Chapter – I

Introduction

The tribal population in India constitutes 8.2% of the country’s population (Census, 2011) and is considered as socially and economically backward and disadvantaged. Tribal poverty has come into sharp focus since their food sources from the forest have started dwindling. Also, widespread poverty, illiteracy, under nutrition, absence of safe drinking water and sanitary living conditions, poor maternal and child health services and ineffective coverage of national health and developmental services have been identified by several studies, as possible contributing factors to the dismal health conditions prevailing among the tribal population in India.

The Constitution of India gives recognition to a category of people designated as the Scheduled Tribes and makes special provisions for their political representation and their economic and social welfare. Anthropologists have since the time of Thurston (1975, pp. 236-256) who in his book titled Caste and Tribes of South India, gave the definition of tribe but very little account has been taken of the tribal communities of India. Many 19th century scholars viewed the tribal societies in the light of evolutionary theory. Thurston sought to demonstrate the stages of social evolution by the comparison of contemporary primitive societies.
Thomas M.M. (1965, pp. 97-105) an eminent modern theologian and sociologist in his book Tribal Awakening gives another definition of tribe as, “A tribe is an indigenous, homogenous unit, speaking a common language, claiming ancestry, living in a particular geographical area, backward in technology, pre-literate, loyally observing social and political customs based on kinship”. The tribes of India are characterized by the identifications remarked by the above definitions.

Thurston anthropologists have learnt to distinguish analytically between the band, the segmentary system and the chiefdom. But they have continued by and large to apply the same term tribe to all the three. The several hundred units that comprise the Scheduled Tribes of India cover all the modes of tribal organization from the band to the chiefdom. This was going back to 19th century when the tribal areas began to be systematically opened up by the colonial administration. At the beginning of 19th century the mix of the different modes of tribal organization among those who comprise the STs of today was different. Bands of hunters and gatherers still exist among the Andaman Islanders or on the mainland among the Birhors were more common then now. The segmentary mode of tribal organization was also more common in Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and other areas. But there were chiefdoms as well in addition to these.

Tribal society faces problem in the context of Indian society. There is first of all the problems of discriminating among related and overlapping
modes of tribal organization. There is also the problem of drawing clear lines of demarcation between the tribal and the non-tribal society. In India the encounters between tribe and civilization have taken place under historical conditions of a radically different sort. The co-existence of tribe and civilization and their mutual interaction go back to the beginnings of recorded history and earlier. Tribes have existed at the margins of the Hindu civilization from time immemorial and these margins have always been vague, uncertain and fluctuating.

The tribe as a mode of organization has always differed from the caste-based mode of organization. But tribes are not always easy to distinguish from castes particularly at the margins where the two modes of organization meet. The distinctive condition of the tribe in India has been its isolation mainly in the interior hills and forests but also in the frontier areas. By and large the tribal communities are those which were either left behind in these ecological niches or pushed back into them in course of the expansion of state and civilization Janaki (1956, pp. 12-44). The isolation of the tribal communities is and always has been a matter of degree. Some tribes have been more isolated than others but at least in the interior areas where the bulk of the tribal population is to found none has been completely free from the influence of civilization. Their isolation whether self-imposed or imposed by others blocked the growth of their material culture but it also enabled them to retain their distinctive modes of speech. Today the most single indicator of the distinction between tribe and
caste is the language. The castes speak one or another of the major literary languages; each tribe has its own distinctive dialect which might differ fundamentally from the prevalent regional language.

**Characteristics of Indian Tribes**

- Kinship as an instrument of social bonds.
- A lack of hierarchy among men and groups.
- Absence of strong, complex and formal organization.
- Communitarian basis of land holding.
- Segmentary character.
- Little value on surplus accumulation on the use of capital and on market trading
- Lack of distinction between form and substance of religion

**Geographical Location of Tribes**

Tribals in India originate from five language families, i.e. Andamanese, Austro-Asiatic, Dravidian, and Tibeto-Burman. It is also important to point out that those tribals who belong to different language families live in distinct geographic settings. For example, in South Orissa there are languages that originate from the Central Dravidian family, Austro-Asiatic (Munda) family and the Indo-Aryan. In the Jharkhand area, languages are from the Indo-Aryan, North Dravidian and Austro-Asiatic. Tribals in India live in the following five territories.
1. The Himalayan belt: (Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, hills of Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh)

2. Central India: Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa, and Madhya Pradesh. Of the total 55% of the tribal population of India lives in this belt.

