CHAPTER - V

SOCIAL IMPACT OF COLONIAL AND POST-COLONIAL POLICIES ON TRIBES

This and the following chapter will discuss the social and economic impact of colonial and post-colonial state on the life of tribals of Wynad, especially the Kurichias. In this chapter emphasis is given to unveil the changing social condition of the tribals. How the colonial and post-colonial state has redrawn the social life and social relations of tribals through various policies like Government of India Act, Constitutional reforms, and other policies will be the focus of analysis. The question of slavery under the changing political dynamics forms another key issue of the discussion. I have also briefly discussed how the political movements and mobilization of people effected changes in the everyday life of tribals. In short, this chapter is a discussion on the intervention of various states and political parties in restructuring the life of tribals.

Colonial Attitude towards the Tribals

The British system of centralized administration has directly or indirectly affected the tribals in several ways which has subsequently led to the breakup of their age-old relation with land and forest. They have been uprooted from their moorings in the same way as artisans and peasants were uprooted under the impact of colonial capitalist profit-oriented economic and political forces.
Towards Isolation and exclusion

The first impact of the colonial rule had been the isolation and segregation of the tribes which invariably led to the exploitation of the tribal population by the selected non-tribals like money lenders and contractors. It also helped the British rulers to exploit and enjoy the natural resources as the rest of the population were not aware or concerned with the development of these areas.\(^1\) The British administrative system was constituted, by and large, independent of the caste system.\(^2\) Moreover, the tribal people were not brought into the mainstream of Indian culture, obviously as a consequence of the British policy of divide and rule. It did not confine itself to highlighting the differences between societies, but also left many undesirable legacies for the nation to negotiate. But the colonial impact on tribal self-perception had been most disastrous.\(^3\) The British for the first time tried to separate the individual from the community. In the case of tribes the colonial administrators mostly followed the policy of segregation and tried to keep them isolated from rest of the population. Thus began the history of the isolation of the tribals. It later adversely affected their socio-economic life. A key administrative policy that made normative the isolation of the tribals is the Government of India Act, 1935. In the beginning policies under the British were varied over the three Presidencies of Bengal Bombay and Madras.\(^4\) So colonial administration in India, treated various tribes in different ways. Though in the Government of India Act, 1935 a reference was made to the ‘Backward Tribe’ and the 13\(^{th}\) schedule to the Government of

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\(^3\) G.N. Devy, \textit{A Nomad called Thief}, , New Delhi, 2006, p.30.

India (Provisional Legislation Assemblies) Order 1936 specified certain tribes as backward in the provinces of Assam, Bihar, Orissa, Central provinces and Bombay and Madras. But the colonial authorities, classified them according to the distinctive qualities and virtues thus identified them to some degree, with the British ruling class (as it is imagined itself to be) and therefore, and qualifying them for authoritative treatment. It was this approach that led to the radical changes in tribal situation.

Though the tribes were isolated they were considered within the administration of British India or within the Indian states where the British kept a watch. These colonial views and values were unknown to the tribal society before the advent of colonialism. The British created new structures and institutions and thereby provided a new system of social stratification. In short, in the 19th century the tribal population was dissatisfied to a great extent with the policies of the British that ultimately led to the redrawing of their community life and replacing it with an individualist society. This shift had resulted in creating new social values where colonial economy and market interests ruled the game.

As a result of the policy of isolation as contained in the Government of India Act of 1935 the tribal areas in different provinces were excluded from the purview of the legislature. These areas were kept as ‘Wholly Excluded Area' and 'Area of Modified Exclusion’ or 'Excluded Areas' and ‘Partially Excluded Areas’. In determining the areas to be classified as excluded or partially excluded, the Secretary of State for India issued instructions that, exclusion must be based upon strict necessity and must be

as limited as possible in scope consistent with the need of the above general population.  

The Government of India in making recommendations for partial exclusion kept in view the possibility of obtaining convenient blocks of territory with readily recognisable boundaries susceptible of special administrative treatment without inconvenience. Thus the excluded and partially excluded areas were well-defined areas populated either predominantly or to a considerable extent by aboriginals. It is stated in a later report that these areas, however, do not by any means cover the entire population of tribal origin, and in many cases represent only a comparatively small proportion of the aboriginal population, the rest of them being scattered over non-excluded areas. A common feature of the partially excluded area is that they are generally located in non-accessible areas and in hill tracts, and it is there that concentration of aboriginal population could be found. In the Madras presidency, they are interspersed with the rest of the population and are hardly distinguishable from the general population.

This policy of Exclusion without any positive steps towards tribal welfare has been criticised for its negative approach. Whatever be the reason, the conclusion to be drawn from the state of affairs noted in Thakkar Committee Report is that partial Exclusion or total exclusion has been of very little practical value. The objective of special administration has thus not been achieved. In other words, no definite programme for the development of the excluded area with a view to remove the disability of exclusion has been achieved.

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8 As quoted in N.P. Bhanage, Tribal Commissions and Committees in India, Delhi, 1993, p. 2.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid., p.7.
followed. The greatest weakness of the scheme of Partial Exclusion is that it left the area weakly or nominally represented in the legislature without any special financial provision. The policy of giving separate representation to the tribes has practically gone without any comment with regard to any of its important aspects. This exclusion to a great extent served the British purpose of keeping the tribal areas isolated from the mainstream of national life, so that the influence of the freedom movement did not affect the tribal people.\textsuperscript{11}

The British policy of separation of tribes and non-tribes mainly came from the notion of cultural backwardness.\textsuperscript{12} But some feel that this backwardness of the tribes was because of their subjugation by the British and it was not because of the natural isolation and autonomy.\textsuperscript{13}

The creation of the non-regulation tract, or the creation of the scheduled district, the backward tracts, the excluded area, or partially excluded area, was a device to keep these people separate.\textsuperscript{14} Historically, this ecological and social isolation has become one of the principal features of the tribal population and for centuries it has left a definite impress on their social system.\textsuperscript{15}

There was a particular attitude in the nature and extent of British contact with tribes in India.\textsuperscript{16} In Madras presidency the tribal development

\textsuperscript{11} S.P Sinha, "Tribal Development Administration – A historical Overview" in LP Vidyarty, \textit{Tribal Development and Its Administration.}, New Delhi, 1981, p.68.


\textsuperscript{14} S.K. Pramanic, \textit{Sociology of G.S. Ghurye}, Jaipur, 1994, p.64.


was not only practically ignored by the colonial authorities but also there was no direct contact between the rulers and the tribes.17 Their administration never allowed a consistent policy directed towards tribal improvement.18 They ignored the traditional structure of Malabar which they considered to be outdated and their disregard aroused the displeasure of both the population and the British raj.19 However, in Malabar, it is stated that colonialism brought about significant socioeconomic changes in the tribal society.20 The most important among them was the agrarian structure which led to the emergence of a new agrarian relation and new pattern of class structure which will discuss in detail below. Economic aspects of these changes are discussed in the succeeding chapters as well.

**Changing Agrarian relations and the question of slavery**

It is a fact that in all taluks in Malabar a considerable section of agricultural labourers consisted of lower castes and tribes attached to their masters (landlords), or what Edgar Thurston had called, ‘men of jenmies’.21 William Logan argues that, unlike in Travancore, landlords in Malabar enjoyed unlimited privileges under the British rule.22 Thackeray reported "Malabar is the only province I have head of in which brahmins do not keep

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any accounts”. These Jenmi’s were Brahmins and other cghite group. The absolute control of land was generally maintained by this upper caste which brought them power and prestige. There are seveal subdivisions among the brahmin, but among them namboodiris were the principal jenmis’. Most of the jenmies were Hindu elites who suffered much under the Mysorean regime. But after the fall of Mysorean power and the subsequent strengthening of the British rule, a favourable situation for the Hindu landlords emerged. To the British these landlords or jenmies seemed more loyal and would be supporters of colonial rule. So the government policies were favourable to the upper strata of society. The British protected the jenmies in lieu of their support. This power of jenmies coupled with colonial support in Malabar much subordinated the social status of the tribal folk.

The prevailing condition of feudalJenmi-casteism together complicated with the advent of colonialism has exasperated the condition of agricultural labourers and tribes in Malabar generally and Wynad in particular. The impact of colonial rule on these downtrodden people was often indirect and confined to a small in number among them. In comparative terms, these groups benefitted than many high castes. Traditionally the largest owners were the highest castes, while the members of the lowest castes and tribes, except some Kurichias and Kurumans, were generally landless poor.

24 Thomas Munro, A report on the Revision of the Judicial system in the province of Malabar, 4th July, 1817, p.12.
25 Herbert Wigram, A Commentary on Malabar Law and Customs, Madras, 1882, p.VII.
agricultural labourers. They lived collectively nearby the field of Janmies to work and look after their paddy fields. The census report of 1817 has recognised this fact that the majority of the tribes have some recognised landlords and receives some remuneration for guarding crops of landlords from wild animals.

**Tribal servitude in the 19th century**

Tribal servitude was a known case in literature on tribal studies. Slavery as a consequence of impoverishment had existed in Malabar from the earliest time and was institutionalised and encouraged by the Portuguese. In 1841 Sullivan reported that there is no race or people in India in a condition so utterly wretched as the slaves of Malabar and Wynad. In the light of contemporary writings (colonial ethnography and other reports) the existence of slave system was very conspicuous in Wynad taluk under the colonial regime. But the census of 1871 that "slavery no longer exists in the eye of the law, but practically the inferior tribes of Malabar are in the bondage of their masters." A letter sent by the revenue and judicial officials to enquire about the nature of extent of slavery, serfdom in the District shows that various forms of agrestic servitudes had existed there. Some admirable

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34 *Slavery in India –Correspondence and Abstract of Regulation and Proceedings (Slavery papers)1828*,State archives.
accounts on slavery were given by William Logan who was for many years the collector of that district. In view of Buchanan there were three modes of transferring the usufruct of slaves such as *janmam, kanam and patom*. As per *janmam* or sale the slaves were totally sold off and then the former owner would have no claim on the slaves. In the *kanam* manner of transferring the labour of a slave, the first owner retained some claims on them as the land was mortgaged to the second owner. Throughout Malabar the concept of *kanam* differed only slightly. In South Malabar, the *kanam* tenure was a lease often for 12 years rather than a mortgage; whereas in North Malabar it was more like an *otti* or mortgage. In *patom* manner employing slaves was by letting them for rent. In this case, for a certain annual sum, the master gives them to another, and the borrower commands their labour, and provides them with their maintenance. These three categories of agricultural slave labourers later constituted the bulk of bonded labourers in Wynad even in the post-colonial period. In the beginning the term like *janmam, kanam* and *patom* were involved only in the case of dealing slaves. Since slaves had no separation from the land they were transferred along with the land. When the slave trade was later prohibited, these terms were confined to the land transaction alone.

The attitude of the colonial Government towards slavery in Malabar was a mixed one. The abolition of slavery and slave trade, under the pressure and through the persuasion of Christian missionaries, also helped the mobility on the axis of status. The so-called reformist activities of Christian

37 Francis Buchanan, n. 35, p. 68.
missionaries formed an integral part of the British administration.\textsuperscript{39} It was in the year of assuming power of Malabar in 1792 that a proclamation was issued against dealing in slaves.\textsuperscript{40} A person offering a slave for sale was considered to be a thief. The sale was to be forfeited, and a person offering him for sale was to be fined five times his value. The purchaser was to be similarly treated. But further measures and proclamation proved that there was no prohibition of slavery under the British but only a banning of sale of slaves.\textsuperscript{41} The Government of India passed the Act V of 1843, the provisions of which were widely published throughout Malabar. Christian missionaries propagated their ideas against slavery. Compelled by these factors, the Government of India abolished slavery in Malabar in 1843, and then extending it to Travancore in 1853 and Cochin in 1854.\textsuperscript{42}

But it had never affected the particular practices that existed among the tribals of Wynad. Though the principal motives behind the abolition of slavery were flow of cheap labour and evangelisation, the Act contributed to the social occupational and geographical mobility of the slave communities. Malabar was thrown open to the evangelical activities of the Basal Mission in 1839 soon after the appalling conditions of the low castes attracted their attention. But such reforms had not so far been extended to the tribal areas of Wynad. It was only in the beginning of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century that some Christian missionaries worked among the Kurichias, especially of the excommunicated Kurichias.


\textsuperscript{40} Edgar Thurston, Ethnographic Notes in Southern India, Part I, New Delhi, 1975, p.443.

\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., p. 445.

\textsuperscript{42} P. Bhaskaranunni, Pathonbatham Nootandile Keralam, (Mal.), Trissur,1988,p.502.
The proclamations of Malabar District Collectors prove that colonial attitude was not against slavery. The collector proclaimed that the Government would not order a slave, who was in the employ of an individual, to forsake him and go to the service at another claimant nor would the Government interfere with the slave's inclination as to where he wished to work. Further, 'any person claiming a slave as Janmam, Kanam or Panayam, the right of such claim or claims will not be investigated into by any one of the public offices or courts'.\footnote{Edgar Thurston, n. 40, p. 445.} It would defeat the very object in view to create any estrangement between them and their masters, and moreover would be an act of injustice and bad faith, of which the masters would be entitled to complain.\footnote{Ibid.} The collectors sometime explained to the Cherumars (a slave caste in Malabar). 'that it was in their interest as well as duty to remain with their master, if treated kindly.\footnote{Ibid.} In practice they treated inhumanely. J. Cameron states that the Janmies contrived to retain a very great part of his former power which was decidedly unfavourable to the slave rising in the social scale.\footnote{J. Cameron, Report on the village of Chevayur – 1866, Govt. press, Madras, 1868, p.2.} The growing type of exploitations of these people by landlords were continued and different types of levies like plantain, coconut etc., extracted from them on the eve of festivals.\footnote{Report of the Malabar Tenancy of committee, 1940, Vol. 1.}

By the influence of the Mysorean power in Malabar the agrestic slave castes had began converting to Islam. In the beginning of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century some Cherumans and Nayadis had adopted such a way of freeing themselves
from their age-old bondage, but no tribe was known to have converted to Islam for that purpose. It is stated that the Mappilas described in the Census reports of 1871 were hybrid Muhammedans whose numbers constantly increased by such conversion of slave castes of Malabar, where ‘conversion’ had a marked effect in freeing the salve castes in Malabar from their former burdens.  

