

Internal Migration

CHALLENGES IN GOVERNANCE
AND INTEGRATION



EDITED BY SHANE JOSHUA BARTER
& WILLIAM ASCHER

Internal Migration: Challenges in Governance and Integration focuses on the challenges associated with internal migration across the developing world. While international migration captures significant attention, less attention has been paid to those migrating within recognized national borders. The sources of internal migration are not fundamentally different from international migration, as migrants may be pushed by violence, disasters, state policies, or various opportunities. Although they do not cross international borders, they may still cross significant internal borders, with cultural differences and perceived state favoritism generating a potential for “sons of the soil” conflicts. As citizens, internal migrants are in theory to be provided legal protection by host states, however this is not always the case, and sometimes their own states represent the cause of their displacement. The chapters in this book explain how international organizations, host states, and host communities may navigate the many challenges associated with internal migration.

Shane Joshua Barter is Associate Professor at Soka University of America, where he serves as Director of the Pacific Basin Research Center. He has written several books and numerous journal articles related to Southeast Asia, armed conflicts, democracy, separatism, and territorial autonomy.

William Ascher is the Donald C. McKenna Professor of Government and Economics at Claremont McKenna College. His research focuses on development policy, natural-resource and environmental policy, political psychology, and international organizations. His predominant geographic foci are Latin America and Southeast Asia.

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and Integration

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PETER LANG
New York • Bern • Berlin
Brussels • Vienna • Oxford • Warsaw

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Barter, Shane Joshua, editor. | Ascher, William, editor.

Title: Internal migration: challenges in governance and integration /
edited by Shane Joshua Barter and William Ascher.

Description: New York: Peter Lang, 2019.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2019018812 | ISBN 978-1-4331-7080-5 (hardback: alk. paper)

ISBN 978-1-4331-7081-2 (ebook pdf) | ISBN 978-1-4331-7082-9 (epub)

ISBN 978-1-4331-7083-6 (mobi)

Subjects: LCSH: Migration, Internal—Developing countries.

Internal Migrants—Developing countries.

Classification: LCC HB1952 .I466 2019 | DDC 304.809172/4—dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2019018812>

DOI 10.3726/b16141

Bibliographic information published by **Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek**.

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the “Deutsche Nationalbibliografie”; detailed bibliographic data are available on the Internet at <http://dnb.d-nb.de/>.

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29 Broadway, 18th floor, New York, NY 10006
www.peterlang.com

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Acknowledgments

This project developed from the Pacific Basin Research Center at Soka University of America. It evolved in partnership with colleagues at the East-West Center, which kindly hosted the authors and other colleagues in a 2017 symposium. The editors would like to thank Soka University of America, the East West Center, and Michael Lofchie for their support. At Soka University of America, Kayo Yoshikawa played an instrumental role in organizing the project, which was enriched by the work of several gifted undergraduate research assistants: Amanda Boralessa, Jaroslav Zapletal, Nikita Sukmono, Vassil Yorgov, Kennah Watts, and Mahesh Kushwaha.



Abbreviations

CSO	Civil Society Organization
GAM	Gerakan Aceh Merdeka; Free Aceh Movement
ICG	International Crisis Group
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IMDRM	Informal Mediation and Dispute Resolution Mechanism
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JRS	Jesuit Refugee Service
LARR	Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation, and Resettlement Bill
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
POC	Protection of Civilian
R&R	Resettlement and Rehabilitation
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
SoS	Sons of the Soil
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
UAO	Unidad de Atención y Orientación para la población en situación de desplazamiento; the Agency of Attention and Orientation for the displaced population
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNMISS	UN Mission in South Sudan



5. *Competing Mobilization of Tribal and Class Identity: Politics of Internal Migration in North India*

RUMELA SEN
Columbia University

In November 2000, the southern part of the Indian state of Bihar was carved out to create the 28th state of the country, named Jharkhand. Although the state derives its name from the tribal¹ separatist movement in the region, tribals comprise only 28 per cent of the state's population. Half of the remaining 72 per cent include backward and other castes settled in the state for centuries, known as "*moolvasis*" (those who have grown roots in the region). The other half of the non-tribal population, about 35 per cent of the state population, was identified as "*diku*" meaning outsiders/exploiters. The region has a long history of grassroots tribal resistance to outsiders going back to the eighteenth century. The Jharkhand identity movement has historically blamed the dikus, comprising the non-tribal working class migrants seeking employment in the mines and factories in the region, as privileged outsiders looting their economy and corrupting their indigenous culture (Munda and Mullick 2003). After Indian independence, economic opportunities in the mines and factories in South Bihar prompted a sudden increase in voluntary non-tribal migration to these tribal dominated areas, which instigated hostilities, that are the focus of this paper.

Yet the historical antagonism between the tribal host community and the non-tribal migrants gave way to a new master cleavage based on class, which united migrant and tribal poor against the rich landlords, mine owners and money lenders. Although the class-based mobilization was short-lived and fraught with many internal divisions, it permanently disrupted the ethnic solidarity of tribals pitted against the non-tribal migrants and enabled the inclu-

sion of migrants into a new detribalized Jharkhand. This chapter shows how a complex interaction of competing mobilizations along crosscutting cleavages of identity and class in the 1970s allowed an emergent rapprochement to replace the hostile antagonism of locals against the migrants.

The tribal areas of South Bihar as well as adjacent plains in Central and North Bihar are also one of the strongest pockets of Maoist insurgency in India. Although there is a growing literature on internal migration and violent conflict (Buhaug and Urdal 2013; Magnus Theisen 2008; Urdal and Hoelscher 2012; Ware 2005; Weiner 1978), this paper does not directly delve into the mechanisms linking migration and the ongoing insurgency in the region. The leftist class mobilization discussed in this chapter includes Maoist mass mobilization in rural areas as well as trade union mobilization by non-Maoist left parties in urban areas. The Maoists eschew electoral politics and aim to overthrow the Indian state through a protracted peoples' war. The trade union leaders contest elections and work within the limits of legality. Despite shared ideological predisposition to class politics, the divide between the Maoists and the trade union leaders were deep and impossible to bridge (Sen and Teitelbaum 2010).

Yet both the left groups, the Maoists in villages and the trade unionists in urban areas, persuasively articulated an alternative class polarization uniting the locals and migrants that challenged emergence of ethnicity as the master cleavage. Electoral politics in India as well as the dynamics of federalism also played an important role in this reframing of a conflict, converting an intransigent identity conflict into a question of inequitable economic opportunities, which was much more amenable to ad hoc redistributive solutions within the federal democracy.

This chapter makes two primary contributions to the literature on internal migration. First, it shows how local politics interact with national politics to encourage the integration of some migrants and not others into host communities. Second, it demonstrates how anti-migrant hostility, rooted in economic anxiety and identity politics, is neither permanent nor inevitable. In fact, anti-migrant hostility is amenable to political solutions within a democracy.

The first section of this chapter sheds light on how drastic demographic changes in the 1950s emboldened xenophobic, anti-migrant politics. As local tribals rallied against migrants (*diku*) as corrupt exploiters, plundering their wealth and women, this phase reinvented a unified tribal identity, vested with integrity, courage, and pride, pitted against the duplicitous non-tribal migrants. The second section shows how communist leaders, mostly nontribal, upper caste gentry from neighboring states, clashed with the xenophobic

prejudices of tribal politics. I argue that the left hijacked anti-migration politics by uniting the local/tribal and migrant/non-tribal proletariats against the capitalist factory owners and managers. This challenged the interchangeable use of “diku” as outsiders and exploiters, creating opportunities for the integration of migrant outsiders into the tribal state project. The third section traces how the two conflicting waves of left and right politics clashed to shape tribal resistance into a political party with a winning electoral strategy that ultimately fulfilled a separate tribal state where tribals became a minority. Thus this chapter illustrates how (a) class politics clashed with and eroded the ethnic movement in Jharkhand and (b) yet how class-based mobilization eventually lost out to identity-based mobilization.

