose true extent has never been revealed.

In Orissa, hundreds of communities have ceased to exist, and hundreds more are threatened with extinction. Local tribal and non-tribal politicians and landlords in Kashipur and Lanjigarh have sold out their communities just as the Scottish Lairds did (Saroj 2008). There is no "empire" for Orissa's displaced people to emigrate to. Factory and construction work is every bit as dangerous and degrading as it was in 19th century Britain, but in the present age of mechanization, permanent jobs are much fewer. Also, environmental degradation works alongside the decline in living standards, even more than in industrializing Britain. Around the Upper Indravati reservoir, displaced people cut down the remaining forest, because they have lost their land along with their traditional forest-based livelihood system. Selling the timber as firewood is all that saves them from starvation.

The aluminium companies are entering the Kond region of western Orissa after the bauxite deposits, which are sited on the summits of the biggest mountains, so although the planned mines, unlike dams and factories, may not displace people directly, they erode the water-bearing capacity of the mountains, and thereby threaten the local Kond's cultivation of millet, maize, turmeric, ginger, orange, pineapple and dozens of other food crops which they depend on for sustenance and income. Mining bauxite from these mountain tops is also an assault on their religion. For Kond religion recognizes mountains as prime sacred entities and sources of life – a connection which geologists recognized when they named the base rock of these bauxite-capped mountains as Khondalite (Fox 1932 p.136, Padel and Das 2007).

DISJUNCTION BETWEEN POLICY AND PRACTICE

The official version of Orissa's modern history tends to reflect the developers' self-image, and focuses on the growth rate, and the development of roads, railways, airports, sea ports, mobile phone networks and the exploitation at last of the state's minerals. What is left out of this version is the realities on the ground. If displaced people suffer – so did

people in “developed” countries. The suffering is often seen as a necessary sacrifice for overall development – the cost of progress. Overall, or eventually, it is believed that most people’s standard of living goes up – even though “trickle down economics” has been shown to be false, and most people can see clearly that poverty is getting worse. Company officials often say “there was nothing here before we came” – only “mud huts”.

According to R & R policies formulated by the World Bank, DFID and UNDP, as well as the Governments of Orissa and India, people’s standard of living is supposed to go up, not down. It is generally acknowledged that this hardly ever happens in practice (Mathur 2008 p.179).

This exemplifies the reality gap at the centre of Resettlement & Rehabilitation. Between what is supposed to happen and what actually happens is a gulf – often no correlation at all. Since most projects have no Social Impact Assessment, since displaced people are not made part of the decision-making process, and there is no proper check on the success of R & R, or even proper ways to assess this, let alone any disciplinary action against officials responsible for failure, this reality gap remains almost completely outside the approved discourse on R & R.

To bring it in, we need to address several issues of fundamental importance on the ground, that find little or no mention in most of the literature on displacement. One set of issues involves Cultural Genocide and the sacrificing of people’s quality of life, along with all the non-measurable factors that make up their culture and community.

Another basic problem is that in most, if not all the project areas, various forms of intimidation and coercion appear to be standard procedure towards people unwilling to be displaced, by police and administrative authorities, as well as by a mafia network of *goondas*. This intimidation also operates around people who have been displaced from traditional communities to a resettlement colony. In a traditional tribal village, differences of status are relatively small: everyone is of approximately equal status and value. Once displaced from their village and land, they find themselves at the bottom of a hierarchy that is often extremely cruel and corrupt.

This corruption is conspicuous by its absence from most models of R & R, and at the heart of the fundamental discrepancies between theory and practice. In the awarding of contracts, for constructing a colony, and at every stage of a displacing project, corruption is rampant (Dash 2008). This starts with the deals mining companies make, but percolates down to

the lowest level. Workers often attest that even labouring jobs, that should be theirs by right, can only be had by paying bribes. Villagers living below Nalco's bauxite mine have informed us that they gave bribes of several thousand rupees just to get preferential selection for labouring jobs up the mountain paid at just Rs. 68/- per day. Often, it seems that large bribes are more or less mandatory even to get standard land title documents, which small-scale farmers need as a basic security, since without *patta*, they are not entitled to compensation for their land - and often, even after bribes, no documents materialize. Corruption only exists among lower officials because it is tolerated at higher levels. In November 2003 the Minister of Environment & Forests was captured on camera receiving a large bribe from an Australian mining company for leases in Orissa and Chhattisgarh, with words that reveal much about modern attitudes to money: "*Paise khuda to nahi, par khuda ki kasam, khuda se kam bhi nahi.*" ("Money isn't God, but by God, it's no less than God", *Sunday Express* 16 November 2003).

This materialism did not start from India, and the reality gap appears to be a feature of most development projects. A study by social anthropologist David Mosse finds almost no correlation between policy and practice in a major agricultural project funded by the DFID (Dept For International Development of the UK Government) in Madhya Pradesh, for which he was a consultant (*Cultivating Development: An Ethnography of Aid Policy and Practice* 2005).

Most of Orissa's first wave of industrial projects have been notorious for their lack of adequate R & R, such as the Rourkela steel plant, the Hirakud, Upper Kolab and Indravati dam projects, and also Nalco in Koraput, sometimes cited as a model of good practice, but actually, as we shall see, anything but.

So the present situation in Orissa involves several high profile struggles of people opposing displacement in Orissa. Three companies in particular face protracted opposition, in a series of projects some of which have already caused displacement or are currently causing agitation, while others (e.g. iron-ore mines) have yet to be finalized: Tata at Kalingnagar and Gopalpur (steel plants), Naraj (thermal power plant near Cuttack), Dhamra (port), and north Orissa (iron-ore mines), Posco at Jagatsingpur (steel plant and port) and north Orissa (iron-ore mines), and Vedanta at Lanjigarh (alumina refinery), Niyamgiri (planned bauxite mine), Jharsaguda district (smelter & giant power plant), near Puri (university-cum-business-centre), and Gandhamardan (another bauxite deposit). Several other projects, which

have recently displaced people, or where people have taken a strong stand resisting displacement, include the Utkal alumina refinery, numerous steel plants and sponge iron factories by Bhushan, Jindal and other companies, and the Lower Suktel dam.