3. Western India: Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Goa, Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

4. The Dravidian region: Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.


**Indigenous Knowledge of Tribals**

India's regional languages such as Oriya, Marathi or Bengali are developed from the tribal languages as the fusion with Sanskrit (or Pali) and virtually all the Indian languages have incorporated words from the vocabulary of Adivasi languages. Adivasis who developed an intimate knowledge of various plants and their medicinal uses played a valuable role in the development of Ayurvedic medicine. In a recent study, the All India Coordinated Research Project (AICRP) credited Adivasi communities with the knowledge about 9,000 species of plants, including 7,500 used for human healing and veterinary health care. Dental care products like datun, roots and condiments like turmeric used in cooking and ointments are also the discoveries of Adivasi, as are many fruit trees and vines. Ayurvedic cures for arthritis and night blindness owe their origins to Adivasi knowledge.
Adivasis also played an important role in the development of agricultural practices - such as rotational cropping, fertility maintenance through alternating the cultivation of grains with leaving land fallow or using it for pasture. The country can learn much from the beauty of Adivasi social practices, their culture of sharing and respect for all- their deep humility and love of nature- and most of all - their deep devotion to social equality and civic harmony.

**Tribes in the Indian Constitution**

The view that there are no tribal societies in India, as described in the anthropological literature, has now gained many adherents. This raises the question of why the Government of India came up with a list of “Scheduled Tribes” and wrote it into the Constitution. One argument is that historically, the invention and perpetuation of tribalism in India owe everything to the calculations of the governing elite. British administrators with their “classificatory urges” were the pioneers in preparing a list of “primitive tribes”, with especially elaborate detail that was based on a 1931 census Sachchidanda R.P. Prasad (1998, pp.167-171). In this regard, Beteille says that “it cannot be too strongly emphasized that the list of Primitive Tribes reflects the demands more of administrative and political circumstance than of academic or logical rigor” (1974).

The Indian Constitution refers to tribal people as the Scheduled Tribes, but it does not define tribe. Article 342 of the Indian Constitution declares that
the scheduled tribes are “the tribes or the tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities” that the President may specify by public notification. They were duly specified by the President through the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order of 1950.

In addition to the “Scheduled Tribes”, the Indian Constitution names other groups who are considered in need of special protection, such as “Scheduled Castes” and “Other Backward Castes”. These communities, which occupy low ranks in India’s caste hierarchy, have suffered through the ages socially, culturally, and economically. To uplift these castes, the Constitution provides certain protective measures such as reserving slots for them in education and employment. Some castes have sought recognition as “Other Backward Castes”, feeling that they, too, deserve constitutional guarantees. A recent example of accession to that status is the politically powerful Jat community of Rajasthan.

The following were originally used as characteristics for awarding a community the status of a scheduled tribe: (i) the primitive way of living, (ii) habitation in remote and less accessible areas, and (iii) nomadic habits and love for drinks and dance. In 1962, the Dhebar Commission took note of the fact that “the term tribe is nowhere defined in the Constitution and in fact there is no satisfactory definition anywhere” Dhebar (1962). It proposed a definition of a “tribal area”, recommending that an area be considered eligible if it met the following criteria: (i) preponderance of tribal people in the population, (ii)
compact and reasonable size, (iii) underdeveloped nature of the area, and (iv) marked disparity in economic standards of the people. As with earlier criteria, these meet administrative and political decision-making purposes but are rather vague as distinct characteristics of a tribal community.

**Tribal-Caste Continuum**

Anthropologists have differed on the question relating to tribe and caste. According to Ghurye (1983, p. 67) tribal people are backward Hindus differing only in degrees from the other segments of the Hindu society. Elwin, (1971, p.125) argued for the recognition of separate social and cultural identity of tribal people. The Government of India gives tacit recognition to this identity of keeping alive under constitution sanction their lists of Scheduled Tribe.

Andre Beteille (1960, observed the differences between tribes and castes. The tribes are relatively isolated as to the castes. Tribes speak a variety of dialects which separates them from non tribes. They follow their own religion and practices which are not common in Hinduism. Language is a criterion of difference as tribes speak their local dialect for example Mundas and Oraons of Chota Nagpur speak different dialects but Bhumij have lost their tribal dialect and speak dominant language of the area.

