CHAPTER-V

EMERGENCE OF NAXALISM AND TRIBAL MOVEMENTS IN STUDY AREA
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Tribal Movements:- Tribal movements can be divided as movements organised by tribals in forest areas, which have not been cleared for cultivation purpose and movements organised by tribals in areas where food cultivation has been taken up by tribals in the right earnest. While the movements in the forest areas are mainly directed against the State, in other areas it is directed against the semi-feudals. Since differentiation of peasantry exists in these food cultivating areas, tribal peasants have led the struggles against the exploiting classes.

Tribal revolts in Andhra Pradesh erupted on several occasions. The first of the revolts led by Rambhoopati took place in 1802-03. It is now popularly known as the East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh. A second revolt around 1862 was directed against Muttadars (petti tribal Zamindars) who supported the British. The third revolt around 1879 led by Chandraiah, Sambaiah, Thamman Dora and Ambul Reddy, was also in the Rampa country. It spread over 5000 sq.metres. The fourth occasion on which a tribal uprising took place in 1922-24 occurred under the leadership of Alluri Seetha Rama Raju. While all these revolts had taken place in the Coastal Andhra region, in Telangana part of the Nizam’s state, tribal revolts had taken place on two occasions. In 1842 Captain Blunt’s Troops were

attacked by Baster Gonds and Captain Blunt had to withdraw. Again in 1941 a sporadic uprising of the Gonds and Kolam led by Bheemu had taken place in the Adilabad district of the Telangana area in the erstwhile Nizam’s state. Tribal revolt at Indervelly in the year 1981. In 1969 the tribal revolts with the support of CPI (ML) party cadres (often referred as Naxalites) had taken place in various places of Andhra Pradesh mainly in Srikakulam, Warangal and Khammam, Adilabad. During the fag end of the 70’s tribal revolts were also being reported from Adilabad, East Godavari districts apart from the areas mentioned above.

At this juncture, the peasant movements led by the left parties that have chosen parliamentary path were gathering some momentum. Around the same period in the plain areas, another left party, CPI (ML) had been organising the tribal peasants on militant lines in the agency areas. Among the inhabitants are savaras, who live mostly on the jungle-clad hills and slopes of the region otherwise known as girijans. Earlier the savaras used to enjoy wide rights and privileges over the produce of forests-fruits roots, leaves and firewood. But rules for the preservation of forests enacted after independence, prevented their access to minor forest produce for domestic purposes or firewood for selling.

As in the rest of rural India, here also the grip of the money lenders was strong over the poor tribals. Many of whom were reduced to landless labourers, deprived of their rights on the forests, and were forced to work

2. Sumanta Banerjee: “In the wake of Naxalbari”, Subarnarekha, Calcutta, 1980: Pg. 128-130
3. Ibid
for poor wages. A survey made in an earlier period revealed that the moneylenders-cum-landlords, who know well the ignorance of the tribals offered only Rs. 60 for transplanting, reaping and depositing the crop in the stipulated place for labour required on a five acre plot, which would earn not less than Rs. 300 on other areas. Besides, the payment in this area, is made in grain. Here also the landlords use fraudulent practices, giving much less than what is agreed upon and the tribal finds it difficult to get even one square meal after a day's toil.

A Girijan Sangham peasant organisation of the tribals was set up during 60's and they were fighting for better wages. In 1964 itself the movement for better wages and against the harassment of the forest officials soon developed into a militant struggle for the right to harvest on vast lands. In the same year, the girijan sangham led a movement encouraging the tribals to cut the forest timber in defiance of official group. The police arrested thousands of girijans and they instituted a number of cases against the poor tribals. But the militancy of the tribals had produced some results like an increase in the wages of the labourers and an increase in the share of share-croppers. These achievements strengthened the tribals faith in political organisations.

In the past, after the ushering in of green revolution, peasant movements, especially those belonging either to landed labour class or landless labour class have been on the increase. This tendency can be observed from 1967 onwards. The green revolution on one hand led to a demand for higher wages by agricultural labourers on the other it also gave vent to the land hunger among the poor peasants. The land-grab movement and the

4. Sumanta Banerjee: In the wake of Naxalbari, Subarnarekha, Calcutta, 1980: Pg. 128-130
5. Ibid
Naxalite movement are the manifestations of the agrarian unrest over the maladies that exist in the prevalent agrarian structure.

While the peasant struggles in the plain areas are extending, the tribals are also continuing their struggle for the occupation of forest lands. In the tribal areas, the girijans have also been able to secure higher wages for timber and bamboo cutting, the wages being increased three or four times. Vetti chakiri or forced labour demanded by forest officials and illegal payments to them have been stopped. The girijans have been able to reduce the interest rates paid to money-lenders and achieve increase in prices of their forest produce, sold to traders. On the strength of their own initiative and organisation and in the face of government opposition, the girijans have setup schools for children and adults.

The movement by the tribal peasants has spread in the past in Adilabad district (i.e., in April, 1981) a massive protest by tribal peasants was organised by the CPI (ML) and the repression of the police led to the killing of 15 tribal peasants and many were wounded. This protest was mainly organised against the plains. People trying to grab the lands of the tribals and other practices like charging exorbitant rates of interests by money-lenders and other.

A review of all these tribal movements indicates that the militancy of the tribal peasant movements depends on the nature of causes around which they are rallied. The demands of the tribal people against the outside landlord and money lenders had led to agrarian unrest in Srikakulam district, tribal belts of Warangal and Khammam and Adilabad districts.

The tribal peasant is often more militant than the peasant in the plain-areas. The nature of the issues, purely economic or socio-economic will also decide the pattern of the mobilisation of the peasants. It is usually observed that peasant mobilisation and peasant resistance had been quite high, when they were fighting against socio-economic injustices. In conclusion, it can be said that the success of any peasant movement and organisation represents the interests of poor and landless in general and tribals in particular. Thus, the success of the peasant movements including tribal movement depends upon the nature of causes for which they are being mobilised, besides the spontaneity or otherwise of the various peasant sections, in joining the movements, the alliance among the different classes of the peasantry and the degree of militancy exhibited by the peasantry.

A) ORIGINS OF NAXALITE MOVEMENT:-

Agricultural sector is the backbone of Indian economy. In other words, it is an important sector for the economic development of the country. The major part of the cultivable lands was concentrated in the hands of landlords (zamindars). At the time of Independence about 75 percent of land was concentrated in the hands of landlords. Thousands and hundreds of acres of land was in few hands. The zamindars and other sections in the society, like the money lenders, usurped a large part of land on the pretext of settlement for loans taken by cultivators and a number of cultivators was deprived of their lands. This gave birth to the class of landless labourers or agricultural workers. They worked on the land of others for wages. Some of the small farmers possessed meagre holdings which were uneconomic.
In Adilabad district landlords were extracting more work and exploiting the agricultural labourers and small farmers for less wages. The enacting of land ceiling Act in 1971-72 did not produce any impact on the district. The “Garibi hatowo” remained as slogan only without any progress. The feudal land lords exploiting the poor and ruling the villages as Crownless Kings The village people used to pay bribes and caste-wise payments to the Landlords. The small farmers have to till the landlords’ lands turn wise without expecting (free) any payment for their labour, with their own ploughs and cattle. Agricultural labourers cannot work according to their will because either they or their forefather’s borrowed money from the landlords, hence all the family members must work as bonded labourers The landlords not only were exploiting the poor people of the villages, but they have become the forest contractors too and selling lakhs of Rupees worth of wood in the black market They also earned a lot of money as liquor contractors and by sub-contracting liquor at higher rates. They also indulged in immoral acts with village ladies as if it is their right to do so. They have controlled local government employees and got the work done in their favour. In addition to excessive rents and illegal exactions, the landlords forced the peasants to offer various gifts, nazranas etc. They killed any person who opposed their acts. This system of land lordism (zamindari) was based on exploitation. The poor people were forced to lead a wretched life of slavery and deprivation.

After the suppression of Naxalite movement in Srikakulam district, the extremists shifted their activities to the tribal areas of Telangana, mainly to the districts of Adilabad, Warangal and Khammam with a large tribal population. The tribal area of these districts particularly that of Adilabad district, despite early start in developmental and welfare activities during the Nizam’s time itself, were ready to receive the extremists. After India’s
independence non-tribal immigration into these areas became an avalanche resulting in large number of local tribals lost their lands. Further these non-tribals also became competitors to the tribals in the exploitation of the forest resources. Added to this, the forest rules and regulation became more stringent resulting in the explosion of many tribal families from their agricultural lands which they have been cultivating from many generations. Unscrupulous traders, money lenders and petty business men invaded the areas and intensified their activities. The extremists found this area fertile and ready to be harvested.

**PLIGHT OF THE TRIBALS:** The Tribal people of, Adilabad lost their cultivatable lands more than half and were holding only barren and unproductive lands. Most of them were depending on forest for their livelihood. The harassment of tribal is continuing since long period. Particularly among the tribes Gonds, Kolams, Naikpod, Lambada, Koya etc., the worst are sufferers and even today they are living in miserable conditions though the government passed an Act that tribal peoples’ land not to be occupied by non-tribals. These acts are not adequately implemented. The forest officials and patels two exploited the tribals demanding many things from the poor tribals. Any resistance from the people only resulted in their repression. There is no safety for the common man in the villages. It shows that small farmers, labourers, and other occupation people suffered from poverty. In this setting a prominent naxalite leader Kondapally Seetharamaiah came and settled in Jannaram area as a farmer.
COMMUNISTS ENTRY:- In 1962-63 Kondapally Seetharamaiah was expelled from C.P.I. In 1964 he went to Luxettipet taluk of Adilabad district and settled there as a farmer. He studied the socio-economic conditions of the people of the district. He started again his political activities and mobilised the poor farmers, agricultural labourers and educated them to revolt against the atrocities of local landlords of Luxettipet area. The landlords could not bear the revolt of the people. They unleashed violence.