The resistance to all these projects by people opposing displacement are of immense significance. From the viewpoint of the companies, and members of the Government of Orissa and GoI supporting them, the protestors are holding up foreign investment worth many crores of rupees. From the viewpoint of protestors threatened with displacement, they are being treated with a fundamental injustice. The authorities appear not to understand or care that these people's whole lives are being torn apart. What else is government for if not to listen to and serve these people? This is the essence of the reality gap: a gulf of understanding between those imposing and suffering displacement.

Displacement tends to be seen as a peripheral aspect of a development project, and the officials in charge of overseeing R & R are neither well-trained nor well-motivated to help in what we now understand is a highly traumatic process for nearly everyone undergoing displacement (Mathur April 2006 pp.48, 69-70). Most of the people faced with displacement do not see the projects as development at all, since far from raising their standard of living, they lower it. As Bhagaban says of a meeting with the Superintendent of Police:

"I put a question to the SP. I asked him, 'Sir, what do you mean by development? (*Agya, unnoti boile kono?*) Can you call displacing people development? The people, for whom development is meant, should reap its benefits. After them, the succeeding generations should enjoy its benefits. That is development. It should not be merely to cater to the greed of a few officials" (A. and S. Das 2005).

Since 1995, the Kashipur movement has been at the forefront of questioning what is meant by "development" (Lingaraj 1995, Pradhan 1995). Defined in purely material and economic terms, "development" loses all connection with the original aim of improving people's actual well-being.

Education, health, levels of nutrition and employment are among the important indices often used to study people's well-being, and where reliable statistics on these aspects have been collected, they do indeed confirm that industrialized tribal areas are among the most impoverished

in India. Nalco-dominated Koraput is the poorest of all, with 78 per cent of the population below the poverty line (CSE 2008 pp.254, 322). But it is not enough to collect statistics. Not just because we all know how easily statistics can be massaged. People's own perception of their well-being is also vital, and most studies of people who have been or are due to be displaced fail to even include these people's voices. This is disturbing. For often, the perceptiveness and wit Adivasis express when they speak freely beat anything in written discourse. The trouble is, they know most outsiders have no wish to hear what they say or to learn from them.

CULTURAL GENOCIDE

Cultural Genocide is the least recognized but perhaps most painful aspect of the drastic drop in the quality of life of people who are displaced (Padel & Das 2008). This is why so many farmers say "we'll die rather than give up our land", recognizing that all their values are at stake, since these are rooted in their land and physical community. When Bhagaban says a cultivator dies when his land is taken away, he is not referring just to a physical death, from hunger or other causes. He means: people die inside - a soul death. The deaths at Maikanch and Kalinganagar are taken as symbolic of a collective death. This is something hard to communicate in words to people who have no experience of the kind of rootedness at the heart of Adivasi society. It echoes the decision to die rather than leave their land of many indigenous people in America, where physical genocide - meaning the extermination of all members of a tribe - often went alongside cultural genocide: the killing off of cultures (Brown 1975).

The Real Impact of Development-induced Displacement" (Padel and Das in Mathur ed 2008). Briefly, social anthropology analyses the social structure of a tribal (or non-tribal) village in terms of several spheres of life, each of which is radically altered and dismantled by displacement:-

- The economy is completely changed when people who have been essentially cultivators are removed from the land and turned into an industrial labour force. Food security vanishes, and money assumes far greater importance in defining relationships between people.
- People's identity is also radically altered. From being largely self-sufficient for their basic food wants and material needs (e.g. making their own houses, and channelling the water to their fields), they become dependent on a hierarchy outside their control for jobs, and every aspect of life. Their fields and houses were often made by their

parents or remote forefathers, so losing their land and ancestral village creates a traumatic break with previous generations.

- The political system and power structure in traditional tribal villages is remarkably egalitarian. Differences in status and wealth do exist, but are counteracted by a strong tendency towards sharing and equality. These differences were accentuated by colonial rule, and displacement makes them much greater. From being in control of most aspects of their daily life and the area around their village, people find themselves at the bottom of a corporate hierarchy, dependent on a wide range of more powerful people, many of them outsiders to the area. In other words, displacement disempowers villagers and lowers their status.
- Women's position is often particularly badly affected, even where education, health centres and self-help groups (SHGs) are provided for oustees. The reason for this is that in a tribal village, women often retain a large degree of control over their own labour, working essentially for themselves and their own families, at times of their own choice. Even when they do coolie labour, this tends to supplement work on their own land as they see fit. Losing their land, they become more dependent on their husbands, and often bear the brunt of men's frustration, in a situation where work ceases to be on their own terms. Tribal women who retain their land go to market to sell their own produce. The dignity from this self-sufficiency is destroyed by displacement. SHGs have an ideology of raising women's status that is often contradicted by ground realities, especially once pressure to repay loans kicks in (Das 2000, Muhammad 2006, Saroj 2008). There are frequent testimonies of displaced women being forced into prostitution, even in the colonies built for them.
- A village's material culture is altered out of all recognition by displacement. From making most of their own food, tools and houses, villagers become dependent on factory-made goods. An influx of cars and trucks into their area make life more dangerous and pollute the atmosphere, as do the factories that become the centre of the local power structure.
- Religious life is also transformed. Seeing the incomers around them tearing nature apart, and participating in blasting rock formations and cutting down trees to earn money, undermines people's sense of sacredness in nature which lies at the heart of traditional tribal religion. For example, a woman who had just been removed from Kinari village

to make way for Vedanta's refinery said to us "*Amoro deveta bi nasht kole*" – "they even destroyed our deities" – referring to the *darni vali* (earth goddess stones) that form the centre of a Kond village, which had been bulldozed into rubble along with the houses as soon as villagers were evicted. Similar testimony is given by people displaced by the Indravati reservoir, who say "Our deities were drowned".

- In this context, the dances, songs, stories, and customary ways of behaving that are commonly understood as "culture" also lose their meaning and vitality. Many displaced by the Indravati dam attest that when times were hard before, the better-off would help those in need. Now everyone is struggling to survive.