According to N.K Bose (1992, there are many similarities in customs between tribes and castes and they are interdependent. Marriage within the clan is forbidden both in the tribe as well as in the caste. Both generally they do not encourage marriage outside the group.
D.N Majumdar (1977), observed that the tribe looks upon Hindu ritualism as foreign and extra-religious even though indulging in it and the in the worship of God and Goddess where as in the caste these are necessary part of the religion. In caste individuals generally pursue their own definite occupations because functions are divided under the caste system. In the tribe individuals can indulge in whatever profession they prefer as there is no fixed relation between them and occupation.

Bailey (1975) stated that tribe and caste should be viewed as continuum. He seeks to make distinction not in terms of totality of behavior but in more limited way in relation to the political economic system. Briefly Bailey's argument is that a caste society is hierarchical while a tribal society is segmentary and egalitarian. But in contemporary India both caste and tribe are being merged into a different system which is neither one nor the other.

The tribes in India have been influenced by certain traditions of the communities around them. Major neighbouring community in all the areas has always been Hindus. As a result from the very period there have been several points of contact between the Hindus of the area and tribal communities living within it. The nature and extent of contact the pattern of mutual participation and characteristics of revitalization movements have been different in various parts of India.
**Tribes in Tamilnadu**

The Nilgiris is the district where the concentration of the tribals is found in Tamilnadu. Of all the tribes, the Kotas, the Todas, the Irulas, the kurumbas and the Badagas form the larger groups, who mainly had a pastoral existence. Other tribes include, Kattunayakan and Paniyan amongst others. (Indianetzone, 2012, www.nird.org.in)

**In Toda Tribes**

Men from the family of the tribes are occupied with milking and grazing their large herds of buffaloes. This tribe is distinguished by their traditional costume, thick white cotton cloth having stripes in red, blue or black, called puthukuli worn by both women and men over a waist cloth. The women are noted by the long ringlets of tresses hanging on either side of their face and the men are distinguished by their closely cut hair. The ornaments are made of iron and silver. Their settlements are known as Munds comprising five-six typical wagon shaped, windowless split bamboos, reeds and thatch huts.

The Badagas belong to the backward class and are not classified as tribals. They are an agricultural community, dwelling in the higher plateau of the Nilgiris district in Tamil Nadu. In the Nilgiris district, Badagas are the largest settlement, with approximately 350,000 in population. They are engaged in tea cultivation and potato growing. They speak a language which is a mixture of Tamil and Kannada. They form the largest group of tribes and boast a rich oral tradition of folktales, songs and poetry.
The Kotas are mainly concentrated in the Tiruchigadi area in the Nilgiris Hills. They are distinguished by their colourful folk dances and are basically musicians, who play at Badaa funerals. They are mainly engaged in producing handicrafts. These tribes of Tamil Nadu are experts in iron smiths, potters and carpenters.

The Kurumbas tribes of this state inhabit the intermediate valleys and forests in villages and were known for their black magic and witchcraft in the past. Their way of living today has been changed from their original gathering and hunting existence to working in coffee and tea plantations as labourers. Kurumbas are perhaps the only main caste in southern India that has a specialised and distinctive Kurumbas Language. Most of the Hindu festivals are celebrated by the Kurumbas.

The Irulas tribes of Tamil Nadu occupy the lower slopes and forests at the base of the Nilgiris Hills. They constitute the second largest group of tribes after the Badagas and are similar to the Kurumbas in many ways. This tribe produces honey, fruits, herbs, roots, gum, dyes and the like and trades them with the people in the plains.

Paliyans in Tamilnadu

Turnbull.T (1817) states that the Madura Pulliers “are never seen unless when they come down to travelers to crave a piece of tobacco or a rag of cloth, for which they have a great predilection. The women are said to lay their
infants on warm ashes after delivery, as a substitute for warm clothing and beds”.

The Paliyans, or Pullers, are described by General Burton as “good trackers, and many of them carried bows and arrows, and few even possessed matchlocks. I met one of these villagers going out on a sporting excursion. He had on his head a great chatty (earthen pot) full of water, and an old brass-bound matchlock. It was the height of the dry season. He was taking water to a hollow in a rock, which he kept carefully replenished, and then ensconced himself in a clump of bushes hard by, and waited all day, if necessary, with true native patience, for hog, deer, or pea-fowl to approach his ambush”.