Before Seetharamaiah organised naxalite movement in the district, the C.P.I. was the only left party which has some influence in Adilabad, Boath, Asifabad Talukas and industrial areas of Bellampally and Mandamarri. The C.P.I. organised and conducted struggles against the price rise, to protect the rights of labour, wage rise etc. In 1971 the C.P.I. gave slogan to occupy the lands of landlords and occupied hundreds of acres of land, distributed among the landless poor. It also demanded implementation of land reforms. On many problems the C.P.I. conducted struggles peacefully in the district. The CPI led movement was confined to limited areas of the district. There were no units of C.P.I. in Luxettipet, Manchirial, Chennur, Khanapur and Utnoor talukas. There was no split in the C.P.I. unit of the district when the Party split in 1964.

In 1966 Seetharamaiah convened a meeting, which was attended by Kothapara Narsimha Rao, Kalyanapu Venkateswara Rao, Raja Reddy, Ranga Rao, M. Papa Rao and some other persons of left views. The meeting was convened to establish a party and oppose the atrocities of the landlords of Luxettipet area.

8. Ibid
ACTIVITIES OF SEETHARAMAIAH:- Under the leadership of Charumazumdar, Kanu Sanyal, the farmers revolted against the landlords in Naxalbari of west Bengal in 1967. Mazumbar and Sanyal originally belonged to C.P.M. They were expelled from the party and those expelled from C.P.I. (M) organised a meeting in the month of June, 1968 at Vijayawada and formed a coordination committee for Andhra Pradesh. These people with help of tribals started naxalite movement. Kondapally Seetharamaiah joined the naxalite party (CPI-ML) Seetharamaiah studied the socio-economic conditions of Adilabad district upto 1972. Later he came to Kazipet, where he joined in a school as Hindi pandit. Through he was working in a school, he has not left his Political activities. He contacted REC (Regional Engineering College, Warangal) students, educated them and made college his centre of political activities very soon his activities expanded in Warangal town and some other parts of the district.

FORMATION OF P.W.G. (PEOPLE’S WAR GROUP):- In may, 1970 C.P.I. (ML) was formed at Calcutta. Till this time K. Seetharamaiah was touring the Telangana districts and mobilising the people into his fold. There was a split in the M.L. Party. In 1970 Viplava Rachiyatala Sangham Revolutionary Writers Association (VIRSAM) with some lecturers has formed and in 1972. Jana Natya Mandali was also formed. This Jana Natya Mandali through its cultural programmes attracted many people into the fold of C.P.I.M.L. from all nooks and corners of the state. The R.S.U. (Radical Students Union) student wing of M.L. was also started. In organising the mass organisations Seetharamaiah played an important role. In the middle of 1974 under the leadership of seetharamaiah a new committee of M.L. group was formed later youth organisation also formed Radical Youth League and Peasants and workers organisations ‘Rytu coolie sangham’ Communist Party of India (M.L.P.W.G) finally was formed in 1980.
At this time the police repression on people increased and in Telangana peasants struggles were intensified particularly in Karimnagar and Adilabad districts the P.W.G. planned a guerilla zone strategy to attack the oppressors. They formed a guerilla zone consisting of Adilbad, Karimnagar, Warangal and Khammam districts which are in between Godavari river and rail road.

Peasant movements of Karimnagar district organised against feudal land lords, influenced Adilabad people. For the first time in 1976 a landlord, Pitambara Rao’s house was raided and he was murdered. This is the beginning of the Naxalite movement in Adilabad district. Though the C.P.I. was strong in this area, it failed in solving the problems of tribals particularly land problem Naxalites utilised situation to their favour.

Naxalites chose their centre of activity in Adivasi (Tribal) area of Telangana. The movement was intensified after the emergency was lifted in the year 1977. From the beginning the three groups of C.P.I. (ML), Chandra Pulla Reddy, Kondapally Seetharamaiah, “Lin-Pio” and Rawoof were working in Adilbad district.

C.P.I. (M.L.P.W.G) group led by Kondapally Seetha Ramaiah took a decision to organise students, peasants and workers organisation in 1978. With this decision the RSU has given a slogan to the students that “Move to Villages” student organisations formed in villages by the RSU leaders. In 1978 Gajjela Gangaram a native of Bellampally and a student of Warangal REC organised the struggles in Adilabad district.

In the beginning the P.W.G. concentrated its work in coal mine areas of Bellampalli and Mandamarri. They organised civil liberty

10. Ibid
movement held public meetings, a revolutionary poet Sri Sri (Srirangam Srinivasa Rao) was invited to these meetings. With this the influence of RSU increased in the district.

To spread the P.W.G. party into tribal areas, to know the socio-economic problems of the tribes of Asifabad Taluka Wankidi area, one Dasari Laksmikantham, an organiser of P.W.G. party was sent there. He was very close to tribals and helped them. He was called by the tribals with love and affection as “Porakala Dora”, (Originally Lakshmi Kantham) he was the pioneer for the Gond’s revolt at “Indervelli” in 1981. Prior to this, there was another incident in the district which caused the spread of the naxalite movement in the district, at Kamana tribal of a Gond village (Wankidi area) revolted against a trader and destroyed the debts papers (Promissory notes) and released two bullocks which were taken by traders in 1977, Lakshikantham, (Pogaku panthulu another nick name - Tobacco Seller) was the organised the local tribals.

For the first time the P.W.G. party organised a mass meeting at Wankidi. A large number of tribals participated in the meeting. The police repression also increased in the district. All these factors caused for the intensification of the naxalite movement in the district.

During the eightees in Adilabad district quite a number of naxalite groups were active. They include C.P.I. (ML. PWG) led by K.Seetharamaiah; C.P.I. (ML) Prajapantha; CPI(ML) Phani Bakshi; CPI (ML) CP. Group; Rawoof led Lin-Pio and other groups. Only (CPI-ML) PWG. group was very active throughout the district, while the remaining groups were confined only to Luxettipet area. Kondapalli Seetharamaiah’s, P.W.G. party and its mass organisations received large support from the people through out the district. A “Dandkaranya Adivasi Kisan Mazdoor sangham” (DAKMS) was formed as its mass organisation in the district

B) SPREAD OF NAXALISM ACTIVITIES IN THE TRIBAL BELT OF ADILABAD DISTRICT:-

When the Girijans (Tribal people) of Srikakulam district in coastal Andhra rose up in 1970-71, the only political leadership they got was from Marxist-Leninist-students. After the suppression of the naxalite-movement in Srikakulam district, the naxals shifted their activities to the tribal areas of Telangana region, mainly to the districts of Adilabad, Warangal and Khammam which have many labour areas (Tribals). Gradually, the movement was started in Karim Nagar district, an area that was not really touched by the agrarian movement.

SPREAD OF REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITIES:-  The movement developed over the following issues Return of bribes taken by landlords during the emergency period on the threat of getting peasants arrested. Cultivation of public land held illegally by the landlords. This movement became intensified. The uprising in the two Taluks-Jagithyala and Siricilla of Karimnagar district was preceded by about three and half years of scattered revolutionary activities, influenced by the Naxalbari and Srikakulam uprisings, the revolutionary movement moved up the Godavari valley and spread into the plains of Karimnagar. At the end of 1973-74, under the leadership of Chandra Pulla Reddy in Siricilla and Kondapalli Seetharamaiah in Jagithyala peasants struggles were organised. Rytu Coolie Sanghams were organised and struggles for social oppression and feudal practices commenced in this area. 14 Peasant movements as large scale in the villages

14. Rama Melkote; Extremist movement in B.A.V. Sharma (ED) political Economy of India; light and life publishers, Delhi 2000; P.259.
of Karimnagar district have been organised; where protests, demonstrations, gheraas, strikes and social boycott have been the various forms for the mobilization of the peasantry.

In September, 1978 a massive demonstration of 20,000 peasants was held at Jagithyala town. In villages also strikes and social boycotts have been led to the use of strong-arm tactics by land lords to cow down the peasants. The struggles in all these villages were mainly against social oppression which took on a fantastic variety of forms. In Telangana Vetti or vetti chakiri (bonded-labour) in many manifestations is the most striking characteristic of feudalism. Not only do the peasants perform unpaid work in dora's fields. Working people of all castes have to do vetti. The start of the beedi-leaf season in April-May 1980 inevitably brought forth the struggle for higher piece rates and for abolishing vetti and the repressive practices of the contractors and their Kalledars (Hench men).

STRUGGLES IN ADILABAD FOREST AREAS:

While the peasant struggles in Karimnagar district had taken place in plain areas, the struggles in Adilabad had taken place in forest areas and almost all the struggles were concerned with the problems of tribals. The Adilabad district consists of 10 taluks and most of the district is covered by thick forests. The tribals have been robbed of the best land by the non-tribals and they are therefore continuously in search of new land. The only way they can get it is to cut down forests. They have always been doing this, ever since the Government of Nizam of Hyderabad allowed non-tribal settlers into the district and parallely adopted a forest policy of growing teak. But they have to be contended with forest department, its corrupt officials and court cases. The main conflict of the tribal and peasants is with the government itself particularly, its revenue and forest department.

