Introduction

India is an agriculture based country and the livelihood of its 70% population depends completely on agriculture. Due to massive negligence to the agriculture sector for decades, a considerable number of farmers shifted from farming to any other sector. The industrial growth has also led to rampant conversion of agricultural land for non-agricultural purpose. Land reform measures have not only failed, but like other natural resources, it has been accumulated by the rich instead of decentralisation through distribution. There are also several other factors which have made agriculture a totally discouraging sector of employment and livelihood. But in spite of all such opposite trends, agriculture still remains as the main source of livelihood for a vast majority of Indians and it contributes considerably to the economy of the country. The other options of livelihood such as industry, jobs, businesses, etc have proved as a failure to accommodate a large section of people and to provide them livelihood. Agriculture is still the only option for providing livelihood for the majority of the population of the country in a sustainable way. Agriculture is the only sector available to accommodate such a vast population and to provide them livelihood in India.

A vast majority of the Indian population are accommodated in agricultural sector in different ways, like big farmer, small farmer, agricultural labourer and Bhagachasi (Share Crop Cultivators) etc. The system of agricultural labour and Bhagachasa are to some extent based on the system of exploitation. The big farming sector is also having its root in Jamidari system and opponent to land reforms. The most appropriate and sustainable way is small and marginal farming. In other words small farming can be defined as distribution of agricultural land to the tiller, ownership over the same land by him and his complete control over the production. This particular type of farming can provide a sustainable source of livelihood to a major section which is free from exploitation and based on the principle of equity.

To ensure such type of farming, land to the tiller is a basic component which was the main objective of land reforms in India. In the course of time, the objective of land reform has remained unreached. Rather, there are other adverse factors which have pushed back the concept and process of land reforms in India. The concept of land to the tiller has become outdated. But it has remained as an universal truth for the Indian society that land reforms is the only way to provide livelihood to the Indians massively in a sustainable and eco-friendly way, and there is no other alternative. So land is the basic component of livelihood for a vast majority of Indians and without land the question of fulfilling livelihood is incomplete. The issue of livelihood in India can be better addressed by analysing the land rights and land ownership of people, so also the impact of landlessness on exercising livelihood activities.

After independence, land reforms and land distribution was seriously taken as an event to strengthen economy of rural India. Several commissions were formed to structure land reforms in India. Various committees and planning measures suggested and started some action for
reforming the land distribution and utilisation system. The centre and the states enacted laws, framed policies, came up with five year plans to address the issue. Revenue departments, authorities and administrative mechanisms were set up for working out the agenda of land reforms.

The issue generated mass actions like Bhooman, Bodhagaya, Tebhaga, Telangana, Srikakulam and the Naxalite movement. These mass movements not only created public awareness but also have compelled the governments to take the issue of land reforms and distribution seriously and design policies accordingly. The political parties have been incorporating this issue in their election manifesto. Left and socialist parties have undertaken long term mass programmes on such issue. NGOs, social action groups, research institutes and welfare organizations have created debate, public awareness and policy advocacy on this. Eminent scholars and academicians have also contributed by their intellectual input by supporting land rights of people.

Status of Land Distribution in Odisha

In spite of all the above efforts, the mission of land rights to all still remains unreached. Like other states of India, the status of Odisha in respect of land reforms is not of much satisfaction. Here, Land Rights have always been at the focal point of socio-political issues as 70% of their populations are dependent directly on agriculture for their livelihood. In Odisha, approximately 40% population belongs to scheduled castes and scheduled tribe communities who are primarily dependent on land-based activities such as agriculture (both off farm and on farm activities). The major issue closely associated with poverty in Odisha is poor access and control over land among the socially and economically marginalized sections of people.

Land distribution at the time of independence was extremely skewed in Odisha. 53% of the land was held by seven per cent of the landowners, whereas 28 per cent of landowners with sub marginal and marginal holdings owned about six per cent. Of this nearly 2.31 million hectares had been taken over by the Government and 1.76 million hectares distributed among five million beneficiaries, half of whom are Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.1 As per the information provided by Odisha State Revenue Department, about 3 lakh families in the state still have no homestead land, thousands of families have no agricultural land, though they are engaged in agriculture from generations (Manas, Jena, 2013). As per the report prepared by UNDP until 2008, 445,450 families in Odisha are landless, however, the real picture is much more. As per 2005-06 records, there are about 445,450 landless individuals in the State, whereas degraded ceiling surplus land available is about 540,725 acres. Similarly, there are about 249,334 homestead-less families for whom land available is 122,764 acres. Besides, since 1974-75, Government wasteland up to one standard acre is allotted to the landless for agricultural purposes. (P.K. Mohanty, 2014)

Women’s rights over land are a crucial issue for any developing society as it is directly linked to right to food, work and other human rights. The denial of inheritance of land rights especially in a patriarchal system has contributed to the subordinate status of women. The Government of Odisha has decided to distribute all such land under ceiling surplus to landless people with high priority being given to landless widows and unmarried women up to 30 years of age. as well as to joint patta (allocations of land use) for the husband and wife. Still, significant gaps exist between women’s land rights and their actual ownership and possession.