An easy way to understand Cultural Genocide is through the original meaning of "culture", deriving from Latin *cultus*, which links the meaning of culture, cult, and cultivation. In other words, cultures which still retain their own system of cultivation, linked with a cult of nature-based deities, are bound to be undermined by removal from their land. For those of us who lost any sense of being part of a community rooted to the soil hundreds of years ago, it is very hard to understand the Cultural Genocide implicit in this kind of displacement.

Cultural Genocide applies most clearly to tribal cultures, which differ markedly from mainstream orientation in their lifestyle's groundedness in nature. When the Balimela dam was being constructed in the 1960s a team from the Anthropological Survey of India were commissioned to study the small, distinctive Didayi tribe, a large part of which was about to be displaced (Guha 1970). But it also applies to non-tribal farmers, such as the betel-vine cultivators resisting Posco, and the farmers who resisted Tata's Gopalpur steel plant plans in the 1990s (Shiva 1998), as well as thousands of farmers in West Bengal resisting takeovers of their land at Singur and Nandigram. The village culture these people are defending is the same "*village swaraj*" which lay at the heart of Gandhi's conception of Indian culture.

So the various people in Orissa and other states who are striving to protect their land from corporate takeover are actually campaigning for much more – to preserve India's cultural integrity and independence against the forces of global finance. And even more than this: to preserve India's natural environment that forms the basis of life itself.

There is a widespread recognition now that biocultural diversity co-exists with biodiversity in nature – that indigenous cultures preserve many of the

world's most important areas of nature, because the values of these cultures differ fundamentally from those of the industrial society that grew up in the West, "built on the misconceived and ultimately ruinous belief in humans' separateness from Nature and dominion over it." (Maffi 2008: 10, Kothari & Pathak 2008). The World Conservation Congress promotes the concept of Indigenous Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs). In Orissa one of the outstanding such areas is the forested mountain summit in Niyamgiri where Vedanta plans to mine bauxite. This is an example of a project that may not cause direct displacement, but strikes at the heart of a cultural heritage that is also the heart of one of Orissa's best preserved forest areas. The reason is the Dongria Konds and their religion, which centres on Niyam Raja, Lord of the Law, whose abode is the mountain summit. The tribes maintain a taboo on cutting trees up there in Niyam Raja's name, out of a recognition that the natural vegetation conserves the fertility of their land through an abundance of streams. So mining bauxite from Niyamgiri and other Khondalite mountains in south Orissa is bound to cause an erosion of Kond spiritual values as well as an erosion of Orissa's natural environment and fertility (Dash 2008).

DIVERGENT VALUES AND BELIEFS

As we write, several other calamities are affecting Orissa, which have an extremely close, though hidden, connection with the subject of displacement: terrible floods, violent attacks between Hindus and Christians, and a number of violent attacks by Maoists and consequent repression. It will be helpful to examine these connections, as a way of leading in to an appraisal of the influence in causing displacement, and compounding its trauma, of differences in what social scientists call the *social construction of reality* (Berger 1966).

The floods sweeping Orissa in September 2008 have displaced about 180,000 people, and marooned about 1,500,000. It seems that mismanagement of Hirakud and other dams is a significant factor (*Hindu* 21.9.08, *Tehelka* vol. 5 issue 39, 4.10.08). Although flood control was given along with irrigation and hydro-power as a main reason for building these dams, recent events have shown that supplying water and power to new factories is the dams' main purpose. Far from controlling floods, evidence suggests that the dams have actually compounded them by releasing water inappropriately, and through the ever-present threat of bursting - the main cause of the disastrous 2008 Bihar floods, after a dam was breached on the Kosi river in Nepal, and officials in Bihar failed to act in time (timesonline 28.8.08, bihartimes.com 12.9.08). On 7 November 2007, protest by 30,000 farmers in the Hirakud

area highlighted the fact of industry taking water at the expense of irrigation for farmers. The farmers drew a “*chashi rekha*” (farmers’ line) against factories’ further intake of water (POKSSS 2008).

Dams thus cause widespread displacement in two other dimensions in addition to their large-scale direct displacement. First, through catastrophic floods in times of excessive rain, and secondly by reducing canal or river flow that thousands of farmers depend upon. When Nehru laid the foundation stone for Hirakud, he saw dams as the “temples of modern India” – a view he later regretted – and his words are a poignant illustration of the reality gap: “The Hirakud project is a work which will not cause more misery to the people, but which will bring about the end of their miseries” (*Tehelka*, above). Chief Minister Nabakrushna Choudhury also promised the dam would bring an end to poverty in Orissa. After at least 150,000 people had been displaced, and two Tehsildars had been murdered by furious villagers, causing severe police repression, Hirakud was a main factor in Choudhury’s resignation in 1956 (Dhalo 2007). Sudden release of water by the Hirakud dam caused widespread displacement and loss of life and property in 1980 and 1999 as well as 2008.

The Hindu-Christian issue was sparked in December 2007 by the application of certain Panos (the main Scheduled Caste) in Kandhamal district to change their status from Scheduled Caste to Scheduled Tribe on the basis that they speak the Kond tribal language Kui – an application that angered Konds, and fanned the flames of a double split in society that broke out in violent attacks: SC (Pano) – ST (Kond), and Hindu – Christian. The latter split broke out with renewed ferocity in August 2008 following the murder by Maoists of the VHP leader Laxmanananda Saraswati, whom they held responsible for instigating communal violence in December. August-October 2008 has seen the burning of countless villages and churches, and the displacement of tens of thousands of Christians.

What we are dealing with here is the spread of a *polarizing tendency* in society. The primary issue we address in this paper is a polarisation between those who believe in or promote industrial development-cum-displacement, and those resisting it. The Kandhamal violence demonstrates the power of several related polarizations – Hindu-Christian, and SC-ST – and highlights the position of the Maoists in this process.

