

THE DAY OF DAWN

Tribal Leadership
Programme, 2019

94 Participants
53 Tribes
21 States



Samvaad - A Tribal Conclave

Organised by Tata Steel

Photographed by Mritunjay Kumar

© Pipilika Enviro Private Limited and Tata Steel Limited - 2019



If

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream — and not make dreams your master;
If you can think — and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings — nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And — which is more — you'll be a Man, my son!

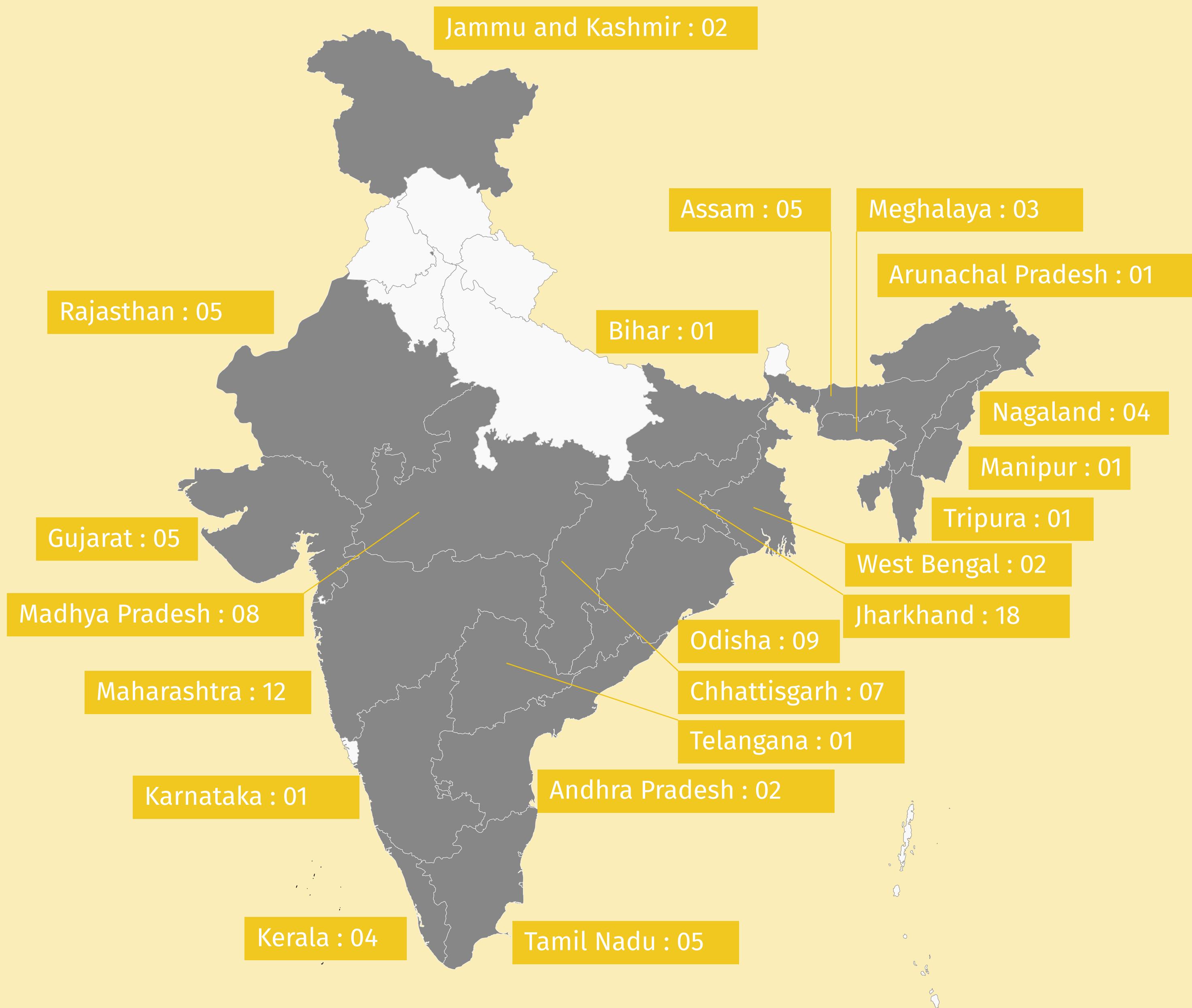
Joseph Rudyard Kipling
English Journalist, Poet and Novelist (1865-1936)



The relentless downpour, the ever-looming clouds cradled within it the apposite poetic metaphor — the promise of an unblemished dawn — as the participants converged for the first stage of the Tribal Leadership Programme (TLP), 2019.