The colonial proclamation of banning the sale of slaves came only in a critical juncture, mainly due to the control in purchasing slaves by the French and Dutch. The practice of slave sale was kept alive by the facility with which the slave could be sold on the coast to the agent of vessels engaged in the trade, sailing from the French settlement at Mahe and the Dutch settlement at Cochin. These ships in general carried slaves to the French Island. At the same time the proclamation against slavery was not to prevent the privileged superior castes from purchasing the children of famine – stricken parents, but was mainly directed against the prevalent practice of robbers carrying off by force the children of the most useful inhabitants. So the colonial proclamation was not effective in the case of aggrestic slaves including tribes. Moreover this kind of colonial attitude in Malabar might have been an encouragement to the slave trade associated with the Valliyukavu temple in Wynad. The inquiries into the existence of slavery in Malabar in the early 19th Century have revealed that even in ordinary leases of land Mavilan and Karimbalan tribes were sold as part of the contract. 


49 Edgar Thurston, n. 40, p.443.

50 The situation prevailed at French settlement in Mahe during that time has been explained in a letter to the principal collector – State Archives, Kozhikode, Vol. No. 4095, General No., 2454.

is also stated that even as late as 1938, volunteers of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party found that these tribes were being sold for 10 to 15 measures of grain.\textsuperscript{52} Thus the practice of slavery continued to remain in another forms in the case of tribes in Wynad up to 1975 and its hang-over is still conspicuous among the tribes of Wynad.

**Tribals and the post-Independent State**

Kerala has been gifted with many social reforms and policy reforms after Independence. Second half of the 20th century had witnessed the spread of education and socio-cultural awakening. As a continuation of it, there also had occurred an intellectual awakening. The Communists with their mass protest movements and mobilization articulated this process of social changes in Kerala.\textsuperscript{53} In the field of social and political awareness, Kerala is widely acclaimed as the most progressive of the Indian states. With the coming of massive social changes in Kerala many among the lower castes became conscious of their state of social suppression. Although the tribes have witnessed differentiation within their own social structure the impact of changes has not been felt on them or was too late to influence them.\textsuperscript{54}

After independence many steps have been taken to improve the socio-economic condition of the tribal communities both by the Governments and Non-Governmental organizations. Even some special provisions for the uplift of the tribal communities in various fields had made very little impact on them.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., p.13.


Social history of the tribal people is much more complex than the conventional assertions about them. But further observations show that there is a remarkable degree of separation of social spaces between non-tribal and tribal people. In this way, their social problems happen mainly in terms of emotional energy and sense of identity. It is observed that the social stratification of the tribals results from retaining their social identity at any cost with some marginal differentiation. Social stratification (social hierarchy) emerged among them in pre-colonial period in the form of semi-feudal exploitation by dividing tribal society into upper and common. After independence, education and employment, though these are in a way integrated phenomena, have become the main basis of social enhancement among the tribal people. A kind of ranking on the basis of social stratification can be seen among the tribes of Wynad. Social stratification had also combined with other structural forms of inequalities such as property ownership and access to political and economic opportunities. This in turn led to social exclusion and is conceived as a process which unfortunately denied opportunities to them from participation in the activities of society. Since inequalities are clearly visible in Kerala society the main aim of tribal developments is to eradicate these inequalities.

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57 By the report of 1978, the Kurichias come first in the social status, Wynad Pulaya was considered to be low by the Paniyas. Kattunaikans are considered to be below by the Mullukurumans.

Abolition of Bonded Labour

All the backwardness of these communities had been encapsulated into the historical enslavement as bonded labour. Abolition of these inhuman practices was an extremely bold, although much belated, step. The first step for liberating them started only after 28 years of independence, with the implementation of the 'twenty point' program and many new Acts and Ordinances came into effect to enforce them.\(^59\) Prior to its inclusion in the twenty point program bonded labour had never become an issue of serious concern and debate among social scientists and politicians. But the existence of this system in Wynad has long been known and many eminent persons have reported about it and requested the Government to abolish this system.\(^60\)

Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Ordinance, 1975, came into force on 25\(^{th}\) October, 1975 and subsequently, the ordinance was replaced by an Act of Parliament known as Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976.\(^61\) Immediately after the abolition a survey of bonded labour was conducted in Wynad area in 1977 and it was revealed that the system existed in a disguised form and a real assessment of the members of bonded labour may be difficult to make because of social and moral implications and inhibitions.\(^62\) By this

\(^{59}\) 1970s was a boon period for tribal development with the eradication of poverty under the twenty points of “Gareebi Hatavo.” It was also during this period that a separate Department for tribal development came to existence.


\(^{61}\) The President of India, in an ordinance of 24\(^{th}\) October 1976, proclaimed that the bonded labour practice was abolished in the country and those who continued to practice it would be liable for punishment upto a fine of Rs.2000 or imprisonment for three years or both – G.K. Gurumurthy, *Cross Cultural Research and other Anthropological Essays*, New Delhi, 1996, p.23.

survey the bonded labourers in debt constituted only 13.65% of the total tribal population. But only a small fraction of the tribal farm – labour force (0.17%) was however officially retained as bonded labourers. The report of the commission states that in major parts of Wynad taluks bonded labour in various forms was existing and it also exists in the district of northern part of Kerala. In this report, there were only 357 bonded labourers in Kerala. Among them 173 were in Kozhikode (South Wynad), 161 in Kannur (North Wynad) and the remaining 23 were in Palakkad. No doubt, in Kerala a good number of bonded labourers have been liberated, but that is neither all nor enough, like the tip of the iceberg is not the iceberg proper. The institution of bonded labour survived the Kerala Land Reforms (KLR) in Wynad, especially in the case of Paniyas and Adiyas. While successive Governments were wise enough to conclude the implications of the changed situation in the post-abolition period, it nevertheless, failed to take note of the tribal situation of Wynad.

The proclamation (Abolition of Bonded Labour) by itself was not enough and the measures subsequently taken were not commensurate with the gigantic scale and uncomprehended complexity of the problem. The abolition of bonded labour system meant only the formal transformation of labourers into free hired workers. This steadily transformed with the replacement of the old feudal landlords by a new generation of tenant farmers and owner farmers who used the system to suppress agricultural wages and  

63 M.Kunhaman, Development of Tribal Economy, New Delhi, 1989, p.82.
66 Ibid, p.179.
also to assure themselves of the availability of labour round the year.\(^67\) The effect of all these unfavourable factors was the 'willing' attachment to the non-tribal employers and abysmally low wage rate. Although the old system has gone in the area of Wynad, in its place, a new form of 'labour attachment' has come to prevail.\(^68\) After emancipation, they had no option but to compete with one another to ensure security of employment and thus to become attached labourers of non-tribal people. The shortage of cultivable land and the consequent fall in employment opportunities also have compelled them to turn to non-tribal employers for their subsistence. This finally adversely affected the wage-rate system of Wynad. Thus the new Act entailed only the freedom to choose the employer, without any acceptable change in the organisation of production.

As the majority of tribal agricultural labourers in this region are very poor, the incidence of attachment is very high. Thus the implementation of Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act has offered no practical benefit to the tribals. On the other hand it benefited the non-tribal employer as they got labour at low wages. So the immediate impact of this Act was misery for Paniyas and Adiyas as several landlords denied them work and wages. These agricultural labourers were virtually slaves tied to soil. As they were equipped for agricultural work alone they had no choice to leave the land of their masters and were sold along with the land to the new owner. However


\(^{68}\) The only difference between the old 'attached labour' system and present system of 'labour attachment' seems to be that, while in the land surplus (labour scarce) economy of the past it was in the interest of the employer to keep the tribal labourers attached to him and in the labour surplus [land scarce] economy of today, it is the tribal labourer's interest not to leave the non-tribal employer.
under this system they enjoyed a certain security as they were given a daily wage and food throughout the year whether they actually worked or not.\textsuperscript{69}

\textbf{Left Movement}

The legislative steps alone were not be sufficient to eliminate bonded labour. There were some other factors which caused the abolition of this system. The influence of revolutionary ideas and the Left Movements had created a general awareness against this inhuman practice. The class and mass organisations built up by the Left Movement attempted to organize people on the basis of their economic demand centred around wages and land.\textsuperscript{70} The formation of Kerala State Karshaka Thozhilali Union (KSKTU) in 1968, with the support of CPI(M) was a challenge against bonded labour. Assembling of these scattered tribal labourers under the banner of the Communist Party helped them to come out of their bondage. Some other evil practices related to bonded labour like \textit{kumbalamadi} and \textit{kumbalachoru} among the adivasies of Wayanad were also abolished by agrarian struggle.\textsuperscript{71} These struggles were also against exploitation in the agrarian sector.\textsuperscript{72} Agricultural labourers including the Paniyas and Adiyas joined the peasant union to demand higher wages. This became the main slogan for unifying these labourers. The role played by the Communist Party and Malabar Kissan Sangham in the cause of proletariat is commendable which resulted in the demand for further enactment of agrarian reforms and ultimately it led to the abolition of landordism.


\textsuperscript{70} \textit{E.P.W.} Aug. 5-12, 1995, p.2003.

\textsuperscript{71} By this inhumen practice tribals were collectively enforced to do dances in the paddy field for long time to prepare the field for sowing. Recently some have come forward to resume it as part of traditional tribal arts.-P.G Padmini, \textit{Keezhala Jeevithamudrakal}, (Mal.), Kannur,2008,p.42.

\textsuperscript{72} M K Prasad, \textit{Aadivaasi Samarathinte Arthantharangal}, (Mal.), (ed.),Cochi,2003,p.60.
The introduction of plantation crops, cash economy and migration etc. have led to the decline of bonded labour system. With the influence of Christian settlers (also known as Chettens) many of the tribals left their traditional Jammies and joined the settlers for making illicit liquor. Though this contact freed them from financial bondage, it alienated them from land and became inveterate drunkards.

The Adiyas and Paniyas mainly concentrated in Pulppally and Tirunelli villages of north Wynad were influenced by A.Varghese, a communist turned Naxalite. He organised them against ‘vallipani’ and led agitations to the houses of landlords like Kaithvalli Swami and Palmool Ananda Varier.  

Later the struggle assumed militancy under the banner of the Naxalite movement in Wynad. Although the movement made some impact on the life of the tribal people, it in no way heralded an end to the adivasi problems.

(2) Untouchability and civil protection act

The system of bonded labour in Wynad was not restricted to the tribes alone but to other low caste untouchables also. The tribes came close to the low castes within the Hindu society in terms of social and economic backwardness. It is the SC and ST who suffered from the age old stigma of untouchability which is the dividing line of discrimination covering their entire activities of life. It is well known that among the upper castes the attitude of untouchability towards the lower castes was instilled since birth and was internalized in the process of socialization. In this way they are

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facing the common platform of untouchability. Since they were discriminated everywhere the Central Government has implemented “The Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955.” This Act was amended in 1976 as per the recommendations of Elayaperumal Committee Report and renamed as the Protection of Civil Right Act (PCR Act), 1955 to abolish the practice of untouchability in any form.  

As part of evaluation of the implementation of this Act of 1955 in Kerala, a report on SC and ST has mentioned that untouchability as such did not exist in Kerala but there were some cases in the northern part of the state especially in the borders of Kasargod Taluk in the former Kannur District. There was a good deal of discussion thereof in Kerala Legislative Assembly which recognized that the continuation of such inhuman practices even in 1984, as the year was declared as the 'Harijan Year', without any changes in different parts of Northern Kerala was contemptuous. Since the cases of atrocities on these people were not covered under the PCR Act 1955, the Parliament passed the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. The impact of such measures was felt very little in the social life of these people in Kerala as they are discriminated everywhere. The Government of India is providing 50% of assistance for strengthening the relief and rehabilitation of the afflicted persons. This act of 1955 has not so far been effectively implemented in Kerala after its formation in 1956.

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Absent Social reform

Anthropologists claim that social hierarchy is absent among tribes. However, the case is different in Kerala. For example, Kurichias have a feeling that they have a superior position among the tribals of Wynad. The Kurumars too have similar feeling. This feeling prompts the Kurichias to believe that the touch of other tribals, sometimes non-tribals as well, make them impure. But many reports in this direction have pointed out that the practice prevailed among the tribes cannot strictly be called untouchability. Some kind of social discrimination existed among the tribal social milieu of Wynad which is different from that of the caste society. So, it seems that all the laws and measures issued by the Government for eradication of untouchability are concerned with SC and other backward communities as they are living among the caste Hindus. Although the tribes possess a distinct culture from that of SC in many ways they are similar in socio-economic backwardness and they too are considered as untouchables by the Hindus. There are many things that they share in common like poverty and social disabilities arising from that fact that, until late, they were untouchables. The separate colonies, hostels and schools exclusively for tribals, as part of their development have accentuated their position as untouchables. Although untouchability has lost its identity it has not been eliminated altogether from Kerala society by economic and political changes but has been made more complex and subterraneous. If and when untouchability is completely wiped out and the erstwhile unfortunate castes find some routes of upward social mobility, adivasies are expected to fill the gap and take the lowest position in the social hierarchy. It was only in the beginning of the 20th Century that this problems attracted the attention of social reformers and it is proved that

82 G.N. Devy, n.3, p.12.
its eradication is more within the purview of administrative and legal measures.  

Kerala have been a major centre of reform movements focussing on specific groups. The history of social transformations of tribals was different from the social transformation of the non-tribal groups.  

Like SCs there had been no social reforms among the STs, because social reforms movements emerge from a community only at a stage of interaction with others or by social involvement. So there is no experienced social and political workers among them. This gap is usually filled by the members of other communities. In the 1940s, Swami Ananda Theertha extended his reform activities to different areas of Wayanad with the help of Sree Shiamjy Sunder Set, among the Kurichias, Paniyas and Irulas. But his reforms and work against slavery at Valliyooravu Shrine came to a premature end. The poor response from the society compelled him to stop his activities. Such external leadership had not remained for long in any locality. In tribal social setup of Wynad there were no social reformers to represent all the tribals. It was late Kalan, former Chairman of Kerala Folklore Academy, who had emerged as a reformer, but his activities remained within the Adiya community.