Increasingly, people who resist displacement are being branded as Maoists, especially in the Kalinganagar and Posco areas (as also at Singur and Nandigram). To what extent Maoist influence is penetrating these areas is

often difficult to gauge. What is clear is that these movements against forced displacement are primarily motivated by the farmers' wish to retain their land and communities, and if Maoist influence enters, the main reason for this is people's exasperation at the injustice they face, and the Maoists' readiness to capitalize on this, since supporting fights against injustice are at the core of their ideology. It is also apparent that labelling protestors as Maoists makes it easier to justify repressive measures against them.

Before examining the ideology of the protestors, or of the Maoists, we need to look more deeply at the mainstream ideology of development that is the prime cause of displacement. By ideology, we mean the patterns of values and beliefs that motivate people and form their perception of what is real and right – the *social construction of reality*.

As we showed in the first section, the phenomenon of displacement taking place in Orissa now comes out of a history of industrial revolution in a succession of countries, motivated by a nationalistic faith in "progress" that shows relatively little variation from 18th-19th Britain and America, to communist Russia and China, to Orissa/India today. The heart of this belief system is *materialism*: the belief that a high growth rate and increased material production and construction lead to a rise in the *general* standard of living. In each of the countries mentioned, millions of people were displaced from their land and faced starvation conditions as a result of rapidly imposed industrialization. In the case of Russia, Stalin's first five year plan caused the death of around 7 million people through starvation in Ukraine in 1932-33, and Mao's Great Leap Forward in 1958-61 caused the death of an estimated 30 million people due to an enforced shift from agriculture to steel production (Chang 1991, 2005, Short 1999 pp. 480-505). In other words, no one seems to have tried to impose industrialization more swiftly and cruelly than Mao. This fact alone would make Maoism a very strange ally of people who are resisting industrialization.

Coming back to the main ideology, it seems that capitalists and Marxists alike believe in industrialization as a necessary stage of development. They also share a belief in violence, as a means to impose their will. No one analysed the inequities of capitalism better than Marx, but he was limited by the belief systems of his own time, when hardly anyone could see the environmental consequences of large-scale industrialization in catastrophic climate change now plainly visible, and when everyone was excited by a new "scientific" vision of progress through set stages of development.

This view of human societies as developing through certain fixed or necessary stages of development is known as *social evolutionism*. Originally it was seen as an application to society of Darwin's theory of evolution of natural species, causing Marx to offer to dedicate a volume of *Das Kapital* to Darwin. Unfortunately, the application of the theory of evolution to society by Herbert Spencer and others was misplaced, since thousands of natural species each develops on its own unique path in relation to changes in other species, while social evolutionists posit the same path of development for every society, forcing diverse cultures into a single paradigm of unsolicited cultural uniformity (Padel 2000, Chapter 7).

So one aspect of social evolutionism, and therefore of the mainstream values promoting industrial development in India and Orissa today, involves a set of negative stereotypes about tribal people, and other small-scale farmers: as "primitive", "backward", "uneconomic", "unsustainable", etc. This has actually been the dominant view of tribal cultures since European moderns first encountered them (Meek 1976), and causes an immense undervaluation of tribal culture, which helps justify destroying it, through the idea that resettlement will aid tribal people's development in the long run, even if it causes pain now.

A core aspect of the ideology of industrialization relates to a faith in certain economic theories. In particular, the idea that a high growth rate in the overall economy is bound to trickle down to the poor, has continued to find currency, even though it has been repeatedly discredited, and flies in the face of the evidence all around us. Neo-liberal economics gives prime importance to a belief in "market forces", on the view that if everyone follows their own interests, market forces will produce the proper adjustments in society. This belief, promoted by Adam Smith and others in 18th century Britain, still forms a core belief in the ideology of developers, even though it is clear that it has led to the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer. It is forgotten that Adam Smith also attacked the power of corporations, the East India Company in particular, warning of their tendency to make a "conspiracy against the public." (Robbins 2006 p.61)

From the perspective of tribal cultures, the idea that everyone should follow their self-interest promotes selfishness on a dangerous scale. Even the idea of private property, which Hunter outlined as the core colonial legacy to India (above), is seen by indigenous people as a cause of environmental devastation. As a leading native American leader, Oren Lyons, sees it, "Private property is a concept that flies in the face...of the reality of life...a human conception, which amounts to greed." (Lopez 2008 p. 28).

The privatization of resources such as land, minerals and water going on now is seen by environmentalists as a danger to the fabric of life, and contrasts with the advice in the famous Constitution of the Six Nations of the Iroquois confederacy, that any important decision should be assessed on the basis of its likely effects on the seventh generation to come (*ibid.* p. 29). This kind of long-term planning is also the reason that Adam Smith distrusted corporations: their thinking is confined to extremely short-term calculations of profits and costs. As we would express this now: wider environmental costs, costs to people being displaced by their projects, and costs likely to fall on future generations are *externalized*, so that they are not borne by the companies who incur them.

In other words, the displacement process involves double standards. A proper Cost Benefit Analysis of any project would offset financial and employment benefits against environmental and social costs, and consequent costs to future generations. The way these are externalized so that companies have to pay nothing, or at most, guarantee a token 5 per cent of profits to compensate for these costs, shows that development projects are defined by the companies and their beneficiaries.

RULE OF LAW

A blatant double set of values is apparent in the application of Law. While protestors against the Utkal, Posco and Tata projects are harassed by countless “false cases” that tie them into a drawn out and highly exploitative process at the local law courts, the big corporations are seen to wriggle out of legal injunctions with ease, e.g. in the notorious bribes paid by mining companies to ministers, and in the way that Utkal and Vedanta proceeded to build their factories without having first acquired proper environmental clearance for the mines they were depending on (IPTEHR 2006 headed by Justice Bhargava, Samantara 2007, Goodland 2007). Vedanta/Sterlite’s clearance for mining Niyamgiri came after the Norwegian Government Council on Ethics released a report that detailed a long list of transgressions of Law by the Sterlite-Vedanta group, and abuse of the environment and human rights in India and other countries (2007).