From Kashmir to Kerala, from Arunachal Pradesh to Gujarat, they came crisscrossing the land, from tribal pockets of the country where development is socially indifferent, intellectually disregarding and economically extractive.

Feedback collated by us since 2014 from over 5,000 tribal women and men from over 100 tribes map out what could be a new narrative: Creation of a tribe of effective servant leaders, who can articulate the architecture of development, connect it to overall nation-building, at the same time stay true to the indigenous value systems rooted in the principles of sustainability.



Borne out of this need, TLP, a transformational learning experience, has been constructed for tribal Indians who wish to drive change. It enables them to:

- Harness the power of positive disruption
- Employ the power of self-reflection
- Cross-learn perspectives on conflict-resolution, policy and law
- Cross-pollinate innovation-driven political, social and economic development models that are rooted in grassroots experience
- Develop decision-making, mobilisation and advocacy skills
- And, by 2030, co-create a honeycomb of collaborative leadership, a social network of 1,500 tribal leaders.

As part of the fellowship, they are makers of the new development discourse, leaders of the new world.

Hear the voices of a cross-section of TLP 2019 candidates to judge for yourself the potential of this cohort.

Deepika M. R.

Kani Tribe, Kerala

Chairperson of Kudumbashree, Kuttichil Panchayat
Secretary, Kani Tribal Welfare Trust

2010. I fell in love, got married, and moved from Trivandrum city to the tiny village of Kottur. The transition was hard; I battled depression. However, it is in and around these forest villages that I rediscovered my tribalism and my larger purpose in life. I began to trek into the poor, backward Kani settlements as a volunteer. I connected them to government schemes. I promoted education. I created a night school.

Now, working with the world's largest women's empowerment programme, Kudumbashree, I activate Self-Help Groups. I have dedicated myself to empowerment of the disempowered.





Huraib Maqbool Lone

Dard Shin Tribe, Jammu and Kashmir
Social Activist

My mountain home, Gurez, is cut off from the civilisation for six months during winters. Even otherwise, it is so poorly connected that pregnant women and patients die in transit. Growing up in this landscape of poverty and hardships, a few years ago, I decided to take action. I created a tourism website for our region, which attracted tourists, and forced the government to provide year-round aerial connectivity.

For us to economically and socially prosper, we have to be better connected with the rest of India. We are advocating that the Gurez-Bandipur Tunnel be built.

Advocate Anil Narve

Bhil Tribe, Madhya Pradesh

Lawyer and Social Activist

I am the only tribal in the Dhar region who has a law degree, a position that has given me a valuable bird's-eye view. Our men have to pay women dowry at the time of marriage. It might appear to empower women; it does not. It has trapped almost every family in a vicious debt cycle that has forced members to migrate as labourers; the children remain unschooled and their lives, scattered.

I am dedicated to creating more lawyers and professionals in the community. This young blood will edge out outdated customs and help us improve our lives and livelihoods.



Asahrii Clement K.

Poumai Naga Tribe, Manipur

Core Team Member, Eco Guardian

General Secretary, Naga Students' Union, Chennai

As student of social entrepreneurship and social innovation in Chennai, I have become aware of the barriers and discrimination students and workers of North East India face in our metros. We help them with admissions and recruitments, documentations and legal counsel.

I strive to become a facilitator for young adults in the tense North East. I want to extend to them structured emotional and social support so that they can unlock their potential as leaders, not of tomorrow, but of today.





Nitesh (Name Changed)

Kolhati Tribe, Maharashtra
Engineer and School Teacher

I come from a poor, nomadic tribe where women are forced to become 'dancers'. The dance is just a front; young girls are sold to the highest bidder and suffer years of physical and mental abuse. They have no status, access to law or social security. The children grow up even more disempowered.