Resistance Against “Diku”: Jharkhand as Tribal Identity Movement

There have been several popular tribal revolts in the hilly and forested regions bordering the Indian states of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa during British colonial rule. Although distinct in terms of location, intensity, spread, duration, and leading tribal group, these uprisings had one thing in common: They were all directed against the outsider/exploiter, referred to as “diku.” In this region of India, the correspondence between the outsider and exploitation goes back to the nineteenth century. Originally “diku” referred to the non-tribal landed upper class and their employees. In post-independence India, “diku” was used to refer to “the people of North Bihar,” “those who came from the other side of the river” and “those who earn their living here and send their earnings to their own homes in Bihar” (Sengupta 1980). Some of the early tribal uprisings in the region were the Khewar uprising among the Santhal tribe in 1871, the Birsa rising among the Munda tribe during 1895–1900, and the Tana Bhagat movement among the Oraons during the first world war. All these movements sought to attain tribal independence through repossession of ancestral lands grabbed by immigrant landlords. Non-tribal landlords and moneylenders introduced land rents, usurped many tribal lands, forced bonded labor on the tribals, and ridiculed tribal customs and festivals. A series of armed tribal uprisings, however, failed to wrest control from these migrant landlords who were recognized as owners of tribal lands. Following the fierce agitation against these land-grabbers under the leadership of Birsa Munda during 1895–1900, the British government ordered a survey and settlement of the country and passed the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act in 1908, to legitimize the Khuntkatti system and enable the tribals of Chotanagpur to clear forest and cultivate the land.

The tribal resistance movement against encroachment by non-tribal outsiders passed through several initial stages of development during colonial rule such as formation of groups seeking to uplift the economic conditions of tribals. Early organizations include *Chotanagpur Unnati Samaj* (Chotanagpur Improvement and Prosperity Society) in 1928, *Kissan Sabha* (Conference of Peasant) in 1935–36, Chotanagpur Catholic Sabha, and *Chotanagpur Adivasi Maha Sabha*. In 1938, it was decided at the annual *Chotanagpur Adivasi Maha Sabha* conference that it would serve as the only political party to highlight the plight of the tribals. The *Adivasi Mahasabha* highlighted their land produces many of India's mineral resources, including 48 per cent of coal, 40 per cent of bauxite, 45 per cent of mica, 100 per cent of kyanite, and 90 per cent of apatite, as well as iron, limestone, soapstone, copper, manganese, and gold. Besides, Chotanagpur has 79 per cent of Bihar's forest area, with Singhbhum alone having Asia's richest sal forest. Under the leadership of Jaipal Singh, an Oxford-educated Christian convert who was elected chairman of the Chotanagpur *Adivasi Maha Sabha* in 1939, the movement gathered momentum.

In the 1950s, the newly independent India had committed itself to a discourse of nation-building that rested on high modernism, heavy industrialization, and development firmly ensconced in the founding principles of federalism, socialism, secularism, and democracy (Corbridge and Harriss 2000). A sudden influx of non-tribal population, owing to government offices being staffed with outsiders, and the almost over-night springing up of many large, medium and small-scale industries caused anxieties among the tribal population. Tribal women became easy targets of migrant workers, harassed and exploited at work and in their villages. Besides massive construction projects, roads and factories displaced a large number of tribals, unemployed due to competition with outsiders and homeless due to improper implementation of government's benefit programs. This created antipathy towards the dikus who harassed and exploited them, which formed the basis of inter-tribal solidarity in the Jharkhand movement. It is noteworthy that during the 1952 general elections, the main slogan of the Jharkhand Party was “*Jharkhand abua daku diku senoa*” (“Jharkhand is ours, the bandit outsiders must go”). During the first general elections of independent India, the Jharkhand Party swept away all the tribal constituencies (32 in total) in Bihar. But the subsequent period witnessed a gradual decline in the popularity of Jaipal Singh and the Jharkhand Party, particularly because it joined hands with the Congress Party in 1963.

On the face of it, the urban and industrial transformation of the mineral rich territories of southern Bihar produced a massive re-apportionment of

economic power in the State of Bihar. Protagonists of a separate Jharkhand State, however, were convinced that these changes had usurped tribal lands and ways of life, and had failed to benefit the tribals. Industrialization advanced at the expense of tribal land rights and the representation of Bihar's tribal communities within mining and manufacturing was disappointingly low. For example, the 1971 Census records that only 2.70% of Chota Nagpur's male tribals and 2.65% of its female tribals were engaged in Mining and Quarrying and in Non-Household Industries. These figures compare with total regional participation rates of 13.8% and 6.6% respectively for men and women. Some commentators have characterized this as "internal colonialism" (Rothermund, Kropp, and Dienemann 1980) and as "economic dualism" (Jones 1978; Minz 1968), which highlights the absence of positive economic linkages between the coal mining industry and its hinterland. It suggests that the development of the Indian coalfield has assumed the form of an "enclave" wherein a dynamic but chaotic urban/industrial sector lives within, and feeds off, a vast sea of rural stagnation.

The origins of this economic dualism were first laid in the colonial period, especially between 1902 and 1908. The urban/rural linkages in Dhanbad continued to be partial and one-sided despite a shift to indigenous ownership since Independence, despite government interference in determining real wages, and despite the increased mechanization and enlargement of markets. According to this model, the success of modern Jharkhandi ethno-regionalism must be seen as but one moment in a one-hundred-and-fifty-year struggle by the tribals of South Bihar to restore their economic, political, and cultural hegemony over a region where they, the original clearers of the land, have progressively been displaced by non-tribal outsiders: the hated dikus of North Bihar and Bengal.

In the 1960s, the Jharkhand movement blamed the Indian state and the dikus for tribal underdevelopment both by safeguarding the power of the non-tribal rural oligarchy and by treating the tribal areas as an "internal colony" (Jones 1978, 9). The "internal colony" thesis maintains that, "the value of the resources extracted from tribal areas greatly outweighs the funds employed by Central and State Governments for tribal welfare and development." There is a substantial net flow of resources from the underdeveloped tribal periphery to the more developed non-tribal urban and lowland agricultural centre (Jones 1978, 5). This account clearly has something in common with the Sons of the Soil thesis (Weiner 1978). Nevertheless, it is distinctive insofar as it specifically blames the non-tribal migrants from the states of Bihar and West Bengal for participating in the neocolonial exploitation of its own tribal population.

A similar thesis has since been developed by a team of academics led by Dieter Rothermund in 1980. Based on research in the Dhanbad coalfield, they advanced a theory of economic dualism and underdevelopment described in terms of three “types of captivity” of tribals by outsiders/migrants. First, Rothermund et al argue that the “agrarian system of ChotaNagpur [exhibited] a prevailing feudal system [which] precluded an adequate response to the challenge of new economic activity.” A second captivity came from the introduction of the British Managing Agency System in coal mining, which prevented the development of a highly mechanized, highly paid coal mining industry based on permanent labour, and instead fostered a premature oligopolization of the Indian coal industry. It also induced a long-standing tendency to using “excessive” coal mining profits to cross-subsidize other industries under the control of the Agency Houses. The third captivity characterizing the internal colonization of the tribal belt by non-tribal outsiders concerns the systems of industrial labor recruitment. Given the captivity of most tribal peasants within the feudal agrarian system, those tribals that were incorporated into the mining labor forces were offered wages only marginally higher than those available to them in the rural areas. Given low local supply of labor, the mine owners then had to set up “a labor recruitment system, which bound the captive worker by contract and advances and [which] deprived him of his free mobility.” This contract labor workers “were housed in ramshackle huts and colonies” where they were “looked after” by “predominantly Bengali” merchants and moneylenders. The enclave development of the coalfield survived independence. It is against this background that we can see the recent rise of ethno-regionalism in South Bihar as a rational reaction to a state of internal colonialism imposed along ethnic lines.

However, it is because many non-tribals have moved into Jharkhand, and because some tribals have benefited from the economic changes when many more have not, the prosecution of a narrow ethnic politics is now more difficult than it was in the 1950s. Many members of an emerging tribal elite continued to resolutely perpetuate the ideology of “tribalism” from which they draw strength in order to put pressure on the government to continue its policies of limited positive discrimination for tribal development (from which they benefit disproportionately). Meanwhile, the poorer tribals—the landless and the unskilled labourers—were being drawn to the brand of ethno-regionalism associated primarily with the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha since the late 1970s, which redefined the Jharkhand Movement as a movement of peasants and workers against landlords and capitalists regardless of caste or race. The rise of class-based politics of the Morcha simply confirms that the politics of Jharkhand was becoming more complex, with old divisions be-

coming blurred. This process, unfolding under the increased influence of left mobilization in the region, benefited some tribals and not others, but above all it fractured the ethnic politics of the undivided Scheduled Tribe.