The Bhooman movement was led by Acharya Vinoba Bhave in 1951 with the objective of bridging the gap between the landed peasantry and the landless farmers by invoking a sense of altruism for redistribution of land for ensuring social justice. Since then land was received as donation from benevolent land owners and the same were distributed among the landless persons under the Bhooman Act, 1953 and Rules 1954 which was later replaced by the Bhooman Act, 1970
and Rules 1972. Under the Bhoomidhan movement, land was distributed to the poor and landless by the first generation of land owners and so necessary records for such transfer of title were not created. Presently, there has been no survey to assess the exact nature and volume of such illegal encroachment and no subsequent enforcement to bring back the land. As per Annual Activities Report of Revenue and Disaster Management Department for the year 2011-12, an area of 638,706.50 acres of land were collected as donation of which 579,994.21 acres of land had already been distributed among 152,852 landless persons. The balance 58712.29 acres of undistributed land are pending with the Samiti.³

The state Govt. has enacted a set of laws and policies to address the issues of landlessness, land ownership and utilization of land since independence. In order to bring a balance and bridge the gap between the poor landless and the rich landed peasantry a number of land reforms legislations initiated by state. These are known as the Odisha Estate Abolition Act 1952, the Odisha Land Reform Act 1960, the Land Ceiling Act 1974, Odisha Survey and Settlement Act 1958, the Odisha Consolidation of Holdings and Prevention of Fragmentation of Land Act 1972, Jamindari Waste Act 1956, Odisha Govt. Land Settlement Act, 1962 and Orissa Prevention of Land Encroachment Act, 1972, etc. Apart from that, there are several rules, regulations, notification, circulars, policies and programme adopted and initiated by the state govt. in this regard. The state govt. has also been launching land distribution programs for the poor, SCs & STs in the state. The ‘Vasundhara’ and ‘Mo Jami Mo Diha’ schemes are adopted by the state govt to provide and settle land in favour of the landless people in the state. In spite of enactment of all these legislations, millions of poor prominently from Dalit, Adivasis and most backward communities in Odisha have remained landless. Overall, land reform legislation has had only limited success in Odisha.

Land Question in Coastal Odisha

As per geographical location, cultural and social differences the state of Odisha can be divided in two parts, i.e. tribal districts and coastal districts. Though there are several common features of land issues in both tribal and coastal districts, still some inherent differences are there. In tribal districts of Odisha, the issue of land rights includes rights of Adivasis (Tribals) over land and forest, encroachment of tribal land by non-tribes, displacement from land for developmental activities, implementation of Forest Rights Act, and non-settlement of land in the name of Adivasis in spite of prolonged possession. The issue of land rights and more particularly landlessness in coastal district of Odisha includes non-settlement of both agricultural land and homestead land in favour of the beneficiaries. Allocating land to the tiller is a previously declared programme of the state govt. However, it is a fact that the majority of the tillers in the state do not have ownership over the land. Interestingly, the previously mentioned marginalized communities like Dalits, Adivasis and backward castes take the major part of small farmers, agricultural labourers and daily wages.

One aspect of the issue is that some of them are given Record of Rights of the land but no physical possession of the land has been delivered to them. The other issue is that there are some people who are possessing the land (either agricultural or homestead) since generations but the same land is not recorded in their name. So one of the most glaring issues in coastal Odisha is that the rights of marginalized communities over land (homestead or agricultural) is kept in abeyance.

In Odisha 75% of the Dalits population depends on land based livelihood for survival either as agricultural labour or share-cropper. Very few of them have marginal holdings. The state govt. source says about three lakhs families in the state are identified as homestead less until 2007. Dalits constitute a major segment of the homestead less families in the state. In the villages, Dalits are still staying at end of the village in paddy fields, coconut gardens, bank of canals and rivers. The forestland, community land and Govt. land for generations without record of rights over the land. Even many of the families are staying on the private land of Ex-Jamindars,
landlords but since the revenue department has not carried out survey and failed to settle the land in the favour of landless and marginalised farmers. They are being forcefully evicted by the dominant caste people or sometimes by the revenue authorities without proper resettlement. Similarly the agricultural lands they possess are also not yet been recorded in their name. The assigned land demarcated for distribution among landless poor has not been carried out yet. There are still ceiling surplus land, Bhoodan cultivable waste-land available for distribution. The Odisha Land Reform Act which was meant to give land rights to poor and marginal sections of the society by taking away the ceiling surplus land of landlords has remained far back from its mission to give land rights to landless people. Many of the lands which is demarcated as ceiling surplus land are either infertile or litigated with regard to the same are lying subjudice for decades in different courts. Even a major portion of the ceiling surplus land and Bhoodan land distributed on paper among the poor are actually in the physical possession on landlords and builders.

