

# International Multidisciplinary Research Journal

## *Golden Research Thoughts*

Chief Editor  
Dr.Tukaram Narayan Shinde

Publisher  
Mrs.Laxmi Ashok Yakkaldevi

Associate Editor  
Dr.Rajani Dalvi

Honorary  
Mr.Ashok Yakkaldevi

Golden Research Thoughts Journal is a multidisciplinary research journal, published monthly in English, Hindi & Marathi Language. All research papers submitted to the journal will be double - blind peer reviewed referred by members of the editorial board. Readers will include investigator in universities, research institutes government and industry with research interest in the general subjects.

### Regional Editor

Dr. T. Manichander

### International Advisory Board

Kamani Perera  
Regional Center For Strategic Studies, Sri Lanka

Mohammad Hailat  
Dept. of Mathematical Sciences,  
University of South Carolina Aiken

Hasan Baktir  
English Language and Literature  
Department, Kayseri

Janaki Sinnasamy  
Librarian, University of Malaya

Abdullah Sabbagh  
Engineering Studies, Sydney

Ghayoor Abbas Chotana  
Dept of Chemistry, Lahore University of  
Management Sciences[PK]

Romona Mihaila  
Spiru Haret University, Romania

Ecaterina Patrascu  
Spiru Haret University, Bucharest

Anna Maria Constantinovici  
AL. I. Cuza University, Romania

Delia Serbescu  
Spiru Haret University, Bucharest,  
Romania

Loredana Bosca  
Spiru Haret University, Romania

Ilie Pinteau,  
Spiru Haret University, Romania

Anurag Misra  
DBS College, Kanpur

Fabricio Moraes de Almeida  
Federal University of Rondonia, Brazil

Xiaohua Yang  
PhD, USA

Titus PopPhD, Partium Christian  
University, Oradea, Romania

George - Calin SERITAN  
Faculty of Philosophy and Socio-Political  
Sciences Al. I. Cuza University, Iasi

.....More

### Editorial Board

Pratap Vyamktrao Naikwade  
ASP College Devrukh, Ratnagiri, MS India Ex - VC. Solapur University, Solapur

Iresh Swami

Rajendra Shendge  
Director, B.C.U.D. Solapur University,  
Solapur

R. R. Patil  
Head Geology Department Solapur  
University, Solapur

N.S. Dhaygude  
Ex. Prin. Dayanand College, Solapur

R. R. Yaliker  
Director Management Institute, Solapur

Rama Bhosale  
Prin. and Jt. Director Higher Education,  
Panvel

Narendra Kadu  
Jt. Director Higher Education, Pune

Umesh Rajderkar  
Head Humanities & Social Science  
YCMOU, Nashik

Salve R. N.  
Department of Sociology, Shivaji  
University, Kolhapur

K. M. Bhandarkar  
Praful Patel College of Education, Gondia

S. R. Pandya  
Head Education Dept. Mumbai University,  
Mumbai

Govind P. Shinde  
Bharati Vidyapeeth School of Distance  
Education Center, Navi Mumbai

G. P. Patankar  
S. D. M. Degree College, Honavar, Karnataka

Alka Darshan Shrivastava  
Shaskiya Snatkottar Mahavidyalaya, Dhar

Chakane Sanjay Dnyaneshwar  
Arts, Science & Commerce College,  
Indapur, Pune

Maj. S. Bakhtiar Choudhary  
Director, Hyderabad AP India.

Rahul Shriram Sudke  
Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Indore

Awadhesh Kumar Shirotriya  
Secretary, Play India Play, Meerut (U.P.)

S. Parvathi Devi  
Ph.D.-University of Allahabad

S.KANNAN  
Annamalai University, TN

Sonal Singh,  
Vikram University, Ujjain

Satish Kumar Kalhotra  
Maulana Azad National Urdu University



## INDIA'S ENDANGERED RAJI TRIBE IN CENTRAL HIMALAYA

Artery Sarkar

### ABSTRACT

**G**lobalized Earth, we and our society, are feeling that indigenous and traditional socio-cultural terrain, settlement morphology and ecological identity of tribe are belonging at the door of abolition. Changes and modification are everywhere. The need and value of the tribal culture and identity are being increased to protect our environment even in geo-environmental field. The touch of tribe on environment is very polite and sustainable. This research will be mainly limelight on Settlement, population, culture, environment and conservation issues for sustainability of societies and tribal identity management of Raji tribe of Uttarakhand on the light of their present environmental conditions and adaptation to environments. An open and extensive research on endangered Raji tribe of Uttarakhand is not found, especially in respect of Settlement structure, Demographic challenges, indigenous cultural identity, environmental sustainability and conservation point of view.

