



# “Adivasi” and The People Indigeneity Debates in India

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# Who is Indigenous?

- **A range of communities** with unique local and traditional codes, customary laws and evolving knowledge practices (both tribal and non-tribal).
- **Ambiguity of first settlers** and those who followed *[Priority]*.



- **Traditional knowledge and occupations overlapped:** Adivasi and non Adivasi as pastoralists, healers, shifting cultivators
- **Establishing the “adivasi” identity** (the indigenous) as a counter political assertion against exploiters since the 1920s-1930s.



# Contextualising Colonization in India

- A **Range of Colonizers** ruling not just over “adivasi” but also many others who had settled in the country over hundreds of years.
- Where colonizers did not stay on; **assertions for autonomy** spread across the country
- Differing notions of **who is a colonizer**: Money Lenders-State-Corporations
- **North East India** versus the Indian State



# Law and Policy Interface



- Indigenous does not appear in constitutional and legal frameworks of India (*Special Governance and Rights in V and VI Scheduled Tribe Areas of the Indian Constitution*).
- Wider usage of “traditional knowledge”, “tribal knowledge and “people’s knowledge” in laws.

- Incongruity with customary laws and local institutions with national and regional frameworks.

- Conflicts around land and territorial rights especially in the context of the industrial expansion.

- Interface with International Networks and Declarations for indigenous rights and self-assertion