In the Madura Manual, it is noted that “the Poleiyans have always been the predial slaves of the Kunuvans. According to the survey account, they are the aborigines of the Palani hills. The marriage ceremony consists merely of a declaration of consent made by both parties at a feast, to which all their relatives are invited. As soon as a case of small-pox occurs in one of their villages, a cordon is drawn round it, and access to other villages is denied to all the inhabitants of the infected locality, who at once desert their homes, and camp out for a sufficiently long period. The individual who is attacked is left to his fate, and no medicine is exhibited to him, as is supposed that the malady is brought on solely by the just displeasure of the gods. They bury their dead”.

According to Dahmen, the Paliyans are a nomadic tribe, who for the most part rove in small parties through the jungle-clad gorges that fringe the
Upper Palnis plateau. There they maintain themselves mostly on the products of the chase and on roots. (yams, and the like), leaves and wild fruits (e.g., of the wild date tree), at times also by hiring their labour to the Kunnovan or Mannadi villagers. The find of a beehive in the hollow of some tree is a veritable feast for them. No sooner have they smoked the bees out than they greedily snatch at the combs, and ravenously devour them on the spot, with wax, grubs, and all. Against ailments the Paliyans have made a name for themselves by their knowledge of the medicinal properties of herbs and roots. Thus, for instance, they make from certain roots (periya uri katti ver) a white powder known as a very affective purgative. Against snake-bite they always carry with them certain leaves (naru valli ver), which they hold to be a very efficient antidote. As soon as one of them is bitten, he chews theses, and also applies them to the wound. Patience and cunning above all are required in their hunting methods. One of their devices, used for big game, e.g., against the sambar (deer), are against the boar, consists in digging pitfall, carefully covered up with twigs and leaves. On the animal being entrapped, it is dispatched with clubs or the aruval (sickle). Another means consists in arranging a heap of big stones on a kind of platform, one end of which is made to rest on higher ground, the other skillfully equipoise by a stick resting on a fork, where it remains fixed by means of strong twine so disposed that the least movement makes the lever-like stick on the fork fly off, while the platform and the stones come rapidly down with a crash. The string which secures the lever is so
arranged as to unloose itself at the least touch, and the intended victim can hardly taste the food that serves for bait without bringing the platform with all its weight down upon itself. Similar traps, but on a smaller scale, are used to catch smaller animals: hares, wild fowl, etc. flying squirrels are smoked out of the hollows of trees, and porcupines out of their burrows, and then captured of clubbed to death on their coming out. The first drops of blood of any animal the Paliyans kill are offered to their god. A good catch is great boon for the famished Paliyan. The meat obtained there form must be divided between all the families of the settlement. The skins, if valuable, are preserved to barter for the little commodities they many stand in need, of or to give as a tribute to their chief. One of their methods for procuring fish consists in throwing the leaves of a creeper called in Tamil Farungakodi, after rubbing them, into the water. Soon the fish is seen floating on the surface. Rough fashioned looks are also used.

In the 1980s, massive riots broke out in central Tamil Nadu between the tribal community and landowners. Since then, till today a majority of these tribes have not been granted Scheduled Tribe Status. The struggle for a brighter future for these tribes continues to be a long and arduous journey. Paliyans, the aboriginal tribes, live in the clad of the Western Ghats falling in the District of Theni. Paliyans are scattered and unorganised group who are all used to live as a smaller group in the foothills. Poolavad i Puliyampatti in Palani hills of the Eastern Ghats is considered to be the origin of this tribe. Paliyans live as isolated groups. They used to live in rock crevices and caves. Paliyas in
Virudhunagar and Madurai districts are mostly settled in the hilly areas of sathuragiri-, Shenbaga Thoppu, Thanipparai, Athikoil, Ayyanarkoil, vinobanagar, in Pilavakkal Dam, Vallimmanagar and the like. They are short in stature and black in colour, with curly hair, thick lips, broad and flat nose. Tamil is their mother language. In the ancient time, the ancestors of Paliyans lived with nature and settled as a small group in the interior forest. In olden days, these people lived in small cave like structures called Kalazhais and later on constructed a small hut in the forest. They are now settler in the footsteps of the hills and used to venture into the forest on several occasion for collection of minor forest produce and medicinal plants and herbs. Their life is very simple and well contended and they do not have saving habits. Paliyans are in chase till time memory as the outsider started to parade on their nature. They were once hunters and nomads. Only in early 50s, they exposed their life to the outside world and also started to wear limited clothes. Their dress code is very simple. Earlier Paliyans were, nomadic and later period Paliyans are semi nomadic and the present Paliyans are settlers. Nomadic Paliyans do not built houses. They live temporarily in rock caves called 'Pudai'. Semi nomadic Paliyans build temporary houses and confine themselves to small territories. Most of their huts are dark with no window or any other opening to admit air.