I want to permanently disable this vicious cycle. I help the dancers and their children obtain relevant documentation so that they can access education, healthcare and alternate livelihoods.

Bumbadiya Vinod Kumar

Bhil Tribe, Rajasthan

Editor, Kotda Times

We tribals suffer in our corners in silence — our concerns unarticulated, our voices unheard. So, I have become an activist-journalist. I run an online news portal that campaigns against social injustices, extensively covers development discourses, and even helps the law bring to justice victims of extrajudicial kangaroo courts.

It is important for any dispossessed community to have its own voice because no one else speaks for them. I aim to connect all tribal news platforms in India to create a unified front.



Navali Kumari Garasiya

Garasia Tribe, Rajasthan

Block Coordinator, Jan Chetna Sansthan

Poverty forced me to give up on college education, but I was already active in public life. I was in high school when I was elected as a representative of the village ward. Later, I became the village head. As an activist, I vociferously campaign for education; I fight child marriage, domestic violence, kangaroo courts and witchhunt. In 2015, I was chosen to represent India at the Hunger Project in Australia.

I dream of a day that every child goes to school; nobody should be left behind because of lack of resources.



Narendrakumar Chaudhri

Chaudhari Tribe, Gujarat
Sarpanch, Kachhal Village

My father was the village headman. Now I am. I have always wanted a life in public office. Taking sanitation as a focus area, I have been able to lead my village to achieve 100 per cent hand hygiene. We have also connected every toilet with water tanks to make the village open-defecation free.

There is joy in being able to bring about small changes, but the larger challenge is the protection of tribal rights. I want to serve as a legislator so that my people are justly represented.



Sundaram Thennarassu

Irula Tribe, Tamil Nadu
Engineer, Social Activist

I had chosen my profession; I had begun to work as an engineer. However, that was not my destiny. Seeing the plight of the bonded labourers and sex workers in our community, I had to return to my roots. I joined my father's organisation, the Sudarolli Trust, which rescues and rehabilitates people caught in inhuman practices.

I help my people apply for community certificates, which secures their land and livelihoods rights and protects them from exploitation. I also work to build greater political awareness because knowledge will truly set people free.





Leeladhar T.

Chenchu Tribe, Telangana
Conservationist

We are a nomadic tribe living in the Nallamalla forests spread across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Our Nature is our reason to live. I did go to the city for a while, but the call of the wild was too strong. I have studied botany and zoology. So, I returned to become a nature guide and wildlife conservationist. I will never leave again.

Everyday, I watch the sunrise and the sunset. Nature is primeval, profoundly beautiful and virgin here. It holds a world within, a world which is now threatened. I will do everything to protect it.



S. Palani

Kattunayakan Tribe, Tamil Nadu
Programme Director, Tribal Foundation
School Teacher

Not all people of my forest tribe are accounted for in the government census. These are people who have had to move to plains, temporarily or permanently, to escape destitution, in search of opportunities. They have fallen off the government's grid and lost their land rights and access to reservations in education, housing, healthcare and jobs.

I have been working to get every last member of our diminishing tribe identity documents. This will not only inform the government census, but will also allow us to mobilise and claim our developmental rights. In time, this process will also reduce forced migration.

Krishna Kumar Bheel

Bhil Tribe, Rajasthan

Project Coordinator, Jatan Sansthan

I work on the issues of Child Education and Menstrual Health among adolescent girls. In large parts of India, we don't talk about menstrual health. It is a taboo subject. As a result, even today, only about 20 per cent of women, have access to sanitary napkins. Even fewer use sustainable products. As a male worker, it was not easy to earn the trust of village women, but I have been able to do it using a mix of conventional and non-conventional techniques like music, dance and art, to get the message across. We also teach them how to make organic sanitary pads.

If we improve health and education standards for women and children, communities and society will change. Health activists alone cannot stand for gender barriers. The community at large have to be part of the solutions.