Every forest official from chaukidars and Dafedars (Attendants) to Rangers, consider the tribals as a milch cows, to be squeezed at will. Fines for grazing cattle, fines for cutting fire wood, fines for tapping toddy or brewing liquor out of wild flowers (Mahua)- the tribals are enmeshed in lines, most of which are actually illegal.

A Visit to the tribal hamlet by any Government official invariably entails forced gifts-from liquor contractors. The tribals are facing another important problem, exploitation by the trade and money lenders. The eviction drive against the peasants gained momentum during the emergency period. The year 1975 saw many such activities and also the greatest resistance from the peasants. In these struggles, the Gonds, Kolams, Lambada and even Marathi peasants fought together. It is during this period that the People's War Group of the C.P.I.(ML) led by Kondapalli Seetharamaiah, started organising the peasants and tribals.

PEASANT ORGANISATIONS RYTHU COOLIE SANGHAMS:

Peasants associations, mainly in alliance with the poor peasants and agricultural labourers in the name of Rythu Coolie Sangham affiliated to C.P.I.(ML) (PWG) has come up in many villages in Adilabad district to achieve economic and social justice. Adilabad district represents the socio-economic background of the Telangana in the 1970s. In Luxettipet, Asifabad, Khanapur, Adilabad and Chennur talukas new landlords still continue to possess land holding over and above ceiling limits, even after the implementation of ceiling on land holdings Act, 1972. In the villages land revenue was collected by patwari with the assistance of the patel. The patwari generally belong to Brahmin caste and the patel was chosen from Velma caste. The landlords, who also belonged to Velma caste acted as a catalyst for strengthening the socio-economic base of the patel.
They exploited small peasants. In some cases, wet lands were usurped by Patwaris. Apart from usurping lands feudal oppression including practice of the vetti system (forced labour and exactions) was extended to tribal areas and to some of the most backward social communities in other areas. The peasants had to sow the lands of the village officials and landlords before they would take up work for their own fields. Agricultural labourers had to work on the fields of the officials and landlords without any remuneration, or nominal wages even. Then only they were allowed to work on the fields of other peasants. This is how they earned their livelihood. For many years that is 1950-70 the landlords families especially the grandson of Asaldar (the heir) continued to exercise his hold over lands and people of the village. Even the Protected Tenancy Act of 1951 did not bring about any change in the position of tenants and most of them still continued their tenancy on an oral basis. The extreme northern district Adilabad bordering the forest area and the tribal people, the conditions of agricultural labourers were far more backward than in any other parts of Telangana region.

The communists began to organise the peasants. Agitation for the recovery of land illegally occupied by the landlords, occupation of forest banjar lands and struggles against illegal payments to the forest officials, the patels and patwaris. In April 1970 a struggle started in Adilabad district at Perkapally (Wankhidi- Adilabad) and Ginnadhari (Tirivani) against the exploitation of local landlord, and village officials and some village patels were murdered with support of the local poor. Young naxals Bhoomaiah and Kishta Goud were accused of instigating the local poor and were executed by the High court of Andhra Pradesh convicted them with capital punishment.15(a)

In the year 1974, PWG organised peasants struggles. But due to proclamation of Emergency and heavy repression, open struggles, could not be carried on with the coming to power of the Janata government and the release of some of the leaders. In the following period RYTU COOLIE SANGHAM organized struggles for increased wages for coolies and agricultural workers.

The Naxalites in tribal areas of Adilabad came to prominence in the year 1976 with the killing of a landlord by name Digambar Rao along with his followers in the village, Tapalpur. With these killings police in the district became alert. For the next two years, very little was heard about the naxalite activities in the district. During this period the People’s War Group of Kondapally Seetha Ramaiah withdrew into the interior forests and started its propaganda among the Gonds and other native tribes of Utnoor, Boath, and Asifabad areas. Much credit is given to Dasari Lakshmikantham, a naxalite - worker for creating the mood of rebellion among the native tribes of the district. He originally belonged to the naxalite group of Kondapally Seetharamaiah. During 1977 he entered the tribal areas of Asifabad to prepare the naxals for agitation against the government and the non-tribal immigrants. Lakhsmikantham (1975-77) toured the entire tribal areas of Asifabad, Utnoor and Boath interacting with tribals and instigating them. They named him as PORAKALA DORA (Porakala = Bush, Dora = Lord) and they say, he comes like lightening and disappears but reappears in another place.

MAIN THRUST OF THE NAXALITE GROUPS:—

The propaganda of the naxalite groups among the tribal areas concentrated on the following issues (1) Forest belongs to the tribals, who have been living in it from time - immemorial. They do not allow the police and the officials of the forest department
into forest areas and also into their villages.

2) The agricultural lands occupied by the non-tribal immigrants in the area belong to the tribals and the non-tribal immigrants have no right on the land in the tribal area.

(3) The unscrupulous money-lenders, traders are supported by the government, against the tribals through the G.O 129 exempting the operation of land Transfer Regulation in the case of non-tribal immigrants possessing five acres of wet land or ten acres of dry land also came very handy to the naxalites to instigate the tribals.

(4) They encouraged the tribals to forcibly harvest the crops in the lands of non-tribal immigrants. Apart from the exploitation by the merchant and trading community, the forest officials, Revenue and excise officials also penalised them and extracted bribes from them.

After 1961, the forest policy on the Government Land had undergone a change and the forest had been cleared by tribals and they were cultivating these forest lands and they were not having any legal - ownership rights on pattas over this land. The forest officials forcibly evicted the tribals from these lands and this led to unrest among the tribals. Thus the tribals in the villages, had to face exploitation from many sides and this was one of the reasons for the tribal unrest and the struggle that ensued later.

**GIRIJANA RYTHU COOLI SANGHAM:**- The CPI (ML) PWG of Seetharamaiah initially organised the tribals after emergency was lifted. The naxalites had more hold on the tribals as well as and organised them to establish an association called GIRIJANA RYTHU COOLI SANGHAM (Tribal Peasants and Agricultural Labour Union). The apparent aim of this body was to secure remunerative wages to the tribal labour and remunerative price to the commodities sold by the tribals. Another aim was against the economic crimes committed on the tribals by the non-tribals. The Girijan Rythu Cooli Sangham was quite active around Indervelli and also in
organising a few protest marches. In 1976 in the Keslapur Jatara the Sangham activists distributed some pamphlets. They had support of all the native tribals of the area. The situation in the area was fast deteriorating, the native tribes were restive and dissatisfied as a result of ploitation, negligence, police atrocities and the actions of the department of forest. Discontentment and dissatisfaction among the tribals reached its peak by 1980.

The tempo of activities of the tribal peasants associations increased from May 1980 onwards. T.Gudem is located in the jurisdiction of Utnoor taluka of Adilabad district. This tribal village is seven kms away from Indervelly. In this village, a struggle was organised over Government taking 200 acres of forest land and declared it as reserved forest. The tribal peasants under the leadership of their peasantry organisation, occupied the 200 acres and planted Jowar, in these 200 acres. The forest officials had threatened with direct action. But the tribals, under the active leadership of their peasant organisation withstood the attempt of the forest officials and the officials had to flee - from the village. This is a great turning point in the life of tribals in this village, In May 1980, around Pipaldhri and other areas they occupied 100 acres of Government land under the leadership of Girijana Rythu Coolie Sangham. They also resisted the forest and police officials oppression. The movement had gradually spread to 25 to 30 villages in Utnoor and Adilabad Revenue divisional areas. In July-September of 1980, people of 30 village had occupied 1150 acres of land and got back 12 pairs of bullocks from money-lenders. In July 1990, under the leadership of sangham tribals had occupied 600 acres of land and distributed this land among themselves.

INDERVELLI MASSACRE:-

Naxalities through the Rythu Cooli Sangham used other tactics to mobilise support for their activities among the native tribes and prepare them for the final confrontation. To highlight their problems tribals wanted to organise a meeting at Indervelli village of Uttnoor Revenue Mandal on 20 April, 1981. The police originally gave the Girijana Rythu coolie Sangham permission to hold meeting at Indervelli where a huge gathering was expected, but due to this, subsequently they cancelled the permission and imposed 144 section. People coming to the village for meeting were arrested and were driven out of the village. When large group of tribals resisted the attempts to drive them back, the Police resorted to firing killing about 30 to 60 tribals and Gonds on the spot and injured about 150 persons. 20th April being a Monday was a shandy day at Indervelly. The hope that something good is going to come out of the meeting prompted many to attending meeting in large numbers. A large number of tribals from all parts of the division visited Indervelli on that day. The gathering of thousands of tribal at Indervelli caused panic among the officials and police.

KOMMARAM BHEEM-IDOL OF GONDS:- The native tribals believe that this violation has taken place, since this happened in the case of Kommaram Bheemu at the time of Babijheri incident, as well as at Indervelli in 1981. The result was many tribals were killed in the firing. Indervelli has become another Jallian Wala Bagh. The Government has gone a few steps ahead and far exceeded the imperialist Killer, (General Dyer, responsible for massacre of Jallianwala Bagh incident in erstwhile in Panjab State) Dyer by wantonly firing upon a twenty thousand strong rally of innocent and backward Girijans at Indervelli on 20th April, 18.