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Colonialism from within

It is observed that the tribal societies are not so conducive to accept social change effectively. Whenever the Government has taken any measures to improve the social life of tribals it was vehemently opposed by the tribals themselves as it was against their beliefs and customs. So all these measures proved futile in making any social change in this regard. It has been realized that the evils of untouchability and other superstitions are so deep-rooted in this society that Legislations alone could not achieve the desired result. The removal of social disabilities enforced in different areas in the state before and after independence has not made any serious impact on the social life of the tribals. With the improvement of communication and other amenities, the contact between the tribals and non-tribals has increased. The entire course of Indian history shows the tribal elements being fused in the general society. But this interaction had varying consequences, sometimes it has produced an 'accommodative' social adjustment tending to make the two groups less dissimilar. In fact all the tribes have not been fully integrated with non-tribal society. The Kurichias and Mullukurmas as landholding groups, has partially integrated, whereas the conditions of the Paniyas and Adiyas still remain unabated. The contact of these groups of tribals with the other people is one of employer-employee relationship. In such a contact the tribals were the losers and suffered in one way or the other. Moreover the attitude of the general public towards tribes is generally unsympathetic, and they also think that tribals could never improve or no policy could improve them. Thus a kind of inferiority complex has been created as a result of these attitudes of

88 D.D. Kosambi, *An Introduction to the study of Indian History*, Bombay, 1956, p. 27.
discrimination and unfriendliness of social environment. Creation of this status has been the basis for the emasculation of adivasi areas through what may be best called as a process of ‘Internal Colonialism’\textsuperscript{91} Under this native colonialism the tribals in Wynad were much subordinated after independence. It was Dhebar Commission (1961) that simultaneously examined the attitude of non-tribals towards tribal people and the approaches of Government to their people.\textsuperscript{92} So, it is stated that the tribal problems cannot be studied in isolation.

**Sanskritization**

The whole tribal India is at the present moment going through a critical state of social transformation ever since they have come in contact with culturally dominant neighbours. In Kerala, that the reaction of each tribe or group of tribes has not been the same is borne out by the fact that there has been no uniformity in the population trends of various tribes. Different distributional characteristics of tribes lead to certain differences in their problem of transformation. Though there are various tribal groups their strength of population is very low. The task of assimilation and integration of these tribes into the mainstream is humanistic. After independence the tribes had some economic and ritual relationship with local caste Hindus.\textsuperscript{93} These contacts to a certain extent might have influenced them to change their lifestyle, but it is believed that sanskritization has not crept into their socio-religious life in a big way.\textsuperscript{94} Sanskritization of tribal communities and their

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\textsuperscript{91} Mihirshah, "the adivasi question", article in *Hindu*, 20.4.2002.

\textsuperscript{92} N.P. Bhanage, *Tribal Commissions and Committees in India*, New Delhi, 1993, p. 104.


\textsuperscript{94} Sanskritization is a process by which a caste or a group of people moves up the social hierarchy by adopting the style of life associated by tradition with the upper classes.
integration into caste structure cannot be understood simply as a change in rituals or lifestyle.\textsuperscript{95} The efforts of adivasis to Sanskritize their lifestyle are not always met with success in Kerala. The structural distance between these communities and upper castes is still too great. Such a social condition had gradually turned the tribals to a subordinate social status and their dependence on the non-tribals had increased. So it seems that the concept of sanskritization is not relevant to explain the social change that happened among the tribals of Wynad.

**Establishment of Tribal Colonies**

The need to uplift the tribal communities was an urgent matter. Some attempts were made to improve the lot of these people after independence largely through welfare measures such as housing colonies. With the enactment of the Kerala Land Reform (KLR) Acts, there was a change in the ownership of the land in which their huts were constructed. Prior to this legislation, the jenmies permitted their agricultural labourers to put up huts for dwelling mainly to watch their crops. But there was general apprehension among the lower class that in spite of security provided for the tenants by the Agrarian Relation Act, the possibility of unlawful and forceful eviction of tenants by landlords still existed and on this basis the need for housing colonies were an urgent matter.\textsuperscript{96} The Tribal Development Department had set up a number of colonies in various parts of the state to provide houses for the landless tribal people. House site of 5 to 10 cents were allotted to them in colonies. These colonists were selected from among landless agricultural labourers who were prepared to become permanent settlers. A colony is not only an area of collective inhabitants of tribal people, but it is a resettlement.

\textsuperscript{95} Dipankar Gupta (Ed.), *Anti Utopia – Essential Writings of Andre Belleille*, New Delhi, 2005, p.204.

area initiated by the government. In this sense, wherever Government land was available they were allotted to landless SC/ST families and where the Government land was not available, private lands were acquired and distributed. These schemes were intended to settle ST families engaged in agricultural and allied activities. Projects were drawn up for this purpose and were implemented with the co-operation of the departments under the control of a supervising officer from the Tribal Welfare Department.

In addition to the colonies where land was assigned by the Department, there were areas of concentration of tribal families. A cluster of at least ten of these families were taken as a settlement. The schemes introduced by the Government of India aimed at the settlement on land with improvement of agriculture among them. The fact is that the tribals are concentrated in certain areas makes it relatively easy for the government to design development plan for them. Instead of thinking improvement of the tribal life the policy makers think how to reduce the amount and time spent for them. These colonies of the Paniyas and Adiyas are still backward and yet to be improved. Clustering of such colonies creates many social problems and often acts as impediments to the developmental policies. So a resettlement with sufficient lands is essential for their progress. But the proposal of development in such areas are beneficial for government in many aspects of development like roads, electricity, water, schools health centres etc. During the 1970s there were 460 such tribal settlements in Wynad. It constitutes 35.11% of the total 1310 tribal settlements established in the state. It was estimated that 58% of total ST population in the state are living in recognized colonies within the forest area. Under special circumstances, however, inter-tribal distinction has

99 The Mathrubhoomi, 10-6-06.
been recognized by the Government while implementing programmes like colonization and rehabilitation of tribals. Under these schemes 'colonies' were created for members of the SC/ST with lands, buildings, and other facilities provided. These tribes in Malabar have been leading a migratory life.\textsuperscript{100} So the government appointed bureaucrats in charge of these colonies.\textsuperscript{101} In the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Five Year Plan, a special colonization scheme for Tribes was implemented under centrally sponsored scheme in different districts. The following are such major schemes for tribes in Kerala.

1. Anchankoil Malapandaram Settlement (Kottayam)
2. Pilot Scheme (Idamali in Kottayam)
3. Pilot Scheme (Champakkad in Kottayam)
4. Mannamkandom Colonisation Scheme (Kottayam)
5. Pilot Scheme, (Kuriakutty in Palakkad)
6. Mukkali Pilot Scheme (Attapadi in Palakkad)
7. Chingeri Extension Scheme (Wynad)
8. Kannavam Colony (Kannur)

Among these schemes I will explain the case of Chingeri below.

Chingeri Extension Scheme

Till 1957 Wynad taluk was under Madras state. The first Communist Ministry in Kerala bought 526 acres of land from the Madras state by spending tribal funds. The land was actually bought to rehabilitate the tribals and this was called Chingeri Project. 530 acres of land have been handed over to the Harijan Welfare Department for starting this scheme in 1958. There were over 200 applicants for settlement. The Wynad colonisation

\textsuperscript{100} V. Nagam Aiya, \textit{The Travancore State Manual}, Vol.3, Trivandrum, 1906 P.479.

\textsuperscript{101} T. Madhavan Menon, (ed.) \textit{A Handbook of Kerala}, Vol.1, Trivandrum, 2000, p.188.
Advisory Committee was formed with the Collector as the Chairman and the scheme provided for the construction of 100 houses. The cost of each house at that time was Rs. 1000. It is said that Rs. 2.5 lakhs have been spent so far on the scheme.\textsuperscript{102} With 10 years of its implementation construction of 59 houses had been completed. But, no further financial allotment had been made to complete the project. And among the 59 houses completed only 15 houses had been occupied by tribal families.

On the whole it seems that the scheme had been working quite unsatisfactorily. The scheme was intended specially for the benefit of the Paniyas but all the development efforts in this project by-passed them. The project miserably failed because of the laxity of the administrators. They silently watched the lands comprised in the scheme being encroached by the 'settlers'. This encroachment prevented the free growth of the area favouring the tribals.\textsuperscript{103} In this project five acres of land was supposed to be given to each tribal family that participated in the project. Nothing has happened so far. Not only did they give the land to tribal families like the law said, but they decided to distributed pattayam to the non-tribal families.\textsuperscript{104} In Chingeri, C.K. Janu and other tribal activists organised a massive agitation campaign on 26\textsuperscript{th} January, 1995.\textsuperscript{105} The agitators argued that the mismanagement and corruptions of the high officials in the project were the main reason for the deterioration of the project. There was another 'Wynad Colonization Scheme' that was started in 1960s to relieve congestion, over population and

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{102} \textit{Report of Evaluation Committee on the Welfare of SC-ST-OBC in Kerala State}, Trivandrum, 1964, p. 73. \\
\textsuperscript{104} Interview with C.K. Janu, a tribal women leader, Kannur, 5.5 2008 \\
\textsuperscript{105} About 266 people were arrested and kept for 12 days in Calicut Jail and 102 people including children were arrested and taken to Central Jail, Kannur for 15 days.
\end{flushleft}
consequent poverty in Malabar by settling large number of Ex-servicemen, aboriginals, landless civilians etc. and helping them to develop the large undeveloped tracts of Wynad

Although the Paniyas were only a small part in this scheme it was mainly for settling the ex-servicemen. The Wynad colony with its headquarters at Amabalavayal extends over an area or 37,146.82 acres or 53 Sq. miles within the village of Sultan Batheri, Ambalavayal and Nenmeni in South Wynad Taluk.\(^{106}\) Besides the above area, and another of 5 Sq. miles of Government land in Chingeri Village has been annexed to the colony to settle the local residents and aboriginals found in the main colony.\(^{107}\) In effect the colony did much harm to the existence of the tribals in this colony as they were extremely harassed and exploited by the ex-servicemen.

Rehabilitation Programmes for Tribals

In the late 1970s, the Kerala Government initiated a special programme for rehabilitation of bonded tribal labourers in Kerala under Tribal Sub Plan. The main objective of the plan was to promote the socio-economic condition of ST and free them from exploitation. Rehabilitation meant "transfer of population from one area to another on a planned basis".\(^{108}\) Groups as well as family oriented programmes were implemented under this approach. Special programmes like Priyadarshini Tea Estate, Sugandhagiri Cardamom project, Pookot Dairy Farm, Attapadi Co-operative Farming Society, Vattachira Tribal collective farm etc. have been started to rehabilitate bonded tribal labourers.\(^{109}\) These five projects have rehabilitated 1089 tribal families in

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\(^{107}\) Second FYP- Kerala, Trivandrum,1958, p.112.
3295 hectares of land.\textsuperscript{110} In addition to rehabilitation these projects envisaged various economic and infrastructural development programmes as well. Three major projects implemented in the Wynad district are detailed below.

Bonded Labour (Abolition Act), 1976 also provided for a machinery to ensure its implementation and contemplated the rehabilitation of the enfranchised bonded labourers who would have to suffer the consequences of the sudden withdrawal of a minimal support which ensured survival.\textsuperscript{111} Therefore, the Government stepped in with massive investments on three major projects in Wynad to relieve the distress.

**Priyadarshini Tea Estate**

Priyadarshini Tea Estate is located at Pancharakolli in Mananthavadi taluk. The Mananthavadi Tribal Plantation Co-operative Ltd. (registered under the Kerala Co-operative Societies Act, 1969) established this estate in the year 1984 with the Collector, Wynad District as its Chairman and Sub-Collector as the Managing Director. This estate holds 995 acres of land in seven different locations. Nearly 400 tribal people were rehabilitated here from different parts of the district.\textsuperscript{112} Till 1993 it remained as a mere tea plantation. But in July 1993 the estate established a Cutting Twisting Curling (CTC) Tea Factory with a production capacity of 7, 00,000 Kg per year.\textsuperscript{113} The families settled in the estate were provided with basic amenities such as

\textsuperscript{110} Economic Review, 2000, p. 191.
\textsuperscript{111} T. Madhavan Menon, *n.* 67, p. 169.
\textsuperscript{112} The Hindu, 11 August 2008.
\textsuperscript{113} Rs. 163 lakhs as the setup cost of the tea factory was given by Government of India.
housing, water supply etc. The project ensured employment to nearly 250 bonded tribal labourers on a regular basis.

In the beginning, it was running satisfactorily and was considered as something radically modern. It was strange to see the labourers of Priyadarshini Tea Estate using mechanical devices. But later, the working of the estate was not satisfactory. Due to mismanagement and crisis in the tea industry the liability of the estate increased considerably and the factory was closed in November, 2005. Thereafter, the tribal workers were leading a miserable life. It was reported that two of them died of starvation during this period. Due to non-payment of Employment Provident Fund (EPF) dues, one of the units was auctioned off by the EPF authorities at a throw away price, though it was later stayed by the High Court. It is reported that conditions of the estate has improved recently mainly due to the advice from the experts of the United Planters Association of South India (UPASI) and serious interventions from the Government and above all by the hard work of the labourers. The arrears of the workers were paid and the auctioned estate unit was taken back. Consequently, worker's productivity as well as Green Tea Leaves (GTL) production increased considerably. Tea produced here has been recognized as having international standard. After setting a model for public enterprises in the state, the Tea estate is about to enter the plantation tourism sector. As part of the expansion, the old estate (Priyadarshini) bungalow in the tea estate has been renovated and christened

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118 Ibid.
‘Wynad Tea Country’. It is expected that it will provide various benefits, including better nutrition to the tribal workers of the estate. However, contrary to all these expectations, its 20 acres of land have been decided to be handed over to Kannur University.\footnote{120}

**Sugandhagiri Cardamom Project**

The Planning Commission of the Government of India sanctioned the Sugandhagiri Cardamom Project in Achoornam village of Vythiri thaluk of Wynad District under Western Ghat Development Programme in 1976.\footnote{121} This project was implemented by the Wynad Co-operative Farming Society (hereafter referred as Society).\footnote{122} Joint farming co-operative was formed in 1978, mainly for cultivation of cardamom. The administration of the Society was vested with an administrative committee with the District Collector as Chairman and five other officials as members.\footnote{123} The five tribesmen also were included on the Board of Directors of the Society. Their appointment was discontinued in 1984 as two important clauses in the byelaws of the society were deleted by the joint Registrar of Co-operative Societies.\footnote{124}

During the 1970s a temporary surplus availability of labour because of the influx of settlers depressed wages and caused unemployment. The Government of Kerala wisely decided that a solution could be found only by increasing the institutional demand for labour and constituted an ambitious

\begin{footnotes}
\item[120] *The Mathrubhumi*, 17 October 2008.
\item[121] The Western Ghat Development Programme coincided with the abolition of bonded labourers throughout the country.
\item[123] District Planning Officer, the Joint Director of Agriculture, Regional Manager of Kerala State Co-operative Agricultural and Rural Development bank and Director of Tribal Development Department.
\item[124] www.niyamasameeksha.com/show/article.php?id=158)
\end{footnotes}
project for raising a cardamom plantation in about 1500 hectares of forest land vested in the Government under the provision of the Kerala Private Forest (Vesting and Assignment) Act, 1971. Of the total area of 1500 hectares, the society cultivated various crops and the project originally had a road network to the extent of 11 Km, which was quite inadequate to ensure effective supervision and management of the project. The project employs 865 labourers (835 tribals and 30 non-tribals) and 77 staff members (43 tribals and 34 non-tribals). There are 750 families resettled in the project area. All the working members of the families are employed as wage labourers. Later they were limited to 521 families in the project. These families have been provided with permanent houses. But it has been observed that drinking water, sanitation and other facilities have not reached all the families.