Hercules Singh Munda

Munda Tribe, Jharkhand

Founder and CEO, Alfred Technologies

Loss of a language does irreparable damage; the identity of an entire people dies. At the same time, there is no point in conserving a language if it is not used by the people. I have designed Trilingo to enable conservation that leads to adoption. The app uses an innovative mix of technologies based on the principles of computational linguistics. We have already digitised Mundari, my mother tongue, and the app is set to launch on August 15, 2019.

We are looking to finance, build a team and market Trilingo. By adding more tribal languages to it, my larger plan is to replace English as the default language in a service like Google Assistant.



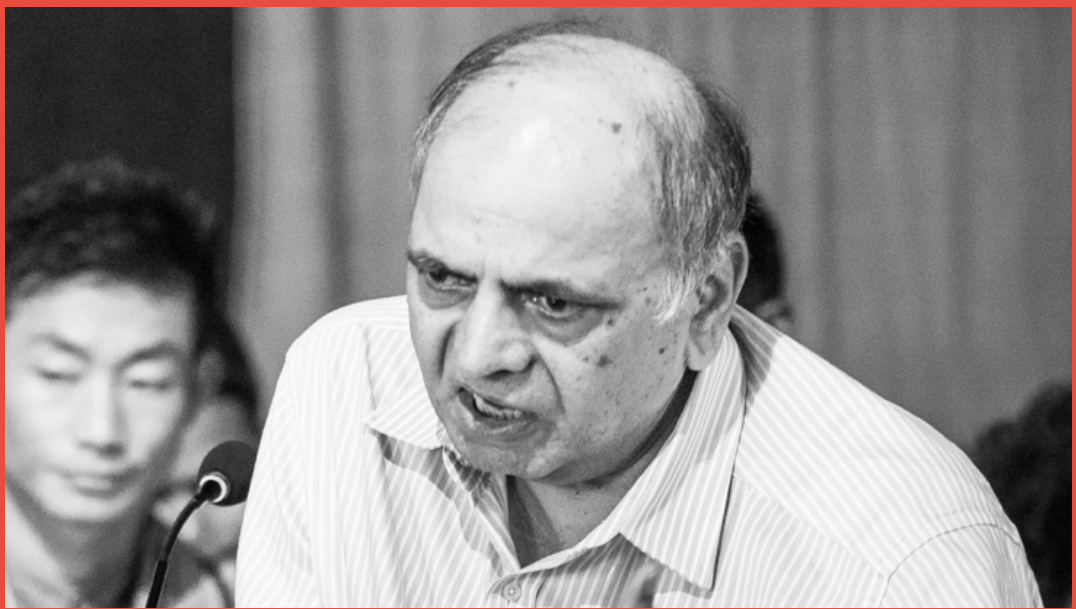


Ritu Pandaram

Gond Tribe, Chhattisgarh
Sarpanch, Sarbahara Village

At the age of 24, driven by the need to bring about social change, I campaigned for myself and was elected head of the village council. The year was 2015 and I had become the youngest Sarpanch in the state of Chhattisgarh. However, I did not want to be limited to a role of decision-making. So, I actively take part in projects related to education, water security, sanitation, housing and healthcare. Recently, we have completed a ₹89 lakh household water supply project for nine thousand people.

I motivate my people to work for the community and not just themselves. I am committed to build an inclusive society, which is aware, educated, resilient and self-sustained.