17. Correspondents; Andhra Pradesh; Another Massacre of Tribals; Economic and political weekly, May 2, 1981 PP. 776-797; “Indervelli another Jallianwalamahali”, Adilabad Girijana peasants struggle forges Ahead undeterred: Kranti Prachuranalu, Secunderbad 1981.
By the time of Indervelli incident three naxalite groups i.e., Seetha Ramaiah, Rawoof and Chandra Pulla Reddy were active in the tribal areas of Utnoor, Boath, and Asifabad taluks of district. Much credit is given to Dasari Lakshmi Kantham (Porkala Dora = nik name) a naxalite worker, for creating the mood of rebellion among the native tribes of the district.

GROWING STRENGTH OF TRIBAL REVOLTS:– The unrest among the tribals is steadily increasing and spreading to other taluks of Adilabad district. Tribals occupied hundred acres of land that the money lenders had occupied and got restored the land to the original owners. In Utnoor area people had occupied 300 acres of government land and resisted the atrocities of the forest officials. In Tapalapoor of Laxettipeta, the landlords had occupied 150 acres of Government grazing land and laid a fencing to use exclusively for their cattle only. Under the leadership of Sangham CPI(ML) (PWG) people occupied the land and removed the fencing for common use of all the village - cattle. In most of the areas tribals stopped doing Vetti to the forest officials.  

BEEDI - LEAF STRUGGLE:–

Apart from the above struggle, the beedi-leaf struggle was taken up as the first mass struggle in Adilabad district. It started over the minimum rates payable for each bundle. As the picking season approached in 1980 under the (CPIML. PWG) guidance of Sangham, they decided to demand a higher rate and for abolishing Vetti Bundles - rates were enhanced from 5 paisa to 10 paisa. In 1986-87 rate per bundle was increased from 15 paise to 25 paisa in most of the units of Adilabad district. This is a remarkable achievement on the part of the organization.

20. Ibid P.146-147.
In the pre-struggle period in Adilabad district, agricultural wages were very low. From 1980 onwards the wages for agricultural labourers were increased very sharply due to the impact of the peasants and agricultural labourer struggles led by CPI (ML) PWG. Even now the struggles in these tribal areas are continuing in the forest areas of Adilabad district.

In 1988 there was heavy loss of crop in many parts of the country due to drought, or excessive rains and floods. One of these unfortunate victims of the vagaries of nature was Adilbad district of Andhra Pradesh, 80 percent of Adilbad reeled under a terrible famine in that year. Out of a total population of about 20 lakhs in this district 15 lakhs were troubled by it, 45 out of 52 mandals (Revenue), experienced this unprecedented famine for which both excess rainfall and drought contributed equally. In the hilly areas of this district, the situation was even worse. The Girijan inhabitants of these areas suffered heavily. All the main crops in the district such as jawar, cotton, maize, redgram, blackgram etc., were completely damaged. According to the estimates made by the District Collector, the total crop loss in Kharif season amounted to Rs.40 crores and that in Rabi to Rs.20 crores. But infact, the loss was much more than Rs.60 crores. Peasants did not even get back the seeds they sowed. Unable to survive in such conditions, several families migrated to plains seeking for livelihood. To fill their hungry bellies, girijan peasants started eating a kind of wild roots, known locally as “mattigaddalu” (MUD ROOTS). As these roots are
poisonous many girijans who consumed them became dizzy and fell conscious. Often they were found lying in interior forests also.

The Government and the money lenders were responsible for this pitiable plight of the girijans and peasants. The Government was not only indifferent towards the basic problem of the people, it did not even extend minimum help to these famine-stricken people. Under these cruel circumstances, the Girijans of Adilbad made several representations to Government to declare the district as famine hit area and take-up famine relief works. They submitted several memoranda to ITDA officials at the mandal level as well as to the District Collector. But the administration remained unmoved.

**HUNGER RAIDS:** The Girijan Rythu Cooli Sangham which was leading them last ten years, in their struggles for land against landlords, forest officials and the Government pitched in. The Girijans did not have any illusions that this famine was the result of mere excessive rains. They recognised the main cause for famine as their exploitation for generations. Having come to this realisation, they adopted a new form of struggle, the “hunger-raids”, against the exploiters, who were looting them for generations. In order to save themselves from the pangs of the famine, they began a series of hunger
raids on the houses of landlords, traders shops, and granaries of the 'shavukars' (traders). Hundreds and even thousands of girijans including women and children participated in these raids and took back goods to their villages by bullock carts. To the girijan peasants of Adilbad presented a new weapon “hunger raids” gave inspiration to Indian peasant movement and set a precedent for famine stricken areas.

All these incidents highlighted the intensity of the problems of tribals and the way they responded under the leadership of a C.P.I.(ML) (PWG) party that could arouse their political consciousness. The peasant struggles in all these areas had been waged, partly due to the political consciousness aroused by the left parties which organised these struggles. Another important factor in raising this consciousness was the activities of the cultural front of organisation of peasants of “Jana Natya Mandali” is the cultural organisation of C.P.I.(ML) (PWG) group of K.Seetharamaiah, likewise Arunodaya is the cultural organisation of C.P.I. (ML) group of Chandra Pulla Reddy. All these groups have their common revolutionary writers organisation called by “Virsam” (Revolutionary writers Association). The cultural front organised by Gaddar (Singer of Revolutionary Songs) became a household name in Telangana.

After 1971, The consciousness of the masses had been aroised by partly due to the “Garibi Hatao” slogan given by Mrs. Indira Gandhi and partly by the formation of ‘Rythu Coolie Sangham’ (RCS) in 1972, the

C.P.I.(ML) party, an association which reflected the level of political consciousness of the masses.

The changes in Telangana over the last one decade as a result of the C.P.I. (ML) (PW) group led peasant struggles took place. The old contradictions slowly receded into the back ground, while some new contradictions emerged.

**FORMATION OF TRIBAL PEASANT ORGANISATION:-**

In Adilabad, the formation of the tribal peasants association had raised the consciousness of the tribals and they have now become aware of the fraudulent practices of merchants and trading community, All these attempts of tribals finally culminated in their impressive show which they wanted to organise at Indervelli, but it was brutally crushed by the police firing at the innocent tribals.

The concerted action by the tribals led to some achievements. Firstly, they almost put a stop to the exploitation by the merchant and trading community. Secondly, they occupied the lands which they lost to the merchant and trading community. Thirdly, the tribals got remunerative prices for their products, Fourthly, the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) had been extending loans in a big way for the purchases of Agricultural inputs. Fifthly, the exploitation of forest officials had been curtailed to a greater extent. Sixthly, their economic position had improved due to the stoppage of different Types of exploitation. Seventhly, they had come out of the shackles of debt and lastly, they were able to lead a life with dignity.
CPI (ML) PARTIES-AGRARIAN AND PEASANT STRUGGLES:-

The agrarian question remained important political question even today for the communists—for the both who are in parliamentary and non-parliamentary political paths—not merely because the Indian Society and economy are still predominally agricultural, but a correct approach in fight against social and economic inequalities and oppression in the village life, according to them, would bring millions of rural poor into struggle for new democratic revolution.

According to the political perception of CPI ML parties, India is a semi-feudal, semi-colonial country; the Indian State is a state of the big landlords and comprodar-bourgeoise state. The semi-feudal character of the Indian Society can be seen from;

- increasing concentration of land in the hands of a few landlords
- the appropriation of the entire surplus produced by the toiling peasantry in the form of rents.
- the complete landlessness of about 40 percent of rural population.
- the back-breaking usurious exploitation
- ever growing evictions of poor peasantry
- brutal social oppression, including lynching of daliths or harijans, reminiscent of medieval ages and
- the complete backwardness of the techniques of production and so on.

They ruled out any possibility of development of capitalism in real sense and held that what had taken place in India since 1947 was the strengthening of feudal and semi-feudal relations. Hence, the principal contradiction, according to ML political approach, is between feudalism-in

whatever form it is-and the masses of poor peasantry. The Indian revolution, at this stage is the democratic revolution of a new type i.e., the New Democratic Revolution. Its main content is agrarian revolution which abolishes feudalism in the countryside. Regarding the class strategy to be followed they said that, if the poor and landless peasants, who constitute a majority of the peasantry, unite paving the way for the inevitable victory of the democratic revolution. The CPI (ML) parties try to characterise and convert every economic struggle for land, wages and other partial demands (like proper work conditions, reduction or waiving of debts, land and water cess etc.) as political struggle, meaning thereby, a struggle to conquer political power. They regard revolutionary struggle in India as National Liberation Struggle and this struggle is essentially a peasant struggle.

However, the naxalites, in the form of different CPI (ML) groups, have never consolidated in to a centralized political party. From the beginning, there were differences in their views and outlook. But most of them accepted that agrarian revolution is the basis to democratic revolution, differences existed in their outlook on the connection between agrarian revolution and protracted armed struggle. On the strength of feudalism, on the question of land seizure and distribution, on peasant partial struggles, on transformation of these struggles into political struggles etc., all of them, however, accept that land question and the agrarian revolution is the axis of the new democratic revolution in India.