**KEYWORDS** :ecological identity, Demographic challenges.

### INTRODUCTION

The population of Uttarakhand has increased significantly in the last decade while the tribal population has been stagnant with one of the most primitive tribes of the state, Raji, on the verge of extinction. The Raji tribe has been included in the list of 18 most threatened human groups of the country.<sup>1,2</sup> The committee, headed by Gobinda Chandra Naskar on August 2013, had earlier expressed its apprehension about the decline of population of the Vulnerable tribal group (PTG) like Raji in Uttarakhand.<sup>3</sup> It is a little known tribal community which is the descendants of prehistoric Kiratas, who were comparatively early settlers



of Uttarakhand, than Khasas, Nagas, Aryas and the Tibetans.

### OBJECTIVES :

- To discuss the present status of Raji tribe in Central Himalaya.

### METHODOLOGY:

The research is based on both literature review and field study.

### RESULT AND DISCUSSION:

Raji tribe<sup>8</sup> ((means "Little Rulers', also described as Van-Rawat (King of forest), Van-Raji (Royal people of forest) or Van-Manush (Wild man or man of forest)) has themselves to comparatively more rugged hill topography (2000-6000 feet from MSL on the steep slope) of Pithoragarh district and Didihat tahsil of central Himalaya. They are most primitive tribe in Uttarakhand and

Austro-Asiatic non Aryan affinity.<sup>4</sup> The villages inhabited by them are Jauljibi, Jamtadi, Altadi, Kuttakanyal, Madanpuri, Kimkhola, Bhaktirawa, Ganagaon, Ciphalthara and Khirdwari. Raji is small in number while 1.35 percent tribal population is enumerated as unclassified.<sup>7</sup> They are who claim themselves to be Rajputs and the original inhabitants of Central Himalaya, though anthropologically they belong to Tibeto-Burman family and until recently they were a community of nomadic hunters and gatherers. They are mainly hunter and gather. Even today their places of residence are confined amidst of the dense forests of the Indo-Nepal border of Uttarakhand. But with the invasion of different ethnic groups, the Kiratas gradually vanished from Uttarakhand and their descendents were remained in Kumaun and Nepal. In Kumaun the descendants of Kiratas were called Rajis.

Most of these Raji tribes have built their settlements in the interior regions of the forests. They move from forest to forest. They have been recognized as one of the primitive group among the 75 groups declared by the government of India in 1975. Raji have recorded the lowest literacy rate of just 35.8 percent (7 years and above); among this 47.2%Male and 22.5%Female.<sup>9</sup> According to Census of 1971, 1981 and 1991, Raji population was 277, 371 and 494 respectively. But now they are only 123 families with a total population of 531, are distributed in nine settlements (85% population are found here)<sup>11</sup> in the district Pithoragarh, one settlement in district Champawat and one new settlement in the district Udham Singh Nagar.<sup>12</sup>

This tribal community presents a significant degree of culture and ethnic diversity. They are addiction towards all types of alcohols. The Raji tribes have also developed tastes for several 'wild fruits' and 'tree roots'. Exquisite jewellerys that these Raji females wear also are quite large and heavy. Artistic fervor of these Raji tribes is nicely depicted in various art forms. For children beautiful handbags are prepared which have demand in the local markets as well as that of the whole of the country. Position of women in Raji tribal community is held high. However, as a recent phenomenon, few of these Raji tribes dress in the similar fashion like that of a people belong to a non tribal community. It is only natural that these Raji tribes have taken up the profession of gatherers. Instances are found where one can see many of these tribes collect honey from the bee hives. In the present world they have resorted to agriculture and labour. However their dependence on forest produce has not ceased completely. They grow cereal crops. They also do fishing and hunting. They are also known for making agricultural tools. No child marriage takes place amongst them. Widow Remarriage and divorce are not common among them. They have a patriarchal and patrilineal system. The oldest man is the head of the family. These Raji tribes converse with each and other in a language of the same name. They follow Hinduism. They also worship Hindu deities, Bhagvati, Nanda Devi. They also worship all aspects of Nature.<sup>5</sup> they marry themselves only and do not marry outside Raji community. The Rajis, socially and economically, are the most underdeveloped tribal community of the region. Land and forests are the primary economic resources of the Raji. At present they are engaged in agriculture, animal husbandry, tailoring and some other occupations. Their traditional occupation of hunting and gathering now occupies a secondary position. Many of them work as agricultural or forest labourers. They are nomadic shy people and hold to a tradition of saluting no one except the Ascot Raja. The Rajis have been a community of food gatherers, small game trappers, cultivators and labour etc. (Prasad, 1998). But still they depend on forest produce. The cereal crops grown by them are of very poor quality and yield is also very low. Rajis are famous for making wooden bowls and agricultural tools (Singh, 1994). They were once famous for the barter trade of wooden bowls with cereals, edibles, clothes etc. This system has now almost vanished due to non availability of Genthii wood (Naswa, 2001). The Rajis have their own dialect which is quite different from that of neighbouring tribal and non-tribal communities. However, they can speak and interact in Kumauni-Pahari dialect as well as in broken Hindi