Jharkhand as Laal (Red) Khand (Communist Land)

A.K. Roy, the influential trade union leader of Dhanbad Coalmines, referred to Jharkhand as Laalkhand (“laal” is red and “khand” is land in Hindi) or communist land, meaning that the traditional tribal society was inherently just, equal, socialist society with no exploitative classes. In other words, he argued that the tribal society is naturally hospitable for creating a classless Marxist society. He highlighted how some elements of tribal identity were in harmony with the values of social equality and economic collectivism. The historical rivalry along rural/urban lines and political opportunism harping on tribal/non-tribal divide only fractured the proletariat in Jharkhand.

Since formation of classes in India took place in the context of preexisting caste stratification and the most oppressed classes also constitute the most oppressed social groups (castes and tribes), we could think that the agitation of the poor against economic exploitation and that of the low castes against social oppression should overlap with and complement each other. Yet caste or tribal politics on the one hand and class politics on the other have a long relationship of mutual suspicion in India. The left in India had been generally dismissive of caste as a vestige of feudalism that interferes with emergence of unified class solidarity among the poor against the rich.

Left leaning commentators have identified four reasons for the failure of the first phase of tribal mobilization by the Adivasi Mahasabha and Jharkhand Party: 1. Urban orientation in thinking and activity; 2. Christian domination and close church links; 3. Pre-dominantly Munda-Oraon organization; 4. Efforts to establish tribal solidarity alone tending to sectarian behavior against non-tribals. Thus despite its advocated policies of liberalism, the Jharkhand Party failed to bring the rural agricultural non-Christian adivasis into its fold. Being pre-dominantly a Munda-Oraon organization, it failed to win over the Santhals of the Santhal Pargana region who had a very proud legacy of struggle against alien rule. Moreover, the non-adivasis who had remained indifferent earlier became rather skeptical towards it.

During the closing period of the 1960s, radicalization entered into Jharkhand politics due to the influence of the Maoist Movement going on in other parts of the country. After the short-lived Maoist upheaval in the neighboring state of West Bengal (WB), the radical revolutionaries were mercilessly hunted down WB police. Some of these revolutionary leaders escaped to the jungles of Bihar

with a renewed determination to organize the marginalized tribal and low caste population against the prevalent inequality and extreme feudal domination. As the radical left began militant mass mobilization in the villages of Bihar, they came in contact with tribal leaders, which paved the way for the emergence of radical politics under the banner of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) led by Shibu Soren and others, which ushered in a new phase in the history of Jharkhand. This phase of the Jharkhand movement emphasized two things: (a) Centrality of land/agrarian issues and (b) Blending Ethnic and Class Factors.

Amidst the radical left intervention into ethnonational mobilization, the biggest success is evident in re-framing the meaning and content of the term diku. In the early phases, going back to colonial era, diku meant both exploiter and outsider, thus the greatest enemy of the tribals and their ways of life. During post-independence industrialization in South Bihar, the migrant workers from North Bihar who sent their earnings to their families in Bihar were diku. These migrant Bihari workers were decidedly poor, working in the informal sectors in the factory towns or as low-skilled contract workers in construction and living in urban shanties in very unhygienic conditions. As the trade union movement in Dhanbad began organizing these migrant workers in the industrial enclaves, they also reached out to the tribals working in these sectors to highlight that their real enemies were factory owners and mining mafia, not non-tribal migrant Bihari workers. While the radical trade unionists mobilized in cities, the Naxalites united tribal and non-tribal rural poor against upper caste landlords and money lenders. While the ethnonational slogans were "*Jharkhand abua, daku diku senoa*" ("Jharkhand is ours, the outsiders are bandits"), Jharkhand Mukti Morcha raised new slogans of "*Maro Mahajan, Maro Daroga*" ("attack the moneylenders and the police"), and "*fasal zapt, zamin zapt*" ("seize the crop, seize your land").

The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (henceforth JMM, or Morcha), a radical political organization, was formed in 1973 under the leadership of Binod Bihari Mahato, A.K. Roy, Sadanand Jha, and Shibu Soren. This is the first time in the history of the Jharkhand Movement that non-tribals became its leaders. Binod Bihari Mahato was the leader of the Mahatos, who were basically agricultural castes in the region. A.K. Roy had a considerable influence among the colliery workers of the Dhanbad belt of the region. Sadanand Jha was a militant trade union leader operating among the railway workers at Gomoh. Finally, Shibu Soren had a wide acceptance among the tribes of the region, particularly among the people of Santhal tribe, who revered him as "Guruji" (meaning spiritual leader). From the left perspective, the formation of the JMM signified two things: first, the composition of the leadership signified a unity of the tribals and the tribals; second, it also struck a united front among

the workers and the peasantry jointly leading a movement. While breaching the tribal-nontribal divide is unprecedented in Jharkhand, it also tried to address the enduring divide among various communist groups in India and elsewhere on whether the workers or the peasants should lead the revolution when it comes. The greatest contribution of the new JMM leadership was articulating that the problem of the oppression of the ethnic Jharkhandis was integrally linked with the class exploitation of their workers and the peasantry by both the private and the bureaucratic state capital.

The Morcha, although primarily perceived as a tribal platform, projected itself as a radical Marxist party, which not only demanded a separate state of Jharkhand with guaranteed jobs for the sons of the soil, but also demanded that the new state be conceived as free from class exploitation. By blending class and ethnicity, the JMM widened the social base of the Jharkhand Movement. For example, they unambiguously redefined what they meant by the term Jharkhandi, by signifying that “a producer, irrespective of caste, tribe or nation, residing in the Jharkhand region” (Sengupta 1980, 5) would now be included within its fold. The first organization that tried to accomplish this goal was the Shivaji Samaj, a social reform organization established by Binod Bihari Mahato in 1971. This organization tried to bring the non-tribal Kurmi-Mahatos, who constituted the traditional agricultural castes of Jharkhand close to the tribals, who were outside the Hindu caste system. This coalition was based entirely on the shared economic anxiety of the two groups, who suffered from historical land alienation. In the villages, the Morcha forged a kind of pan-ethnic Jharkhand peasant solidarity against oppression of landlords and moneylenders.

But the JMM, despite enjoying some initial success, failed to achieve its objectives in the long run. This failure may be partially attributed to the complexity that the process of working-class formation experienced here due to the intervention of ethnic factors. A large portion of the working class, as mentioned earlier, was composed of immigrants who considered their class enemies (factory owners and landlords) their ethnic brethren. Further, the ideological divide between the trade union leaders like A.K. Roy and the Maoist leaders in the region further fractured the grassroots movement, fizzling out the momentum they gained early on. The migrant working class gradually distanced itself from the JMM. To achieve political mileage out of this hazy situation, the national parties opened their Jharkhand offices in the region after 1978. Salt was added to the wounds when Shibu Soren, like his predecessor Jaipal Singh, decided to join electoral politics and run for office in the seventh Lok Sabha election in 1980 by forming an alliance with Congress Party. In protest, Binod Bihari Mahato left JMM and formed JMM (B) while A.K. Roy also resigned. The history of the Jharkhand movement

from this point on was embroiled in electoral politics (Sengupta 1980). As the tribal votes gravitated towards the Congress, the non-tribal votes in the region shifted to the rightwing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which became so confident of its hold over its nontribal base that it nominated a nontribal as the Chief Minister of Jharkhand in 2014.

As national political parties became embroiled in the local politics of Jharkhand, the ensuing game of political alliances invoked old identity politics for electoral benefit. In addition, the national political parties, when they controlled the federal purse strings, made generous investments into infrastructure and development in Jharkhand with aims to court local favor. The trend began with the formation of the Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council (JAAC) in August 1995 which was a powerless and crippled body gifted to the people of this region to ensure their loyalty to the system of electoral politics (Corbridge 2000). The same political arithmetic of electoral profit and loss saw the passing of the Jharkhand Bill by the Indian Parliament on 2 August 2000, which resulted in the formation of a separate Jharkhand state on 15 November 2000. The people of this region, realizing that the formation of the state was a result of political maneuvering instead of their active struggle, remained indifferent. They knew enough to perceive that this could not resolve their contradiction with the dikus both indigenous and outsiders, hence the story of their exploitation would also carry on. The attitude of the common people of Jharkhand towards the new state was reflected in *The Times of India* reports on 5 August 2000: “A quick survey of the Santhal Pargana area reveals that it is the dikus who are celebrating the formation of Jharkhand, not the tribals. The reason (for their celebration is that) they are preparing for the loot of the vast natural resources of the area.”