The use of *goondas* (hired thugs) by mining companies is a particularly blatant example of double legal standards. As “Outrage against displacement spreads”, (*Statesman*, Bhubaneswar, 23.5.06), it is clear to observers in Orissa that the orchestration of *goondas* in support of mining companies is a nexus that involves certain politicians and senior

administrators, as well as the mining companies they promote (Dash 2008). The murder of gangster Biranchi Das in Bhubaneswar on 13 April 08 pointed to senior administrators' involvement in campaigns to terrorise displacement protestors. Raja Acharya, who was arrested for this murder had a close connection with senior IAS officer Priyabrat Patnaik, whom Raja stated offered him a contract working for Posco (*Kalinga Times* 5.5.08).

In the Kalinanagar area, leading activists of the *Bisthapit Birodhi Jan Manch* (People's Platform Against Displacement) have been attacked, and one murdered, while another activist was killed in the Posco area. Amin 'Shyam' Banara was gunned down on 1 May 2008 by goons who accosted him near the Tata factory site – a crime for which gangster Arbind Sing was later arrested. A month before, another activist, Jogendra Jamuda, was shot in the back while driving his mother and wife on a motorbike past the Kalinganagar police station. As Chakradhara Haiburu, 60-year-old spokesman for the BBJM said, "If Maoists were involved then it would be Arbind Sing lying dead, not Amin Banara." (see Samadrusti TV: "Tata steel bullets" on youtube.com). The main Kalinganagar activists have all received death threats for their opposition to Tata.

The anti-Posco activist Dula Mandal was killed by pro-Posco goons in his village of Govindpur on 21 June 2008, after a day's work alongside hundreds of others, dredging the Jetadhari river mouth. Villagers had alerted the authorities to the importance of this task to avert floods, but after huge delays, and offers of a 20 crore contract for the job, the villagers had decided to do it themselves, which angered businessmen who had hoped to get this contract. After completing the dredging on 30th June, they held a memorial for Dula attended by 3,000 villagers and supporters. A few days later, villagers captured several goons who had used violence, along with six boxes of home made bombs and other weapons, from the school in Govindpur (*Statesman*, 26.6.08). When serious violence erupted before this, on 29 November 2007, and bombs had been thrown by goons at a crowd consisting largely of women, Priyabrat Patnaik had made a statement on TV that "those people have been taught a lesson".

Similar intimidation, by goons as well as police, took place at a Public Hearing for a Tata thermal power plant at Naraj, near Cuttack on 10 March 2008, that would displace several villagers (Samadrusti TV: "Tata Muscle power" on youtube.com). In this instance, villagers entirely new to this kind of intimidation were beaten up and began the process of making a stand against displacement.

Another area where intimidation by goons has escalated is around Maliparbat, a mountain in south Orissa threatened with bauxite mining by Hindalco, where most villagers have come together to oppose the project (K.S. Patnaik 2008), where goons attacked the village of Maliguda on 20th July. Ten villagers were seriously injured and taken to Koraput hospital. Women and girls were molested.

Villagers who maintain a stance against displacement need the utmost strength and courage, not just because the power nexus confronting them links gangsters and mining companies with people in the Government who do secret deals with the companies, but also because of a *manufacturing of consent* by the media. Posco's invitation of journalists to Korea, and Vedanta's invitation of journalists to Lanjigarh, and the money on offer to journalists who promote positive news for these companies, is well known. The number of journalists and editors prepared to take a stand for truth and report what is really happening on the ground, or give a voice to the anti-displacement protestors, is relatively few. So is *the social construction of reality* around the issue of displacement, *The Manufacturing of Consent* by corporate interests making use of the media plays a significant part (Chomsky and Herman 1988).

Tata and Posco followed Vedanta's example of trying to construct their factories before getting mining clearance, in order to exert leverage in their bids. The primary object of their desire is the iron-ore in the few as-yet untouched mountains in north Orissa, in a race with Rio Tinto and Mittal. Yet the pollution and devastation of large areas of north and central Orissa by existing iron-ore, chromite and coal mines, and about 90 sponge iron factories, has already made life hell for countless Adivasis (Dash 2008). Sukinda, adjacent to Kalinganagar, has been named one of the ten most polluted spots on earth (M.Dutta 2007, CSE 2008 p.247). Posco at first did not even want to build a steel plant in Orissa, but was persuaded that this was a condition of gaining access to north Orissa's rich iron deposits. Meanwhile, all the bauxite-mountains in south Orissa are exposed to the imminent threat of mining clearance. BHP Billiton, Alcoa and Dubai Aluminium are among the companies known to be manoeuvring for bauxite deals.

Among the most important aspects of development is access to equal justice for all – rich and poor alike. A lot of evidence from the ground indicates that far from getting better, the corruption and intimidation are getting worse. Mining companies, in fact, are notorious for spreading not just material pollution, but also a corruption of values and the dividing of communities.

The pattern for this behaviour was set in the age of the “robber barons” in 19th century USA, when the biggest capitalists often showed contempt for the process of Law. Corrupting elected politicians and Supreme Court Judges was a basic part of this system. Cornelius Vanderbilt, one of the first “railway kings” once remarked when challenged, *“What do I care about the law? Hain’t I got the power?”* In 1866-8, during the ferocious “railway wars”, rival companies bribed SC Judges, and one party was exposed as paying over 1\$million in bribes, describing it in his expenses as *“extra and legal services”*. There was an established system for purchasing elected politicians and judges. As Collis P. Huntington, another of the railway kings, put this in a letter of 1877:

“If you have to pay money to have the right thing done, it is only just and fair to do itIf a man has the power to do great evil and won’t do right unless he is bribed to do it, I think the time spent will be gained when it is a man’s duty to go up and bribe the judge” (Josephson 1962 pp. 15, 352, 354).

The prevalence of this corruption explains why Abraham Lincoln, shortly before he was assassinated in 1865, drew attention to the dangers of company power for America:

“Corporations have been enthroned...An era of corruption in high places will follow and the money power will endeavour to prolong its reign by working on the prejudices of the people...until wealth is aggregated in a few hands...and the Republic is destroyed” (Korten 1995 p. 58).