Paliyans in Cumbum, Bodi, Varusanadu and Cudaloor revenue district of Theni are mostly settled in the hilly areas of the Western Ghats in Varusanadu which is known for legendry and religion. It is an isolated hill
situated at the eastern side of the Western Ghats. This hill range is an off-shoot that is connected to the Western Ghats through the Kodaikanal hill ranges in the north. It is known for Siddhas date back to 5AD. It was also referred in Ramayana. It was believed that while Hanuman (Monkey God) was carrying the Sanjeevi Mountain, a portion of it was dropped containing all the rare medicinal plants.

**Customs And Rituals**

Paliyans are relatively nonviolent, peace loving and innocent tribes. They were nomads till time memory. The men were half-necked and used to put the dotti in the waist and the used ones of the men were then worked by women as dress. The habit of wearing the saris and other modern dresses fond in their changed life style only in the later period that is after they have been exposed to the outside world and started to settle down in the foothills. The ancestors of paliyans used to eat vallikizhanku and hunt animals for food. They worship Goddesses Ananthavali and Vanadeva. The tribal offer prays to the vanadevadas in the interior forest. They also worship god Karuppan by visiting a remote area of the forest along with the families. Still believes that these vanadevadas protect their family. Adi amavasai (an auspicious days for the Hindus) is an important festival that is celebrated with more ritual and gaiety. In the early 50’s the Paliyans were allowed to perform poojas and today this right has been taken away by the caste Hindus of the plains. Still, the
community is having the habit and celebrity of venture in to the interior forest with family members and offer poojas.

**Life Style**

Their life style is very simple and sacrosanct. They love to live with nature. Their belongings are limited and they do not have saving habits. Once they live in rocks and their life style has now been disturbed and witnessed past erosion. Those days the marriage ceremony was very simple and they had a practice of marring the maternity uncle’s daughter. They will exchange the groom within their community settled in particular settlement. They rarely search the groom from the other paliyans living in the other parts of the places in the Western Ghats. The same custom is still in practice. In early days, the bride and bridegroom were allowed to start the new life by separating them from the father’s house from the day one on wards by giving gift of small pottery for cooking materials. The young couple had to accept and to start the new life in the forest. They used Tharanipoo and perandipoo during the marriage feast and the young woman put the Tharanippu garland as a token of love and affection and a symbol of marriage. Such a system of marriage has been eroded now once the community mingled with outsiders. But instead of giving mud pot as a marriage gift, now they are accustomed to give goat and cow as a marriage gift to the bridegroom family.
Livelihood

The hunters have now become gatherers. Their knowledge on medicinal plants is extraordinary and has a rich expertise about herbs. They used to collect the medicinal plants from the interior forest. Their rights on forest and their present with nature are to be relooked as they have been traditionally protecting and conserving the forest resource for sustainable use. They collect honey from the branches of towering tall trees and rock caves skillfully. Paliyans in Theni district resulted in the identification of 134 medicinal plants that are used by them to treat common ailments such as cold, cough, headache, snake bites, poisonous insect bites and digestive disorders.

The Problem of Tribes

Over the last 20 to 25 years, the international tribal community has been incessantly trying to draw the attention of the world’s leading power blocks to save them from perennial miseries. Currently there are about 300 million indigenous people in 70 countries (Beteille 1998). They have come together to seek help from the UN to put an end to their poverty as well as to social discrimination against them. In response, the UN has taken some decisive steps. Among these is a series of programmes under the ‘Declaration of the International Decade of World’s Indigenous People’, aimed at strengthening international cooperation on redressal of crises in the areas of human rights, environment, development, education and health. The World Health organisation WHO,(2000) has emphasised that indigenous people have higher
rates of infant mortality, lower life expectancy and more cases of chronic illness than the non-indigenous populations in their home countries. It is argued that the indigenous people are among the poorest of the poor. They suffer from extreme discrimination and lead a life of misery and destitution. The development discourse, therefore, needs to concentrate on finding an effective strategy to mitigate these crises. Following is a presentation of some major problems which present day tribal people faces. It should be remembered that problems which Indian tribes face can be sect orally divided as Problems of Poverty, Health Problems and social problems like lack of education, however, it is more pertinent to look at each categories in to greater details by carefully taking into account the nuances of a problem.