There are landlords but since the society by mission to give land rights to landless people. Many of the lands which is demarcated as ceiling surplus land are either infertile or litigated with regard to the same are lying subjudice for decades in different courts. Even a major portion of the ceiling surplus land and Bhoodan land distributed on paper among the poor are actually in the physical possession on landlords and builders. Lack of records in different kissam (category) land and due to lack of necessary records in Bhoodan, large area of land encroached by the government in coastal Odisha. many families received passbook, K form, Bhoodan gift papers, pattas. However, they do not have actual ownership or rights over land. The ‘Vasundhara’ and ‘Mo jami Mo diha’ schemes enacted by the state Govt. has failed to provide minimum land to the poor.4

This issue is not only due to non-implementation of the law and policies but there are other socio-economic and political factor responsible for existence of this problem. The issue has contributed to caste oppression and conflict. The rural economy of coastal Odisha is seriously affected because of this issue. The issue is very peculiar in nature. There are several policy frameworks, implementing mechanism, peoples demand and states recognition to the issue. There are also adequate lands with the govt. for settling the same in favour of the landless and marginalised farmers. However, in spite of all such circumstances the settlement of land and physical possession of it largely remained an unfinished agenda.

In most of the occasions caste plays the prominent role in denial of land rights to the marginalized communities. The upper caste people try to evict the Dalits and backwards from their possessed land by force and oppression. That creates mass resistance and conflicts in the rural Odisha. This resistance not only tries to combat the upper caste repression and atrocities but also challenges the faulty policy provisions and inadequate legal options. In all cases the conflicts arising out of such situation, resistance emerges in the form of civil and democratic rights of the marginalized people. Marginalised and landless farmers are not protected simply by using the constitution in letter and spirit.

The crux of the above issues is that the marginalized sections are residing over the land from generations but their legal rights as per the revenue record is not been settled in their favour in spite of the span of decades. More surprisingly there are several laws which speak for allotment, distribution and permanent settlement of land in favor of these sections, like Orissa Estate Abolition Act, Orissa Land Reforms Act Orissa Govt. Land settlement Act, Orissa Prevention of Land Encroachment Act, Orissa Survey & Settlement Act are there. The state Govt has also come up with schemes like Basundhara Yojana and Mo Jami Mo Diha Yojana. But in spite of all such legislations the achievement is very miserable and minimal. This has created a space for public reaction and movements in the state which sometimes end at conflict among the groups.

Land Issues and Tribal Odisha

The traditional land use patterns of the Adivasi communities was ignored by the State (both colonial and post colonial period) which settled a large area of customarily claimed land as State-owned land. Thus in the Scheduled Areas, an average of 74 per cent of the land is categorised as vested land, of which 48 per cent is forest land and 26 per cent is non-forest barren land. Three-fourths of all land in the tribal-dominated districts belongs to the State, though most
of the tribals in these areas are either landless or marginal landowners eking out a predominantly subsistence agriculture-based livelihood. The Forest Enquiry Committee Report of 1959 mentioned that 12,000 sq miles (almost 30,720 sq km) of land in Odisha were under shifting cultivation. Very little of the vast area was settled with the tribals. The land was settled either as forest land or as Government revenue land. Thus paradoxically, even though three-fourths of the land in tribal districts belongs to the Government, most tribals remain landless or marginal landowners. In practice, much of the customary owned land is still under cultivation of the tribals, and is treated by the State as encroached. The fact that much of the land customarily cultivated by the Adivasis has not been settled with them has had major implications for their livelihoods. Combined with ineffectiveness of laws to prevent transfer of tribal patta land to non-tribals, this has led to loss of access to land and criminalisation of customary landownership systems. At the same time, the State Government has found it very easy to divert customary tribal lands for development and conservation projects as legally, most of the land is vested.

Ever since independence, various land reforms initiatives were taken to abolish intermediary interests so as to ensure direct relationship of ryots (farmer) with the State. The Odisha Estates Abolition Act 1952, the Odisha Tenant Reforms Act 1955, the Odisha Land Reforms Act 1960, Odisha Transfer of Immovable Property Regulation 2 of 1956 (amended in 2002) are some of the important steps taken to safeguard interests of the landless poor. The Odisha Transfer of Immovable Property Regulation Act 2 of 1956 was further amended in 2002 and rules were made more stringent to check large scale alienation of tribal land in scheduled areas. The regulation prohibits transfer of immovable properties belonging to members of Scheduled Tribes in favour of persons not belonging to that category. This regulation provides for penal action in respect of illegal transfer as well as unauthorised transfer. In spite of all these provisions, illegal transfer and sale of land is a regular affair in tribal areas.