The project was implemented during 1976-84 with central financial assistance and also with funds provided by the Kerala Co-operative Central Land Mortgaging Bank, Trivandrum. The total amount spent for this project from 1976 to 1984 was 515.20 lakhs. The total amount received from government and financial institutions upto July 2001 was Rs. 1,556.61 lakhs. Out of 1556.61 lakhs Rs. 1,041.02 lakhs was received by the society under T.S.P, Rs. 387.63 lakhs under the western Ghat Development Scheme up to 1985 and Rs. 961 lakhs under the institutional Financial Agency (Kerala State Agricultural Bank). Besides these, the society also received Rs. 15 lakhs under the Social Forestry Scheme and Rs. 4.17 lakhs under Sericulture Industry Department and T.W.D. Out of Rs. 1556.61 lakhs received by society an amount of Rs. 107 lakhs was incurred for infrastructure development such as roads, buildings, quarters for staff, curing chambers, unit

126 P.R.G. Mathur, *n.* 122.
office, godowns, health and sanitation.\textsuperscript{127} A huge part of the expenditure incurred by the project every year is for the payment of salaries.

It is distressing to note that the income from the project from 1980-81 to 1997-98 was only 945 lakhs, while the expenditure was as high as Rs. 1874.24 lakhs.\textsuperscript{128} The society is called upon to repay the loan of Rs. 2.58 crores towards the principal of Rs. 96 lakhs and interest to the Kerala Co-operative Central Mortgage Bank. The Bank has filed an arbitration case before the Registrar of Co-operative Societies in Kerala. The society has submitted a proposal to the Government in 1998 to write off the amount of Rs. 2.58 crores. It is stated that this itself is violation of human rights. The amount earmarked for the development of the tribal people was spent without any financial discipline and as such the society violated not only the human rights but also the constitutional safeguards earmarked for the ST.\textsuperscript{129}

It is found that along with the poor functioning of the project the unprecedented drought during the 1982-83 and 1986-87 affected the cardamom yield adversely. The lack of efficient management of the farms in the project caused deterioration of the quality of the cardamom produced and diminishing yield. Cardamom production has shown a declining trend since 1985-86. It fell to 12.5 tonnes in 1991-92 from 37.27 tonnes in 1985-86, but these has been a slight improvement in production from 1992 to 1995. During 1996-97 production decreased to 9.58 tonnes from 16 tonnes in 1995-96. During 1997-98 the production was worth of Rs. 20.80 lakhs.\textsuperscript{130}

Like any other project the major problems were excess of staff and low productivity of labour, lack of essential infrastructure facilities, payment of

\textsuperscript{127} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{128} Thresiamma Varghese, \textit{n.} 119, p.128.

\textsuperscript{129} P.R.G. Mathur, \textit{n.} 122.

\textsuperscript{130} Thresiamma Varghese, \textit{n.} 128., p. 129.
over dues of long term loan taken from Kerala Finance Corporation (KFC) and lack of multi-cropping and crop differentiation strategies. Thus these schemes were not properly managed, but it served the primary purpose of providing equitable employment to the Paniyas and others at a critical juncture.\textsuperscript{131} Though financially never a success they suddenly raised the demand for agricultural labour in the region, and even those Paniyas who were not directly benefited by the project started receiving better wages. As an ambitious project for rehabilitation of the emancipated tribal bonded labourers the Sugandhagiri project has experienced acute labour shortage ever since its inception. The flaws in rehabilitation policies are obvious and the free tribals are likely to embrace bonded labour once again.\textsuperscript{132}

**Pookot Dairy Farm Project**

This project was started in a vested forest area around the Pookot lake near Vythiri taluk in 1979 under the Western Ghat Development Project. The Project was designed to satisfy two main objectives, namely, putting the available land resources to optimum use and uplifting the tribal families living in and around the project area by involving them in the development process, so that the benefits flowing out of this project will go to them in large measure.\textsuperscript{133} The project started with the development of a dairy farm, based primarily on the natural grass available in the area.\textsuperscript{134} The project area consists of about 420 hectares of land, of which about 245 hectares are grassland. These lands formed a part of the vested forests brought under

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{131} Interview with P.R.G. Mathur, Palakkad, 4-1-2009.
\item \textsuperscript{133} Summary in the *Project Report for the Development of a Tribal Collective Farm at Pookot*, South Wynad, 1979
\item \textsuperscript{134} Dairy Farm consisting of about 400 cow units. It is proposed to have about 10 cow sheds each with a capacity to have 4 cows. These units will be located at different parts of the farm.
\end{itemize}
Government control as a result of the agrarian reforms envisaged in Kerala Private Forest (V and A) Act, 1971. According to the KPF (V and A) of 1974, this area has been recommended by the vested forest committee for assignment on lease exclusively to members of the Paniyas, Adiyas and Kattunaickans collectively or individually.\textsuperscript{135}

The programme had envisaged the settlement and rehabilitation of 110 bonded labour families, but 100 families were actually enrolled as members of the society.\textsuperscript{136} Out of this 84 families have been given permanent houses and most of them were Paniyas, Adiyas and Kattunaikkans. It was envisaged that these families will operate the farm on collective principles. The management of the project was vested with a committee headed by the District Collector, as Chairman. Asst. Director, Dairy Development and Joint Registrar Co-operative Societies (Wyanad District) as members of the committee. During the earlier stages, however, the farm was managed by qualified people from outside of the tribal communities. It is hoped that by providing necessary education and training over the years, tribal families will be able to run the farm themselves.\textsuperscript{137} But in practical sense this has not happened.

The basic feature of the tribal rehabilitation schemes is to establish 11 residential clusters each accommodating 10 tribal families in 5 twin houses. Each family is provided with 4 acres of land around their house to facilitate vegetable cultivation. Five twin houses for 10 tribal families and a cattle shed for 40 animals make a residential cluster. A seven metre wide road is

\textsuperscript{135} Project Report, Pookot Dairy Farm-As per the order (GO (M.S) No. 73/79 AD dated 17-12-1979

\textsuperscript{136} Report of the state Scheduled Tribe Development Department, Trivandrum, 1997-98, p.30

\textsuperscript{137} Project Report of Pookot Dairy Farm. Trivandrum,,1979,
proposed to connect various residential clusters. \footnote{\textit{Adivasi Master Plan Committee Report}, Trivandrum, 2002, p.12} Whatever be the facilities provided, the success of the farm will no doubt depend on the effective management and official commitment. The functioning of the project in this direction has been far from satisfactory. Unfortunately the cattle in the farm were also affected by brucellosis, an infectious disease found among cows and other animals and the dairy farm was closed down in 1994-95. Then the farm area was subjected to careful veterinary examination and made thoroughly disease free during 1996-97.

There were great anomalies between the expenditures and incomes acquired from the dairy and other subsidiary programmes. At this time, Government issued an order to transfer 100 hectares of land belonging to Pookot Diary Project to Priyadarshini Tea Estate for tea cultivation, which would have satisfied the twin objectives of employment to the Pookot tribals as also providing raw materials (GTL) to the Priyadarshini Tea Estate. But it could not be completed so far due to various administrative problems. The revitalisation of the dairy project is going on, an amount of Rs.15 lakh having been provided during 1999-2000 for this purpose. The major component of the revitalisation programme is the improvement of agriculture methods by adopting modern cropping strategies. But the issue of clearance (nearly Rs.44 lakhs) of past debt of the project with the State Bank of India is under consideration of the government. So the government has ordered the transfer of 100 acres of land belonging to the project for starting a Veterinary college at Pookot.

The schemes under all these projects failed to meet the needs of the tribals of the project area. \footnote{The Town Planning Department, Calicut, has prepared a detailed lay out for Pookot lake area.} The tribal families settled in these area are to be
educated and trained to take up the responsibility of managing the enterprise themselves at a later stage, which has been proved a failure. The mangelments of these projects are still unable to make them conscious of that these projects are for them, instead of a feeling which creates dependency among the tribal.

**Tribal Health**

It is an accepted fact that the social condition primarily determines the health status of the population. The determinants of health are social and economic and not merely pathological. The relationship between health and social condition is constantly changing as health is a socially produced reality. This is true in the case of tribals where health system constitutes a sub-system in the social system of the community with its own believes, interpretations, curing practices and indigenous medicines.

Health services are one of the main factors influencing the health status of the population. In modern sense it is also influenced by such social and economic factors as nutrition, housing, education, income and its distribution, employment, communication and transportation and social structure.\(^\text{140}\) The poor health status of the tribals and social exclusions are due to the unequal distribution of power, income, goods and services. Poverty and social disabilities have a multiplicative effect on the social determinants of health with those at higher risk for diseases having a higher probability of being excluded from the health care services. So the health problems are one of the basic problems the tribal people face at present. The tribals of Wynad as a section of humanity are exposed to many hazards that prove detrimental to their health.

A factor the importance of which has been accepted by nearly all to explain Kerala's health status is the intervention by the state.\textsuperscript{141} It is argued that strategies and approaches adopted for disease control in non-tribal areas cannot be adopted in tribal areas.\textsuperscript{142} The major barriers to mainstreaming health care in tribal area and to scaling up effective intervention are the inequality based on socio-cultural issues. The districts like Kasargod, Wynad and Idukki had lesser government investment in health than other districts.\textsuperscript{143} The private sector had already moved into the vacuum created by the slowing down of government investments. Tribal health protection is a part of rural health project and there is no special health care programme for the tribal areas.

The World Health Assembly in 1977 launched a movement for 'health for all by the year 2000'. This call was to bring about a social revolution in community health.\textsuperscript{144} Thus the 6\textsuperscript{th} Five year Plan (FYP) adopted revised norms for the rural health care infrastructure. The plan envisages the setting up of a 30 bed rural hospital known as the Community Health Centre (CHC).\textsuperscript{145} In Kerala, the earlier policy regarding the CHC was of upgrading one out of every 4 PHCs into a rural hospital.\textsuperscript{146} The PHC gives coverage to 30,000 rural population or 20,000 in hilly and tribal areas.\textsuperscript{147} In the Government reports the proportion of Health subcentres and PHCs serving in

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{141} Rajeev Sadanandan, "Government Health Service in Kerala - Who Benefits?" In \textit{E.P.W.}, Aug. 11, 2001, p. 3071.
  \item \textsuperscript{142} \textit{E.P.W.} Feb. 28, 1998, p. 481.
  \item \textsuperscript{143} Rajeev Sadanandan, \textit{n. 141}, p. 3071.
  \item \textsuperscript{144} V.J. Shobha Devi, "Problem and Prospects of Attaining the Goal of Health for All by 2000 AD", in P.C. Joshi, \textit{et al.}, (Eds.), \textit{Studies in Medical Anthropology}, New Delhi, 1990, p. 63.
  \item \textsuperscript{145} K.P. Kannan, \textit{et al.}, \textit{Health and Development in Rural Kerala}, Trivandrum, 2000, p. 109.
  \item \textsuperscript{146} \textit{Ibid.}
  \item \textsuperscript{147} \textit{Ibid.}
\end{itemize}
ST areas of Kerala is greater than the proportion of STs in the state's population.\textsuperscript{148} The per capita health expenditure of the tribes is higher than that of the general population.\textsuperscript{149} In spite of considerable improvement in healthcare facilities in the Wynad district over the last three decades, much of it is not accessible to the tribal people. The decline of the tribal health condition is a continuous process in Wyand. The Government machinery seems to be quite inadequate to judge the magnitude of work to be done. The apathy of health workers is widely visible in the tribal villages where the health professionals from urban areas do not attend the health centres regularly; most of these centres do not have doctors, and staff machine and necessary equipments. The district as a whole is backward in health facilities as mentioned by various commissions and the areas of north Wynad and South Wynad come under special considerations of health development.\textsuperscript{150} In Wynad tribal areas being isolated, the poor tribal people do not get much benefit from general health schemes. As the tribal areas are mostly inaccessible regions the medical vehicles of the tribal department are unable to reach the tribal centres with the result that these visits do not yield the desired result. This is one of the reasons given by the concerned officials why the tribal people seldom make use of the facilities offered by the existing medical institutions. The problems of transport being experienced by the medical personals create obstacles in extending medical facilities to the tribals. In such a situation the tribal patients are allotted Rs 500 for hiring


\textsuperscript{149} Jose Chathukulam, "Issue in Tribal Development"; The Recent Experience of Kerala in Govinda Chandra Rath, [Ed.] \textit{Tribal Development in India}, ‘New Delhi’, 2006, p. 185.

\textsuperscript{150} Some PHCs have recently been upgraded to CHCs are Perunnanur, Panamaram, Meppali and Kappukunnu. The Vythiri CHC has also been upgraded to a Taluk Hospital. The Mathrubhoomi, 4 June, 2009.
vehicles. Even this amount is misused by some tribals with the involvement of non-tribals.

It is a fact that the success of the state in providing literacy and health care has not only reduced the birth and infant mortality rate but also increased longevity in general. But the recent experience of tribal health scenario gives a different impression. The medical and public health problems they face have not yet been tackled effectively. The reciprocal association between poverty and disease has been recognized by health reformers, who advocate social reforms on political, economic, humanitarian and scientific ground.\textsuperscript{151} Lack of proper sanitation poor personal hygiene, peculiar food habits, etc. are some of the apparent causes of diseases and these have been exacerbated by grinding poverty and ignorance. Protected water supply is still a major problem in many tribal areas of Wynad. Lack of potable water facilities leads to various complications as they are compelled to collect water from ponds and pools flowing through the forest. In many areas these pools, ponds and rivulets are also used for the purpose of washing utensils, cloths and bathing people as well as by wild and domestic animals. Even the latrines which are provided in some of the colonies of the Paniyas and Kattunaikkas do not serve the purpose for which they were intended. In many colonies there are no facilities for keeping the latrine clean, with the result that it has gone out of use and abandoned by the colonists. As per the information of social activists, instead of helping to improve the sanitary conditions in the locality this type of latrines only proves a nuisance to the tribals.\textsuperscript{152} Concerned authorities in the state have over the past decades proposed and implemented many schemes for the provision of safe water, sanitation, nutrition, 

\textsuperscript{151} The Hindu, 6 December 2007.
\textsuperscript{152} Interview with Benny, Sultan Battery, 11.5.2008.
vaccination coverage, education and employment among tribals. But it had not fetched the result expected.

