

TRIBAL LAND ALIENATION IN JHARKHAND AND ODISHA

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The historical deprivation of tribal lands and withdrawal of forest exploitation rights have led to the grave situation of tribals being coerced into becoming landless laborers or retreating to jungles, impacting their primary livelihood source. Exploitative practices by moneylenders, traders, feudal lords, and wealthy peasants have led to widespread land alienation from tribal communities, often facilitated by large-scale deforestation projects. Manipulation of land records, 'benami' transfers, leasing, mortgage, encroachment, and other methods further dispossess tribals of their lands, threatening their right to life. The issue is rooted in antagonistic class interests and supported by historical state policies that facilitate non-tribal settlement in tribal lands. Despite stringent laws, exploitation persists, highlighting deep-rooted contradictions within Indian tribal society. Consequently, tribals, natural owners of forests and lands, have been relegated to dependency, exacerbated by exploitation and detrimental state legislations.

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