**Development induced Displacement**

The most marginalized people of the state were compelled to sacrifice their land, resource, livelihood, climate and heritage and culture with the plea of larger interest, at the cost of which they have got nothing but more impoverishment, deprivation, unemployment, starvation and cultural loss and many others. The National Planning Commission estimates that some 50 million people have been displaced since 1950 on account of various development projects, of which more that 40 percent are tribals. An estimate of displacement by development projects is that of 1.5 million people were displaced between 1951 and 1995, of which 42 per cent were tribals. As per this estimate, less than 25 per cent of the displaced tribals were never resettled even partially.

The major dams taken up in the schedule area are Machkund, Salandi, Balimela, Upper Kollab, Indravati, Mandira etc. the major industrial projects taken up in the state are Rourkella steel plant, Alumina Refinery at Damanjodi, HAL Sunabeda. Large number of industrial projects under implementation is UAIL in Kashipur, and Vedanta in Lanjiga. Jawaharlal Nehru laid foundation of the Hirakud dam in northwest Odisha during 1950s, calling dams the ‘temples of modern India’. About 200 workers lost their lives during construction. Over 1,000,000 people displaced for that dam. Most of them are not compensated till date. They remain city dwellers, rickshaw driver and started staying in slums. In Upper Indrabati project several hundred people were killed in accident on 28th July 1991. An estimated 50,000 people (mainly Adivasis of the Jhoria, kond and pengo tribes) were displaced because of this project during the 1990s and most striking fact is that even the electricity promised to their village has never been given.

The government of Odisha did not have any rehabilitation policy for a long time. Due to the lack of a basic framework for rehabilitation, the ousted especially during the period from 1950 to 1970 have suffered a lot and a number of them have perished in the changed condition of post displacement. “It was found in 1988 that even after 32 years of filling of Hirakud reservoir compensation amounting to Rs. 15 crore rupees were to be paid to 9,913 claimants who lost their
lands. A number of cases are yet to be disposed even after 60 year of its existence. In the case of Machhakund Hydro-electric project, no rehabilitation provisions were made for 300 displaced Scheduled Caste families. Only 450 families, which are 30% of the total tribal families displaced belonging to Scheduled tribes, were rehabilitated. Similarly the Rourkela project (steel plant) rehabilitated 53.6% of its total number of displaced families. There was no clear-cut principle under which the land was allotted to each family for the purpose of rehabilitation. Same situation consist in Bastar, Chhattisgarh, 600 tribal village have been raped and killed and 200.00 tribal people have become refugees. Since many Maoists are also adivasi, the same situation sustain in Odisha Malkanagiri, Koraput, Kendhmal and Sundargarh.

Industrialization has already displaced and estimated 60 million of India's villagers within the last 60 years, 3 million in Odisha alone, around 75% of whom are adivasis and Dalits. All are all most loss their land, livelihood, cultural values, customs and traditions. Tribals are pushed in to unemployment, debt bondage and hunger due to loss of access to traditional sources of livelihood, land, forests, river, pastures, cattle etc. Some 30,000 of the 1,50,000 construction workers of the Asiad facilities in 1982 were bonded labourers from Odisha and Chhattisgarh brought to Delhi by labour contractors with the promise of offering a job in Baghdad. They had been displaced by the Hirakud dam and other projects. The operational leases in Odisha is about 60,000 hectares, covering districts like Keonjhar, Sundargarh, Jajpur, Dhenkanal, Mayurbhanj, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur where about 335 working mines. NALCO built to units in Odisha in the mid-1990s, one of them in the tribal majority Koraput district, and the other in the high caste dominated Anugul. The 58% of all land acquired in the former was Common Property Resources, against only 18% in the latter. For the little private land they owned, the displaced persons of Koraput received a compensation of Rs.2,700 per acre, while those of Anugul received Rs.25,000 per acre.

Although land acquisition is the main reason for conflict, there are other reasons like inadequate rehabilitation and resettlement measures and perceived state protection of the interests of the companies and industries. In 1994, ICSSR studied that 21.3 million people had been displaced between 1951 and 1990. A disproportionate percentage of the displaced were tribals and Dalits. An estimate of displacement by development projects is that 1.5 million people being displaced by the development projects between 1951 to 1995, of which 42% were tribals. As per this estimate, less than 25% of the displaced tribals were ever resettled, even partially. Except for few irrigation projects, development projects have not provided land as compensation, often cash compensation was provided. A study reveals that landlessness of the displaced people increased from 15.6% to 58.8% after displacement. More important issue is that since large number of area of land cultivated by scheduled tribes from the time of their fore fathers, are not settled in their names, they were not received compensation. So the experiences on rehabilitation are bitter.

