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## THE STUDY OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF TIBETAN REFUGEES IN GONDIA DISTRICT

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### ABSTRACT:

*The Tibetan community living in the Norgaling Tibetan settlement in the Gondia district still observes the Tibetan National Uprising Day to show their devotion to their ancestors. In 1959, Tibetans rose against the Chinese government to fight for their religious freedom, and their struggle is still relevant today. Regional Tibetan youth members also distribute pamphlets on the issue of Tibetan Uprising Day in Arjuni Morgaon, Sakoli, and Bhandara. To celebrate the Tibetan National Uprising Day, people gather at the Tibetan Refugee Settlement Office in Norgeling Tibetan Settlement*



*and read a statement from the Central Tibetan Administration in Exile. Although the Tibetan community was forced to flee their homeland in 1959 and the years that followed have dwindled, the memory of religious persecution and subversion still lives on. Despite the lack of progress on the ground, the Tibetan community remains steadfast in its commitment to religious freedom. Tibet began to be targeted by the Chinese government before 1959 in the form of so-called democratic reforms in the Kham and Amdo regions of Tibet. In this research paper, the socio-economic status of Tibetan refugees in the Gondia district has been studied.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Tibetan Refugees, Socio-Economic Status, Gondia District, Religious Persecution*

### INTRODUCTION:

Since time immemorial, India has followed the path of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam", that is, the whole world is one family. This is the reason why even today the citizens of India's neighboring countries when facing situations like violence or starvation in their country, turn to our country India. People who migrate officially or unofficially to other countries due to persecution or lack of basic amenities in their country of origin are called refugees of the host countries. Indian law recognizes various groups as refugees. But accepts. Since India has also been the birthplace of many religions, due to which the followers of religions of Indian origin, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, and Jainism are mainly accepted here. There are typically refugees from the Tibetan community forced to flee their homeland in the years following the Partition of India, in 1959 and the Bangladesh genocide in 1971.

Foreign nationals entering India without a valid visa are considered illegal immigrants and can be arrested and deported under the laws of India. There is no specific law dealing with refugees in India, instead, they are dealt with at the political and administrative level, and their status is governed by an international act of 1946. The Indian nationality law governed by the Citizenship Act (Articles 5 to 11 of the Constitution of India) was passed for the first time in 1955, which included the creation of a National Register of Citizens (NRC). Also from time to time, the Citizenship (Amendment) Acts were passed in 1986, 1992, 2003, and 2005.

The military invasion by China in 1949 forced Tibet, a historically independent country, to face the crisis of its existence. This was soon followed by the loss of universal liberties resulting from communist ideology and events such as the Cultural Revolution (1966–76). However, it would still be wrong to assume that the worst is over. Its apprehension is still there. Even today, the unique national, cultural, and religious identity of Tibet is being played with by the Chinese and these identities are under serious threat. The policy of Chinese occupation and persecution has destroyed Tibet's national independence, culture, religion, environment, and universal human rights of its people. From time to time, this destructive trend can also be seen in China breaking international laws without any reason.

In recent years, the continuous population transfer to Tibet by China has doomed Tibetans to become a minority in their land. Today, while Tibetans number six million in Tibet, they are greatly outnumbered by Chinese immigrants, who are given preferential treatment in education, jobs, and private enterprises. On the other hand, Tibetans are treated as second-class citizens in their own country. Under the guise of economic and social development, Beijing encourages the migration of the Chinese population to Tibet and marginalizes Tibetans in the economic, educational, political, and social spheres.

By the end of 1998, the People's Republic of China had signed three treaties, including the International Bill of Rights, but these have still not been implemented in China and Tibet. The violation of individual and collective rights has become the main target of the Tibetan people and their unique cultural identity, and their existence is threatened in the future. Many people from India's neighbouring countries come to India due to persecution and starvation, they are given refuge in our country India. A separate policy should be made for refugees so that refugees get shelter and they do not cause problems with the resources of the country, India has the highest refugee population in the South Asian region, but to date, uniform laws have not been made for their shelter.