On the character of Indian agriculture, CPI (ML) groups not only rule out the possibility of developing capitalist relations, but also hold that

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feudalist relations have been strengthened in Indian agrarian structure. The semi-feudal exploitative relations continued intact in different forms. The Congress agrarian reforms were only a stunt to deceive the rural poor. On class differentiation and attitude towards various peasant sections, the CPI (ML) political line do not talk about the rich peasantry, but see the rural contradiction as between the feudal landlords and the landlords and the mass of poor peasantry. They however, emphasize the unity of the poor and landless peasants who constitute the majority of the peasantry with the middle peasants. On the question of land Ceiling, CPI (ML) views that the landlords lands have to be seized and as the movement grows a portion of the lands of the small landlords may also be taken and distributed. According to perception of this political line, land needed by a middle peasant who cultivates the land by himself as the maximum ceiling limit.

Thus, with this political perception and strategy the CPI (ML) parties started organizing the rural poor to make them actively participate in agrarian revolution, its final aim is new democratic revolution in India.

During the period of set back (1971-76) the fragmented and disintegrated groups of CPI (ML) Party tried to remobilize their scattered revolutionary cadres into a vital organizational force to start the movement once again after undergoing a self-purification process. At this stage, a serious ‘self criticism’ campaign had started in the party circles to make critical review of earlier experience and to learn lessons out of it. As a part of this ‘self criticism’ campaign the CPI (ML) COC (Central Organizing Committee) organized a Telangana Regional conference in October, 1974.

And A.P.Revolutionary Communist Committee, “Immediate-Programme, April-1969.
In this conference, the party felt that the ‘self criticism’ campaign in the revolutionary movement will not end in a day or two. This campaign should run through the party circles vertically, from lower levels to higher levels as a continuous process and as a movement. The Telangana Regional Conference in it’s ‘self criticism’ report covered all important aspects, related to the peasant armed struggle. Some of the crucial defects identified in this report are, defects in understanding national and international political situation, neglecting the importance of ‘subjective factor’ in the movement, premature and irrelevant slogans in the struggle, heavily depending upon annihilation of class enemy line and neglecting other forms of mass struggles and mass organizations, united front and approach towards rich peasants, relevance of guerilla actions in towns, bureaucratic tendencies in the leadership and party and so on. The report critically reviewed both the earlier achievements of the movement and defects in the party’s ideological outlook and creatively redefined the ideological stand positions to recognize the revolutionary movement.

UNITED FRONT STRATEGY:-

All the Naxalite groups except Pro-Linpiao group in Telangana, have accepted the mass line and formulated a policy and demands on the basis of which the vast majority of masses would be moved from a united front to be more effective, it should be given an organisational shape. Their strategy was to struggles through these mass organisations on partial and economic demands, which would ultimately be developed into political struggles. For them, the question of struggle for occupying lands of the landlords was the key stone of agrarian revolution. Land struggles are not mere economic struggle but are armed struggles to seize political power.

NAXALITE'S PRESENT SCENARIO:-

Though the genesis of the leftist movement can be traced to socio-economic disparities, ideological commitments have pushed the radical left naxalism. Consequent to the advent of the militant left-wing in the wake of Naxalbari struggle, variations in perceptions have resulted in a multitude of naxal groups all over the country. As many as 11 factions are noticed in Andhra Pradesh of which Peoples War Group; Pyla Vasudeva Rao group (Now Prajapandha) and some splinter factions. However, Peoples War Group extended its activities beyond the state. It has been indulging in violent action to achieve its objectives. Naxal groups believe in capturing state power through armed revolution. Though there are differences regarding the phase in which actual uprising manifests itself, there are also differences among the groups regarding the appropriate tactics to be adopted in different phases. P.W.G. believes in economic and partial struggle as a means to mobilise people for final uprising and armed struggle though K.G. Satyamurthy terms it mere militant struggles for economic gains with only produce short term benefits. Once they are achieved the poor peasantry and tribals wean away from uprising activities. Factions like the Praja Pandha C.P. groups, however perseve the Parliamentary path for technical regions, while nurturing the ultimate goal of the armed - revolution. The various Naxal tactics spend their time and energies in fighting and finishing each other or the police, instead of attending to the problems of the poor.

C.P.I. (ML) (PEOPLE WAR GROUP:-)

The influence of P.W.G. mainly extends to the economically backward sections, particularly in the rural areas. This has been made possible because of its front organisation like, R.S.U., R.Y.L., J.N.M., in the early eightees. The party has established wide network with units in Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Maharastra, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa. After the Srikakulam uprising

North Telangana remains the citadel, while the trans-Godavari valley forests complement by providing adequate shelter to the squads.

The P.W.G.'s success lies in the adoption of multi pronged activities such as to organise units to spread its militant activities, ideology, based on the dictum that power grows out of the barrel or gun thereby gathering support for its intended objective of a new Democracy with the exploited masses as the backbone of the this front organisation covering a substantial area of Adilabad and parts of Karimnagar, Warangal, Khammam, West Godavari and Vishakapatnam districts. The dalams and squads, armed with grenades country made pistals, AK 47 rifle carbons tapanchas and explosives, while wearing olive-green uniforms. They expected to liberate the forest area as the Dandakaranya Forest-Zone and subsequently occupying, the plains of the state.

In pursuance of this policy PWG has developed front organisations such as Radical student union (RSU) with base among students, Radical Youth League (RYL) consisting of unemployed youth; Rythu Cooli Sangham (RCS) drawn from agricultural labourer, Girijana Rythu Cooli Sangham organised the Adivasis (Tribals), Jana Natya Mandali (JNM) a cultural troop spreading PWG's philosophy through modes like dance, song, drama etc. and Revolutionary Writers Association, with writers of naxal ideology to spread the message of the party. Apart from these organisation, the PWG's influence extended Singareni (collories) by organising Karmika Samakhya, RTC, Railway employees, Union Paper Mills, Slabstone Workers Union, Indervelli labour etc. These organisations have been effective in giving the CPI (ML (PWG) the legitimacy and respectability.

The Strength and influence of naxalite group is not so much of ideology but their well knit secret organisational structure, modern arsenal and hit and run tatis ambush of pre-occupied by self-persuasion and militarization, the PWG wash unmindful deviations have afflicted it.
Due to disputes with the foremost naxalite group in India, the People's War Group (PWG) reached a boiling point. Its chief, Kondapally Seetharamaiah was removed from the post of general secretary of the party. The differences were not ideological but appear to be largely organisational. The organisational squabbles were mainly related to Seetharamaiah’s differences with the A.P. unit. Because of the mutual - quarrels among the top leaders within the party, the lower cadre became directionless and began to act independently. The net result was a total drift from the objectives of the party. The stepped up violence and killings by the P.W.G., in the North Telangana region was attributed mainly to the brewing discussions within the party. Hence the differences among the top party leaders are obviously organisational rather than ideological, which led to a split in the P.W.G. CPI (ML) 28.

C) TRIBAL INDEBTEDNESS:-

Tribals live in the hilly and forest areas. Their economy in the past to a great extent had been self sufficient and non-specified. About 95 percent of the tribals are living in rural India and are engaged as agricultural labourers, inferior tenants and small peasants. One of the most peculiar problems faced by the tribals is their indebtedness. Indebtedness is a strong factor that begins the process of exploitation in the sense that no sooner a person incurs a debt, other economic and social consequence undermining his status follow. Indebtedness may be regarded as a normal fact of life of tribals caused by their backwardness. Indebtedness is considered as one of the major problems of tribal people all over India, irrespective of the occupation pursued by various tribes. The problem is found to be very acute in the tribal areas. Due to the general poverty and unemployment in the tribal areas, more and more tribals are not only alienated from their lands and uprooted from their native places. They are forced to immigrate

to near by the towns and cities to earn their livelihood by taking up unskilled manual work on daily wages.

The twin problems faced by the tribals in general are credit and marketing. The only agency operating in the tribal areas was the showkar (Money-lender) and the tribals whose income was below the subsistence level and who indulged in costly religious rituals and for which social practices they depend on, an outside agency for loans to meet their expenses. The Showkars as traditional money lenders, also used to help them in disposing of the minor forest produce collected by them. Usually the money lenders advanced money to the needy tribals, whenever they wanted it but the condition that the tribals should sell their produce only through them whatever produced or collected from the forest. Thus, in the tribal areas credit and marketing were provided by one and the same agency. This facilitated their control over the tribals and the tribal economy.

Although agriculture is the main occupation it is not able to provide attractive returns to the tribal families to meet their expenditure. The land owning also due to their uneconomic land holding of poor fertility, vagaries of monsoon primitive methods of cultivation, lack of irrigation facilities and lack of sufficient investments, could not cope up with the situation. As a result of all these, both landed and landless tribals, had to go for loans to meet even their daily expenditure. The net impact is the high rate of indebtedness.

On the other side, the social and cultural factors also contributed their might to force the tribals to go for loans. The superstitions beliefs and

traditional way of living further made them to spend a major part of their earnings towards different social functions. Such an unproductive expenditure is incurred regularly resulting in the perpetual indebtedness. Coupled with all these due to the ignorance, illiteracy and honesty, the tribals become easy prey for widespread exploitation.

Tribals depend mostly on non-institutional credit agencies as they are easily approachable at all times and for all purposes. The rate of interest charged by the money lenders/sowcars is exorbitant. Once the tribal falls into the clutches of money-lenders, it is difficult to extricate himself. The economic conditions do not permit him to repay the loan and the debt goes on increasing year after year. Finally he is forced to part with either his lands or cattle or standing crop for repayment of debts.30

Surveys undertaken in certain areas at different intervals of time, have confirmed the view that indebtedness is prevalent on a large scale among the tribal communities.