Although electoral politics occupied the center stage, one should not underestimate the role played by the people in general. The latter part of the 1970s and throughout the 1980s saw the alienation of the immigrant working class from the Jharkhand movement. But the indigenous working class, however minimal their proportion in the total work force might be, remained supportive of the movement. The economic policies of liberalization, privatization undertaken by the Government of India in the later part of the 1980s and the early 1990s resulted in severe exploitation of the working class. The economic reality of exploitation again brought the nontribal immigrant working class close to their Adivasi counterparts (Shah 2007). This was evident in some of the programs of Jharkhand *bandh*, including a days-long economic blockade of the region organized by Jharkhandi political outfits, where they participated in large numbers. Therefore, at the societal level, the indigenous and immigrant working class were on the same track as the peas-

antry. Unfortunately, there was no political organization to further the cause of the Jharkhand Movement. As a result, this force remained unorganized and rather underutilized. Hence, the Jharkhand movement came out of the clutches of ethnic particularism. The combined operation of both the cultural and economic variables in terms of ethnicity and class contributed a great deal towards the widening of the social base of the movement.

Federal Politics and Creation of Jharkhand

In this section I show how New Delhi and Patna, the capital city of the state of Bihar from which Jharkhand was being sliced out, have been active in the production of Jharkhand as a “detribalizing territory.” I argue that the state has been formed with little regard for the Adivasi communities that were so long in the vanguard of the Jharkhand movement.

At the heart of tribal policy and politics in India for the past 100 years has been an ideology of tribal economy and society. Roughly summarized, this is the view that “tribal” societies are different: that they are organized according to a principle of equality not hierarchy (in gender as well as in class terms); that they are geared to the production of use values in remote and often forested areas of central or north-eastern India; that they maintain animistic forms of religion; and that they are not equipped to deal with communities which are better versed in the law or the use of money. This perspective has the effect of constituting the Adivasi communities as radically “Other” to mainstream (caste) society, and of concentrating debate on the pros and cons of this Otherness.

The first phase of the Jharkhand movement against outsiders and immigrants emphasized this uniqueness of tribal identity and the need to protect it from all outside influences, such as industrialization and urbanization. In time, of course, the willingness of some Jharkhandi activists to define their communities as victims of Hindu outsiders, or as noble lords of the forest, would limit the possibilities for building a less ethnically restricted movement. But in the mid-1950s it seemingly made sense to present an argument for a specifically “tribal” Jharkhand. Finally, the Jharkhand Party made the claim, which has long been at the centre of tribal politics in the region, that Adivasi livelihoods were under threat from outside interests and diktus. A way of life that was in tune with nature was being undermined by timber contractors and mining capital, and by those recent immigrants who refused entry to Adivasis in the shops and hotels of Ranchi city.

But the urbanized leadership of the Jharkhand Party was quickly discredited, paving way for the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM). Led by the Santhal tribal, Shibu Soren, the JMM developed a program of direct actions reach-

ing out to the industrial working class (led by A.K. Roy in Dhanbad) and the now substantial community of *Sadans* (those who had settled in Jharkhand and “contributed to its prosperity,” as the JMM put it). In both its red and green wings, the JMM developed a discourse rooted in a populist mixture of Marxism and ecology (resistance to the exploitation of the working class, resistance to the loss of land and trees, resistance to *dikus* and Bihar) and an appeal to “Our land, our policy, our identity, our culture,” where the latter was understood in terms of Adivasi practices and festivals.

The high point of the Morcha was probably achieved in the early 1990s, at the time of the minority Congress government of Narasimha Rao. The JMM was then able to use its position in the Lok Sabha to make several demands of the Government of India in return for its continuing support. The formation of a separate state of Jharkhand might be a success story of Indian democracy, as Jharkhandis are rewarded with better governance and high rates of economic growth. There remain doubts, though, that all Jharkhandis will be fairly rewarded in the new state. The protection of tribal land rights has not featured prominently in the agendas of the new government, and it is unlikely that rural dwellers will be compensated for the ecological services—including better quality air and water—they provide to the cities by virtue of their agroforestry practices. Also untold is the continuing struggle for Jharkhand—one relating to memory and a sense of betrayal, particularly among the Adivasi populations.

The original demand for tribal state included 18 districts of Bihar, three districts of West Bengal, four districts of Orissa, and two districts of Madhya Pradesh. However, the present Jharkhand state was carved out of Bihar only, with the tribal constituting 27.67 per cent of the population. At the heart of the story is a tale of sabotaging the “legitimate” demand of the Jharkhand Party for a tribal state protected against forced industrialization of a region in which “the tribals” were meant to enjoy protection, and their rights to *jal-jameen-jangal* (water-land-forest).

Conclusion

This chapter attempted to assess how class-based mobilization gained prominence in an ethnonational movement but eventually lost ground as the dynamics of electoral politics favored exploitation of ethnic cleavages. I show how the tribal separatist politics against internal migration in southern Bihar (now Jharkhand) evolved as a complex interaction of competing mobilization along crosscutting cleavages of identity and class. Local resistance against internal migration went through three phases. From a purely xenophobic, anti-immigrant tribal movement, the Jharkhand resistance evolved

into a more broad-based coalition of rural/tribal agrarian poor and urban/non-tribal industrial poor against the exploitation of the rich landlords, factory owners and managers. The emerging communist counter-movement, in their attempt to mobilize the factory workers and peasants, clashed head on with the xenophobic prejudices of tribal mobilization, which created opportunities for assimilation of migrant outsiders into the project of a separate tribal state. However, the logic of electoral politics that ultimately wrested the demand of a separate tribal state in 2000 and continues to dominate local politics marginalized class-based mobilization completely.

The primary contribution of this paper is to highlight the intervening role of politics, both grassroots mobilization and electoral competition, in shaping local attitude towards internal migration. Empirically, it shows how competing mobilization of cross-cutting cleavages of class and identity evolves in the context of a diverse democracy like India. It is generally believed that the state governments in India tend to be pro-native (Bhavnani & Lacina, 2015). Yet the reality is far more nuanced in the case of Jharkhand, a state formed specifically as a tribal homeland, where the migrants gradually gained the upper hand. Future research on migration in India and elsewhere should investigate the conditions under which the migrant or the host community can be expected to prevail. This paper shows how intransigent ethnic conflicts in India interact with electoral politics and center-state relations, which detribalize them into economic conflicts amenable to redistributive solutions. Further research should focus on the mechanisms of this process of detribalization in various parts of Northeast India and elsewhere, which ensures the remarkable resilience of Indian state in the face of many violent ethnic separatist movements.

Note

1. The terms tribal and “adivasi” are used in this chapter to refer to the indigenous groups officially recognized as Scheduled Tribes (ST) in India since 1950s. The term Dalit is used to refer to the formerly untouchable caste groups officially designated as Scheduled Caste (SC) in the Indian Constitution.

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6. The Political Economy of Special Economic Zones and Internal Displacement in India

VINEETA YADAV
Pennsylvania State University

Development related projects have become an increasingly significant source of internal displacement in the world. Global estimates put the number of people displaced by development projects at about 10 million per year (Cernaia 1999; Mathur 2013). At about one million per year, India displaces the most people in the world (IDMC 2016; Lok Sabha Secretariat 2013; Negi and Ganguly 2010).¹ Between 1948–2000, the Indian government displaced about 60–65 million people for development projects including dams, ports, industrial corridors, defense projects, highways, metros, etc. (Fernandes 2008; Lok Sabha Secretariat 2013). By 2000, between 67% and 75% of these displaced people had been transformed into permanent migrants who lacked a stable residence (Fernandes 2008; Negi and Ganguly 2010). These grim figures however do not include the numbers displaced by the creation of Special Economic Zones (SEZs)—a policy initiative that has become one of the most significant creators of internally displaced migrants in India and in the world.²

India passed the Special Economic Zones Act in 2005 leading to an explosion of these zones from 19 in 2004 to over 600 by 2016 (CAG 2014, v). They were established without placing any legal obligations on private SEZ developers or central, state, or local governments to resettle or rehabilitate the people displaced by them. The SEZ Act was specifically exempted from the purview of India's first resettlement and rehabilitation bill passed in 2013. To date, SEZs have failed to deliver the jobs and the economic opportunities they promised (CAG 2014). Thus, few economic opportunities have been created for these

SEZ-displaced people. Collectively, these trends virtually guarantee that SEZs will continue to transform entire populations of settled areas into populations of displaced internal migrants for the foreseeable future.

