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Name of Topic: A Study of Educational Status, Government Provisions and Aspirations of Denotified Communities

Keywords- Denotified Communities, *Sapera*, *Sansi*, Criminal Tribes Act, Ex-Criminal Tribes

ABSTRACT

Denotified communities in India were historically wronged. Under Criminal Tribes Act (CTA), 1871, roughly 200 ethnic communities were declared criminals (Radhakrishna, 2009) under British Rule. Later, they were denotified of their criminal status through complete CTA abolishment between 1950 and 1952 (Heredia, 2002) ; but stigma of criminality and Habitual Offender's Act (1952) still affects them.

In this Qualitative study; educational status, socio-economic status, status of women, vocational aspirations of youth, social discrimination, educational marginalisation, and overall stigmatisation of *Sapera* and *Sansi* communities were explored; along with an overall impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the educational adjustment of children; through Ethnography and Case study approaches. Data was collected through- Settlement Observation Inventory, Community Leader Interview Schedule, Family Survey, Focus Group Discussion of Women and Youth, and Teachers Interview Schedule. Special cases were extracted from both communities. Findings through thematic analysis suggests that *Sapera* community is lagging *Sansi* community, in education. Stigma of criminality is still prevalent. COVID- 19 has affected the livelihood and education. Children in *Sapera* community are dropping -out due to digital divide. Suggestions are- a permanent National Commission for addressing their issues; and a specific Act on the lines of 'The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989'.