language (Bisht, 2006). The Raji religion also reflects their unique world view that keeps them aloof from most others around them. For their own gods and some adopted Hindu ones, the Raji construct simple open-air altars with prayer flags and cloth swaying in nearby trees. Their marriage rites are also simple, without Brahmin or priest. With the acceleration of development and communication with the outside world, the Raji have struggled to maintain a way of life they greatly value.



As of 2001, the Raji people were classified as a Scheduled Tribe under the Indian government's reservation program of positive discrimination.<sup>6</sup> Onerous forest laws have also made life difficult. They had their own peculiar traditions which were quite distinct from the neighbouring Kumaun tribes. But in the present day they have undergone changes. Now some of them have got their permanent settlement of residence, which gradually took the shape of small patch like villages.<sup>10</sup>

The Raji tribe in Central Himalaya inhabited so remote and inaccessible area of Uttarakhand that they are deprived of almost all kinds of basic necessities like education, sanitation, health assistance and pure drinking water. There are many ethnographers who do not have a clear idea about the Raji tribes of Central Himalaya and there are very few researches on them. After the completion of this research work, people will come to know about this particular Tribe in respect of demographic view, settlement structure, socio-economic-cultural terrain, environmental sustainability, and challenges to sustain. The Tribe and our Indian Tribal Research, too, will be benefited. All aspects of the Raji tribe's life like: racial history, population, migration, birth, death, sex ration, education, demographic dynamics, marriage, dress, funeral, spiritual activities, their food habits, belief, traditional knowledge, environmental knowledge, disaster management knowledge, racial identity, settlement, political life, administrative system, traditional game, indigenous identity, ecology, and their geo-political importance will be recorded in the research archive. The Raji tribes have lived a very isolated existence. They suffer from severe malnutrition. Without health facilities, skin diseases and tuberculosis are widespread. The mortality rate among infants and children is also high. This is primarily because they do not understand the necessity of personal hygiene. Raji villages, with its flora and fauna and immense natural beauty, are fast turning out to be a popular tourist destination. Speaking of ways in which the Tribe could benefit from tourism and Raji tribes could find employment as guides and porters for the tourists who visited the region. With the invasion of modernity and western perception most of the indigenous-demographic structure, traditional-socio-cultural-economic terrain, settlement structure, ecological viewpoint, and resource management are being changed. To conserve their historical identity and to curtail the challenges of their contemporary life this research is very much important. In this way they can conscious vis-a-vis our Indian Government can also give prior intention on the matter of their conservation.

Traditional settlement, socio-cultural-cultural life, and environmental knowledge of Raji tribes can be as important as, and sometimes even more important than, the knowledge of the geographical

terrain. These all are relevant and important to policy and strategy making for their conservation. We can consider demographic view, settlement structure, socio-economic-cultural terrain, environmental sustainability as the way Raji tribes assign meaning to the world around them and define their place in that world.

Sustainability of Raji tribe community is a concept which promotes equality between the Raji tribe people of today and the Raji tribe people of tomorrow. The idea of sustainability is to create a balance between their demography, ecology, social and livelihood needs. Their needs of today must be taken care of in such a way that it does not negatively impact the needs of the next generations. Ecological sustainability of Raji tribe community refers to the capacity of the biosphere to meet the needs of the present Raji tribes, without hindering future generations from being able to meet their needs. This means using their natural resources shrewdly in the short-term so that these resources are available in the long-term. Ecological sustainability is the belief that all Raji tribes must use natural and indigenous resources wisely and efficiently so that these resources never become exhausted. To ensure that the environment is not destroyed forever, humans need to start living in a way which reduces their pressure on the environment and helps to preserve the Nature's resources for the future (means ecologically sustainable development in Raji tribe and their socio-economic-cultural environment). This means that Raji tribes not only need to avoid destroying the environment any further but also attempt to repair the resources which have already been damaged.

