CONCLUSION

A number of factors are responsible for the tribals not being able to get the benefits of modern health care. The main reason is due to the geographical isolation and inaccessibility. Health care centers are far away from tribal areas and poor transportation makes it even more difficult for tribals to make use of the available medical facilities. In the tribal context, environment plays an important role in the framework and evaluation of health care systems. Therefore, policies and programmes should be evolved keeping in mind the ground realities. Poor socioeconomic condition forces the tribal children to give up their education. No doubt, existing health care system is people centric but it is the fact that the benefits have not reached the tribals.

It was observed during the study that most of the tribal families live in thatched huts with floors made up of mixture of cow-dung and mud. Sanitation and drainage systems are poor. Malnutrition and gastrointestinal disorders are common among tribal populations. Many tribal homes have animals (goat, rabbits) and birds at home, living side by side with them. If tribals are not enlightened on the importance of clean environment at home, it may result in communicable diseases of childhood turning into chronic diseases. Protein deficiencies, which have been detected in gross amount, may aggravate disease conditions.

Absence of qualified medical practitioners have resulted in mushrooming clinics run by unqualified (quacks) medical practitioners in and around tribal areas. Use of infected syringes and needles by them may transmit infections. It was also revealed during the study that, very few of tribals were able to read and write. Therefore, they could not appreciate the benefits of modern medical facilities.

Two questions are central to understand the effects of health care service delivery system in tribal areas, one being their knowledge of the modern health care system indicating needs, interests, and preferences and the second is the accessibility to the health care center. Research reveals that media influences the knowledge, opinions, attitudes, and behaviors of target audience. Media can disseminate ideas,
images, themes, and stories. Therefore, media can play a potential role by being a part of all health related promotional programmes in tribal areas. The media both the audio and the visual can play a major role in disseminating health awareness. Every Haadi (tribal village) can be provided with a radio or TV set. This provision of audio-visual media is especially important in view of the high scale of illiteracy prevailing. The department of public health also can project films relating to community and personal health at village shandys (santhe in Kannada) and fairs through their mobile vans. Posters can also be put up at public places. N.S.S and Seva Dal camps can also be organized in tribal areas. In this context, the yeoman service being rendered by Dr. Sudarshan for the Soligas at B.R.Hills is highly commendable.

The plans and policy options of health care delivery system should be ambitious, at the same time, be guided by the realities. At times, enthusiastic and ambitious health care delivery system has an utopian appeal. Hence, it is imperative to carry out locally relevant initiatives for better service delivery.

There is a wide scope for studying the problems inherent to the tribal society. Developing a system that can ensure a close monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of delivery system to augment positive response from the tribals is the need of the hour. Though a number of national and international agencies have conducted studies to evolve schemes for upliftment of this vulnerable section of the Indian society, every one is of the opinion that there is a mismatch between the problems and solutions. It is true that there is no single measure to correct any system but a holistic approach to the problem may lead us nearer to the goal . If an effective machinery to supervise and execute the health care services of the tribals is developed with social and legal accountability, an inseparable, historical and a sizeable section of the Indian society who have been neglected so far in the glare of modernization can be protected before it vanishes. In order to achieve national integrity in this regard a time bound and comprehensive health programme needs to be developed so as to bring prosperity and progress to our tribal brothers and sisters.