In tribal Odisha land question includes development induced displacement, illegal land alienation and land transfer, cash cropping, commercial crops, establishment of SEZ, encroachment of village commons. The ownership of land in tribal areas has remained a complex issue for decades. The tribals are not benefited from land distribution reasons-there are three basic problems that beneficiaries face in ceiling surplus and wasteland distribution cases, (a) lack of actual physical possession by the beneficiary (b) no records (patta-ownership) with the beneficiary (c) poor land quality making it almost impossible to cultivate. The poor and landless tribals have not been able to benefit much from the ceiling surplus land that has been transferred to them under various schemes. The large numbers of families have not got patta. The beneficiaries remained ignorant about official procedures and hesitated to discuss the matter with the concerned Revenue Inspector. Financial condition does not allow them to probe the matter in depth. In many villages land remained unproductive or uncultivable. There are so many problems in tribal districts like accumulation of land in the hands of few, illegal possession of
land by the elite, passing off irrigated land as unirrigated land in land records, use of agriculture land for commercial purposes and other related issues. The mortgage and sale of patta land is the most common form of land alienation, especially in the Scheduled Areas. The normal procedure is mortgage and sale without any valid document causing alienation of patta land. Viega's study in four districts of Odisha found that Scheduled Tribes had lost almost 56% of their private land, out of which 40% was lost through debts and mortgages and the rest 16% through personal sales.

Response of State on the question of landlessness
Response in Costal area

As stated above, non-settlement of land in favour of the marginalised communities in the costal districts of Odisha has been a long term issue. It is a fact that the state govt has been enacting legislations and taken up policies and schemes for providing land to the landless. But the same is not been acted upon in the field to the minimum level. Lakhs and lakhs of families of marginalised sections of the family still renders landless on record though they have been possessing land from their predecessors. The schemes and legislations have remained ineffective due to lack of sufficient political willingness. The implementing agencies and revenue authorities who have been entrusted the implementation of the schemes have deliberately failed and neglected to allot or settle the land in favour of the landless families. The representations of the people have been slept over. Surprisingly, there is no effective review mechanism to critically evaluate the implementation of the schemes by the Govt. The callous and mischievous officials and authorities are not made accountable. Due to the aforesaid reasons the settlement of land in favour of the landless has remained as a slogan in the costal districts of Odisha.

Response in tribal area

The motto of democracy lies on the opinion of the people. In a democratic state the voice of the people are given at most priority. In the development project areas in the state the sense of democracy is undermined. In the plea of larger public interest the scheduled tribes are forcefully evicted from their land and livelihood. The previous bitter experiences which have led them to destitution and destruction of their livelihood and culture have caused strong resistance to the so called development projects. But these democratic peaceful resistances have been facing serious brutal repression by the police and administration. Even so many were sought dead while begging for their right over land and livelihood. Innocent tribals in hundred numbers are booked and languishing in jail because of false cases. Even evidences are there where the resisting tribals are named as Maoists and encountered or criminally prosecuted. The Kalingnagar, Kashipur, Lanjigarh, paradip, POSCO in Jagattasingpur district are so many examples clarify the violence of corporate world. The police firing on tribal protesters against Tata's planned steel plant at Kalingnagar that killed 14 and wounded about 60 people (January, 2006), have clear roots in this colonial model. When one hears members of Odisha's elite and middle class justifying such use of force to 'teach them lesson', this brings back painful memories of the widespread support which General Dyer enjoyed among the British for his 'decisive action' at Amritsar. In 2007 Swarni Laxmananda Saraswatii incident was one of brutal incident in Odisha history. Since Aug-2008 the Odisha govt. has announced that the 'Salwa Judum' experiment in south Chhattisgarh is to be tried in five districts of Odisha particularly affected by maoist violence- Kandhamal, Gajapati, Rayagada, Koraput and Malkanagiri. Once Medha Patkar said that- 'it is not land acquisition is the chief issue, the main issue is of planning and development. Anything and everything are being called a project in the 'public interest. What could be worse when even the govt. statistic, in the economic survey of India, estimates that more than 60 lakh hectares has been taken in the last 15 years and hardly any among the poor has been benefited out of this development. It so happens the rural and urban poor and not the elites of the country have to sacrifice always for such development. And this is leading to a scenario of structural violence of the state against violence of the people. (Maharashtra, 2011)
The concept of Gram Sabha has remained dormant even the PESA Act is there. No Gram Sabha is done and even if it is done the wishes of the people are not noted. The Forest Rights Act has become ineffective due to lack of political willingness and administrative callousness. Hence democracy has failed in these areas. The hierarchies of power in the law, courts, police and administration were all put in place in British times. The structure of power and authority which British rule imposed over tribal peoples are still in place overall, the present situation in tribal India has aptly been called ‘Internal Colonialism’ or ‘state-sponsored terrorism’. State ownership of property leads to concentration of economic and political power in the hands of a small bureaucracy which has the monopoly of violence and hence is an antithesis of trusteeship.