#### **Research Methodology:**

The research paper has depended on secondary data.

#### **Objective of Article:**

- 1) To study the socio-economic status of Tibetan refugees in the Gondia district.
- 2) To study the condition of Tibetan refugees in the Gondia district.
- 3) To study the steps taken so far in the interest of Tibetan refugees in the Gondia district.
- 4) To search for the reasons why there is a huge gap in the problem of refugees and migrants in India.

#### **Socio-Economic Status of Tibetan Refugees in Gondia District:**

In 1959 and the years that followed, Tibetans were subjected to land reforms and a cooperative system, which was used as a pretext to confiscate their land, livestock, and means of production in the name of collectivization. Monks and nuns were forced to disrobe, and monasteries were demolished under the guise of religious reform. The Tibetan insurgency of 1959 was a desperate attempt by Tibetans to preserve their age-old religious identity, as they felt threatened about their very existence. Those who stood against the administration were branded as dacoits and rebels.

HH the Dalai Lama and ministers of the Kashag (Tibetan cabinet) began the march into exile on March 10, 1959, followed by about 80,000 Tibetans, including Tibetan government officials. However, there was no respite in the following years, as Deng Xiaoping's development policies in the 1980s led to further colonization of Tibet by exploiting the region's natural resources through the construction of large dams and infrastructure projects. This resulted in massive resettlement and destruction of Tibetan people and resources. While the projects led to the development of western or coastal China, they came at the expense of the Tibetan people and increased income inequality between China and Tibet.

Currently, the PRC government is pursuing a "one nation, one culture, one religion, one language" policy, under which Tibetan children are forced to learn Mandarin from kindergarten schools. Marriages between Tibetans and Chinese are being rewarded for promoting the so-called

model family of ethnic harmony. But there is no such thing in the Gondia district. Tibetans are being carefully resettled on the pretext of providing job opportunities, building dams, and ecological protection. However, the relocation is aimed at displacing the majority of Tibetan Buddhists in Tibet. For this reason, faith in Buddhism is increasing in Norgeling Tibetan settlements and other places of the district, along with Tibetan refugees who have also started believing in the Hindu religion.

Despite repression from the Chinese government, the Tibetan population in the area continues to fight for religious freedom and the preservation of its cultural identity. The policies of the Chinese authorities have resulted in the loss of land, resources, and independence of Tibetans and the weakening of their cultural identity. Tibetan refugees in the district demand that the international community should pay attention to the situation in Tibet and put pressure on the Chinese government to stop its repressive policies toward Tibetans. The observance of Tibetan National Uprising Day in Norgaling Tibetan Settlement and elsewhere in the district reminds the world that the Tibetan people's struggle for independence and cultural identity continues.

The Tibetan community in the district expresses gratitude for India's support and contribution to their cause, which they consider an integral part of their existence. He praised India's inclusive development policies, which prioritize the welfare of ethnic and religious minorities. The Tibetan community believes that India's approach to respecting all religions and minorities is a lesson the world should follow.

There is a long history of refugees coming to India, in which the main ones are refugees during the partition of India, Tibetan refugees, refugees from Bangladesh, Kashmiri refugees, etc. As of January 1, 2021, 58,843 Sri Lankan refugees were living in 108 refugee camps in Tamil Nadu and 54 in Odisha, and 72,312 Tibetan refugees in India, according to Union Home Ministry records. The problem of refugees is a global problem. There is a huge gap in the Gondia district regarding the problem of refugees and migrants. The Tibetan refugee problem in the Gondia district and India is a major threat to the sovereignty and security of the country. There is a big challenge before India regarding this.

There is no internationally accepted legal definition of a migrant. Migrants can be understood as people living outside their country of origin who are not asylum seekers or refugees. Some migrants leave their country for livelihood or study-teaching. Such people do not leave their country due to poverty, political unrest, mass violence, natural calamities, or other dire circumstances. An asylum seeker is a person who has left his country. He seeks protection from persecution and serious human rights violations in another country. However, they are not yet legally recognized as refugees. Such Tibetan refugees from the district are awaiting a decision on their asylum claims. A refugee is a person who has fled his country due to fear of persecution and human rights violations. The risk to their safety and life is so high that they are left with no option but to go out of their country and seek safety. This happens because the government of their country is unable to protect them. Refugees have the right to international protection. But the Tibetan refugees of the district are not much aware of this.

