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WORLD ANTHROPOLOGY CONGRESS-2023

BHUBANESWAR, INDIA | 9-14 AUGUST 2023

CTD: o1GT - GENERAL THEMATIC DOMAIN

SUB-DOMAIN:

INDIGENEITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

PANEL TITLE:

**DEVELOPMENT, MARGINALIZATION AND TRIBAL COMMUNITIES IN INDIA:
QUEST FOR IDENTITY AND JUSTICE**

CONVENOR: PRALAY KANUNGO

CO-CONVENOR: JAGANNATH AMBAGUDIA

Development is a double-edged sword; it can erase as well as accentuate marginality. Ironically, the hype of neoliberal development has further marginalized the poor and the deprived across the world. India's tribal communities, which have already been marginalized for centuries, instead of being empowered, are rapidly getting dispossessed from their lifeworld. Development-induced displacement has ruined their livelihood, disrupted their social capital, and fragmented their identities. Both State and corporate actors play a key role in accentuating their exploitation, vulnerability, and precariousness. Representative democracy, designed as a panacea to ensure equality and justice for tribals, has increasingly become a neoliberal tool, thereby eroding its liberating potential. The State-corporate nexus, creating a rhetoric of an inclusive development, at best offers symbolic tokenisms and limited economic benefits to tribals, without making them genuine shareholders in development.

In this context, the panel will take up some key issues and concerns that revolve around the everyday life of tribal communities in contemporary India. It will deconstruct the context in which tribal identities emerge, get shaped and are operationalized through acts and agencies of various kinds seeking rights and justice. Further, the panel will explore how natural resources, such as land, forest and water constitute an intrinsic part of the tribal lifeworld, identity, and dignity and how tribals mobilise to protect their lifeworld from neoliberal assault. Drawing upon some case studies, the panel will reflect on the nature and processes of tribal assertion, mobilisation and movements and assess their impact on socio-economic, cultural, and political spheres. Finally, the panel will go beyond India to examine how neoliberal development in China has evolved with a view to comprehend trajectories that developing economies pursue to come at par with the developed world. Empirical studies from these countries would also provide inputs to understand, how marginalized communities negotiate for justice in both rural India and China.

Keywords: Tribes, Development, Neoliberalism, Marginalisation, Justice

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LIST OF PANELLISTS:

- Dr. Isha Tirkey, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, University of North Bengal, District – Darjeeling, West Bengal – 734014. E-mail: isha.tirkey@gmail.com

Title of the Presentation:

'Carving Tribal Identity and Autonomy on Stones: A Study on the 'Pathalgadi Movement in Jharkhand'

- Dr. Gyan Ranjan Swain, Professor and Head, Department of Political Science, G.M University, Sambalpur - 768004, Odisha, E-mail: gyanranjanswain@gmail.com

Title of the Presentation:

'Empowering Self: Tribal Women's Search for Autonomy in Odisha'

- Dr. Moses Khabithai, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Assam University, Silchar, Assam, E-mail: moses.kharbithai@gmail.com

Title of the Presentation:

'Khasi Identity Assertion and Mobilization in Meghalaya'

- Ning Wei, Doctoral Student, Leiden Institute for Area Studies, School of Asian Studies, Leiden University, Leiden, The Netherlands, E-mail: n.wei@hum.leidenuniv.nl

Title of the Presentation:

'State, Development and Quest for Justice in Rural China: A Study of the Petition System in Three Shanxi Villages'

- Dr. Jagannath Ambagudia, Professor and Dean, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Guwahati, Assam, E-mail: ambagudia@gmail.com

Title of the Presentation:

'Democracy, Representation and Political Justice in India: Reading Tribal Politics in Reference to 2022 Presidential Election'

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