The tribals of India are in a way geographically separated from the rest of population. Somehow them are living in the unapproachable physical areas such as deep valleys, dense forests, hills, mountains, and the like. It is difficult for them to establish relations with others, and hence, socially they are far away from the civilized world. This kind of physical as well as social isolation or seclusion has contributed to various other problems. (Pranav Dua, 2011).

**Cultural Problems**

The tribal culture is entirely different from the way of life of the civilized people. The tribal fail to understand the civilized people, their customs and practices, beliefs and attitudes and so on. They are suspicious towards the civilized people. They are clinging tenaciously to their customs
and traditions. During the British rule some foreign Christian missionaries made an attempt to propagate their religion in some of the tribal areas, particularly in the North-Eastern provinces. Even today such an attempt is going on. On the other hand, the Ramakrishna Mission, R.S.S, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and other organizations are spreading the Hinduism in these areas. Some of the tribal leaders have now started popularizing the tribal religion. These different propagandas have created a great confusion for them. The cultural gap between the civilized and the tribal people is coming in the way of the assimilation and integration of the tribal people into the mainstream of the national life of India.

**Social Problems**

The tribals have their own social problems also. They are traditional and custom-bound. They have become the victims of superstitious beliefs, outmoded and meaningless practices and harmful habits. Child marriage, infanticide, homicide, animal sacrifice, exchange of wives, black magic and other harmful practices are still found among them. They believe in ghosts and spirits. They have keen desire to maintain all these practices in general, and their individual tribal character. Hence it is said that “the tribal are the tribesmen first, the tribesmen last and the tribesmen all the time”.

**Economic Problem**

The tribal people are economically the poorest people of India. Majority of them live below poverty line. The tribal economy is based on agriculture of
the crudest type. The main economic problems of the tribal are explained below.

About 90% of the tribal are engaged in cultivation and most of them are landless and practice shifting cultivation. They need to be helped in adopting new methods of cultivation. The tribal possess uneconomic holdings because of which their crop yield is very less. A very small per cent of the population participates in occupational activities in the secondary and tertiary sectors.

Problems of Land Ownership

A good portion of the land in the tribal areas has been legally transferred to non-tribal. In fact the tribal had earlier enjoyed much freedom to use the forest and hunt animals. Tribal are emotionally attached to the forests for they believe that their gods, spirits live in forests. The tribal who are “deprived” of their rights to the land and forest have reacted sharply to the restrictions imposed by the government on their traditional rights.

Unemployment and Underemployment

A large number of tribal young men and women are either unemployed or underemployed. They are unhappy for they are not able to get jobs that can keep them occupied throughout the year.

Non-Availability of Banking Facilities

Banking facilities in the tribal areas are so inadequate that the tribals have mainly to depend on the money-lenders.
Educational Problems

Illiteracy is a major problem of the tribals. More than 80% of them are illiterates. Literacy among them has increased from 0.7% in 1931 to 11.30% in 1970 and to 16.35% in 1981. This shows that more than 3/4 of the tribals are illiterates. They have no faith in formal educational organization. Many of them do not know anything about education, schools, colleges, universities, degrees, and the like. They feel no urge to educate their children. Since most of the tribals are poor, education appears to be a luxury for them. In the case of those people who are engaged in agriculture, their minor children are also engaged in it. The illiterate parents do not consider it as their primary responsibility to give education to their children.

The Problem of Language

The medium of instruction is another hindrance to the promotion of education among the tribes. Most of the tribal languages do not have a script of their own. Hence the children are obliged to learn things in a language which is foreign to them. Even in tribal areas the number of tribal teachers is very less and hence communication problem always arises between the students and the teachers.

Problem of Health and Sanitation

Due to illiteracy and ignorance, the tribals are not able to appreciate modern concept of health and sanitation. They do not take much care
pertaining to their own health. They believe that diseases are caused by hostile spirits and ghosts. They have their own traditional means of diagnosis and cure. Good number of them fall a prey to the diseases such as skin disease, forest fever, typhoid, T.B., leprosy, malaria, venereal diseases, small box, and the like. Contact with outsiders further added to a few more diseases in the tribal areas.

