

Understanding the public sphere of tribal society in Central India

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The central Indian tribal societies are mobilising themselves to protect their rights over land ownership. The recent phenomena of land acquisition brought upheaval in the society, as the whole social, cultural and economic system of tribal society is connected with the ownership of land system. To protect their land, tribal revived and utilised their traditional form of public sphere to communicate with the government. They evolved their own public sphere (*pathalgarhi*) to deliver their message of resistance. For protesting the land acquisition *pathalgarhi* become the strongest medium of resistance. Tribal carved out their constitutional rights over *Pathal* (stones) and establishes it to the entry of each villages communicating that no one can acquire land without the permission of *Gram Sabha* (the village council). The issues started covering a big space in the dominant media when tribals started to resist the land acquisition and mobilise people through '*pathalgarhi*'. It provided a challenge to the government authority which is controlling the community by imposing policies of development. The tribal area in India has been protected and regulated under special provision of the constitution but there is loops between the practice and the constitutional rights. Therefore, the major research problem focussed around that the state's constitutional right given to tribal, when they are utilising under their own traditional form of public sphere as *Pathalgarhi* movement, how the state responding to their expression? whether, state is reacting, or giving space to the expression? Demonising their expression or dealing and accepting their expression? To cover the loops the recent phenomena of *Pathalgarhi* movement has been observed. The expression of dominant media over this movement and the participation of tribal people in their public sphere have been mapped. For understanding the expression of dominant media local newspapers content and national newspapers coverage has been analysed (Content analysis) and for understanding the participation of tribal people in their public sphere, a survey has been conducted and semi structured interviews have been conducted. The study finds its relevance in understanding the conflicted relationship between public sphere and state. In other words, the study aims in understanding the state's relationship with its people focussing their communication with each other.

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