“Breaking rules at opportune moments” was one of the secrets of Carnegie’s success (Josephson 1962 p.43), and for the other Robber Barons too, laying down a pattern of “dancing with the law”, in which politicians and the judiciary were in effect making and implementing the law at the Robber Barons’ bidding - a pattern painfully visible in corporate takeovers today, in Orissa and worldwide.

The difference in values and beliefs between corporate attitudes to Law and those of Adivasis could not be starker. The Kond concept of Niyam Raja as upholder of law unites a universal with human conceptions of law, like the ancient Indian concept of *dharma*. In fact, hearing that a judge in India’s Supreme Court was effectively selling Niyamgiri to Vedanta, by asking the company to set aside fixed sums for tribal development and compensatory afforestation, a Kond elder, in our hearing, said something that demonstrates this connection: *“Taro Karma, Amoro Dharma”* (his the sin, ours the *dharma*).

Another example we witnessed took place during a session of the Inquiry by Justice P.K. Mishra into the Maikanch firing on 29 May 2002, when Utkal's Chief Executive Officer was in the witness box, and stated that he could not get the balance sheet to explain where an unaccounted-for 70 crore rupees had gone - listed under "miscellaneous" in Utkal's accounts, and allegedly set aside for bribes. Unable to account for these missing funds, he passed on responsibility to Ola Lie, the head of Norsk Hydro (resident in London), indicating that Mr. Lie was in effect his superior in Utkal, which was then a Hindalco-Norsk-Alcan joint venture. The Judge made a joke about the appropriateness of Mr. Lie's name given Utkal's reputation for tampering with the truth. After the Utkal executive, two women were called, an Adivasi and a Dalit, who had witnessed the shooting in Maikanch, and whose relatives were shot. The whole time each stood in the witness box she kept her palms joined in *Johar/Namaste*, in a symbolic plea for justice and truth in that alien environment of the courtroom, where the Judge kept an impartial aloofness, while the company lawyers pretended friendliness, but tried to trip them up with complicated lines of questioning about who had paid for them to come to Rayagada that day, and where they were during the shooting, implying that they couldn't have seen it, or to cow them with scorn. For example, in answer to the question "*Occupation?*" when one of the women answered "*Chaso*" (cultivation) the lawyers led a round of titters, as if to dismiss her as an illiterate peasant. Before the end of the session, when the witnesses had left, the Judge made the whole courtroom stand while he said that lawyers can be more violent than guns, and that treating villagers with such little respect will erode their faith in our courts.

Indeed, if it is true that Maoists' appeal is on the rise, village people's despair of getting justice at the courts should be counted as a significant factor. The call to armed struggle appears as radical and progressive empowerment for oppressed people who lack legal redress for their grievances. To many observers it seems that, at the grassroots level, money usually decides who wins a case, making a mockery of the idea that the Law is impartial between rich and poor. There is little question that police lodge court cases for unreal offences against activists to de-activate them. Over 500 arrests were made against anti-mining villagers in Kashipur up to 1999 alone (Mahapatra 1999), and villagers attending the court every few weeks for these cases say they have to pay fees or bribes to a large range of lawyers and court officials.

A summary of Mishra's report was finally released to the media on 10 October 2003, when *Dharitri* published an account under the title "Maikanch firing was justified". Basically, according to the extracts released, the report reaches

the contradictory conclusions that grossly excessive force was used, but that the firing was justified. It singles out the OIC (Officer In Command) of Kashipur Police Station “for continuing with firing beyond requirement”, after the Magistrate had given the order to fire, and also admonishes this Magistrate, for giving an open-ended order to fire. The excerpts released mention the 19 rounds fired as excessive, and question the prior intent of the police visit to “investigate” and “maintain law and order”, but they do not highlight the height at which bullets were fired (i.e. with intention to kill), nor the live ammunition in the guns, which implies a prior intention to cause harm. The report accepted the villagers’ account that the incident was provoked when police laid their hands on two of the women. But critics of Utkal had hoped Mishra’s inquiry would reveal the collusion between politicians and ministers, police, and company officials. The fact that the report did not apparently touch on the question of who called out the armed police, or how this decision was reached, implies to critics that the whole exercise was basically a whitewash. Most controversially, the report went beyond its brief to justify the alumina project, stating that “the state cannot afford to remain backward for the sake of so-called environmental protection” – an ideological statement.

One of the best-known books about mining in 19th Wales is called *The Rape of the Fair Country* (Cordell 1959), and opponents of the proliferation of mining projects talk about a rape of Orissa - its resources as well as its people. Indeed, with the sidelining of legislation that protects India’s forests, coasts and landrights by the SEZ and other recent Acts, conservationists as well as rights activists are worried that India’s resources are being looted on a scale that even the East India Company could not dream of, and in the violence and manipulation of law and finance the ongoing corporate takeover of farming and forest land represent a kind of reincarnation of the EIC - an undermining of India’s Independence in which members of the ruling class are colluding with foreign-based financial institutions for short term gain. In effect it is the very people and communities living most sustainably that are being sacrificed.

The American legal expert Cormac Cullinan’s book *Wild Law: A Manifesto for Earth Justice* raises the question of whether systems of Law now shouldn’t make protecting the basic fabric of life a fundamental concern. As he says,

“Most lawyers and legislators do not know enough about natural regulatory systems, and in any case, do not believe they are relevant to humans.....

We need to

"recognize that at the moment the governance systems of most countries and of the international 'community' actually facilitate and legitimize the exploitation and destruction of Earth by humans (2002 p. 30).

Much of what is being called "development" is essentially destructive: the removal of unrenewable resources (in the case of Orissa's minerals), and dangerous overuse of water, as well as destruction of communities living basically in harmony with nature. And much of this "development" promotes an *over-consumption*:

"while economists look with pride on the fact that the world economy expanded sevenfold between 1950 and 2000, and world trade is expanding more rapidly, ecologists see that these are based on a profligate use of Earth's 'natural capital' (ibid., p. 38).

Cullinan calls for a swift change in countries' legal systems with a view to protecting the fabric of life in a world which most ecologists see as entering a period of severe environmental crisis caused by economic growth out of control. The irony of displacement in Orissa is that the very tribal people being displaced in Orissa have been at the forefront of protecting the environment, living sustainably in the true sense of the word.