Impact of landlessness on livelihood in Odisha

Land and livelihood are two sides of same coin for majority of Indians. As most of the Indian depends on agriculture for their food grains and as their source of income, land is a basic component for the livelihood for them. It may be tribal, Dalits, backward castes or any sections of the society land is the most essential factor which modules their standard of life and livelihood. Landlessness of people makes their livelihood fragile and insecure. Landlessness creates poverty, migration, farmer suicide, starvation, joblessness, homelessness, marginalisation, unemployment and food insecurity. Traditional livelihood system, survival and traditional shifting cultivation in tribals also destroyed. Land is a source of employment and livelihood to the farmer. In reality, in most cases the land does not give him a very high quality of life, but it helps in to eke out a living and be somewhat ‘food assured’. This is the income function of land.

Further, land is also "something" he can fall back on, even though it may not be anything much. This is the insurance function of land. Ownership of land does not make him "jobless", the way a person can be jobless in the urban areas in the industrial system (under the dominant capitalist system). Not only is he not "jobless", but he also has some assured capital. Thus, shifting from his land means shifting to an entirely new kind of existence inflicted with uncertainties and risks. So landlessness has a major impact on the livelihood of a major population in India. Landlessness leaves a greater impact on the life and livelihood of people in their different aspects of life. Some of them are briefly analysed below.

Exploitation & grabbing production: due to landlessness people works in the land of the landlords as share croppers. The system of share cropping is nothing but based on exploitation of production of the poor cultivator. The landless cultivators, engages his whole family for farming throughout the year, invests on the cultivation of his own, by taking loan. But at the time of harvesting the landlord takes a major share in the production without just doing anything. For such reason the poor cultivator takes the burden of loan every year and suffers from serious financial deficit.

Exploitation of Labour: Landlessness paves the way for exploitation of labour. The poor landless people has no other option than to work as the agrarian labour or any other manual labour under the landlord or the employer. In the both the cases the poor man labourer is forced to work in very lower wage. In most of the cases the wage is even much less than the prescribed minimum wage. They landlord or the employer decides the wage for the work and the poor worker lacks the power to bargain.

Low Production: Landlessness also causes low rate of production. Landless people always work or cultivate the land of landlords. Due to lack of ownership, the cultivator of the land loses his interest in such cultivation and keeps on the same only because he has no other alternative. Due to lack of ownership the cultivator becomes deprived of the benefits of different schemes and subsidies and financial assistance like agricultural loan, which also seriously affects on the production of the land. Due to lack institutional financial assistance to the landless persons who
only cultivates others land, they are unable to invest properly in cultivation which also adversely affects the production rate.

**Migration**: Landlessness or forceful displacement is the most vital reason for migration of people. Landlessness, displacement, lack of minimum support price of agricultural productions, lack of security of farming, insufficient assistance schemes have boosted the issue of migration by which people have migrated to other states in search of livelihood.

Apart from such direct issues there are also certain other factors of landlessness which affects the livelihood of the people substantially.

**Landlessness**: India being a farm dominated society with agriculture as the main occupation, non-settlement of possessed land or displacement from land, removes the main foundation on which people's productive systems, commercial activities and livelihood are based. Unless this foundation is reconstructed elsewhere or replaced by steady income-generating employment, landlessness sets in and the affected families are impoverished. In most of the cases/projects, land for land, norm could not be followed. But cash compensation is inadequate to make up for the loss of land. This aspect needs to be seriously considered the implementing agencies in general and the policy makers formulating strategies for the impacted people of development projects at government level:

**Joblessness**: in both cases of non-settlement and displacement when people are displaced from their habitat, they lose their means of livelihood. Creation of new jobs or alternative sources of income for them becomes very difficult since the oustees do not posses any skill to learn new methods of earning their livelihood. Hence those who were owners of the means of production before displacement have now become daily wage earners.

**Homelessness**: Whether in case of non-settlement of land or by displacement the affected people are always prone to homelessness. Due to non-settlement of land in the costal villages, some times the marginalised sections depend on the mercy of the upper caste villagers to stay on the land by building house. And in case of any conflict, they are forced to vacate and neither the administration nor the legislations come to their rescue. In case of displacement in tribal areas loss of house and shelter may be only temporary during the transition period for most of the displaced. But for some, homelessness remains a permanent feature. There are several examples where the evicted people are provided with only land without home. There are also many instances where the marginalised sections are evicted or displaced several times for different reasons or different projects.

**Food Insecurity**: landlessness or displacement increases the risk of chronic food insecurity. In India, crops are grown to provide food to the family while vegetables are grown in the kitchen gardens that take care of the food needs of the family. Surplus is also sold in the market. But forced displacements deprive the oustees from their former resource of livelihood rendering them landless.