In this chapter, I examine the political dynamics that have created this SEZ-induced displacement crisis in India. I first provide a brief overview of SEZs and the displacement they have created. I then highlight the role that party politics has played in creating this situation at both the state and national levels by discussing two SEZs in Andhra Pradesh—Polepally and Apache. This within-state comparison between these cases as well as the comparison over time of Polepally allows us to identify some factors that can improve or worsen the governance of the SEZ process, especially the resettlement and rehabilitation of SEZ-induced migrants. As I will argue, civil society organizations play an essential role in mobilizing and strengthening the ability of affected people to demand a policy response from the government. However, I will also argue that, while necessary, such involvement is not sufficient for obtaining an effective response at either the governance or the integration process. In addition to CSO mobilization, SEZ-displaced migrants must translate their mobilization into sustained political capital to ensure a sustained de facto policy response from governments. As the chapter will illustrate, both these factors have been important in improving the prospects of SEZ-displaced migrants.

Special Economic Zones: Concept and Performance in India

Special Economic Zones or SEZs are commonly defined as “a geographical region within a Nation-State in which a distinct legal framework provides for more liberal economic policies and governance arrangements than prevail in the country at large” (CAG 2014, iii). SEZs are established to attract investment, create jobs, spur upstream and downstream economic activities, promote exports and encourage skill and technology transfers. To attract investors, governments typically exempt firms from many taxes, national laws, and regulations; streamline bureaucratic interactions; and commit to developing local infrastructure. Crucially, they also provide for free or at highly subsidized rates the land needed for establishing an SEZ near infrastructure such as ports, airports, and highways, as well as near significant markets. As I will discuss later, it is this acquisition of land for private and public-private SEZs that has turned hundreds of thousands of Indian farmers, agricultural workers, artisans, and tribals into permanently displaced internal migrants.

After experimenting with a limited free trade zone in Kandla in 1965, India did not pursue this further until 2000. Then China’s success with SEZs

inspired the BJP-led central government to include an SEZ Scheme in its Foreign Trade Policy. Many states soon followed suit. In 2004, the central government announced India's first National Resettlement and Rehabilitation Policy which required that landowners be compensated for land acquired for development projects including SEZs and encouraged states to formulate their own policies. In 2005, the rival Congress (I) led coalition's central government passed the Special Economic Zones Act which regulated the structure and operations of SEZs. This bill mandated compensation for landowners with legal titles for their land but imposed no resettlement or rehabilitation (R&R) obligations on either the state or the private investors (Jenkins 2014; Raghuram and Sunny 2015). Crucially, it did not recognize landless people such as tenant farmers, agricultural workers, artisans, and tribals whose livelihoods depended on the village economy and its common property resources as being displaced by the SEZ, thus failing to provide either compensation or R&R benefits.

Serious questions about the economic benefits and costs of SEZs emerged in a 2014 parliamentary report which found that only 152 of the 625 approved SEZs were operational; these fell short of proposal projections by 58.8% for investments, 74.6% for exports, and crucially, 92.7% for employment (CAG 2014, 5–8). Moreover, only 8.5% of operational SEZs were in multi-sector manufacturing industries which could potentially absorb the kind of unskilled labor SEZ-displaced migrants could offer (CAG 2014, 5–8). Despite this dismal assessment, in 2013 the SEZ Act was again exempted from the jurisdiction of India's first ever R&R bill, the *Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation, and Resettlement Bill* (LARR) which redefined how land could be acquired by governments, who was considered affected by such acquisitions, and how they needed to be compensated for the loss of their land, livelihoods, and communities (Raghuram and Sunny 2015). Since land is considered primarily a state subject in India's federal structure, the final legal responsibility for the design of SEZ and R&R policies fell on the state governments. However, in the competition to attract investment, state governments often diluted the few legal responsibilities investors had under central laws even further (Kohli and Gupta 2016; Mathur 2013).

Despite these gains, the business sector pushed the BJP-led government to promulgate a series of presidential ordinances from 2013–2016 to roll back the scope and obligations of the LARR bill while it tried to pass new legislation diluting it (Kohli and Gupta 2016; *Man Ki Baat* 2016). At issue were key provisions which required a pre-project social impact assessment, legally defined displaced landowners and landless people as affected people, mandated consultations with affected persons and their representatives at

every stage, and required the establishment of relatively independent institutions to monitor and enforce the implementation of R&R packages at all levels (Jenkins 2014; Kohli and Gupta 2016; Mathur 2013). In the face of popular resistance from civil society groups, parliamentary opposition parties, and adverse judicial rulings, the government finally changed tactics. In 2016, it revoked the LARR exemptions granted to sixteen special acts, including the 2005 SEZ Act but amended the LARR bill by revoking many of its social provisions. The government claimed that this balanced the interests of business and displaced populations (*Man Ki Baat* 2016). Critics described it as effectively reverting to the pre-LARR 2013 situation of almost no R&R (*Economic Times* 2016).

In order to study the impact SEZs have had on the situation of internal migrants in India in this historical policy context, we need to first address three basic questions: Who was displaced by SEZs? How many people have been displaced by SEZs? What is the state of the resettlement and rehabilitation (R&R) of SEZ-displaced people?

The Scale and Nature of SEZ-Induced Displacement and Migration

There are no comprehensive, systematic statistics on the numbers of people displaced by SEZs in India. While government and international institutional websites proudly report statistics touting the economic performance of SEZs, no information about displaced populations is listed. The unfortunate fact is that governments and private investors have strong incentives to underestimate and avoid reporting the numbers displaced by SEZs since this potentially defines their legal obligations (Jenkins, Kennedy, and Mukhopadhyay 2014; Mathur 2013; Somayaji and Talwar 2011). Data is available only for a handful of SEZs documented by scholars studying specific projects (Chakravorty 2013; Ghatak et al. 2012; Lobo and Kumar 2009), but their estimates vary widely. For example, the number of landowners estimated displaced by Nandigram SEZ in 2006 ranged from 15,000 to 35,000 and by the Singur SEZ from 1900 to 15,000 (Chakravorty 2013, 49–51; Ghatak et al. 2012). Scholars have tried to estimate the broad scope and composition of displacement by using information on the structure of land ownership and use in India.

Tenant farmers operate 11% of landholdings across India (Chakravorty 2013, 35). Since these farmers have no legal claim to the land, they are always displaced when this land is acquired. 65% of landholdings in India are smaller than half an acre and support subsistence farming (Chakravorty 2013,

34). These rural poor were again among the first targeted in any acquisition. In tribal areas, land is often owned communally. Since individuals do not hold land titles, they are not compensated for such land (Chakravorty 2013, 120; Mathur 2013). Common property resources such as grazing grounds, ponds, and forests are legally owned by the government and do not need to be formally acquired. For these reasons, the history of non-SEZ development projects such as dams, ports, and defense projects shows that almost 80% of those displaced by such projects belonged to backward castes, Dalits, and tribals (IDMC 2016). The few existing empirical studies of specific SEZs show that SEZs are displacing the same vulnerable groups (Chakravorty 2013, 120–123; Mathur 2013, 172–177). For example, in Polepally and Singur, land owned by higher castes was either not acquired at all or acquired when land rates had soared even as Dalit, tribal and backward caste owned land was acquired first and by force (Chakravorty 2013; Rawat, Bhushan, and Surepally 2011). Whether these SEZ-displaced people are resettled into stable new communities where they can resume their livelihoods and social and cultural lives on a permanent basis determines how many of them become temporary and permanent migrants in India.

Under the 2005 SEZ Act, people with legal land titles were compensated for land but not for any assets they owned on the land (for example houses, sheds, and cash crop trees). Compensation rates were typically kept artificially low and it was not uncommon for such payments to be delayed or stopped completely (Agarwal 2010; Jenkins 2014; Mathur 2013; Ramachandraiah and Venateswarlu 2014). Thus, even among this relatively protected displaced group, significant shares of people lost the bulk of their assets and were pushed into poverty (Chakravorty 2013, 34). Village residents working as tenant farmers, agricultural wage laborers, service providers (barbers, washer-men, carpenters), and those dependent on its common property resources for their livelihoods had no legal claims on the promoters or the state and were driven deeper into poverty by the creation of SEZs (Chakravorty 2013; Jenkins 2014; Mathur 2013).