The poor standard of living is the root cause for such malnutrition. A great number of tribes are still living mainly by eating various roots available in the forests. This poor diet leads to malnutrition among them in general. As a result various deficiency diseases prevail among them and the modern diseases can be explained only in their changed life style, particularly their dietary practices. Due to socio economic and ecological changes the tribal inhabitants of Wynad have lost their balanced diet which was available free of cost from the forest resources. The media are reporting such conditions prevailing among them. Malnutrition is rampant among the children, vaccination coverage is inadequate and government have failed to deliver genuine health and nutritious programmes.¹⁵³ Lack of ante-natal care, absence of safe delivery system and penury take a toll of women's lives and health. The studies by the National Institute of Nutrition reveal that tribal women and children are severely anemic.¹⁵⁴ During the 1970s the facilities of preventive medical aid was available to a majority of STs in the state, but in Wynad less than 50% of the STs are getting these facilities.¹⁵⁵ A medical team in this area has found that tribal people suffer from narcotic related 'thrombo-agniitis obliterans' (TAO) and also from various other diseases such as scabies and tropical ulcer, dyscentry, respiration trouble and STDs of all kinds.¹⁵⁶ In the tribal areas, even in the modern age, there are very often

¹⁵³ _The Hindu_, 1 July, 2005.
¹⁵⁴ _The Hindu_, 1 July, 2005.
large scale casualties due to contagious diseases. As the tribals live in groups the risk of rapid spread of communicable diseases is very high.

The poor tribals, many of them are Adiyas and Paniyas, have migrated to different parts of neighbouring states in search for work.\textsuperscript{157} The migrant tribes are often considered vectors of communicable diseases and are not engaged by the public health system as they drive down indicators of health.\textsuperscript{158} Health workers point out that skin diseases are rather widespread among migrant tribals and those who reported skin diseases may be really suffering from Venereal Disease (VD) a they consider VD as a form of skin disease due to ignorance.\textsuperscript{159} The tribal migrants find it difficult to register with the National Tuberculosis Programmes at their place of work, resulting in out of pocket expenditure for treatment, discontinuation of medication when symptoms improve, relapse of the disease, medication resistance and premature death.\textsuperscript{160} In some Paniya colonies of Nenmenikunnu, Kolipali, Kakavayal and Karapadi of Noolpuzha panchayat in Wynad about 10 adivasis died of tuberculosis due to lack of proper treatment and it was also noted that about 300 tribals were there with this disease.\textsuperscript{161}

Of all diseases among the tribals sickle cell anemia is threatening the survival of many tribal people in Wynad.\textsuperscript{162} This disease among the tribal people of Wynad was found out and brought to the notice of government and

\textsuperscript{157} In their migrant status they lose many benefits generally offered to poor schemes as they are BPL and the ration cards are not valid across state border.

\textsuperscript{158} K.S. Jacob, "Caste inequality in India" in \textit{The Hindu}, 1, July 2005.

\textsuperscript{159} Interview with Shaji,social activist,Sulta Batteri ,12.8.2008.

\textsuperscript{160} \textit{Ibid}.

\textsuperscript{161} The \textit{Malayala Manorama}, 17 July 1993.

\textsuperscript{162} As a type of anemia, it is a genetic disorder of the blood. Sickle-shaped means that the red blood cells are shaped like 'C'. Anemia is a condition in which one's blood has a lower than normal number of red blood cells. This condition also can occur if one's red blood cells don't have enough haemoglobin.
AIIMS, New Delhi by the Vivekananda Medical Mission Hospital (VMMH) Muttil. Later another survey was conducted by the Science-Technology-Economic Committee of the state government. According to the survey there are about 3000 sickle-cell anemic patients in Wynad and hundreds of children are born yearly with this disease.¹⁶³ There is an organisation of these patients, Sickle cell Amemia Patients Association’, registered in 2006.¹⁶⁴ These anemic tribal patients predominantly found in the Nilgiri-Wynad region harbour the highest frequencies of traits.¹⁶⁵ Prior to the advent of agriculture, malaria was unknown to human beings. But penetration into tropical forest and clearing patches for slash-and-burn cultivation created a condition for breeding of mosquitoes in the vicinity of human settlements.¹⁶⁶ Sickle-cell mutation is one of the biological adaptive responses to the changed malarial environment. After malaria struck human beings its spread produced a tremendous selective impact.¹⁶⁷ Besides the tribes of Wynad and Palakkad this disease is widely seen among the chettis of Wynad as it covers 34% of total patients in Kerala.¹⁶⁸ The Kurumars and Paniyas also show a high number of homozygotes with the oldest being 48 years.¹⁶⁹ But these patients are not seen

¹⁶³ Janakeeyasuthrana Karadu Rooparekha, Wynad District, 1997, p.120.
¹⁶⁴ The Mathrubhumi weekly, Feb 18-26, 2008.
¹⁶⁵ Some have high frequencies (30 to 40 per cent), other intermediate (10-15 percent) while still others have very low frequencies or are altogether free from the traits – The Hindu, 20 December 2007.
¹⁶⁶ Ibid.
¹⁶⁷ R.S. Negi, Former Director of Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, in his study on ‘Bio-Cultural aspects of Sickle-cell trait in South India’, said that Malaria and sickle-cell anaemia were environment related and serious research was needed to find solution to these major health problems among tribal people – The Hindu 20 October 2007.
¹⁶⁸ Ibid.
¹⁶⁹ Interview with Feroz, M., Department of Pathology, Medical College, Calicut, 10.9.2007.
among the Kurichias.\textsuperscript{170} Since mortality is very high in sickle-cell patients, a control programme was started in 1998 in Wynad by AIIMS with the help of Wynad district authorities.\textsuperscript{171} A study team of experts from AIIMS, Delhi, revealed that nearly 15\% of the total families in Wynad and Palakkad districts had traits of this genetical problem. They are also of the opinion that if quick action is not taken, sickle cell disease and anaemia may wipe out the entire tribal population in a few decades.\textsuperscript{172} No effective treatment for this disease has ever been started by the government in this district. The patients suffer severe anemia and repeated episode of infections that may be life threatening at times pain in limbs, abdomen and chest and paralysis. Most of them die in their early childhood unless treatment is initiated.\textsuperscript{173}

The patients with sickle-cell anemia require urgent blood transfusion and electrophoresis test but no such facilities are available in Wynad.\textsuperscript{174} These are available at the Medical College, Calicut, and expensive as far as the poor tribals of Wynad are concerned. Some minor treatments are provided by the VMM Hospital, Muttil, under the aegis of the Department of Bio-Technology in the Ministry of Science and Technology of Central Government.\textsuperscript{175} Free distribution of Hydroxy urea is continued, screening camps and health education camps are conducted in tribal colonies of Wynad.\textsuperscript{176} No treatmentent can cure this disease, but the suffering can be

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{170} Interview with Seetha a Tribl Promoter, Manantavadi 5.1. 2009.
\item \textsuperscript{171} The programme was held jointly by Swami Vivekananda Medical Mission, Muttil, IMA's Wynad Unit and Wynad Unit of KGMOA.
\item \textsuperscript{172} The Hindu, 9 August 2008.
\item \textsuperscript{173} Interview with Dr.Anooj Singal, VMM Hospital ,Muttil ,10 .2 .2007.
\item \textsuperscript{174} Interview with Dr.Preetha, DMO, Wynad, 3.6.2009.
\item \textsuperscript{175} Janakeeyasuthrana Karadu Rooparekha, Wynad District, 1997, p.38.
\item \textsuperscript{176} Interview with Adv. Asokan, Secretary of VMM Hospital, Muttil, 10.2.2007.
\end{itemize}
lessened by controlling it. In this case immunity becomes less and the afflicted person will be prone to infection.  

Earlier the Government had taken several steps for providing better medical facilities. Systematic DDT spraying in the 1950s and 1090s under National Malaria Eradication Programme brought down the level of malaria to the point of eradication. Significantly, the immunisation programme which is essential in malaria eradication has not been effectively implemented. The villages situated at the foot of the western ghats as well as North Wynad and South Wynad are endemic areas for malaria. Anti-malaria and anti-filaria works are carried out by the three anti-malaria units in Malabar, such as, (1) Wynad Malaria Field station, Kalpetta, (2) the Anti-Malaria Unit at Nilambur, (3) The New Settlers Colony, Kozhikode. Out of the four Mobile Medical Units in Kerala, one is in Wynad under the control of the Director of Health Services. Tribal Department and Health department together conduct medical camps every year in tribal areas to diagnose the disease and provide free medicine. Patients detected with the disease are referred to the nearest hospital for treatment. Wynad district administration is aware of the various health problems of tribal people. With the support of various departmental agencies including tribal department., a Health Action Plan has already been implemented. As a result, the Wynad Health Project, situated at Nalllurnad with a speciality hospital, is providing facilities for the diagnosis and treatment of major tribal disease. As per the proposal of

177 Interview with Dr. Dananjay Divakar Sukhdev, VMM Hospital Mu til, 10.2.2007.
KIRTADS, the state Govt. has also started a centre for tribal medicine at the hamlet of Valat.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allopathy</td>
<td>1. District Hospital</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Taluk Hospital</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>3. T.B. Centre</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>4. PHCs</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. CHCs</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Private Hospitals</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayurveda</td>
<td>1. Hospital</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Dispensaries</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homoeopathy</td>
<td>1. Hospital</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Dispensaries</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


As the tribes are more addicted to herbal and other medicines they may have some preference to Ayurvedic Medicine. Ayurvedic dispensaries may therefore be more popular in the tribal area. As the tribal folk are orthodox and moderates by nature, they do not easily repose their faith in modern medicine. In the beginning there was a general apathy among the tribals towards allopathic medicine due to their addiction to the use of herbs and such other medicine available in the forestry. They were exclusively relying on their traditional system of treatment which is a form of 'Sidha Vaidya'. It may very well be termed as an 'Ethno-Herbal System', a crude adaptation of Ayurveda. Since the accessibility to other forms of medicine was virtually

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182 Ibid.
183 Interview with Dr. AK .Saamad, Kambalakkad 13.8 2008.
absent prior to the migration of the settlers, every family was constrained to depend on it exclusively. Even two decades ago they had continued to use the traditional Ethno-Herbal system along with other systems of treatment like allopathy, ayurveda, and homoeopathy. An amalgam of black magic and herbal medicine had been used by many of them and only in serious illness or the educated tribals used to visit the hospitals. During the 1980s, VMM and other NGOs started an effective propaganda among them, so as to educate them on various problems related to health. Medical practices of tribal people evoke mixed reaction. Some look upon it with suspicion, some are curious, some others dismiss tribal headers as illiterates and superstitious. To public health workers these healers are an obstacle to their work. A commendable contribution in taking illiterate tribes to accepting modern medical treatment is made by VMM Hospital. It has made a general awareness about the modern medicine. The influence of settlers and the Government health programmes also further induced them to adopt modern medical treatment by offering free treatment through public health institution. Now the problems of tribal health is not their non-cooperation but the inaccessibility to the health care. A sizeable proportion of tribals have faith in government doctors but the accessibility of this treatment are often denied to them.

**Literacy and Education**

Literacy as an indication of socio-economic status is largely a sine qua non for development in all respects. Of all the Indian states, Kerala has the highest literacy rate (90.86%). The state raised the literacy of downtrodden people by more than twofold from 1961 to 2001 and succeeded in reducing

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185 Interview with M.V. Biju, Health Inspector, Mananthavadi, 12.10.2007.
186 Dr. Dhananjay Divakar Sukdev, *n.* 177.
the gap between the literacy rate of SC/ST and that of the general population.\textsuperscript{187}

\begin{table}
\centering
\caption{Literacy rate of SC/ST from Census 1961-2001 in India and Kerala.}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
 & \multicolumn{3}{c|}{INDIA} & \multicolumn{3}{c|}{KERALA} \\
\hline
 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 & 6 \\
\hline
  & ST & SC & Country total & ST & SC & State total \\
\hline
1961 & 8.53 & ---- & 24.0\% & 17.26 & 24.4 & 46.8 \\
\hline
1971 & 11.30 & 14.67 & 29.45 & 25.72 & 40.21 & 60.42 \\
\hline
1981 & 16.35 & 21.38 & 36.03 & 31.79 & 5.96 & 70.42 \\
\hline
1991 & 29.60 & 37.41 & 52.21 & 57.22 & 9.66 & 89.81 \\
\hline
2001 & 47.08 & 54.35 & 64.36 & 64.35 & 2.66 & 90.86 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

Sources: Censuses from 1961-2001

In the 1961 Census Report the literacy rate of ST in Kerala was 17.66\% as against the national level tribal literacy rate of 8.35\%. By 2001 the literacy of the ST of Kerala has been raised to 64.35\% against the national level tribal literacy of 47.08\%. From the above figures it can be seen that the literacy level of ST in the state is not bad compared to the condition at the national level. Among the numerically larger tribes of the state, Malayarayas have the highest percentage of literacy [94.5\%] followed by Kanikars, Kurichias, Kurumans and Marati (71.4\%) . They have also shown higher female literacy ranging from 60-93\%, whereas Muthuvan, Paniyan and Iralar have lower female literacy in the range of 31-43\%.\textsuperscript{188} In the highest literacy rate of Kerala more than 64\% of ST can read and write.\textsuperscript{189} In the present

\textsuperscript{187} Economic Review, 2006, p. 394
\textsuperscript{188} http/census India.gov.in/Table –published/SC/ST/dts, st-Kerala-pdf.
\textsuperscript{189} The Hindu, 23 April  2007
theory of development this rate is not considered as a reliable indicator of their development. As part of the total literacy programme of the state, a special sub-project for tribal literacy programme was launched in 1991.\textsuperscript{190} Under this programme tribal literacy reached 80.71%. In Malappuram and Kannur it reached 97.3% and 90.88% respectively. In official records this programme was a great success which could make 64,000 ST literate and as such the state could declare total literacy of ST people.\textsuperscript{191} Indeed, the programme could not achieve the distinct level of importance in certain remote tribal areas. As per the report there was no active literacy programme in such areas\textsuperscript{192}. Hence, to bridge this gap and to consolidate the literacy status already achieved by the tribals, the state Saksharatha Samithi launched the post-literacy and continuing education programmes among the tribals in the state from Sept, 1993. It covered not only literacy, but included several other items incidental to the cultural and socio-economic advancement of tribals.\textsuperscript{193} The growth of tribal literacy rate was an imperative made in time-limit programme. So their increased rate of literacy could not produce expected results. So far as the level of education is concerned, as many as 35.5\% of tribal literate are either without any education or have attained education below primary level.\textsuperscript{194} So, in declaring Kerala a complete literacy