**Problem of Separatism**

The “divide and rule” policy adopted by the British did a lot of damage to the tribal community of India. The British had superimposed their own administrative patterns in tribal areas and deprived the tribals of their traditional methods of interacting with people. The “Criminal Tribes Act” which the British had introduced gave an impression that the tribals were either “criminals” or “anti-social beings”. The tribal groups such as Kolis, Mundas, Khasis, Santals, Naga, and the like, who fought against the British were branded as “dacoits” and “robbers”.

**Tribals Revolt And Uprisings**

Numerous revolts and uprisings of the tribal have taken place beginning with the one in Bihar in 1772, followed by many other revolts in Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Mizoram and Nagaland. The important tribes involved in revolt in the 19th century were Mizos. [1810], Kols [1795
and 1831], Mundas [1889], Daflas [1875], Khasi and Garo [1829], Kacharis [1839], Santhals [1853], Muria Gonds [1886], Nagas [1844 and 1879], Bhuiyas [1868] and Kondhs [1817], During the recent tribal uprisings the Nagas, Mizos and the Bodostook part in them in large number and created serious law and order problem. (Khan, Ismail. 1986)

**Smuggling, Infiltration and Drug Addiction**

The foreign infiltrators especially from Bangladesh, Pakistan, Burma and China are entering the borders of India through what are known as “tribal belts” Some of them take undue advantage of the tribal’ innocence and ignorance for their smuggling activities.

Prohibited drugs and unlicensed weapons are smuggled inside the land and beyond the borders of India through the tribal areas. Some of the tribal have been made the victims of drug addiction. Hence, tribal areas in the borders have become extremely sensitive areas.

**Problems With Land Alienation**

Land as a prime resource has been a source of problem in tribal life because of two related reasons, first, dependency, i.e. tribal dependency on land and second, improper planning from government agencies. Tribal people in India can be classified on the basis of their economic pursuits in the following way: Foragers, Pastoral, Handicraft makers, Agriculturists, Shifting hill
cultivators, Labourers and Business pursuits. All of these occupations involve direct or indirect dependency on land. (Rao, Janardhan. B. 1987)

According to Marx, in a Capitalist society an alienated man lives in an alienated nature and he performs estranged labour and the product of his labour becomes alien to him. Alienation as a concept is used by many social scientists in India, merely as a sociological phenomenon. Since land alienation is the crux of the sanitation of the tribals, the concept assumes utmost importance in the analysis of tribal rights as a part of human rights discourse. The problem of land alienation is a much deeply connected phenomenon with full of contradictions related to the existing socio-economic order. The separation of land from the tribal communities can be understood in a more scientific way with the assistance of the theoretical formulations of the concept of alienation.

Alienation was defined by Hegel and was used by Marx to describe and criticise a social condition in which man far from being the active initiation of the social world seemed more a passive object of determinate external processes. Marx says, alienation is fundamentally a particular relation of property, involving involuntary surrender to antagonistic 'other'. Alienation is inherent in exploitative relations of production and its nature varies with that of exploitation. Hence alienation's manifestation also differs among societies based on slavery, serfdom and capitalism and the like. Thus the concept of alienation may be interpreted to understand a specific problem of the tribals
where land becomes the primordial source of exploitation and results in the creation of a society where exploitative production relations exit.

**Land Rights and Alienation**

Land rights and changes in rules go unnoticed. Tribals are unaware or are made unaware about the rules which governs India’s land rights. (Asian Indigenous & Tribal Peoples Network, 2008)

- The Tribals do not have access to land records, not even the record of Rights. This lends them to a higher probability of getting exploited, by the non-tribals and in some cases by the local officials. Wherever lands are given yet the pattas are not given, or pattas handed over yet the land is not shown.

- There is a discrepancy in demarcation of Scheduled Areas. In some places it is village wise and in some places it is area wise.

- There are many tribals villages with populations more than 50 per cent and contiguous to the existing scheduled areas. Yet they are not declared as scheduled areas

- Some of the tribal villages surrounding the Scheduled Areas are administratively called the Tribal Sub-Plan Areas, where land alienation is high and has numerous pending cases. Land restoration and issuing title deeds to tribals as per Land Transfer Regulation (LTR) Act should be implemented immediately in all these areas. This issue has to be
immediately addressed, since only land situated in those villages that fall within the Scheduled Areas enjoy the protection under the LTR Act 1/70 in Andhra Pradesh.