State courts were vital in correcting these violations, for example by setting higher rates when they were approached. However, few farmers had the financial means to mount such legal challenges and sustain themselves financially given the length of time it takes for courts to adjudicate cases (Agarwal 2010; Mathur 2013; Ramachandraiah and Venateswarlu 2014). Furthermore, a favorable court judgement could not ensure compliance and most court judgments overruling or reversing state decisions were simply ignored by governments and promoters alike (Srinivasulu 2014; Surepally, Bhushan, and Rawat 2012).

Even though SEZ promoters were not legally required to offer R&R packages, occasionally promoters and the state made such promises to reduce public resistance. Had these promises been implemented, SEZs may have been an economic boon to these residents. Unfortunately, such deals were rarely honored after the erstwhile residents moved out (Chakravorty 2013; Mathur 2013; Pratap 2012; Srinivasulu 2014). If residents were relocated at all, it was to geographically unsuitable land often distant from any jobs. Replacement houses were shoddy and their ownership was retained by promoters. Promised services such as water, electricity, and roads failed to materialize. Promised job training centers were never established and residents were either hired and fired after a short period or never hired at all. In many cases, villages were deliberately broken up and scattered in order to reduce their ability to mobilize against SEZ authorities and governments down the road. Consequently, the vast majority of SEZ-displaced people were forced to migrate to nearby villages, towns, and cities in search of work. A few found jobs in urban factories, most commuted to work as daily wage laborers and some ended up as bonded laborers (Chakravorty 2013; Mathur 2013; Pratap 2012; Seethalakshmi 2009; Srinivasulu 2014). For most displaced citizens, SEZs moved them from a life of financial security and social stability to one of abject poverty and social isolation.

There were rare cases where promoters did indeed pay fair compensation rates (for example the relocated Nano factory in Sanand, Gujarat) and deliver on R&R packages to landowners and some landless residents (Chakravorty 2013, 52). Even very modest success in ensuring that compensation and R&R are delivered significantly boosts the capacity of displace people who are living on the margins of survival to avoid permanent decline and re-establish their lives. Therefore, it is worthwhile to understand the conditions under which such success can be achieved. In order to do so, I now examine these dynamics for two SEZs located in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

SEZ-Induced Displacement and Migration in Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh was one of the earliest states to formulate an SEZ policy (in 2002) and an R&R policy for development projects (in 2005). As of 2014, it had the second highest number of approved SEZs (115) in India and the highest number of operational SEZs (36) (CAG 2014, 48–49). It also had the highest number of SEZs (19) which were de-notified, a process which allowed the promoters to resell the land as commercial property (CAG 2014, 5, 48–49). Historically, Andhra has performed poorly in resettling people

displaced by development projects. Of the approximately 3.25 million people displaced for non-SEZ development projects between 1951 and 1995, only 28.8% were resettled (Chakravorty 2013; Fernandes 2008, 113–114). Furthermore, in line with national trends, the vast majority of people displaced by previous development projects were tribals, Dalits and backward caste members. Studies suggest that SEZs have continued these historical trends (Pratap 2012; Ramachandraiah and Venateswarlu 2014; Seethalakshmi 2009).

However, Andhra also has some prominent examples of SEZs with *relatively* successful R&R performances. This makes it an informative state for examining the factors that produce different outcomes across SEZ projects. I compare the dynamics driving the displacement and R&R policies of Apache SEZ, considered an abysmal failure, to Polepally SEZ which produced somewhat better outcomes for the displaced population.

Apache SEZ

The Apache SEZ was set up in 2004 by the Andhra Pradesh Industrial and Infrastructure Corporation (APIIC) to host Apache, a Taiwanese manufacturer of Adidas Shoes.³ Over 1000 acres of land spread out over 13 villages of Nellore district with direct access to a national highway and proximity to a port were acquired for this project by APIIC. An estimated 800 families with over 3200 people were evicted to form this SEZ. Most villagers belonged to scheduled castes, backward castes, and scheduled tribes. Most had incomes below the official poverty line and survived based on income from daily wage labor on neighboring farms, and from fishing and collecting firewood on common village property. Few held legal titles to the land they lived and worked on. For example, in Kasimkhanhandiga village, all 58 households belonged to scheduled tribes and only 14 held legal titles to their land (Halim and Roy 2008). There was no prior consultation between villagers, the state, and Apache on the processes of land acquisition or rehabilitation. The government compensated the few landowners, simply repossessed the common property and forcibly evicted those without land titles without paying compensation even for their assets.

Neither the state nor the firm announced any R&R package for landowners or landless villagers. Prior to acquisition, the state government, in the form of the state chief minister himself, had promised that one person from each family would be employed in the SEZ. The firm itself made no such promises. When the SEZ commenced operations in 2006, it only created 5000 of the 20,000 jobs it had promised (Halim and Roy 2008; Srinivasulu 2014). Most villagers lacked the literacy or the qualifications to get them. A few were occa-

sionally employed as daily laborers by Apache. When production commenced in 2006, the chemicals used for processing leather contaminated nearby waterbodies, killing off most of the fish. Along with lack of access to common grazing grounds and woods, this undermined the ability of displaced villagers to earn income and survive.

The Apache SEZ saw little protest during the land acquisition process because the population was dominated by settlers with few legal claims to the land. However, as its environmental and economic consequences unfolded, local civil society organizations (CSOs) started forming and mobilizing villagers and organizing protests. They submitted petitions to various government agencies asking for two acres of land per family, the provision of boats and nets to enable fishing, housing, annual monetary compensation for ten years, basic services such as water and electricity, priority access to common property resources, and a rehabilitation package to educate them for new job opportunities (Halim and Roy 2008). While other local anti-SEZ groups joined their cause, they failed to attract the attention of prominent CSOs, political parties, or the national media (Srinivasulu 2014).

Some government offices such as the Integrated Tribal Development Agency responded to these protests by offering loans to tribal people to buy sheep and a few people received housing support. However, neither Apache nor the government engaged affected people in any systematic dialogue regarding an R&R process (Halim and Roy 2008). With no support from the state or the SEZ, affected villagers have relied on their personal resources and contacts to obtain casual jobs in these towns. They have received no support from public, private, or civil society groups in ameliorating the poor conditions that prevail in their new jobs, nor have they obtained basic support for healthcare, education, voting rights, or residential cards entitling them to valuable benefits such as subsidized essential foods (Halim and Roy 2008; ILO 2012).

While many residents moved away from their villages to nearby towns with their families permanently, others opted instead to keep their families near their village while the men migrated to find work in cities (Srinivasulu 2014, 85). Those lucky enough to be employed in the Apache SEZ soon found that labor conditions were highly exploitative and stressful. In addition to the lack of safe and acceptable working conditions, reports of sexual exploitation soon surfaced (ILO 2012; Srinivasulu 2014, 86). CSOs such as the Vyavasaya Vruthidarula Sangam have been active in publicizing the problems relating to the status of compensation promises made by promoters as well the general economic and social challenges faced by affected people. However, these problems have failed to attract mainstream CSO or media

attention. Given their limited resources, local CSOs have not been active on issues related to re-integration of displaced migrants and have instead focused their efforts on governance related issues.

Despite numerous blatant violations of their legal rights, the villagers received little support from political parties. Local parliamentary candidates toed their party lines and also avoided engaging with the displaced villagers in their constituencies (Srinivasulu 2014). Coalition governments composed of different parties in Andhra and the center have failed to take up the issues affecting Apache SEZ displaced people (Halim and Roy 2008; Srinivasulu 2014). To date, most of the displaced people have received no compensation and no other support to re-establish their livelihoods and their new communities. The Apache SEZ therefore transformed the residents of these villages into permanent migrants who have not been able to find a new permanent home. It also deprived them of the economic, social, psychological, and cultural benefits that come from belonging to a coherent community of families and individuals. As a result, it has become a prominent example of the failure of SEZs among SEZ opponents in India.