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{Economic Review}. 1993, p.15
\item The Tribal literacy rate estimated by Kerala Saksharatha Samithi as on 3-7-1993 is 80.71\%
\item \textit{Gramapanchayat Development Records}, Vol 137, Wynad-Mananthavadi Block, Trivandrum, 1997
\item The proportion of literates who have attained education up to primary level and middle level are 29.3\% and 22.9\% respectively. Persons educated up to matric/secondary/higher secondary have a share of only 12.4\% in total literate proportion. Graduates and above are 1.2\% while non-technical and technical diploma holders constitute a meagre of 0.8\% only. \url{http://census India.gov.in/Table publishe/SCST/dh, st-Kerala.pdf}
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
state it would have been possible even if the tribal minority of the state have not been estimated in the regards as they constituted only 1.14 of the state total.\textsuperscript{195}

One major problem in tribal development in Wyanad is their illiteracy and subsequent ignorance as social facts. The general literacy rate of Wyanad in 1981 was 58.33\% and ST's was 20.74\%. But in 1991 it was raised to 82.72\% and 50.63\% respectively due to the work of Literacy Mission\textsuperscript{196}. From 1995-96 onwards the literacy programme was transferred to the Panchayat Raj Institutions. Yet even in the declaration of official estimation the tribes in Wynad are illiterate due to lack of post-literacy programmes in proper manner. This programme could not achieve the desired result under Pancharyat Raj Institutions. The difference between the literacy rate of ST and general category is 25.5\% in 2001 census. The interruption of post-literacy programme among the tribals of Wyanad is described as a havoc to the tribal society\textsuperscript{197}. The tribes like Paniyar, Adiyen, Kattunaikkans, Evavallan, Malasant etc are still backward in literacy. In the traditional concept, literacy is the ability to read and write but presently it extends to the curiosity to know and ability to think. This approach in literacy is absolutely absent in many of the tribes in Kerala. So the 64.35\% literacy of tribes is not a good indicator of their socio-economic development in Kerala.

**Tribal Education**

The thrust for education in Kerala has been started even before the formation of Kerala State, and advancement in this field is significant. The policy to promote educational interest among the weaker sections of the


people, especially SC and ST, has been enshrined in the constitution as a Directive Principle of state policy.\textsuperscript{198} The efforts for education of tribes has been pushed vigorously only after independence. Article 46 of the Constitution provides for the promotion of tribal education and for their protection against social injustice and exploitation.\textsuperscript{199}

It was noticed that 1960 onwards there has been appreciable progress in education among SC and OBC, but the same cannot be said about the ST of Kerala. A major development in the policy towards tribal education is in the National Education Policy (NEP) of 1986, which specified among other things the following.

1. Priority will be accorded to opening primary schools in tribal areas

2. There is need to develop curricula and device instructional material in tribal language at the initial stages with arrangement for switch over to regional language.

3. ST youth will be encouraged to take up teaching in tribal areas.

4. Ashram or Residential Schools will be established on a large scale in tribal areas.

5. Incentive Scheme will be formulated for the ST's keeping in view their special needs and lifestyle.

The history of tribal education in Wyanad is part of education in Malabar. Malabar was highly backward in education and more so among the backward people. Wynad district, as one of the most educationally backward districts in Kerala does not have a long history of education. The first middle

\textsuperscript{198} D.C. Ahir, \textit{Ambedkar and Indian Constitution}, Delhi, 1973, p.91.

school was started in 1865 at Mananthavadi. Another primary education institution of German Missionaries under Church Mission Society, (CMS) was started at Chuttakadavu. Later various schools were started at Aratthara (Vamom), including Mananthavadi Little Flower UP School.200 Some other factors like general education trend during the 1940s at the national level, the struggle for education rights in Travancore and Cochin and the migration to Wyanad area created a new impetus to start schools in Wyanad. It has to be agreed that no tribal student has been admitted to these institutions in the initial stages as they kept absolutely away from the ambit of education.201 But in 1931, with the purpose of educating tribal children a Single Teacher School was established at Munderi, near Kalpetta, later upgraded to the Kalpetta Govt. VHS.202 Initially students for 1st std are to be admitted in this school and the same teacher continues with them in the next four years. There is no fresh intake of students in the school during the period.203 The first tribal student to have passed SSLC from Wynad was Sri. Gulikan, who retired from Postal Department and Sri. M.V. Rajan (Late] former MLA.204

Under the changing socio-economic scenario Wyanad was slowly improving after the establishment of new professional educational institutions. Major Educational Institutions in Wynad during 2001-2002 are given in appendix 5

The problems of tribal education identified are many and varied and also manifest in many painful ways. It seems that education does not have the same meaning for the STs as it has for the middle and upper strata of society.

201 Ibid.
202 Ibid., p.32
204 Ibid, p. 54.
They are not able to look at this as an opportunity for self-expression and self-actualization. It is observed that educational opportunities have been very unevenly utilized by different tribal groups.\textsuperscript{205} In Wyanad it was the Mullukammans and later the Kurichias who utilized educational facilities more than any other tribe. The impact of the education policy in the post-independent period was reflected in quantitative development of education all over India.\textsuperscript{206} Government policy is to provide education to all citizens including tribals. Then the tribal people are destined to get education in quantitative manner and qualitative education is only a dream for them. The growth of tribal education is considered in the amount of number of students going to schools. Recently, the number of students and educational institutions have increased in tribal areas of Wyanad, but this rate of increase in the percentage of outcome is now in comparison with the resources involved in the field. The outcome of most of the resources involved in this field of education seems to be quantitative in nature but with the quantitative increase the quality of education has gradually decreased. In the assessment of tribal education the result is far away from satisfactory. The Government is providing liberal contribution for spread of education among them but the children start going to school is very late at age and irregular. Those who are absent for more than 15 days without proper reason should have be removed from the register as per the rule. This is not always applicable in the case of ST students, to avoid their stagnation and dropout. The teachers are promoting them irrespective of the rule. The result is that many of the students in the LP and UP still cannot read and write. Many of the

\textsuperscript{205} B.V. Shah, "Education and Social change Among the Tribals in India", in Pariyaram. M. Chacko (ed), \textit{Tribal Communities and Social change}, New Delhi, 2005, p.125.

\textsuperscript{206} Davendra Thakur, \textit{et al}, \textit{Tribal Life in India}, New Delhi, 1996, p.xi.
programmes like thudakkavnm thudarchayum has not proved effective in attracting ST students, especially the Paniya children, in to the class room.

The percentage of dropout of students is an indicator of the socio-economic and educational backwardness. The dropout rate during 2001 and 2002 for ST and SC students in primary classes was 3.47% and 1.57% respectively as against 1.36% for all communities in the state.\textsuperscript{207} The incidence of dropout rate is very high in Wyanad District as it has the largest tribal population. This dropout is largely from the Paniyas and Adiyas as these communities themselves constitute 44.6% of the total tribal population of the district. The number of dropouts of ST, SC and General in the Wyanad District during 2003-04, 2005-06, and 2007-08 are given in appendix 6.

Recently students attending schools regularly are mainly from Kuruman and Kurichia communities. Except the Adiyas and Paniyas, the percentage of enrolment in LP and UP sections is higher than the population proportion but it is less in High school and Higher Secondary sections.\textsuperscript{208} The reasons for the growth of enrolment in lower classes are the attractive incentives offered to these students.\textsuperscript{209} The great incentive in this regard is noon-feeding system, which has been implemented from the early period of the 1960s in all welfare schools.\textsuperscript{210} Besides an incentive of Rs.500 is also given to the parents of the tribal students having 75% of attendance.\textsuperscript{211} The department also provides educational concession, scholarship, and other kinds of assistance like free boarding and lodging facilities in hostels, lump sum

\textsuperscript{207} Economic Review, 2004, p.348
\textsuperscript{208} Economic Review, 2004, p.348
\textsuperscript{209} Economic Review, 1994, p.214
\textsuperscript{210} At present noon feeding in certain schools are not regularly conducted for want of payment of bills in time, Interview with K.T. Regi, Teacher, Tavinjal, 8.6.2007.
\textsuperscript{211} The Mathrubhumi, 10 July 2006.
grant for books, stationary, dress etc to the ST students from Primary to PG level under various plan schemes. There is also a scheme for providing financial assistance to SSLC and Pre-Degree failed students to continue their studies in private tutorial institutions. Provision for better educational facilities to brilliant students is another scheme, such students from V\textsuperscript{th} std to X\textsuperscript{th} std or +2 are admitted in well-known public schools. Another Scheme (Ayyankali Memorial Talent Research Development Scheme) is for spotting talent and providing continuous assistance to the talented students so that they can realise their potential. The selection is made through an intelligent test conducted at the end of Std IV and Std VII. The selected students are given the cost of books, medical care, hostel facilities apart from special guidance and counselling.\footnote{Note submitted to the Parliamentary Committee visiting the State from 29\textsuperscript{th} Jan. 2008 to 2\textsuperscript{nd} Feb. 2008-ST Development Department Trivandrum, 2008. p.10.}

Other efforts are also being made through ST promoters to identify the dropouts and to encourage them to continue their education. In many areas the tribal promoters are not much interested in educating the parents about the dropping out of their children. Despite the efforts of promoters a large number of Paniya and Adiya students are still keeping away from the class rooms. When it comes to the High School level, the situation is worse and it can be seen that the dropout ratio from Std VIII onwards is relatively high as they are going out for manual work for earning. During the harvesting season of pepper, coffee etc many of them would not get back to classrooms.\footnote{Interview with Vinu, a School Teacher in Varayal, Mananthavadi, 8.6.2007.}

As per an observation, it is understood that the home atmosphere of tribal students is not conducive to education. Thus they suffer from various kinds of disabilities in the matter of primary education. Except some communities, many of them are not interested in sending their children to
Parental illiteracy and the economic activities of family and social customs like early marriage have impeded the promotion of education in these people. The condition prevailing in the independent period has been pointed out in the Commission report that either these children have to help their parents in their agricultural operations or look after the younger ones in the household in their absence. The nursery schools in tribal areas were one of the remedial measures. But the same situation still prevails among many of them without much change even after various remedial measures and spread of primary education of half a century.

The distance and accessibility to school is another bottleneck in the progress of education among the tribal children. In many parts of Wynad district tribal children have to walk ordinarily five or six miles to attend schools. In Wynad the school and other related institutions are comparatively less to provide facilities for tribal students. Although TDD considered these educational institutions as an effective means of social transformation, spending substantial resources for tribal access to the field of education is very meagre. Considering all these infirmities in tribal education there are some educational institutions exclusively for tribals working under STDD. Out of 48 kindergarten in Kerala 16 are working in different villages of Wynad. The nutritional requirements of the children are taken care of to a great extent in these institutions. Of the total 110 pre-metric hostels 33 are working in Wynad. (25 for boys and 8 for girls). The conditions and facilities

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of these hostels are deplorable and 16 of them are still in rented buildings.\textsuperscript{218} The students in these hostels are provided free boarding, lodging and tuition facilities. The students admitted in the subsidised hostels managed by voluntary organisations are also eligible for these assistances.\textsuperscript{219} There are also some other major institutions under centrally sponsored schemes under ST Development Department.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\caption{The Model Residential Schools (MRS)/Ashram Schools in Wyanad under STDD}
\begin{tabular}{|c|p{8cm}|c|c|}
\hline
SL No & Schools & Year of starting & Category & Classes \\
\hline
1 & Model Residential School at Nelloornad & 1990-91 & Boys & 5-12 \\
2 & Model Residential School, Kalpetta & 1997-98 & Girls & 5-10 \\
3 & Ekalevya MRS, Pookot & 2000-01 & G/B & 6-10 \\
4 & Rajiv Gandhi Ashram School & 1994-95 & G/B & 1-10 \\
5 & Govt.Ashram School Tirunelli & 2000-01 & G/B & 1-9 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

Source: ST Directorate Trivandrum

Of 18 MRS/Ashram Schools in Kerala 5 are in Wynad. All these are under SC/ST Residential Education Society. As per Article 275(i) of the Constitution 50\% of the cost of construction and infrastructure of the Ashramam school is provided by Government of India, and 100\% for MRS provided by the Government of India.\textsuperscript{220} Ashram school at Tirunelli is exclusively for Paniyas (70\%) and Adiyas (30\%). One of the major problems


\textsuperscript{219} Interview with S. Sudarshanan, Asst. Director, Publicity, ST Directorate, Trivandrum, 21.4.2009.

\textsuperscript{220} as quoted in Note submitted to the Parliamentary Committee, visiting the state from 29\textsuperscript{th} Jan. 2008 to 2\textsuperscript{nd} Feb, 2008. STDD, Government of Kerala. p.14
of all these schools is the acute shortage of permanent teachers.