The threat of accelerating climate change is a case in point. Orissa is a frontline region in climate change causes as well as effects. As it builds new metal factories, deforests its mountains and valleys for mines, depletes its water and food sources, and accepts a virtually uncontrolled increase in pollution in order to service foreign investors, it is heating up its own climate as well as making a major contribution towards pushing the whole planet towards the tipping point of inevitable runaway global heating. What we need is a fundamental shift of consciousness. We should be learning from Orissa's indigenous people, not dispossessing them of the land they have safeguarded over centuries.

IMPOVERISHMENT: A DRASTIC FALL IN PEOPLE'S QUALITY OF LIFE

Most studies of R & R agree that oustees very rarely regain their previous standard of living, let alone raise it. Orissa's 3 million oustees, and people faced by further displacement now are bound to be cynical about the new R & R policies, when even many areas often mentioned as positive

examples of resettlement, such as Nalco's Damanjodi area, prove anything but positive. Will the new policies really remedy the situation, or simply entrench an already ingrained pattern of un-met promises?

When the ILO, and the recent UN declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, insist that the provision of land of similar quality for land being taken away is the minimum requirement to safeguard indigenous people's quality of life, and this provision is not in the recent R & R policies; and the UN Declaration, like the Extractive Industries Review, insists that people faced with displacement have the right to Free Prior Informed Consent, and this too is not in the R & R policies, it cannot be said that these R & R policies are generous.

One symbol of the reality gap is a cheque for just six rupees we have photocopied, dated 29 September 2007 and presented as compensation to Umesh Chhatra of Koindapali village in the Lower Suktel area, for his house by the Special Land Acquisition officer, Balangir. What can be bought for six rupees?

When Company people say of a tribal area where they have erected a factory "there was nothing here before – only mud huts", this shows how the dominant mindset equates development with modern, material constructs, such as roads and buildings. Most R & R schemes assess traditional tribal houses as without any economic value. For example, an official account of Nalco's R & R at Damanjodi states that:

"The Government of Orissa as well as the NALCO have taken the view that the homesteads lost by the tribal families were practically of no value as they were *small mud huts*. As no compensation could be paid for loss of such homesteads, durable houses (partly pucca) could be constructed for them at the cost of NALCO. Secondly, the concept of rehabilitation was based on the fact that it was necessary for NALCO alumina project to create certain amount of community relationship with those who have *lost all their assets in the larger interest of the nation.....*" (Muthayya 1984 p.2, emphasis ours)

The contrast between houses before and after displacement demonstrates a far-reaching difference in values and culture. Traditional tribal villages, without too much outside interference, have a high quality of life in that each man and woman is self-employed on their own land. They have clean water, and a daily bath in a flowing stream – better than the most expensive bathroom! They make their own houses out of earth and wood, and though these houses

are officially classified as mere “mud huts” - and on this basis people receive minimal compensation for them when they are destroyed to make way for a project - they are far superior in many ways to pukka concrete houses. They remain cool in summer and warm in winter, unlike concrete buildings in resettlement colonies. They are beautifully painted with clays and well-mixed natural glazes; and have many secret spaces for cooking, storing things, and worship of gods and ancestors. Traditional houses are an expression of cultural pride, while the pukka houses that are “gifted” to oustees as if far superior are soulless, inconvenient, and alien in culture. Since the people rarely have any design input, the houses lack the spatial arrangement that binds people into a living community.

The following are some of the areas of life where displaced people generally see a marked decline in their living standards:-

Food security lost along with people's land,

Self-employment replaced by humiliating dependency on a supply labouring jobs,

Egalitarian social structure replaced by a low place in an extreme hierarchy,

Splits in the community between people for and against a project/company,

Access to fresh stream water ends, replaced by pump water, often polluted and unreliable (residents in many rehab colonies testify to a dire water shortage),

Deterioration in community values, corruption, and oppression by *goondas*.

Offsetting the deterioration in standards, are various schemes of “sustainable development” and CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility). Vedanta's 2007 Report devoted 60 pages to SD and CSR. The main evidence of good works is statistics of money spent on schools, health centres and SHGs, accredited by a London-based accountancy firm. Investigation on the ground in the Lanjigarh area reveals that schools and hospitals are functioning barely if at all, while SHGs are open to the problem that once loans are disbursed, repayment pressure is intense and affords a means of control over the indebted population – problems reported by several researchers from Bangladesh, where the SHG model first took off (Muhammad 2006). It is true that Vedanta gave training to a number of local youths, but the participation by these youths in repeated demonstrations at Lanjigarh demanding jobs gives the lie to claims that the company offers major opportunities for local people. Local people insist that most well-paid jobs go to outsiders (Dash 2008).

The basic problem with privatized models of development is that they bypass democratic social controls that developed through intense campaigns since Independence. Officials have been heard to say, e.g. in the Kashipur region, that once the Utkal project is underway, proper development in terms of schools and hospitals will be given by the company. But the companies involved in Utkal have changed: from Indal, Tata and Norsk, to Alcan and Hindalco, to just Hindalco. So when officials say "*company debo*" (the company will give), the actual company involved shifts its form, and this statement is an echo to words that might have been said 200 years ago about the EIC and its promises. How to ensure that companies keep their promises? What punishments should be meted out to company executives who deceive people with false promises?

In this context, the specific problems with the new R & R policies are that:

- They say it is best to avoid displacement, but there is no serious or publicly transparent process of pursuing alternatives,
- The promise of one job per family has often been made (e.g. at Rourkela and Damanjodi) but has rarely if ever been kept in practice,
- Land is often bought for absurdly low prices, a major factor of discontent at Kalinga Nagar, where land was resold by IDCO to Tata for ten times the price paid,
- People without *patta* are classed as "encroachers on government land", even though they have often farmed this land over generations,
- The value of houses is grossly underestimated by classing them as "mud huts",
- Cash compensation is the norm, and accepted uncritically in the R & R policies, even though it has been shown repeatedly that business sharks invariably pursue those in receipt of cash and new bank accounts, with offers of vehicles or schemes that enmesh oustees immediately into debt (S.Das 2000),
- Even recent suggestions that mining companies should give 5 per cent of their profits for local area development, or make displaced people shareholders are unenforceable and likely to compound the exploitation.