There is a need for a practical approach and legislation for refugees in India. India's security concerns also need special attention in the national refugee law. Nor should it be that anyone should be deported or detained under the guise of national security concerns. The fear of being deported or being detained under the guise of national security concerns persists among the Tibetan refugees in the district. The Tibetan refugees of the district are recognized by the Govt. They are provided protection and assistance through specific policies and rules framed by the government.

The question is why a concrete law on refugees could not be made in India till now. In recent times many citizens of neighboring countries have come to India illegally not because of state persecution but in search of better economic opportunities. Most of the debate in India revolves around illegal immigrants rather than refugees. The situation in India is quite complex. In one situation both categories are usually integrated. Due to the unclear law, many options are open for India to decide on the migration of refugees. India can declare any group of refugees as illegal migrants. Refugees in India are entitled to rights under Article 14 (right to equality), Article 20 (protection against the punishment of offenses), and Article 21 (right to life) of the Constitution. Also, Muslims have been excluded from the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), 2019. It grants citizenship only to Hindu, Christian, Jain, Parsi, Sikh,

and Buddhist immigrants from Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. Despite not being a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol, India is home to many refugees. India has an ethical tradition of assimilating foreign people and cultures. The Dalai Lama and Tibet are major bottlenecks in India-China relations. China regards the Dalai Lama as a separatist who has more influence over Tibetans. India wants to use the Tibetan card to counter China's continued aggression along the Line of Actual Control.

Currently, there is an executive policy (not a law) regarding Tibetans settling in the district. The Government of India does not grant citizenship to Tibetans born in India after the cut-off year of 1987. This has created a feeling of discontent among the youth of the Tibetan community in the district. This issue will affect India's role as the sole entity to influence the Tibetan refugee debate in the future. India's current Tibetan policy is important for the welfare and development of Tibetans living in India, but it does not legally support the core issues of Tibet. For example, the demand for independence in Tibet by the destroyers of Tibet. Therefore, the time has come that India should also take a more assertive stand on the issue of Tibet in dealing with China. The district is home to a young and restive population of Tibet, which has looked outside India for its leadership and command structure after the passing of the Dalai Lama. Therefore, India also needs to avoid such a situation. India ensures that refugees can access the same security services as fellow Indians.

They can also get the benefits of national welfare schemes and can contribute effectively to the Indian economy. But those who do not have the documents issued by the government. They are unable to open bank accounts and do not receive benefits from all government welfare schemes and are thus unknowingly left behind. India lacks a specific law to deal with the problem of refugees, yet their numbers have grown steadily. Despite not being a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol, India has many refugees. resides. However, India has an excellent record on the issue of refugee protection. India has an ethical tradition of assimilating foreign people and cultures. The Foreigners Act, of 1946 failed to address the problems relating to refugees. It also gives immense power to the central government to deport any foreign national. Apart from this, the Constitution of India also respects the life, liberty, and dignity of human beings.

### CONCLUSION:

Various welfare schemes of the Government of India should also be extended to the Tibetan community living in the Gondia district on humanitarian grounds. Tibetan people are spread in different parts of the district and they are very hardworking and successful. The Government of India may review the Tibetan Refugee Policy from time to time to make life easier for the community displaced from Tibet. The government needs to make significant contributions to the cause of Tibetan interests. Tibetans never deliberately create problems in India. They are very peace-loving people. The Tibetan population, which is dispersed throughout India, is very prosperous and industrious. According to him, many Tibetans who have been established around the globe have migrated from India. They never neglect their roots or take their Tibetan heritage with them wherever they go. The rules need to be revisited from time to time for the Tibetan people to make their lives easier.

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