30. Reports of the study Team on Tribal Development Programmes - All India Committee on Plan Projects, Planning Commission, Govt. of India 1969.
The Tribal Cultural Research and Training Institute (TCR & TI), Hyderabad conducted survey of indebtedness among scheduled tribes of A.P. through stratified sampling technique in the districts of Srikakulam, Visakhapatnam, West Godavari, Khammam, Warangal, Adilabad, Mahaboobnagar, Guntur, Nellore and Anantapur with a view to estimating the extent of indebtedness, with specific reference to sources and purpose of debt.  

An enquiry into the reasons for borrowing would throw more light on the processes of utilisation of loan and agencies involved in the deployment of loans. It also indicates the changing situation in the tribal areas in respect of the utilisation of the loan facilities provided by various organisations working for the development of the tribal people and the areas they inhabit. The hallmark of the tribal economy has been depending on private money-lenders for loans which were normally utilised for consumption and social functions.

It is clear that unproductive purposes like ordinary consumption and social functions together claim only non-insignificant percent of the total funds borrowed from different agencies, while productive purposes like investment in fertilisers, land development, irrigational wells, oil engines and agricultural operations claim a major chunk of the funds. Social functions and consumption together claim 15.22 percent of the total borrowings while productive purposes claim the remaining 84.88 percent. This is economically significant.


Agriculture in tribal areas, as is evident from the earlier account, does not give them sufficient food-grains to feed themselves, throughout the year. Only cash crops generally cultivated in the tribal areas. They sell the crops, as soon as they are harvested and with the money they realise, they purchases their household requirements or whatever they have produced would be utilised for domestic consumption. The net result is by the month of June or so the poor adivasis are left with little food-grains and it becomes difficult for them to feed on themselves unless they get some work. Those who depend on agriculture are really faced with a serious situation at this part of the year. They approach a showkar, friends and relatives for food-grains. Though some of the institutions provide consumption loans taken from shop keepers, though the number of tribal families is very small, still the problem is there. Usually the interest charged for grains would be double the principal i.e., 100 percent.

Grain Goalas or Grain Banks which provide grain loans for family consumption, seeds and payment of farm expenses in kind and which have been found to work successfully in the Adivasi areas. The idea behind setting up grain goalas, is to ameliorate the economic conditions of the scheduled tribes by providing cheap credit in the form of grain-loans and by eliminating the usurious money-lenders.

Tribals are exposed to various forms of exploitation. The economic poverty, ignorance, fear coupled with low literacy have made them easy prey of the exploiters. Indebtedness is a net result of deficit economy which arises from increased family size, reduction in size of holdings, low income from agriculture, disproportionate expenditure and vagaries of nature. Tribals feel indebtedness is an inescapable aspect of their life and it is a socio-economic drag on their life.
With the advent of independence and in the light of constitutional provisions, the State and Central Governments took substantive steps to protect the tribals from the tentacles of the trader and the plains-man. The renowned committees/Commissions like Dhebar, Elwin, Aiyappan and Malayappan studied the conditions and problems of tribals and suggested ameliorative measures. One of the important suggestions was the establishment of multi purpose societies besides enacting regulations to protect the tribals from economic exploitation.

**FLEECING MONEY LENDERS:-**

The plain-men, who came in search of better living with their limited means, advanced money, food grains, clothing to the tribals in terms of without insisting on security. At first needy tribals regarded and respected the new comers as friends in need but it did not take much time to learn that they are in a vicious grip of never-ending indebtedness. The ignorant and illiterate tribals could not seek the protection of the law.

The non-tribals employed stronger tactics of money lenders as a convenient way of grabbing tribal lands. They evolved various methods of money-lending through which the tribals were systematically exploited and ultimately forced to transfer their lands in lieu of outstanding debts. The main practice adopted by the moneylenders to provide credit to tribals as mortgage (Tanakha). This is the most popular mode of money lending employed in the scheduled areas. Under this system, the mortgaging person had to part his land to the latter who takes possession of its benefits for fixed number of years. This is the most prevalent method in parts of Adilabad district. They advance cash and kind for short periods in the scheduled areas of Adilabad district. Under this system, the money lenders advance money or lend commodities, mostly for domestic needs during the lean months.
However, some tribals used to borrow seeds and other inputs also at exorbitant rate of interest, ranging from 24 percent, which gets multiplied year after year; when the loan amount accumulates to a huge sum and when the tribal debtor finds himself unable to repay it after a bad harvest or when he is badly in need of money due to a natural calamity, the non-tribal moneylender harasses him for an immediate settlement of the loan, Such repeated harassments often culminates in execution of a deed of lease by the gullible tribal in favour of the money lender in repayment of his loan. This is how the slow process of dispossession of the land starts.

**NON-TRIBAL EXPLOITERS:-** On the basis of the comparative data collected from various areas of tribal belt of Adilabad, the non-tribal exploiters, who operate in those areas who are involved in illegal land transfers, may be classified as the inherent merchants, who roam about in tribal areas and sell clothes on credit at exorbitant prices: Not only merchants-cum-money lenders from neighbouring plain areas, forest Contractors and other contractors from the plain who also extend loans to tribals. Non-tribal cultivator-immigrants who manage to get tribal lands leased out or mortgaged to them and finally purchased it from tribals, village officer like Karnam or patwari and patel, thus use every opportunity to grab the lands of the innocent tribals.

Usurious money lending in the tribal areas is the main cause of large scale land alienation. Realising the need for protecting the tribals from exploitation by the money-lenders who have been using money lending as an effective instrument for land alienation.
EXPLOITATION BY MERCHANTS, REVENUE AND OTHER OFFICIALS:-

The tribals in the villages are being exploited by the merchant community in many forms. These merchants have also grabbed their lands. The general form of exploitation are as follows. Firstly, the merchants usually charge three to four times more than the market price for the products they sell here. Secondly, they use false weights and measures and also use wrong procedure of the accounts. Thirdly, they also fix the under price for the products they purchase from the tribals, especially from the Gonds in these villages, For example, one kilo of salt in exchange for one pot of Jawar, where the salt is over-priced by many times. Like wise two tobacco leaves are also made equivalent to one pot of Jawar. The same sort of under pricing is done where they extract huge amount of profit in the market by reselling it for five times more than the price they offered to the tribals. Specific cases of those who were exploited in the villages will show how the merchants have amassed wealth, while the economic status of the tribals is deteriorated. Apart from the exploitation by the merchant and trading community, the forest officials, revenue officials and excise officials also try to penalise the tribals and extract bribes from them.

Thus revenue officials also try to exploit tribals whenever they arbitrate between tribals and non-tribals over the land dispute. Even otherwise, the tribals had to pay the revenue officials for the conferring of ownership rights over the forest lands they had earlier cleared.

The excise officials also intervene in the daily life of the tribals. The tribals prepare arrack from Mohua which they distil it in their households. This also becomes a contentious issue between the tribals and excise officials and the excise officials levy some fines and also extract bribes from the tribals.
Thus the tribals in the villages had to face exploitation from many sides and this severe exploitation is one of the reasons for the tribal unrest and the struggle that follows later.

**TRIBALS TURN TO NAXALISM:**

As the living conditions of tribals deteriorated, their dependance on naxals to save them from exploiters increased. The naxals held village courts and threatened forest, excise, and revenue officials who are creating problems for tribals. The landlords who grabbed tribal-lands also got warnings. After the occurrence of a series of such acts, many of the lower level officials stopped going to tribal areas, while higher level officers also stopped going to a routine way.

The unrest in the tribal areas has been explained so far in terms of tribal, non-tribal interaction. Discontent and unrest leading to armed rebellion may arise in any community so long they are exploited beyond their ability to tolerate. Socio-economic and even political order have been the major causes for the armed rebellions in many parts of the world. Whether armed rebellion also successful by armed in displacing the previous socio-economic and political order is successful or not the people who were responsible for the rebellion, enjoy the benefits or not it, is entirely a different matter altogether. But what is important here is, that the economic reasons have always been on the forefront leading to discontentment and unrest that prompted armed rebellion. The native tribes of 'Utnoor' Revenue division are no exception to this. Basically they are suffering from deprivation, poverty and misery.
After looking at the tribal scene in the country and the attitude and actions of the Government, one gets a doubt whether the country has a tribal policy at all. If so what is it? However, it is a pity that even today, the Government treats the protests of tribals as law and order problem but not as human problem. The setback has created more discontentment among the tribals and loss of faith on Government’s ability to do justice to them. Many native tribals could not understand why the Government handed over their lost lands back to them without their specific request (result of ‘suo-motto’ action) and again after a lapse of few months the same Government took it back and handed it over to the non-tribals. They could not understand the legal implications of the problem. For example a Gond tribal village, Arguda lost its entire land to a non-tribal and moved to another village and managed to become share-cropper.

Inspite of many restrictions on the transfer of lands from scheduled tribes in different states, a large average of tribal lands continued to be alienated. The main reasons for this alienation, may be classified as loopholes in the tenancy legislation, slackness in the implementation of restrictive provisions and socio-economic factors.