THE GENOCIDE OF OUR LANGUAGES

Padma Shri Dr. Ganesh Devy
Renowned Linguist and Literary Critic



PERSPECTIVES ON TRIBAL RE-PRESENTATION

Padma Shri Patricia Mukhim
Anti-Mining Activist and Editor, Shillong Times



SOCIAL CAPITAL vs. NATURAL INEQUALITY

Vijay Mahajan
Social Entrepreneur and Founder, Basix



A CASE FOR PUTTING TRIBALS FIRST

Professor Ramaswamy Balasubramaniam
Development Scholar



HOW THE BODOS TURNED TO PEACE

Promod Boro
President, All Bodo Students' Union



THE POWER OF POSITIVE DISRUPTION

Martin Macawan
Rights Activist and Founder, Navsarjan Trust



LET'S BUILD ORGANIC MOVEMENTS

Gagan Sethi
Minority Rights Activist and Founder, Janvikas



KEEP THE PROCESS OF CHANGE CLEAN

Niketu Iralu
Gandhian Social Worker and Peace-builder



HARNESS RTI FOR CHANGE

Shankar Singh
Right to Information Activist



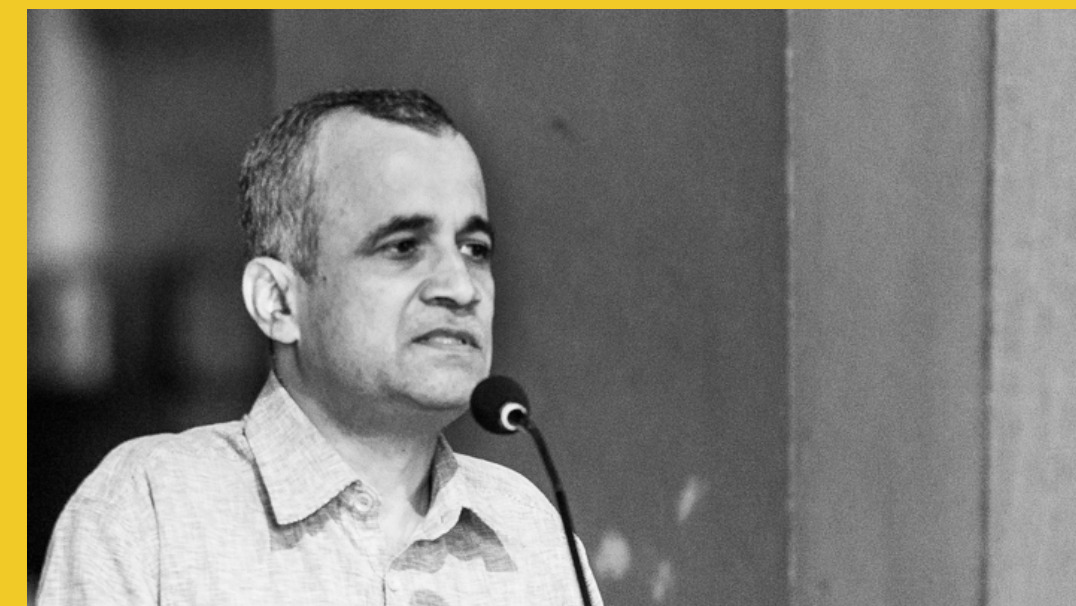
DECIMATE THE STEREOTYPES

Ajmeera Bobby
First Tribal Woman Pilot in India



THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF LAND RIGHTS

Namita Wahi
Fellow, Centre for Policy Research



WIELD THE CONSTITUTION

Subhash Ware
Political and Human Rights Activist

The Constitution is the vanguard of tribal rights, but many of us do not understand it. At the TLP I got the idea to create a film on our cultural, linguistic and land rights that even a child can understand. Information is power; let it be available to all.

Bikram Biruli

Ho Tribe, Odisha
Cultural Activist and Founder, hosamaj.com

Every share, every story and every session taught me to be strong, inspire and be inspired, understand life from conflicting perspectives, and forgive and ask for forgiveness. These learnings have reshaped my idea of community development.

Chingme Marak

Garo Tribe, Meghalaya
Social Worker

I write to represent my community, but after attending the TLP I have decided to delve into political and social activism. The TLP has helped me find pride in my identity. It has inspired and informed me.

Jaincy John

Malayariya Tribe, Kerala
PhD Scholar and Writer

At the TLP I understood that we are not unique in our struggles, hence we must be connected with the larger fight. I have brought back for my community the learning that we cannot live in silos; we have to engage with all of India.

Dharmesh Chaudhari

Chaudhri Tribe, Gujarat
Government Employee and Social Activist

Working as I do in the field of wildlife conservation and preservation of natural resources, it was inspiring to learn at the TLP that a true leader creates more leaders. It is a model that can keep any cause alive and broadens its canvas.