The existing school atmosphere is also unfavourable to the tribal students. In this context the spirit of recommendations of Dhebar Commission is yet to be considered.\textsuperscript{221} As the teacher and taught in the tribal areas belong to different cultures the communication barriers become almost insurmountable. Majority of the teachers are indifferent and there is no supplementary educational initiatives for the tribals.\textsuperscript{222} The textbooks do not have tribal or local content and students are unable to relate themselves to the learning process. There are very few teachers with a tribal background, most of them coming from Kuruma Community.\textsuperscript{223} Other teachers in tribal areas are non-tribals probably from other districts. Even though the government has come up in recent times with various plans and programmes to improve the educational lot of the tribals, there is not much result to show as there is lack of sincerity on the part of officials. To them the schools in tribal area are invariably uneconomic and the authorities are insensitive to the needs of the tribal students. The condition of tribal education in Wyanad before and after independence has been deplorable.\textsuperscript{224}

A major causality of the development schemes in Wynad has been the tribal language. Modern educational system has created the linguistic problem as most of the tribals speak their tribal dialects and face difficulties when they are taught in other medium. The Adiyas and Kattunaikkans are the


\textsuperscript{222} \textit{The Hindus}, 23 April 2007

\textsuperscript{223} Interview with P. Lakshmanan, Rtd Principal, DIET, Sultan Batheri, on 27-2-2008

\textsuperscript{224} Dharma Raja Iyer, a Congress member during 1927, mentioned in his diary titled "Ente Kudumbacharithram"- the condition of tribal education in The British period. as quoted in \textit{Municipality Development Records}. Vol. 164, Kalpetta, , Trivandrum, 1997,p.35
people suffering much from the language problem. Kattunaikkans speak a language similar to Kannada. Bhaskaran's interesting biography of C.K. Janu mentions modern changes that have overtaken the languages of the Adiyas. Their language is also a form of Kannada. However, the acculturation process has not proceeded smoothly. Modern education has not changed the affinity of the tribes for their languages. The Adiyas are presently suffering much from linguistic problems. The finer sentiments associated with linguistic identities and feelings did not find a place even in the Dhebar Commission's scheme of things. The commission was not fundamentally different in its approach to tribal language. The idea was simple, marginalised communities were 'history-less', they did not deserve a language and, finally, did not deserve to exist except as significant cogs of a monolithic state. Neither the District Primary Education Programme nor the SSA has been successful in solving this core problem. It is not only the poverty and ignorance but the language problem also that poses a great hurdle in continuing their studies. But some problems have been noticed in introducing tribal language as medium of instruction for tribal students such as the absence of a script of their own, want of proper text books in tribal language at primary level and lack of teachers who can teach through tribal language. The primarily education, as it is the foundation of the entire educational system, has not been fully utilized by the Adiya, Paniya and Kattunaikka communities and their performance has been poor with no one among them

225 Interview with Ramesh, School Teacher, Pulpally, 28.4.2008.
228 The Hindu, 27 April 2003.
229 Ibid.
230 Ibid.
reaching 'plus two'. While under the decentralised system of governance, primary schools are funded through panchayats, the role of local bodies are confined to developing infrastructure. Quality at primary level is important since there is no effective system of pre-primary education for tribal students. It has been recognized that when a tribal child begins his education he starts with no linguistic information and conceptualization where as a non-tribal child starts with a few familiar concepts and linguistic association. Many agencies and institutes are engaged in studying these imbalances in the educational status of tribal society.

The educational evaluation of tribal students should be studied against the backdrop of other deprivations, the most important of which being abject poverty. It is well evident that privatisation, the soul of globalisation, and hence, education also cannot get away from the grip. The global education, therefore, is alien to tribal people as it is based our urban, non-tribal culture. In this context compensatory discrimination has effectively characterized the tribal as a welfare problem.

In accordance with the directives of the Constitution, special provisions have been made in the Kerala State and Subordinate Service Rules, 1958 for reservation of appointment for SC, ST and OBC. In 1951, Travancore-Cochin Government constituted a committee to go into the question of reservation vacancies for the downtrodden people. In 1952, Government orders on the committee's report were issued, in which the constitutional safeguards are concerned with (1) reservation of political reservation, (2) reservation of services posts.

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231 *The Hindu*, 23 April 2007

232 The Centre for Socio-economic and Environment Studies (CSES) Cochin, The Centre of Excellence, Indian Institute of Management, Kozhikode

233 The Post-independence policy in relation to SC/ST has been the scheme of compensatory discrimination, or reservation, as it is popularly known. Considering this reservation the constitutional safeguards are concerned with (1) reservation of political reservation, (2) reservation of services posts.

234 No. 52-25238/50/CS dated 17-9-1952.
total quantum of reservation in favour of SC, ST and OBC together shall be 45% of all initial appointments. Out of which the SC/ST together got 10 per cent.\textsuperscript{235} There was no change in the rule of reservation for SC and ST till 6-2-1957. It was stopped in 1957 and the Kerala Government issued an order,\textsuperscript{236} for enumerating the groups of citizens who are to be considered as SC, ST and OBC for the purpose of article 16(4) of the Constitution. A reservation of 10 percent is given for the SC(8%) and ST(2%) in proportion to their population in Kerala. Legally 2% of the vacancies occurring in various job opportunities in Government and quasi-government institutions are reserved for ST.\textsuperscript{237} The posts reserved for SC-ST and BC were allotted to the categories irrespective of caste or tribe. As per an order dated 22-7-1957 the percentage of reservation for BC was enhanced from 35 to 40 and introduction of subrotation among the major groups of BC.\textsuperscript{238} Even if a candidate from the reservation category is selected in open competition quota, the number of posts reserved is not reduced. By another order the quota for SC/ST has been fixed as one out of every five posts reserved for SC and ST.\textsuperscript{239}

The policy of reservation raised the expectation of these people to dizzying heights. But the fact is that only a few persons among them could get education and employment through reservation. This could not be a

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\textsuperscript{235} Pulayas-3.5%, Parayas-1.5%, Kurava-1.5%, ST-0.5%, other SC-1.5%, Pallan-0.5%, Valan, 0.5%, Thandan-0.5%

\textsuperscript{236} G.P. NO. S (D) 2. 41489/56/PD dated 6-2-1957

\textsuperscript{237} Out of every 20 posts, 2 would be reserved for SC and ST and 7 for Backward Classes (BC). The remaining level would be filled by open competition on the basis of merit. T. Madhava Menon, \textit{n. 67}, p.157

\textsuperscript{238} As per this order (w.e.f. 22-7-1957) in a cycle of twenty posts 8 will be for BC, 2 for SC/ST, 10 for open competition.

solution for the general backwardness of these communities. There are some other incentives like age-relaxation and concession for these groups to help them to enter the government services. But the basic structure of reservation for SC and ST continues unabated. They are confined to their fixed reservation by rule, even these seats are not always filled up. In 1950 the Government decided to make a detailed evaluation of the backlog in representation of SC/ST in Government service from 1950 onwards. Pending such evaluation Government have ordered to make a special recruitment of SC/ST to Gazetted posts in each Department. Some problems in the reservation of SC/ST are yet to be solved. Like OBC, there is no sub-rotation system of reservation in SC/ST. The number of posts in higher categories is not sufficiently large to provide for all the reserved communities. Among these categories more advanced groups are fully enjoying the benefits of reservation. In the case of STs in Kerala a few privileged people like Malaya Arayas and others are reaping all the fruits of reservation and others are wallowing in poverty and privation. In Wynad the Kurichias and Kurumans as educated groups are taking advantage of reservation. The converted tribals with material benefits of Christians are taking advantage. This finally led to the emergence of an implicit stratification within the tribal society on the basis of acquiring education, income, status and power.

Although the Kurichias and Kurumans of Wynad are educated recently, none of them is in the higher posts of Government services like tribes in the South. The members working in Government services within the district as well as out of the district are very few. The Paniyas and Adiyas are far behind in Government service. In fact reservation as a force of social

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241 *The Hindu*, 3 August, 2004
change has failed to function for these communities. Tribal development of the past fifty years proves that the problem of ST cannot be solved by more reservation or other material benefits unless they become enlightened by education.

Land Alienation and its impact on Tribals

"Land is a symbol of the social organization of the community". So the tribal land alienation is a part of the tribal land situation which has resulted from the socially conditioned history of which their social structure is apart.\(^{242}\) Land alienation, broadly speaking, is alienation at will and alienation resulting from a number of factors such as agricultural capitalism, social formation, land legislation, modernization and above all the forces of development, education and political awakening. The genesis of land alienation began from the new pattern of social formation of the tribal society. Therefore, the tribal land alienation cannot be analyzed without reference to the new social formations which are emerging from the working of the forces of modernization.

Land is an intrinsic part of the tribal life and therefore land alienation should be considered as an important indicator of tribal poverty and social deprivation. In this situation, it would not be wrong to say that increasingly tribal lands were offered for sale or grabbed due to a variety of factors. Those who constitute the land alienees are mainly the migrants, the high caste Hindu Jenmies, petty non-tribal traders and shopkeepers. But the worst to affect them was the opening up of Wynad to settlers after independence. One of the epoch making changes that took place in Wynad was this migration from Travancore to Malabar which had started around the 1920's and came to an end by the 1970s when practically the entire area of cultivable wastelands

was occupied by the peasant farmers from Travancore. This was not just migration of non-tribes into tribal area rather there is a history behind it and the state has supported the non-tribal migrants to settle down in tribal land. Thus the problem of tribal land alienation is a much deeply connected phenomenon full of contradictions in the existing socio-economic order. This resulted in reduction in tribal cultivation and increase in tribal labourers. In order to protect the interest of ST with regard to land alienation and other social factors, the provision of the 9th schedule has been enshrined in the Constitution and got mandatory assent of the President of India. The illegal transaction of land from tribes to non-tribes became an established social fact. The social change posed by such illegal transactions was noticed as early as 1961 by an evaluation committee of Kerala Legislative Assembly. The committee of 1961 in collaboration with Dhebar Commission, (1961) for the first time addressed the tribal question and suggested that all land alienated from 1950 onwards should be restored. Commenting on the problem of land alienation in tribal areas, another committee on plan project of the Planning Commission presented a report on the development programme in 1969. The commission noticed that tribal land in many areas had passed into the hands of non-tribes. All the committees and commissions further recommended a special legislation to protect the tribal land and restore the alienated land, and it could be done only in 1975 with the passing of the Kerala Scheduled Tribe (Restriction on Transfer of Land and Restoration of Alienated Land) Act, 1975. This Act received the assent of the President of India on 11-11-1975


and was enacted by the Government to fulfill the constitutional obligation under Article 244 (i), under which the state is obliged to make suitable legislation to protect the ST and their land. Though the Bill was passed unanimously in Kerala Assembly, ironically enough the Act has not yet been implemented, obviously due to the influence of non-tribal settlers and the resistance offered by the powerful groups who control the political parties.\textsuperscript{246}

This Act declared that any transfer of immovable property, possessed, enjoyed or owned by a ST member, to a person other than a member of ST, effected on or after 1-1-1960 and before the commencement of this Act shall be deemed to be invalid (as per the section 4\textsuperscript{th} and 5\textsuperscript{th}). The most shocking event regarding this Act is that, from 1975 to 1986, the Rules were formulated granted by any successive Governments to implement this Act. The rules under the Act were framed and notified in the gazette only on October 20, 1986, giving retrospective effect only from 1982.\textsuperscript{247} There is no provision in this Act to reclaim the land alienated before 1960. There was no historical justification to determine 1960 as the basic period of alienation because even before 1960 the land has been alienated.\textsuperscript{248} A major weakness of the Act (1975) was that a small minority was able to present documents as required by the Act, leading to a vast majority of the adivasis in Kerala not coming under the protection of the Act.\textsuperscript{249} So they suffered badly in terms of receiving compensation. Out of the 8879 applications only 4524 were accompanied by supporting evidence as required by the Act. Accordingly


\textsuperscript{249} \url{http://www/aepp.org/uappeals/2006}.
3170.12 hectares of land had to be restored.\textsuperscript{250} Kerala Government had declared in Legislative Assembly another account of district-wise details of the alienated tribal in 1989.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
Sl.No. & Districts & Land in Hectars \\
\hline
1. & Trivandrum & 237.7 \\
2. & Kollam & 83.9 \\
3. & Pathanamthitta & 293.67 \\
4. & Alappuzha & 0.3140 \\
5. & Kottayam & 272.7591 \\
6. & Idukki & 1165.0 \\
7. & Ernakulam & 105.2631 \\
8. & Thrissur & 23.8029 \\
9. & Palakkad & 3602.66 \\
10. & Malappuram & 48.4830 \\
11. & Kozhikode & - \\
12. & Wynad & 1392.3500 \\
13. & Kannur & 49.12 \\
14. & Kasargod & 86.7594 \\
\hline
Total & & 7761.7815 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{District-wise details of Tribal Land alienation in Kerala (in Hectars)}
\end{table}


But in practice no piece of land was sanctioned to any tribes in Kerala by this Act. Above all sections IV\textsuperscript{th} and V\textsuperscript{th} of this Act did much harm to the tribes due to the political influence.\textsuperscript{251}

In 1988, following a public interest petition seeking the intervention of the Kerala High Court, a writ of mandram was issued in 1993 to the State

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{250} Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{251} K.K. Annan, "Swantham Mannilum Abhayarthikal", in \textit{Malayalam. Varika}, March 14, 2008, p.37.}
\end{footnotesize}
Government to restore alienated land to the tribes. The state Government not only ignored the order, but attempted to pass an amendment to the Act 1975. The argument in Kerala Legislative Assembly for amendment to the Act 1975, by the Government was that a complete implementation of restoration of alienated land, as per the Act would adversely affect the ST people and small peasant holders. Later, the UDF Ministry through another ordinance, tried to effect changes in the Act, but the then Governor foiled the attempt. In 1996, the High Court set a deadline of September 30th to evict the non-tribes from tribal area. Flexing their political power the settlers forced the successive LDF and UDF Governments to amend the impractical provision of the Act, under which they should hand over the land in their possession back to the adivasis. The result was the Kerala Scheduled Tribe (Restriction of Transfer of Land and Restoration of Alienated Land) Amendment Bill, 1996 passed by the state Assembly under the LDF Government almost unanimously. But this amendment was also rejected by the President as it was a serious fraud on the Constitution against the safeguards given to the tribes. Legal experts have pointed out that the State Assembly has no power to amend an Act which was included in the 9th Schedule of the Constitution, whereas the central Government has pointed out that the amendment is against the interest of the tribal people, and will safeguard the persons who are in possession of lands alienated from tribal owners. Again in 1999, the LDF Ministry scrapped the Act, 1975 and


254 It is said that out of 140 MLAs in Kerala Legislative Assembly 139 MLAs supported the Bill.

255 *The Hindu*, 1 April 2003.

passed The Scheduled Tribe (Restriction of Transfer of Land and Restoration of Alienated Land) Act, 1999. The High Court of Kerala later nullified the 1999 legislature and observed that Kerala Government had committed contempt of court. However, the government appealed to the Supreme Court and a Special Leave Petition of the Government is pending before the Supreme Court. 257 Such legal entanglements have sabotaged the possibility of retrieving alienated land of the tribals. P.R.G. Mathur says that there is already a Supreme Court Order to restore the alienated tribal land in the country and in some states it has been implemented. But in Kerala, political parties ganged up to deprive the tribes their rightful land which they were holding for generations in the forest area. 258 The political coalitions in Kerala led by both the LDF and UDF have found it politically convenient not to implement the Act, 1975. 259 In depriving the tribes of their land the settlers who are economically strong and politically influential have the blessing and support of the rulers at state level. 260 The settlers, on the basis of vote bank, organized themselves to argue for their permanent rights on land and later all governments made legislation on their behalf. 261 As far as the settlers in Wynad were concerned, even the formation of this district in 1980 was a great boon as it helped them to settle many of the problems in regard to encroachment at the administrative level. 262

Thus virtually there is no law in Kerala now to restore the alienated tribal land. All these clearly show the indifference of the authorities towards.