D) NON-TRIBAL EXPLOITERS-LAMBADA INFILTRATION:

Lambada-Infiltration:- There are some 5 million Banjaras in India, known by the names of atleast 27 synonyms and 17 sub-groups, in different states. All of them have a common culture and common language. The Lambada dialect is predominantly a mixture of Sanskrit, Rajasthani, Marathi, Gujarathi and Hindi and bears the influence of the local language also. They live in small settlements referred to as Thanda. One peculiarity about this tribe, is that unlike all other tribes which are located in some districts or some states, Banjaras can be found nearly in all the states of India. They treated
as scheduled tribes in some states, scheduled caste in certain other states and some sections of Lambadas are considered socially and economically forward classes in some states for instance, in Andhra Pradesh Lambadas in Telangana region were only recently recognised as Scheduled tribes (S.T.), earlier they were recognised as denotified tribes.

Lambadas are of north-west Indian origin, who lived primarily by their earnings from transportation on the back of bullocks. There is evidence to show that they supplied food grains to the Mughals when they invaded Deccan.

However, in the absence of concrete historical evidence, the reasoning could be reversed to state that the Lambadas, to protect their only form of wealth, cattle from drought, moved in search of food and subsequently took to trade which was initially a subsidiary means of livelihood. However, the development or cheap modern means of road and rail transport, displaced them quickly as transporters. This led to many Lambadas choosing alternative professions. A great proportion of them chose to settle on the land and took to agriculture for living.

Lambadas are not the original inhabitants of the Andhra Pradesh. They came along with the Mughal armies as carriers and a few of them remained to serve the Nizam through the same occupation. When the communications and transport facilities improved, they slowly lost their occupation but remained in the state. Most of them took to criminal activities like decoity and way - side robbery due to lack of alternative source of livelihood. They were declared as a criminal tribe and strict restrictions were placed on their movements. In many cases they had to remain in their tandas (hamlets) for the night, lest they would be caught by the patrolling.
police. They left their pastoral activity and gradually came to be dependent on agriculture. After the repeal of the Criminal Tribes Act they began to live like other tribes. After Independence, the community which consisted of large agricultural labourers, tenant farmers and fire wood sellers, was in search of areas where land was available freely or at cheaper rates.32(a)

**THE PROBLEM OF LAMBADA IMMIGRATION:** Unlike other non-tribal and tribal immigrants into the tribal areas of Adilabad district, the Lambada immigration into the area was methodical. Lambadas, till they were declared as Scheduled Tribe in 1977, were known under the name of denotified tribe.

The immigration into this area in the case of Lambadas, both from Maharashtra as well as from other parts of the other areas of Andhra Pradesh, was possible mainly because of the well developed leadership - pattern in the community. Each group of Lambada is headed by a ‘Naik’ who assisted by ‘Dhan’. The pattern of immigration followed by Lambadas into Utnoor area was typical of their modus operandi First they send a few scouts to the area of intended migration to locate the villages where they can easily settle and acquire land for cultivation. When the scouts return with the information, a few lambadas, usually the Naik and a few other families move to the area first and establish themselves firmly. Gradually, all the members of the group join them first as agricultural labourers and as and when opportunity arises, to acquire land they grab it and establish themselves as Independent cultivators but still under the leadership of their Naik only.33

32(a). Banjara—one derivation of this as given by V. Raghavaiah, in tribes in India is that it comes from Vanchar as meaning ; wanderers, in the forest., in the Deccan the common name are Lambadi. And Thad. Lambada families settlement.
This is not to say that the Lambadas succeeded in their methodical immigration in all the areas like the tribal areas of Adilabad district. To succeed in this kind of immigration existence of certain other conditions in the selected areas, perhaps is necessary. In the tribal areas of Adilabad, in general and Utloor Revenue Division in particular, one can clearly identify the existence of these conditions. They are 1) easy accessibility to land, ii) cooperation of the local population for some consideration, iii) illiteracy and ignorance of the local population, iv) primitive mode of agriculture and consequent problems of subsistence among the local population and v) collaboration of officials with the immigrant population again for certain considerations.

The process of successful Lambada immigration would be clear, if we see their method of gradual infiltration into ‘pahad patti’ area (Marlavai circle) of the Utloor Revenue Division. The pahadpatti area of Utloor division was the last one in the area to receive Lambada migration in large numbers. The area attracted the attention of immigrants very late, may be because of less developed communications in the area. The immigrant Lambadas after exhausting all the sources in tribals areas of Asifbad, Boath and certain other parts of Utloor division turned their attention towards Pahadpatti area. The conditions were ripe in this area for their infiltration and certain activities of the forest department and also certain cultural traits of Gonds and Kolams. The native tribes helped the immigrant Lambadas to establish themselves quickly in the area. Desertion of villages both by Gonds and Kolams, due to some reason or the other was a common phenomena, a few decades back. These villages came in handy to the Lambadas, not only in pahad patti area, but also through out Utloor division to acquire some land and settle permanently. Desertion of villages by the Gonds and Kolams took place voluntarily as well as by force. The Lambadas
who already settled in certain villages and who were substantially rich, started securing information about the deserted villages and the land still available for occupation by the secret enquires as well as from unscrupulous patwari’s who were ready to sell this information and also devise ways and means of acquiring these lands. The influential lambadas of the area also secured information about the Gond patels of the reoccupied villages. It is reported that many patwari’s sold the information about deserted villages to Lamabadas for Rs. 5,000/- a high price during those days (After the Babijheri incident in 1941).

Another “Modus operandi” in acquiring lands followed by Lambadas was, through unscrupulous patwari and forest officials. Samething happened in the cases of Lambadas presently settled in some of the villages. They purchased the information about the villages from Muslim and Hindu patwari. The patwari himself seems to have arranged for these people initially with the forest officials to settle at the villages and clearing forest areas illegally for cultivation. Originally these villages were inhabited by Gonds and Kolams. The forest department under the pretext that the various villages fall under reserved forest, evicted the Gonds and Kolams who were now dispersed in various surrounding villages, complain that when the Lambadas occupied their lands and the villages, the forest department did not raise any objection, on the other hand it helped them to settle down conveniently.

Till the Lamabadas were declared as scheduled tribe in 1977 in Telangana area, they carried their land grabbing operations steadily and
under cover. Once the community was declared as a Scheduled Tribe its activities became legal. Neither the law nor the officials could do anything about it. The land lost by Gonds and Kolams to Lambada was lost forever, of course Lambadas alone cannot be blamed, but the Gonds, Kolams and their leaders have to share equal amount of blame for the state of affairs. They did not realise the harm they are doing to their own people and also to the Kolams by encouraging Lambadas to occupy the local lands. Even as late as 1971, the process of land alienation from Gonds and Kolams to Lambadas occurred due to the interference of Gond leaders. It is ironical that the traditional Gond leaders also joined in protest along with ordinary poor Gonds and Kolams in claiming that they are being exploited and lot of injustice is heaped on them. While the later protest due to poverty and misery resulting from land alienation, decrease in the forest resources, indebtedness etc. the former protest was against the increasing political clout of the LAMBADAS in the area.

The Lambadas were notified as scheduled tribes in 1977 and they constitute 28 percent of the total tribal population of Adilabad district according to provisional figures. Because of the relative economic prosperity and other cultural factors, the Lambadas are able to make use of most of the privileges, such as reservations in educational and employment sectors. However regarding the agency programmes, the tilt in favour of Lambadas in earlier years, was completely rectified and as per the population various sub-tribes are being provided economic benefits. The important dimension is that most of them originally hail from Maharashtra and there are cases where some of the Lambadas have come from far away places and settled down in Agency areas. As they are categorised as backward classes in Maharashtra, a jump across the border made them eligible to preferential treatment in the Governmental programme in Andhra Pradesh.

This has caused considerable discontent and alarm in the minds of aboriginals. Therefore, it is suggested that a cut off date may be evolved. It is suggested that date on which the Lambadas were declared as S.T.'s in Andhra Pradesh should not be entitled to any preferential treatment. Secondly, a conscious effort should be made to discourage and prevent migration into Adilabad district from across the borders.

E) STATE RETALIATES:-

The State and its executive, legislative and even judicial wings, create conditions where human rights cannot even be availed of, by or section of the Indian people and also see how the limited rights and freedom given in the constitution to the citizens are not being permitted to be enjoyed by the rulers. Several studies also reveal how the rulers and richer, exploiting power-status hungry classes belonging to upper or immediate caste or richer statum of different religions of ethnic groups are systematically violating the rights and freedoms of the under privileged. Further, the assaults on democratic and human rights experienced by various sections of the people, raise some fundamental issues concerning the very concept of rule of law as it prevails in India and the character of the state which claims to be democratic.

Where the aggrieved cannot influence the State, they try to capture the state, resort to violence while naxalism is perceived by some as nothing more than and short of capture of political power through armed struggle. Tribals are reduced to cogs in the naxalite machine, others maintain that it is naxalism but not its casual factors that is bothering the police, who are aligned with the haves. Naxalism is not very much concerned with the tribal rural problem of poverty and development. But the injustice that the tribals experience within the frame - work of law is a factor contributing to the popularity of naxalism.
Police over react with all their might, alignment with the haves, taking the frustration of their service upon the citizens, and the bad elements bringing disrepute to the entire police force, are another set of contributory factors. The grievances of citizens are that even though they operate within the boundaries of law, they are stamped as naxals carrying a match-box is enough to attract arrest and imprisonment. Any protest against police action results in involving the provisions of Terrorist Activity and Disruption Act (TADA) as a matter of Government policy.