What adds insult to injury is the dehumanized discourse that is customary concerning people who have been or may be displaced. A study

commissioned by Tata soon after the Kalinga Nagar firing is a case in point (Harsha 2006), giving statistics of DPs (displaced persons) and PAPs (project-affected persons). Meeting with opposition from villagers whose friends and relations had been killed, the team *"repeatedly emphasised to them that this survey has been initiated only to strengthen the cause of the affected people. Sometimes it worked, paving the way for future deliberations."* (ibid., p. 10) Which contrasts strongly with the tendentious assumption that *"The very fact that the displaced persons have spelt-out their options and preferences for their relocation, resettlement and rehabilitation indicates that they are willing to accept the project. It also indicates that they are mentally preparing themselves to get displaced to give way for the project."* (ibid., p. iv) Posco, like Tata, has spent a lot of money studying the people resisting displacement, and a visit to the Posco office in Bhubaneswar revealed a site map where resisting households were marked with red dots, pro-Posco households with green, and fence-sitters with blue. In other words, the companies keep lists of "agitators" to be "targeted".

The takeover of Adivasi lands in Orissa's tribal areas follows the same pattern as Scotland's Highland Clearances. Any visitor to Scotland will see clan maps, which show the territories of the Highland Clans, before their villages were burnt and their land was cleared of people to make it more profitable.

In tribal villages that still remain far from industry, there is a silence. The peace at night vibrates with the song of *jhintika* (crickets). When a factory is nearby, this peace is shattered by many sounds of heavy machinery and vehicles, together with the shattering of the community's social structure, and the pollution by dust and smog.

In the Scottish highlands today, the glens (valleys) are full of a different kind of silence – a silence which thousands of tourists come to enjoy – a silence of a land emptied of its people: post-industrial silence, post-people emptiness.... (Prebble 1969). Basically the 'Scottish Enlightenment', in 18th century Edinburgh, promoted market economics, while simultaneously, English armies were slaughtering the Jacobite rebels, who fought for Scottish independence. Scottish as well as English intellectuals wrote about the wretched poverty of the highland crofters and their hovels, and when famine and cholera swept the land, this was taken as a sign, not of the outrageous exploitation, but of the crofters' lack of economic sense. It was Scottish Lairds (*zamindars*) who got their factors and bailiffs to

drive the people out of their hamlets and set the crofts on fire, which fitted like hand into glove the English military policy to break the power of the clans. These crofts were made of stones and their ruins are still visible, far and wide.

From 18th-19th century Scotland to 20th-21st century Orissa, essentially the same discourse: a view of clansmen and Adivasis as unruly, uncouth, uneducated, backward, and above all uneconomic and standing in the way of progress. Yet the reality was, and in Orissa still is, that these people grow a large variety of foods on their land, and if the process is labour-intensive, it also involves a huge variety of experience and communication - bathing in the stream, complex songs, dances, myths related to the local landscape, visits between communities, clan feasts - and careful preservation of the natural environment.

Scotland too had its mines, dams and factories. When Kinlochleven aluminium smelter was built in the 1900s and Lochaber smelter in the 1920s, they were the world's largest, and the hydro-schemes to supply them with water and electricity were among the world's first big dams, the Blackwater dam supplying Kinlochleven, and 3 dams built for Lochaber, with a series of pipes 50 miles long bringing water to fall down an incline through the shoulder of Britain's highest mountain, Ben Nevis - a model for the Indravati hydro-scheme.

Thousands of people laboured to build these dams, and smelters, and their associated roads and railways. Conditions were close to slave labour. One of thousands of Irish navvies employed to build Kinlochleven in the 1900s wrote a famous book about the experience: *Children of the Dead End* (McGee 1914), and during the first world war, hundreds of German Prisoners of War were brought in to build a road to Kinlochleven on the north side of Loch Leven, while hundreds of British conscientious objectors (pacifists, jailed for refusing to fight in this war) were forced to build a road on the south side.

From the silence of tribal villages at night, to the silence of the vanished crofts cleared or drowned from glens and lochs, to another kind of silence: our own silence, when we don't speak about what is really happening.

CONCLUSIONS

A recent review of the state of human rights in India by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UNESCR) expresses deep concern about the displacement and forced evictions

of millions of families, and their inadequate R & R, especially the adverse impacts on Adivasis and Dalits, and the harassment of human rights campaigners attempting to help people assert their rights. The Committee recommends the enforcing of laws that prohibit forced evictions and guarantee proper compensation (2008, paragraphs 31 and 71).

1. As Bhagaban Majhi says, no more displacement ought to happen in Orissa until already-displaced people have first been properly resettled and their standard of living has improved. At the very least, a much more stringent attempt should be made by the authorities to avoid displacement. The principle of Free, Prior Informed Consent should be applied, as set out in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (September 2007), which says they “have the right to require that States obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands, territories and other resources.”
2. The process of consulting with people slated for displacement should be a real and equal procedure, far removed from the present scenario of Public Hearings, where coercion has become the norm, and people’s voices have no impact on the outcome. The provisions of the 5th schedule of the Constitution, the PESA, and the Samata Judgement should be applied to protect tribal people’s land rights in Scheduled Areas, at the very least. People’s voices should be heard and quoted in official discourse to counteract the proliferation of stereotypes.
3. Social Impact Assessments should be required. R & R should be carried out by properly trained and well motivated officials in charge of resettlement, with an attitude of serving the people. In present circumstances, this is almost unimaginable, so it needs to start from a correction of existing stereotypes about tribals, and an awareness of the reality gap, along with a collective determination to bridge it. If people are opposing major projects, it needs to be clearly understood that this is because they are trying to save the land that forms the core of their culture and community. If these people are sometimes angry at the injustice and intimidation they meet with, it needs to be widely accepted that their anger is justified, and that their movements against displacement are seen by many people as an attempt to safeguard saving the fabric of life itself. □

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