Kotso Medo

Chakhesang Tribe, Nagaland
Member, Change for Change

As a lawyer and activist it is easy to lose focus of the nuances of life. The TLP has taught me how to centre myself and keep my dreams in sight. It has also taught me to persevere like Mother Nature against odds; the world will have to listen to us.

Ripe Bagra

Galo Tribe, Arunachal Pradesh
Lawyer and Activist



Andhra Pradesh

Kranthi Kiran Sodem
Peesam Dulaiah

Arunachal Pradesh

Ripe Bagra

Assam

Debraj Rabha
Dilip Kathar
Janali Rabha
Morin Daimary
Welsing Hanse

Bihar

Manish Kumar

Chhattisgarh

Baldev Ram Mandavi
Gokul Bharti
Kalavati Sahani
Kishan Mandavi
Linga Ram Kodopi
Ramesh Kumar Dhurwe
Ritu Pandram

Gujarat

Dharmesh Chaudhari
Mita Patel
Narendrakumar Kantilal Chaudhri
Pardip Mukeshbhai Dhodia
Vasava Falguni Rameshbhai

Jammu and Kashmir

Huraib Maqbool Lone
Thiles Norboo

Jharkhand

Babulal Goipai
Bhonjo Singh Banra
Bimalchand Asur
Chandra Mohan Chatomba
Dubeshwar Bediya
Dubraj Munda
Hercules Singh Munda
Jitesh Minz
Kiran Khalko
Kishor Lakra
Manoj Oraon
Marwari Birhor
Meera Hembram
Nikita Soy
Shankar Sen Mahali
Sudam Hembram
Sukumar Soren
Vibhanshu Kumar

Karnataka

Bharat Chandra Devaiah K. M.

Kerala

Deepika M. R.
Jaincy John
Sudheesh Kumar V.
Thara P. C.

Madhya Pradesh

Anil Narve
Jagairam Badole
Mahesh Adme
Mohan Kirade
Neman Markam
Pravin Katara
Rahul Pendara
Sumer Singh Badole

Maharashtra

Deepa Samshon Valvi
Jayram S Bhusum
Mahendra Mahadya Lohar
Narayan Shivram Jambekar
Navade Radhe Shyam Vising
Pali Lalsu Mahaka
Prashant M. Kasdekar
Pratiksha D. Shidam
Sandip B. Kove
Shubham Uday Andhare
Sonal N. Pardhi
Virendrakumar Munalal Uikey

Manipur

Asahrii Clement K.

Meghalaya

Chingme Marak
Leba Lamin Dumai
Wandaplang Nongrum

Nagaland

Joshua
Khronyilo Lohe
Kotso Medo
Leyi Sakhamo

Odisha

Bikram Biruli
Deepan Digal
Ghasiram Majhi
Mukesh Kumar Jamuda
Pati Majhi
Pinki Sandil
Pratima Majhi
Raidash Oram
Sarojini Oram

Rajasthan

Bumbadiya Vinod Kumar
Krishna Kumar Bheel
Navali Kumari Garasiya
Pujaram Bhagora
Sarda Devi Garasiya

Tamil Nadu

S. Palani
Sundaram Thennarassu

Telangana

Leeladhar T.

Tripura

Sadagar Kalai

West Bengal

Bablu Ari
Kalyani Mudi

Participants of the
Tribal Leadership
Programme - 2019

Sourav Roy

Chief, Corporate Social Responsibility

Tata Steel Limited

We cannot approach the subject of tribal India from a point of traditional disillusion anymore. Tribalism of tomorrow is very much a part of the India of tomorrow. More so because our tribal communities are the last keepers of sustainability. As we work with the youth leaders today, we see in them national leaders a decade from now.

TLP is not a push towards a specific skill-set or prescriptive learning. It is an exposure based in tribal values. The candidates decide and build on what the manifestation of that value system should be for them, directionally consistent with a bold, new vision.

At the risk of being called a romantic, I believe non-tribals have a lot more to learn from these young voices of change than the other way round. Even after being acutely and systemically marginalised for generations, they are constructively conceptualising a new world order.

Photographed by Mritunjay Kumar

© Pipilika Enviro Private Limited and Tata Steel Limited - 2019