Perceptions widely vary as to the geographical spread and growth of naxalism as a movement. Naxalism has become more resident inspite of suppressive measures, it is demanding and tending to respectability and recognition as movement. The movement seems to remain eternally young. It is attracting the attention of different sections of the society.

Democracy has to accommodate dissent. Even if more police men lost their lives, than Naxalites, that does not justify police excesses and indiscriminate and unrestrained 'state terrorism'.

REPRESSION AND ENCOUNTERS:- “No person shall be deprived of his life, or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law”. (CONSTITUTION OF INDIA). The Government strongly feels that naxalism is basically a law and order problem has to be treated as such, effective police measures if implemented, would curb the movement. But, in addition to the violence let loose by the landlords, the Government proclaimed whole districts and large areas as ‘disturbed areas’ and let the special police to handle the situation. The struggles of the people of Srikakulam district and other parts of the state to be free from exploitation of local landlords, money lenders and forest contractors were brutally

35. K. Balagopal-G. Hara Gopal, Economy of Agrarian Classes and conflicts (Reprinted from EPW perspectives, Hyderabad, 1988)
pressed at gun point. The State Government involved the provisions of Suppression of Disturbances Act, 1948, a legacy of British colonial rule and declared several parts of Srikakulam, Warangal and Khammam Districts as disturbed areas and they crushed peoples’ struggles. Organisation of the Protection of Democratic Rights (OPDR) submitted a memorandum to the President of India on April 2, 1977, demanding among other things a judicial enquiry into mass killings of over 350 revolutionaries by the Andhra Pradesh Government between 1968-76, as so called encounters. Due to universal demand for a judicial probe, the central Govt. advise the A.P. Government to appoint a commission headed by justice Bhargava, retired judge of Supreme Court of India, to go into the question of encounters.

The State Government made repeated pronouncements indicating that it would take ‘serious’ steps to tackle rural unrest in five Telangana district of Karimnagar, Adilabad, Nizamabad, Warangal and Khammam. The then Director General of Police Gopala Krishna Erady said in a press interview reported in the Telugu daily, Andhra Pradesh of 6th November, 1983 that in addition to the widespread development of A.P. special police (APSP) the state has also decided to request the centre to land two battalions of CRPF. The DGP further said that “whereever we feel it is necessary we will crush the naxalites as we crushed them in the past”.

STATE’S DRIVE AGAINST RURAL UNREST:-

The naxalites were organising the people in North Telangana districts they form organisations called Rythu-coolie Sangham (RCS) and Girijan Rythu Sangham (G.R.C.S) which fight for the rights of people. The essential point of the State’s drive against rural unrest is that it is an undeclared crime to join the Sangham. The most common method of harassing the people is to keep them in police lock up for longer periods at a stretch.
Once in detention, an illegal person is subjected to severe torture. In case of women detainees, rape or threat to rape is a strong form of torture. After this period of torture and political education the arrested person is now a changed person with all kinds of fabricated crimes and will be sent to jail. He might have been arrested while writing, slogans on a wall, singing songs, going to a public meeting etc., None of these is a crime. But the police are not satisfied with just booking them under ‘nuisance sections’. They generally detain under Explosive Act, murder, sedition and criminal conspiracy etc.

Police raids can create havoc in the lives of the poor. If such raids are felt to be insufficient for apprehending the activists, a police camp is set up in the village. Initially it may be only a police picket from the neighbouring police station. Life of the rural poor in a village in which a police camp is setup, can only be described as horrible. Apart from such direct assaults on the rural poor, the police and the administration in general indulge in blatant violation of all democratic norms to prevent, the functioning of organisation of the rural poor, the students and the youth. Prevention of public meetings is a common practice. Students organisations are another target in the hunt to “root out extremists”. Again assaults on students in the towns are not isolated actions. It is a part of a systematic assault on student organisations which are proclaimed ‘extremists’ by the authorities. These examples of suppression of democratic activities can be continued endlessly. This onslaught on the rural poor culminates into murder of their activists. Killed them in cold blood and declaring killing in encounters, is a tactic that is by now well exposed. In Andhra Pradesh, there were about 430 such encounter killings before and during the Emergency and another 19 since then.36

To protect the landlords, the Government declared two taluks of Karimnagar district, namely Sircilla and Jagatyal as ‘Disturbed Area’ under the (Andhra Pradesh) suppression of Disturbances Act, in October, 1978. Under the provisions of this Act, who ever in a disturbed area commits any offence, punishable under Indian Penal Code may, in lieu of the punishment to which he is liable under that code, will be punished with death.

A press report dated 21 April, 1981 gives an account of the police firing on the Gonds at “Indervelli” (Adilabad district, A.P.) on “April 20, 1981”. This act reminiscent of the massacre of Jallian Wala Bagh can perhaps best be described as a ruthless display of State violence, meant to terrorise the Gonds into total submission. As one report had it, a section of the Administration felt that “this confrontation would have a statutory effect in instilling a healthy fear of authority in the Gond minds”.

In India however, for a government which professes, non-violence and claims ‘socialism’ as one of its objectives, frightfulness and terrorising are a common remedy. Incidentally the brutality at Jallian Wala bagh and Indervelli occurred in the same month April. Indervelli was turned into another Jallian Wala Bagh on April 20. The A.P. police opened fire on innocent Girijans coming for the District Conference of the Girijan Rythu Coolie Sangham and killed more than 60 on the spot and injured about 150.

During the tenure of Chenna Reddy as Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh the State Government declared that he was prepared to hold talks with People’s War Group (PWG) (C.P.I.M.L.). He promised medical aid to Kondapalli Seetharamaiah. It is important to note, in this context that while the demand was for the lifting of all false cases and unconditional release of naxalite prisoners, only a few under trial, revolutionaries were

37. Mohan Ram: Mini Emergencies to suppress the poor, Economic and political weekly November 18, 1978; P.2.
released and that unconditional bail and parole. This was a clear indication that the Chenna Reddy Government however sincere in its proclamation for from lifting false cases against revolutionaries, the Chenna Reddy Government foisted the notorious TADA Act on thousands of peasant activists within a few months of his demonstrate pretensions, immediately after coming to power. The Chenna Reddy Government appointed a “Cabinet sub-committee” to find a solution to the naxalite problem. 39

A.P. CABINET SUB-COMMITTEE:-

The Council of Minister of the newly formed Congress (I) Government of Andhra Pradesh at its first meeting on 4th December, 1989 resolved to constitute a cabinet sub-committee comprising four ministers to study the problem of naxalites in the State and to submit a report. 56 persons belonging to different walks of life have deposed before the sub-committee. Out of them 12 belong to I.A.S., 12 I.P.S., two I.F.S., two jurists, four journalists, five civil liberties, four leaders professors, 13 peoples representatives, one student leader and one former Naxalite.40

Based on the deposition, the committee prepared a report and submitted in the month of may, 1990. Some extracts from the report, which procured informally. There is a strong feeling that naxalism is basically a law and order problem and have to be treated as such. Effective measures were to neutralise their channels of supply of arms. Unofficial sources reveal that the sub-committee recommended to neutralize the channel of areas supply to form a task force to strengthen the police force etc.

Several suggestions were made towards improving the administration so that the developmental programmes of the Government reached the targeted group land reforms, land survey demarcation of reserve forest and allotment of land to the landless and the tribals were also advocated. A strong case was made out against the police brutality at lower level and the need for corrective measures. Various suggestions put forth for handling the problem of naxalism. With the foregoing analysis the cabinet sub-committee made the following specific recommendations in regard to law and order aspects arising out of naxal activities.

- The Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (prevention) Act which is on the Statute book should not be used in the areas notified under A.P. Suppression of Disturbance Act.
- All actions should be according to law. No excess should be tolerated. Wide publicity should be given to this policy.
- Every one in police not to do anything beyond the law and any police officer committing any excess will be punished ruthlessly.
- In cases of deaths in police custody all concerned including the Station House Officer should face judicial enquiry.
- In case of deaths of naxals in encounters with police also judicial enquiry should be conducted. The above enquiries will be conducted by concerned District Judge.
- A credible system is to be established to inspire confidence among public as well as law enforcing agencies.
- The scheme of separation of judiciary from executive shall be extended to Agency areas.
The Land Transfer Regulation Act does not extend to the Scheduled Tribes in the non-scheduled parts of the districts or non-scheduled districts where the protection of this legislation is not available to them. State Government should take positive steps to actively implement money lending regulations and debt redemption laws by filing suitable targets for field agencies. In this light the the sub-committee to remedy the present situation with adequate compensation for land taken over by the state government from the non-tribals may be examined as to make it more or less equal to market value prevailing at the time. There has been a controversy about the role and functions of the Raja Sabhas of Gonds in Adilabad district. There were some times conflicts with local Panchayat institutions. Traditional tribal institutions like ‘Raj Sabha’ should be protected and actively promoted. This may be done in such a way to enable, co-existence of these institutions along side of the panchayat Raj institutions.

The Fifth Schedule of the Constitution of India entrust special responsibility on the Governor of the State in respect of tribals and the tribal areas. Reports from the Governor of the State at suitable intervals may have to be considered by the ministry of Home Affairs in consultation with the presidents’ Secretariat.

In summing up the committee admitted that there is very little political challenge to the naxalism. No political party is effectively propagating in a substantive way any political philosophy contesting the politics of violence.