**Conflicts between groups**: prolonged failure in settlement of land in favour of the landless Dalits, tribals and backward castes some times creates conflicts between groups. In Odisha, it has been a regular event that the Dalits, Adivasis and backward castes are forcefully ousted from their long possessed land by the upper castes. When the Dalits resist the same there emerges a caste conflict between them. There are several incidents of murder, loot and house burning and so many other heinous crimes against the marginalised communities by the dominant caste. There are other events where the Dalits and backward castes who provide customary service to the villagers traditionally have been given govt. Land by the villagers to which they have been using as their homestead and cultivation from generations as per implied condition of the villagers. In lieu of that the said Dalit and backward caste people have been providing traditional service to the upper caste villagers like, barbers, washer man, carpenter, worshiper, etc. These families have been
forced to provide such service in lieu of the enjoyment of such land. Though the said families have been in possession of the said land for generations, no steps have been taken by the revenue authorities to regularise them and record the same land in their name, even if enormous legislation, schemes and policies are there. As the ownership of such communities are not confirmed by recording the record of rights, their possession remains fragile subject to the whims and fancies to the upper caste villagers. Very interesting to note that there are several incidents where the said Dalits and backward castes do not get any benefit of the welfare schemes like housing, crop damage compensation, relief for accidents like fire and flood, etc. Due to lack of ownership on record the marginalised communities are also facing hurdles to take the benefit of law and judiciary. So landlessness arising out of non settlement of possessed land in favour of these Dalits, tribals and backward castes, has caused serious caste conflict. If the land would have been settled in the name of them, they would not be subjected to forceful eviction by the dominant caste people.

**Relevance of Gandhian alternative**

It is a fact that Gandhi has not stated extensively on land rights. The only theory he has adopted was the theory of ‘trusteeship’. But the issue of landlessness or land rights and its impact on the livelihood of common people can be analysed from theangel of Gandhian outlook. It is true that Gandhi has not accepted the Marxian theory of land rights through class struggle. But as like Marx he had always opposed the system of Zamidari in other words accumulation of wealth or capital in the hands of few. The only difference is, when Marx noted class struggle as inevitable, Gandhi stated the peaceful and non-violent way of ‘Trusteeship’. Gandhi wanted to seek a solution to the conflict between Zamindars and Kisans in a non-violent way by means of converting the oppressor and being just and fair to the oppressed. It was in this context that the concept of trusteeship was developed, as an alternative to class conflict. Trusteeship would eliminate all possibilities of class conflict and lead to the establishment of co-operation and harmonious relations between the conflicting classes. As per Gandhi all public property is meant for all people—rich or poor. Capitalists, being trustees, would take care of not only themselves but also of others. The workers would treat the capitalists as their benefactors and would keep faith in them. In this way there would be mutual trust and confidence with the help of which the remarkable ideal of economic equality could be achieved. But in Champaran movement (1916) and Bardoli struggle (1928), the concept of trusteeship was not applied. By 1936, Gandhi began to realise that the concept of trusteeship was ineffective in practice.

While dealing with the issue of landlessness in the present context, one should not confine the analysis within the theory of ‘trusteeship’ adopted by Gandhi in the pre-independence period. The theory of trusteeship has got so many critiques from different corners, but it is true that Gandhi had tried to take both the Zamindars and peasants united in the freedom struggle against the British rule which may be relevant in that particular time when the struggle for independence was organised during a crucial period. He tried to ensure the unity of all classes and interests in the national struggle including the Zamindars who were an important influence in it.

The theory of ‘trusteeship’ may not be completely relevant in the present context to address the issue of landlessness and practicing livelihood. But the other ancillary ideas of Gandhi, namely decentralised and self sufficient village economy, swaraj, sarvodaya, small scale industry, etc are so many other ideas of Gandhi which are still having strong relevance to analyse the issues of landlessness in the present time.

Gandhi looked for a way out in the direction of regenerating Indian village communities, which according to him, were from olden times based on the twin pillars of small-scale agriculture and cottage industries and which involved the minimum use of machinery and the maximum employment of human labour. These views which Gandhi held had not only an economic, moral and ethical basis, he tried also to buttress them with the force of economic logic. What Gandhi
argued with great emphasis was that industrialisation on western lines was not likely to provide a satisfactory solution to the problem of mass poverty, mass idleness and unemployment in India. The Gandhian solutions may seem to be unreal and outdated, but the problems which Gandhi raised were real and compelling. On the other two important problems of the agrarian economy relating to the revenue system and landlord-tenant relations, the Gandhian period was characterised by new developments.