Polepally

The Polepally SEZ was initially approved in 2001 as a Green Park that would host agro-industries and horticulture.⁴ In 2002, the Telugu Desam Party state government began acquiring land in Polepally, Mudireddipally, Rayapelli, and Jundhagadda Thanda, potentially displacing 9700 residents. Records show that backward caste, scheduled caste, scheduled tribe, and Muslim land-owners were overwhelmingly targeted for acquisition while upper caste land-owners—primarily politically connected Reddys—were not (Ramachandraiah and Venateswarlu 2014; Rawat, Bhushan, and Surepally 2011). Local leaders promised agricultural jobs, housing sites, allowances for building new houses, and fair rates of compensation for their land but no compensation for their assets and no retraining (Srinivasulu 2014). Landless stakeholders were not recognized as being affected and were offered nothing.

In 2005, the state government now led by the Congress (I), repackaged the Green Park project as a Green Industrial Park and authorized the establishment of pharmaceutical manufacturing firms. When their lands stayed acquired despite this radical and legally questionable change, landowners and landless stakeholders alike realized that they had little chance of realizing any improvements in their lives through this SEZ project given their lack of skills suitable for pharmaceutical jobs and the absence of any commitments from the state or the SEZ to retrain or hire them (Agarwal 2010; Pratap 2012).

This realization led to a dramatic change in attitudes and actions regarding the SEZ among villagers.

As construction for the pharma firms began in 2007, so did sustained protests by landowners and landless villagers (Srinivasulu 2014). The Polepally SEZ Vyathireka Aikya Vedika (SEZVAV), an anti-SEZ alliance, formed out of these protests and mobilization efforts. In addition to the return of their lands and compensation for the economic hardship they had suffered in the interim years, displaced villagers demanded the prosecution of local politicians and bureaucrats involved in the irregularities and corruption which had characterized their SEZ process. These local protests attracted the attention of nationally prominent activists and CSOs who in turn, attracted more media attention and eventually political interest.

Sensing the potential this project had to embarrass the Congress (I) government in the upcoming elections, opposition parties including the BJP, the Communist Party of India, and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) joined and escalated the anti-Polepally SEZ protests (Oskarsson and Nielsen 2014). When 24 protesting farmers were arrested in 2008, every non-Congress party sent high-level state representatives to show solidarity with the affected people of Polepally and to ensure they were seen by larger media audiences to be doing so. The anti-SEZ protestors then made two important tactical decisions which had significant consequences for their success—they decided to limit their involvement and integration with more prominent CSOs fighting on similar issues and on anti-globalization agendas and, they decided to fight politically by directly challenging politicians at the ballot box.

Thirteen individuals from the anti-SEZ movement, including displaced landowners and landless villagers, contested the May 2008 by-election for the state assembly seat of Jadcherla. They won a combined total of 13,000 votes which was sufficient to defeat the incumbent legislator (Ramachandraiah and Venateswarlu 2014; Rawat, Bhushan, and Surepally 2011). While CSOs undoubtedly played a vital role in bringing Polepally to the attention of parties, it was the vision of the villagers to mount a political challenge, their willingness to bear the costs of doing so, and most importantly their ability to sway and win votes in numbers large enough to affect election outcomes that proved to be critical in finally bringing them the attention of the state government.

In the face of such successful politicization of the project, the state government sent its bureaucrats to negotiate an R&R package which included guaranteed employment in the SEZ, 200 square yards house site for each family, 70,000 rupees to build a new house, and the release of arrested farmers (Rawat, Bhushan, and Surepally 2011; Srinivasulu 2014). For those who

accepted it, the government began dispensing compensation. Many villagers began working as watchmen, gardeners, and janitors in the SEZ and the process to identify land for a resettlement colony began (Rawat, Bhushan, and Surepally 2011; Srinivasulu 2014).

The local movement continued to mobilize and stay in the news with visits by many non-Congress party representatives and a famous movie star hoping to enter politics (Srinivasulu 2014). The local anti-SEZ movement decided to continue with their strategy of political contestation and in 2009, nominated 15 candidates to contest the national parliamentary elections. Their 77,568 combined votes were enough to defeat the incumbent Congress (I) candidate (Rawat, Bhushan, and Surepally 2011; Srinivasulu 2014). Hailed as a moral victory by the media and broadcast extensively, this kept the political and bureaucratic momentum going for some time. As per the R&R deal, compensation continued to be dispensed and construction of the resettlement colony began (Srinivasulu 2014).

However, with the completion of state and general elections, media and political interest in the movement waned easing the political pressure on the local bureaucracy. By 2010, compensation payments and R&R activities came to a virtual halt. Housing construction for the resettlement colony stopped, the village development fund was withheld from the village council, and vocational training programs were non-functional (Agarwal 2010; Rawat, Bhushan, and Surepally 2011). Importantly, most of the men employed in the SEZ were laid off, especially those known to have participated in protests (Agarwal 2010, 87; Surepally, Bhushan, and Rawat 2012, 183). Only village women who had not been involved in protests were offered any opportunities in SEZ firms (Surepally, Bhushan, and Rawat 2012, 195). This led to a lopsided job market with long term consequences for individuals, families, and the community.

Many villagers had been forced to build new houses at their own expense in new locations after their evictions. Since prices had shot up, they could only afford land in distant areas (Srinivasulu 2014). These areas lacked access to public transportation which could allow the displaced villagers to commute to take up the few available jobs (Surepally, Bhushan, and Rawat 2012, 94). Due to the frictions that the land acquisition created between those who gained from it (upper-caste landowning Reddys) and those who lost from it (lower-caste landowners, Dalits, and landless people of all castes), upper-caste landowners stopped employing men or women belonging to these castes further aggravating unemployment and poverty in the affected villages (Agarwal 2010, 89–90). This combination of lack of jobs for men in SEZs or nearby towns, and the lack of transportation to nearby locations, led to migration

out of Polepally. While the women, children and very elderly stayed on in the villages, the men from affected SEZ families migrated to Hyderabad and other towns. While some of these jobs were seasonal, most men left for the year and would only return for major festivals (Agarwal 2010; Surepally, Bhushan, and Rawat 2012, 184).

This migration pattern placed considerable burdens on individuals, families, and communities. Women now handled all the family responsibilities and worked to raise additional income (Agarwal 2010, 83; Surepally, Bhushan, and Rawat 2012, 195–204). One study found that a significant number of families had to pull their children out of school and put them to work as well to raise sufficient income (Surepally, Bhushan, and Rawat 2012, 183). At the same time their new location lacked schools, accessible healthcare, or access to drinking water (Agarwal 2010). While the political mobilization of 2009 had resulted in the provision of a village development fund to meet some of these needs, local officials blocked the release of the funds to the village authorities after that time (Agarwal 2010, 87; Surepally, Bhushan, and Rawat 2012, 193). Consequently, the village council and the village head could do little to mitigate these conditions.

Unfortunately, SEZVAV, the CSO which was formed by the local farmers and displaced people, had neither the skills nor the resources to address these larger problems and their ability to ensure that promises made by the promoters or the government were honored was limited. Organizations such as the Human Rights Forum helped displaced people with paperwork and legal cases, but even legal victories could not ensure compliance. More experienced CSOs who could have mobilized on a wider scale to attract media attention and put pressure on politicians and bureaucrats were no longer involved with the Polepally movement. Moreover, these CSOs were more invested in reversing the SEZ rather than in negotiating an effective and fair implementation of any R&R policies (Agarwal 2010, 106). Hence, the likelihood that they could have improved the conditions of displaced citizens as they negotiated the process itself was doubtful.

The men displaced by the SEZs who migrated to cities and towns found themselves competing for jobs with migrants from other states (Surepally, Bhushan, and Rawat 2012, 184). These jobs were in industries whose environments were characterized by the absence of labor rights, labor unions, and health benefits (ILO 2012). The sheer competition for jobs discouraged villagers from challenging such violations and relief came on an ad hoc basis from CSOs. SEZVAV leaders and members lacked the knowledge and the means to help SEZ-displaced migrants with these problems. In this case, SEZVAV's lack of links with external NGOS, a tactic which had given them

credibility during their political mobilization, proved to be a serious constraint.