257 *The Hindu*, 1 April 2003.
258 Interview with P.R.G. Mathur, Palakkad, 4-1-2009.
259 Interview with C.V. Kumaran, Lecturer Government Law College, Kozhikode, 8.3.2007.
260 M. Kunhaman *n.* 240, p. 87.
a vulnerable section of society which has become a victim of development rather than a beneficiary.\textsuperscript{263}

Perhaps no other legal framework of rights was so complicated and subject to abuse as tribal entitlement to the enjoyment of land. The legal measures of tribal land alienation begin with the legal battles of Dr. Nalla Thampi Thera, a social activist and campaigner for the rights of landless tribal people in Wynad, whose public interest litigation in the High Court led to legislation on restoration of alienated land to the tribal people, has emphasized the need for urgent governmental intervention to improve the lot of the tribal people.\textsuperscript{264} Dr. Thera has been highlighting in various ways the fact that the government has not restored to the tribal people the land that was taken away from them in violation of the legislation enacted in 1975. While emphasizing the need for quick action to complete distribution of land Dr. Thera complained that action taken so far by the government to give land to landless tribal people had been nothing more than a token gesture.\textsuperscript{265} Later, Dr. Thera as a respondent in this case has offered all help to settle the case out of court. As part of terminating all efforts in this regard PRG .Mathur viewed that the vexed tribal land restoration issue evaded a settlement and now there were attempts to withdraw the case pending in the Supreme Court filed by Dr. Thera demanding the implementation of Kerala Scheduled Tribe (Restriction on Transfer of Land and Restoration of Alienated Land) Act, 1975, passed by Kerala Legislative Assembly.\textsuperscript{266}

The process of land alienation has increased after independence. The use of a land for variety of cultivation has further worsened the problem. This

\textsuperscript{264} \textit{The Hindu}, 16 August 2006.
\textsuperscript{265} \textit{The Hindu}, 24 November 2007.
\textsuperscript{266} \textit{The Hindu}, 9 December 2009.
trend of alienation of their land in favour of non-tribal people despite all efforts of the state and Union Territories could not be arrested completely.\textsuperscript{267} According to the Socio-economic survey of 1976-78, during the decade ending 1976, 3346 tribal families in Kerala have lost 9859 acres of land, 86.3\% of the cases and 92.1\% of the areas related to transfer of land from tribal to non-tribes. 29.1\% of the cases and 27.4\% of the area were transferred by means of leases, 44.7\% and 42.1\% respectively by sale, 16.1\% and 18.8\% by mortgage, 1.7\% and 1.6\% by oral transfer, 2.2\% and 3.1\% respectively by mortgage of usufructs, and the remaining 6.2\% and 7\% by some other means.\textsuperscript{268}

The survey brought to light about 38 specific reasons which compelled tribal owners to part with their land. Of the major reasons 33.6\% of the cases and 49.2\% of the area were transferred to meet domestic expenses; 28\% of the cases and 21.1\% of the area to clear debt. Alienation in connection with medical treatment and marriage represent 14.7\% cases and 9\% area and 4.5\% cases and 2.3\% area respectively. Land encroached upon covers 4\% cases and 3.8\% area, while the corresponding percentages with land taken over by force workout to 1.5\% and 1.1\% respectively.\textsuperscript{269} It is true that some of these are rare events and they are very insignificant considering the extent of land transferred. Some other reasons as mentioned by the Tribal officers in Mananthavadi Tribal Block, which necessitated the alienation probably among the Kurichias and Mallakurums includes house repair, funeral

\textsuperscript{267} S. Narayan, \textit{Indian Anthropology}, Delhi, 1988, p.70.

\textsuperscript{268} \textit{Report on Socio-economic Survey of Tribals in Kerala 1976-78}. Trivandrum, 1979, pp.33-34.

\textsuperscript{269} \textit{Ibid.}, p.36.
ceremony, lack of interest in cultivation, threat of animals, drinking habit etc.\textsuperscript{270}

The manipulation and unsatisfactory state of land records contributed a lot to the problem of tribal land alienation. The tribals were never legally recognized as owners of the land which they cultivated. The unsystematic land records of the pre-colonial and colonial period was followed by later rulers. Many of the tribes did not have proper revenue records. This was because the area was so backward that the tribes did not show any interest in getting incorporated in the mainstream revenue system and they were not able to understand the significance of title deed for land used for shifting cultivation.\textsuperscript{271} So the poor land record system in the tribal area coupled with illiteracy, poverty and ignorance have resulted in the continuous transfer of resources from tribals to non-tribals for several decades. Taking the advantage of the absence of proper land records of tribals, the village heads took away the maximum amount of compensation in the name of these tribes. Land alienation is also reported to have taken place due to 'benami' transfers. The report of the study team of Union Home Ministry (1975) pointed out that large scale transfer of ownership of the adivasi lands are being allowed to go out of hand through illegal and benami transactions, collusive civil transactions etc. in which land remains in the name of the original owners who are reduced to the level of share croppers. As per another report of the Research project by the Ministry of Environment and Forest, a large number of tribal households have alienated more than half of their land even prior to the migration of the settlers in different ways.\textsuperscript{272} Of the total area of tribal alienated land in Wynad as per this report, 39.52% of the area transferred was

\textsuperscript{270} Interview with Joseph, rtd Tribal Officer, Mananthavadi,11. 10. 2007.

\textsuperscript{271} PRG. Mathur, "Transfer and Alienation of Tribal Land Indebtedness", in Kerala, 

\textsuperscript{272} M. Mohandas, n. 184, p.134.
in the form of cash sale to settlers, 28.23% was alienated through mortgage to settlers. 20.97% of the tribal land was grabbed by settlers through illegal encroachment. 2.42% was also lost through share cropping, where as 3.22% was lost due to cash sale to persons other than the settlers and tribes.\footnote{Ibid.}

Though the extent of land alienated in the state by lease is smaller than that transferred by selling, it covers a larger area in the district of Trivandrum, Quilon and Palakkad while land sold assumes larger weight in Kottayam, Idukki and North Wynad, Malappuram and land transferred by some other manner in north Wynad claims importance in this respect.\footnote{Report on Socio-economic Survey of Tribals in Kerala 1976-78. Trivandrum, 1979, p. 35.} Transfer of land by lease, sale, mortgage and by any other manner has been effected in southern and northern taluks of Wynad.\footnote{Ibid.} The oral transfer of possession of land is found in these taluks. Many of the Kurichia Tarawards were victims of land alienation by oral lease. The wild life legislation and forest laws after independence has forced the tribals to give up their traditional shifting cultivation. The land alienation thus also resulted from restriction imposed on shifting cultivation in colonial and post-colonial period. However, the art of settled cultivation was alien to large sections of the tribes and many of them leased their land to non-tribals for cultivation.\footnote{The Hindu, 27 November 2003.} These tribal lands are being taken on lease on stamp paper of Rs. 50, violating all land transaction laws. Regarding these types of land alienation A. Aiyappan wrote, if it were possible to gather correct information about land dealing in tribal areas, the story would not make a pleasant reading.\footnote{A. Aiyappan, "Tribes in South India", in Devendra Thakur, \textit{et al.}, (eds.) \textit{Tribal Life in India}, New Delhi, 1996, p. 93.} Land alienation which took place in these ways had assumed an alarming
proportion threatening the right to the life of tribal people. In the name of protecting the interest of the tribals stringent laws were enacted by the Government but the non-tribals find the loopholes to their advantage. Since these laws are meaningless adivasis no longer ask for restoration of alienated land, instead they demand five acres for each landless family. So there is a proposal to give 85% of forest land taken over by the Government to the tribals. But the Centre's Forest Protection Act of 1980, make it difficult to implement it.

Social Impact of Migration on Tribals

Migration is both a cause and consequence of the wider process of social change. These changes may be in various spheres of the life of the migrant group, namely demographic, economic, social, cultural and political.\textsuperscript{278} The incidence of migration indicated a system of social and economic change and could be regarded as a form of human adjustment to economic, environmental and social problems.\textsuperscript{279} But in the case of migration to the tribal areas of Wynad it deteriorated the socio-economic life of the tribals and created ethnic problems. A majority of peasant farmers who migrated from Travancore to Malabar were Syrian Christians and they set up a new diocese with head quarters at Thalassery.\textsuperscript{280} This facilitated their penetration into northern Wynad, especially to tribal areas. The early migrant people moved to settle at Mananthavadi, Thavinjal, Nadavayal, Sultan Batheri etc. Later their unrestricted influx into various tribal areas reduced the tribal people into a minority, who had been a majority in Wynad till 1941


\textsuperscript{279} K.C. Alexander, "Rural Development studies in Eighties" in M.S. Gore (ed.) \textit{The Third Survey of Research in Sociology and Social Anthropology}, New Delhi, 2000, p. 258.

constituting over 60% in 1931. But by 1971, they were a minority of 73,439 ie, 18% of total district population of 413850. Presently their number has dwindled to 17% of total population of the district. The Christian population has swollen by migration from Travancore, and the Muslim population by heavy natural increases. A tragic result of this migration was the eviction of many from the land cleared by them for cultivation. In almost all cases non-tribals who came late became land owners whereas the native tribals become landless labourers. When the land was transferred to the settlers and jenmies the tribals became wage labourers in their own land. This further led to a master-servant relationship in the social setup of Wynad. This continuous interaction between a traditional closed society and fairly open society would naturally turn the tide in favour the latter. The large scale migration destroyed the original floristic composition and the traditional social setup. The tribal communities were gradually alienated from their lands until they became virtually landless. In all the tribal societies the local chieftains had played a crucial role enjoying social and religious authority. The last many decades have witnessed considerable social change in the tribal pockets with the erosion of the authority and influence of the Moopan. Although this trend cannot be attributed to the rising impact of settlers, the prevalence of nuclear families and self-centred social and family behaviour of the settlers have had a lasting impact on the social life of the tribals. The extreme individualism and the system of private property and direct management of family property by settlers also had a demonstrative effect on the tribals. The democratic political process reduced

282 T. Madhavan Menon (ed), n. 103, p.302.
286 Mohandas, n. 184, p. 113.
Moopan's power and spread of modern system of treatment in tribal areas resulted further in the decline in his role as an indigenous physician. The present generation of more politically conscious tribes started looking upon the Moopan as an unnecessary intermediary who perhaps interfered with the family, social and political life of the tribal people. The common land and those which were assigned for tribal colonies were also alienated in different ways with the connivance of the Moopans. All these changes made many to think that Moopans had played a significant role in depriving their common land and were ineffective in protecting the traditional right enjoyed by them.

The spread of education, marriage with other groups where private ownership is practiced and the growing individualism paved the way for a systematic sharing of the property of the colony on a commonly agreed formula. Earlier the tribals in general used to marry at fairly lower ages. But the higher age of marriage of the settlers have had some favourable impact on the age of marriage of the tribals of the area. The marriage at pre-puberty has completely disappeared among the tribals of Wynad. The method of tribal worship, system of faith and attitude to religion were also influenced by the influx of settlers. It is observed that though the traditional system of faith and worship more or less continued, a gradual erosion in the religious faith is reflected in the religious ceremonies and rituals. A new trend was rather pronounced in certain areas that changed their faith and embraced Christianity. They are being systematically exposed, persuaded and pressurized so as to weaken their traditional faith. Some social activists point out that a number of economic incentives are offered to weaker section to induce them to change their faith and certain sections have responded to such efforts favourably. All these were not done by the settlers but by the Church which intensified their activities consequent on massive migration by persons belonging to their faith. Such changes in faith by force have given birth to social tension in certain places as it is opposed by some other faith.

The changing of social habits of the tribals are evident from the
incidence of household consuming items. The increased migration into remote areas resulted in construction of new roads, opening up of schools, dispensaries, ration shops and other infrastructural facilities to both tribal and non-tribal alike. According to a former Minister of Kerala in charge of Tribal Department, most of the roads, with TSP funds starts from the main centre to tribal area and may end before it reaches the tribal area due to lack of fund.\textsuperscript{287} These facilities were designed primarily to cater to the requirements of settlers who are more organized, politically involved and articulative of their rights. There is no denying that the tribals also benefited by the "trickledown effect". But effective accessibility of the tribals to many of these facilities has been constrained by their economic backwardness, especially in respect of private educational and health facilities.\textsuperscript{288} The opening up of new schools and nurseries in the area consequent on the settlement of the migrants really improved the accessibility to educational institutions. But the tribals are unable to make use of these institutions as most of them are under private management.

One of the worst and disastrous effects of migration on tribal social set up is the enhanced availability of liquor through illicit brewing patronaged by the settlers. Although liquor consumption had already been there among the tribals it increased manyfold due to the opening up of new liquor shops near their hamlets. Some settlers forced the tribals to join company with them and supplied arrack to the tribals at their residence. Some of the settlers find it convenient to pursue their nefarious designs whether it is economic or sexual exploitation of tribal women. Although it is difficult to quantify the extent of sexual exploitation of tribal women in this district the issue seems to have assumed an alarming proportion. As CK. Janu observes these excessive sexual exploitation and violence against tribal women is reflected in the

\textsuperscript{287} Interview with Radhakrishnan, Speaker of KLA. Trivandrum 28-8-2009.
\textsuperscript{288} M. Mohandas, \textit{n.}, 184, p.84.
increasing number of unwed mothers and they are suffering from a kind of neglect in society. The illicit liquor brewing within the tribal hamlets provides chances for others to keep in touch with them. The impact of liquor addiction has resulted in substantial land alienation, shattered family life and destroyed the social fabric of the tribal life. The persistent use of liquor even by children and women, results in deterioration of health and has added to economic misery. Thus addiction to liquor and intoxicants has been the primary cause for their economic backwardness and social degeneration and land alienation. No wonder, they have been an easy prey to the evil designs of certain outside elements. It is noted that the settlers alone are not the exploiters of the poor tribals. As per the information collected from police officers, tribal officers and social activists, the tribals are lured into illegal felling of trees, transportation in sandal wood etc, for earning money. Drugs, sandalwood and ivory worth millions of rupees are transported illegally at the cost of their life, probably induced by tobacco and arrack given by the mafia groups. The same tribals who were the custodians and protectors of forest wealth earlier are being reduced to sheer hoodlums by vested interests. But it may be misconstrued to say that all the settlers are of this type. A majority of them want to pursue only cultivation of cash crops which is profitable. Others are interested in taking up trade in hill products which is also a profitable occupation.

290 As per a study conducted by Manorama TV channel the average longevity of tribals in Wynad has been reduced to 40 years-Manorama News channel 4 November 2009 .
291 Interview with Maniappan , Mananthavadi, 6.1 .2008.
292 M. Mohandas, n. 184, p. 84.