The need for study of this tribe is highly valuable and relevant in the light of their present environmental conditions and adaptation to environments. Due to cultural suicide, mixed culture, cross-culture, globalization and modernization most of the indigenous ecological resources, settlement structure, socio-economic and cultural terrain are belonging at the edge of destruction. The concept of sustainability is highly questionable for tribal society. Changes may be found in their social and cultural adaptations as a result of inter and intra connectivity and opening up of spatial and economic relation with surrounding territories and cultures. Being a researcher we should develop a conceptual framework for understanding their demographic and cultural changes, as well as human-environmental relationships. In this proposal, an aspect of demography, settlement, indigenous socio-culture, economic and livelihood opportunities, resource of natural environment related with their life, Nepal-India political geo-boundary and their life, Governmental approaches for development in the areas of Raji tribes territory and sustainability issues (development which achieves ecological sustainability while striving to meet Raji tribe's other needs) of the tribe in terms of traditional resources management (the maintenance of life support systems and the achievement of a 'natural' extinction rate) will be highly concerned.

#### REFERENCES:

1. Tribal population stagnant, Raji tribe on verge of extinction from <http://www.tribuneindia.com/2014/20140118/dun.htm>
- 2 Jay Singh Rawat (2014). "Uttarakhand Ke Janjatiyon Ka Itihaas".
- 3 India's endangered tribal groups see rise in population. [http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2013-08-25/news/41445973\\_1\\_population-tribe-census](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2013-08-25/news/41445973_1_population-tribe-census)
- 4 Śarma, Devidatta. Tibeto-Himalayan Languages of Uttarkhand.p.4
- 5 [http://www.indianetzone.com/9/raji\\_tribe.htm](http://www.indianetzone.com/9/raji_tribe.htm)
- 6 "List of Scheduled Tribes". Census of India: Government of India. 7 March 2007. Retrieved 27 November 2012.

7[http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/11218/12/12\\_chapter%204.pdf](http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/11218/12/12_chapter%204.pdf)

8Census of India, 2001

9 Office of the Registrar General, Govt. of India, 2001.

10,11Pandey, P. (Apr-June, 2008).Raji: the tribe of Uttarakhand approach to tribal welfare. The Indian journal of political science. Vol. LXIX. No.2. P.381-91

12 Van Rawats, Samal ed . GBPIHED, Kosi-katarmal, Almora, p.30

Bisht,B.S. (2006), "Tribes of Uttaranchal: A Study of Education, Health, Hygiene and Nutrition", Kalpaz Publication, Delhi, P.105

Naswa, S.(2001), "Tribes of Uttar Pradesh and Uttaranchal", Mittal Publications, New Delhi, P.21.

Singh, K.S. (1994), People of India, Vol-III-The Scheduled Tribes, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, P.119-121.

Prasad, R.R. (1998), "Raji", in Encyclopaedic Profile of Indian Tribes(eds.) Sachchidananda and R.R. Prasad, Vol-IV, Discovery Publishing House, New Delhi, P.863.

# Publish Research Article

## International Level Multidisciplinary Research Journal For All Subjects

Dear Sir/Mam,

We invite unpublished Research Paper, Summary of Research Project, Theses, Books and Book Review for publication, you will be pleased to know that our journals are

### Associated and Indexed, India

- ★ International Scientific Journal Consortium
- ★ OPEN J-GATE

### Associated and Indexed, USA

- EBSCO
- Index Copernicus
- Publication Index
- Academic Journal Database
- Contemporary Research Index
- Academic Paper Database
- Digital Journals Database
- Current Index to Scholarly Journals
- Elite Scientific Journal Archive
- Directory Of Academic Resources
- Scholar Journal Index
- Recent Science Index
- Scientific Resources Database
- Directory Of Research Journal Indexing

Golden Research Thoughts  
258/34 Raviwar Peth Solapur-413005, Maharashtra  
Contact-9595359435  
E-Mail-ayisrj@yahoo.in/ayisrj2011@gmail.com  
Website : www.aygrt.isrj.org