Gandhi has always given importance to maximum social welfare and for this he has stressed on the welfare of the individuals. As per him such objective can be achieved by reducing inequalities in income and wealth distribution that prevails between the citizens of a country. According to Gandhi in a society based on welfare and equity, every person should be provided with bare minimum necessities i.e. food, shelter, and clothing. His thoughts always opposed the concentration of wealth to a few groups of people. He states such accumulation certainly will shatter the dream of a society which will be socialist in nature. Gandhian ideology has always preferred self-sufficient village economy where the villages will be the independent economic units. Gandhi has given importance on agriculture but has propagated such farming where people friendly techniques will be adopted, which will not deplete the soil and pollute the environment. Eco-friendly production technique to be adopted and practiced by the farmers was the Gandhian idea of agriculture. He preferred small and minor irrigation instead of large hydro-electric projects, since the latter one gives birth to exploitation. He strongly held his ideal that India lives in villages. So naturally the development of the country depends on the development of villages itself. All the goods and services necessary for the village members should be produced in the village itself. Moreover, every village should be a self-contained republic. If every village distributes its surplus produce to the poor villagers then there will not be the problem of poverty and starvation in the rural areas. Only this can help eradicating poverty and thus people can be happy and self-reliant. As the alternative to the massive industrialisation Gandhi gives stress on the growth of the rural industries like khadi, handlooms, sericulture and handicrafts. He opines that large-scale industries make people lazy and help concentration of wealth in the hands of few. On the contrary, rural industries are based on family labour and also require less amount of capital. Raw materials are also collected from local markets and the goods thus produced are sold in the local markets. Therefore there is no problem of production and market. Large scale production creates conflicts between labour and capital. Here capital takes upper hand over labour. Such conflicts may not occur in the case of rural industries. Rural industries are the symbols of unity and equality. In India large-scale industries have been concentrated in a few big cities like Mumbai, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Jamshedpur etc. Some of the rural areas are still without industrial practices. Concentration of these industries in few cities has given birth to a number of problems. The major problem is the problem of overpopulation in the industrialized areas. With this there arises pollution in the air and water. In addition, large-scale industries promoted monopolistic trends and unequal distribution of income. Rural industries, on the other hand, help decentralization of economic activities and a large proportion of income generated in these industries gets distributed among the workers and among a very large number of people. Gandhi is not in favour of large-scale industries in the sense that these industries are not related to a vast population living in rural areas. Thus industrialization, according to Gandhi, does not help the growth of the personality; contrarily it helps only the material progress of a few numbers of individuals. Our handicrafts were destroyed by the use of machinery during the English rule. Machinery, being capital-intensive, displaces labour and naturally augments employment and under-employment. Machinery creates a Pareto optimum situation in the sense that it improves the economic conditions of a few at the cost of many unfortunate rural people leaving them unemployed and exploited. Therefore it is a situation of two-person zero sum game. But what is disappointing is that it reduces welfare of a large section of rural population.
In respect of the ownership of land holding, Gandhi has always opposed the zamindari system and has propagated that ownership of land should go to the actual tillers of the soil. He has strongly supported the communal ownership of land by the village people for balanced cultivation. As per him if there is any surplus land it must be distributed to the rest of the village communities. So it is quite clear that Gandhian philosophy supports and strengthens to ensure land rights to the common man and has suggested different means of use of the said land by the common villagers to secure a sustainable economic development and healthy atmosphere. May it be the farming, or cottage industry, or small scale industry, land is the basic requirement. When heavy industry snatch land from common people, Gandhian model of industrialization speaks for small scale cottage industry by the common man of the country by utilizing his land. To implement such model of Gandhi land to all is a basis requirement. Hence distribution of land to landless people and ensuring their livelihood through Gandhian model of farming or small scale/cottage industry still keeps its relevance in the present times as an alternative to the so-called heavy industrialisation and corporate farming and also to the system of Zamidari.

Conclusion:

When we look towards an alternative solution, there should be a need for transformation of traditional, stereotype bureaucratic and trickle down approach to people oriented approach. Fixation of accountability of authorities, adequate legal provision, political mission, administrative broadness and involvement of social groups and awareness can boost the process. Transformation from administrative system to a self-governing system is not possible without a long, sincere and systematic social (political & economic) mobilisation.

Present ecological crisis demands a change in modern life style, reduction of consumerism and capitalistic outlook. The concept of environmental conservation, sustainability and survival are inherent in ideology of Gandhi. Gandhi, being a practical man, a clear visionary and having an outlook for future problems visualised his approach as a political practical outlook struggling for injustice and exploitation of downtrodden man. His all concepts swadeshi, swaraj, sarvoday, satyagraha all are interrelated to each other and focused toward a better life and better peaceful world. Gandhi’s path of development, ecological protest movements, environmental laws and education change in the mental attitude of exploitation are needed to protect the environment (land, forest and water).

The non-violent struggle and reconstruction (sangharsh aur nirman) are the need of the day. Satyagraha (“truth-force” or “soulforce”), Gandhi’s technique of non-violent and passive resistance, has emerged as a useful weapon in the contemporary struggles against displacement and dispossession, rights for landless people. By this way Gandhi explored the possibility of building up a power force, non-authoritarian, non-exploitative society by changing the present set-up and establishing peaceful world through ensuring the rights of the last person of society.

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