These changes have led to depression and hopelessness among SEZ-displaced people in Polepally, in turn leading to alcoholism, mental and physical illnesses, and suicides (Surepally, Bhushan, and Rawat 2012, 191). The loss of income and assets has also destroyed the social status and relationships of most families (Surepally, Bhushan, and Rawat 2012, 92). For example, studies show that affected families have found it difficult to arrange marriages in a society where having a single son or daughter is a cause of great social distress (Surepally, Bhushan, and Rawat 2012, 96). Residents lost access to their traditional cremation grounds and cemeteries. Unfortunately, with the withering of media and political attention, the Polepally SEZ affected people were left to their own means and to the mercies of local officials and promoters.

While organizations such as the Telangana Aikya Karyacharana Committee and the Telangana SEZ Vyathireka Iky Sanghatana organizing SEZs across Telangana stayed involved at varying levels, they had limited capacity and resources, so could not sustain their involvement in Polepally (Surepally, Bhushan, and Rawat 2012). Many prominent CSOs and activists simply stopped being involved with the Polepally anti-SEZ movement when the movement lost the media spotlight and stopped gaining victories (Agarwal 2010, 105–106). This disassociation was also driven by ideological differences, since many of the most well-known and well-organized CSOs were opposed to a development paradigm based on neo-liberal economic policies and foreign investment and did not believe that improving rehabilitation and resettlement could genuinely lead to better lives for affected people (Agarwal 2010, 106). Today people displaced by the Polepally SEZ continue to struggle to obtain the packages that were promised to them in 2009 at the peak of their mobilization.

Factors Influencing Success and Failure in Realizing R&R for SEZ-Displaced Migrants

These two cases—Apache and Polepally—offer some useful insights into the factors that can help mitigate or worsen the experience of internal displacement for migrants created by SEZs. I focus on two factors that these cases highlight—the extent and character of involvement by civil society organizations and the capacity to transform local mobilization into sustained political capital.

A comparison of these cases suggests that intense involvement by CSOs is necessary for drawing a policy response from the government. However, they

also demonstrate that such CSO involvement is not sufficient in ensuring that such policy responses are actually implemented. Most villagers were illiterate and socio-economically marginalized. They possessed neither the information required to evaluate their interests and challenge officials, nor the means to acquire such information. CSOs were essential in mobilizing displaced residents and arming them with the information and tactics necessary for tackling the bureaucracy in both the Apache and Polepally SEZs (Agarwal 2013; Pratap 2012; Srinivasulu 2014). Their efforts were crucial in getting displaced residents the bureaucratic attention that led to the few offers of R&R in Apache and the formulation of an R&R package in Polepally. In Polepally, mobilization by these CSOs was also essential in drawing valuable media and political attention.

However, these cases also demonstrate how the effectiveness of CSOs vis-à-vis parties, bureaucrats, businesses, and displaced people was limited by their strong ideological opposition to the market-based model of development that SEZs represent (Agarwal 2013, 85; Chakravorty 2013, 48–49). Such ideological opposition reduced their credibility and effectiveness as negotiators, limiting their capacity to serve as the social link between SEZ-displaced citizens and parties that India lacks. This was especially true when it came to R&R policies. Many displaced migrants were in fact eager to transition out of their impoverished land-based livelihoods into the economic opportunities offered by SEZs (Chakravorty 2014; Jenkins, Kennedy and Mukhopadhyay 2014; Mathur 2013). What they lacked were effective advocates who could guide them through the process in ways that helped protect their interests.

Unfortunately, many prominent CSOs which had both institutional and political experience, commanded valuable resources and enjoyed widespread recognition were simply not interested in mediating such compromise policies. Yet, given the reality that many SEZs were already functional and unlikely to shut down, these policies had perhaps the most potential to improve the lives of affected villagers both supportive of and opposed to SEZs. In some cases, the confrontational style and hostile ideological resistance of these CSOs and activists to any compromise permanently soured relationships with local officials in charge of the SEZ and R&R processes, leaving villagers to suffer the consequences long after activists and CSOs had left (Agarwal 2010, 106–108). It also means that CSO's campaigning on SEZ-related issues have played a limited role in helping SEZ-displaced people adjust to the challenges they face in their new lives and communities. Instead, CSOs working on issues of labor unionization, women's health, education, and human rights have filled this niche typically on a sporadic and ad hoc basis (Agarwal 2010; Fernandez 2008; IDMC 2016).

Finally, however, the two cases also show that, while necessary, CSO involvement was not sufficient for obtaining the necessary responses and implementation from the state. Both Apache and Polepally had high CSO involvement, yet the displaced villagers in Apache failed to see the implementation of the few promises made to them. In Polepally, CSO involvement remained high, yet the responsiveness of the state government in making appropriate policies and in delivering on them varied. The first wave of mobilization from 2008–2009 was effective in obtaining concessions regarding compensation, housing sites, and retraining. Yet, despite continued high CSO involvement, the government failed to deliver on these promises after 2009. This suggests that in addition to CSO involvement, successful resolution of these issues also requires the ability to transform mobilization into sustained political capital.

Since the late 1990s, political parties at the state and national level in India have largely shared a consensus to follow a market-based economic development model. Attracting foreign investment in order to create jobs has been a crucial element of this strategy (Kohli 2009). This means that any movement or policy proposals that challenge this paradigm lack ideological support among political parties. Instead, party positions are based on strategic political calculations regarding the number of votes, financial support, and political rent that competing policies can potentially deliver. Unfortunately, none of these factors suggest that any political party will find that supporting the villagers affected by SEZs is a core political interest.

SEZs have primarily targeted land held by the poorest people who frequently belong to the lowest castes and to tribes. None of the major political parties consider these castes to be core vote banks and these villagers certainly cannot offer parties any financial inducements. Conversely, industrialists, business owners, and big landowners in Andhra Pradesh do belong to vote banks that both the major parties in Andhra consider their core constituencies—Kammas for the TDP and the Reddys for the Congress party (Srinivasulu 2014, 76). These upper-caste industrialists are critical sources for financing election campaigns and other party expenses. These are the groups promoting SEZs in Andhra and therefore, it is in the strategic political interests of all parties to support SEZs.

To counter such calculations, displaced villagers must offer something of considerable political value which can alter the calculations of party leaders. The political mobilization of 2008–2009 was successful precisely because it demonstrated that SEZ-displaced people had such a valuable asset—their ability to affect the outcomes of elections at both the state and national levels. In both the 2008 state and 2009 parliamentary elections, despite their small numbers, villagers were able to vote cohesively enough to act as swing voters

and change the outcome of the election leading to the defeat of the incumbents. Importantly, they were able to do so without the benefit of money and the help of high profile CSOs, and despite their limited appeal beyond local constituencies and the considerable harassment they faced from the authorities. This was a powerful message that led all parties, including those in government, to subsequently respond by changing their positions.

However, once elections were over and the ability of the villagers to mobilize and run for further election campaigns dissipated, implementation of the program died down. Housing construction and training programs stopped, and compensation payments either stopped or were stolen by officials. Despite the continued mobilization by SEZVAV in Polepally, R&R policies have not resumed since. Notably, Apache SEZ never saw any political mobilization or serious negotiations or implementation of R&R policies. The experience of Polepally therefore illustrates how necessary it is to transform successful CSO mobilization over displacement issues into sustainable political currency in order to pressure political parties to create *de jure* policy and keep them motivated to maintain to ensure its *de facto* implementation.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the consequences of a specific development policy—Special Economic Zones—for internal displacement in India. The unfortunate consequence of this mode of policy adoption is that countries which lack the political mechanisms necessary for successful implementation have enthusiastically adopted it. The discussion of the two Indian SEZs shows that while civil society mobilization energizes and directs efforts by SEZ-displaced people to claim some benefits from these projects, success in these efforts only results from sustained political mobilization. SEZs have therefore displaced hundreds of thousands of people from their livelihoods while failing to resettle or rehabilitate them. India's experience suggests that this is the likely outcome of SEZ policies in countries which similarly lack strong institutions that can deliver accountability.

Notes

1. Recent studies put India's total internal migrant population at 307.1 million or about 30% of its 1.02 billion population (UNICEF 2012).
2. By 2006, 130 countries had created 3500 SEZs, employing over 40 million people and generating over \$200 billion in exports (Farole et al. 2011, 5). There are no figures available for the numbers displaced by the creation of these zones.

3. I draw on Halim and Roy (2008), Seethalaksmi (2009), ILO (2010), Srinivasulu (2014) for this case.
4. This began when Mahboobnagar district was in Andhra Pradesh. In 2014, it became part of the newly-formed Telangana state.

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