- When talks were divided into mandals in AP in 1986, some of the scheduled villages got included in the plain area mandals. Land alienation is very serious problem in these areas and the administration is not implementing the LTR Act here, as these areas are a fraction of the total area of mandals. The mandals and Scheduled Areas should be co-terminus.

- The Agency Revenue Divisional Officers serve as judicial magistrates and conduct agency courts in the Scheduled Areas. They are not knowledgeable of judicial matters and LTR, as they are posted from the Revenue Department. Because of their inexperience, numerous land alienation cases are pending in such courts. Some such SDCs are given charge of more than one district, or have to deal with both plain areas and scheduled areas, causing all sorts of logistical and experiential problems.

- Non-tribals are taking possession of lands in Scheduled Areas by marrying tribal women. Most often, the tribal women, who are legal owners of lands and yields, become concubines and are denied all enjoyment over such rights by the non-tribal men. The children of a non-tribal father should not be given tribal status as most of the tribal
groups in the country follow a patriarchal system of identity and ownership over property. It was felt that this system should be followed in the tribal area as well in order to prevent land alienation. Section 3(1) of LTR Act should be accordingly amended prohibiting transfer of land to children of tribal women married to non-tribal men.

Throughout the history of Indian Civilization tribal people have increasingly lose their land because of state’s encroachment, and also lack of understanding between tribal mode of relationship and outsiders’ interests. Tribal people’s mode of land ownership is quite different from the rest. With cross cultural research three kinds of land ownership is noted –Community based ownership, Clan based ownership, Family based ownership

As commons are difficult to manage, tribal people have frequently been denied from their rights over land. The first phase of alienation began with the state formation and incorporation of tribal territory by medieval rulers. Scholar like Singh, (1988) and Dasgupta (1971, pp. 234-246) have depicted cases from India where Kings actually to earn more resources from the land taken from no agriculturalist tribal people and distributed to caste people. In Tripura for example, it is argued that Kings invited outsiders as tribal people were not ready to cultivate, in consequence, they became marginalised.

The second phase of land alienation starts with colonial rule of banning shifting cultivation and promotes specific kinds of cultivation by outsiders within tribal territories. Their compulsion leads to a situation where tribals
purchased seeds and other components from local money lenders in loan which ultimately displaced them from their lands due to chronic indebtedness.

The third phase of alienation resulted in direct displacement of tribal people from their homeland because of large project constructions and outsider’s interventions.

**Forms of Alienation**

The first and foremost is the manipulation of land records. The unsatisfactory state of land records contributed a lot to the problem of land alienation. The tribals were never legally recognized as owners of the lands which they cultivated.

The second form of land alienation is reported to have taken place due to 'benami' transfers. The report of the study team of the Union Home Ministry (May 1975) pointed out that large scale transfers of ownership of the Adivasis' lands are being allowed to go out of hands through illegal and benami transactions, collusive civil proceedings etc., in which land remains to be in the names of the original owners who are reduced to the level of share croppers.

Another form of land alienation is related to the leasing or mortgaging of the land. To raise loans for various needs the tribals have to give their land as mortgage to the local moneylenders or to the rich farmers. Encroachment is another form of dispossessing the tribals of their lands and this is done by the new entrants in all the places where there were no proper land records. Bribing
the local Patwari for manipulating the date of settlement of land disputes, antedating etc., are resorted to claim the tribal lands. Concubinage or marital alliance is another form to circumvent the law and grab tribal lands at no cost at all. Fictitious adoption of the non-tribals by the tribal families is also another method to snatch the lands of the tribals. Also the slackness in the implementation of the restrictive provisions encourages the non-tribals to occupy the tribal lands. Lands alienation which takes place in various ways has assumed alarming proportion threatening the right to life of the tribal population. Though the problem lies elsewhere, it is being unfortunately always interpreted as the handiwork of certain individuals like the moneylender, traders, land lords, etc, without understanding the class connection of these individuals. The unsystematic land records of the pre-colonial and colonial periods were followed by the present State. There was collection of 'taxes - (a strange phenomenon for the natives and it was the beginning process of alienation) in the tribal areas.

In the name of protecting the interest of the tribals stringent laws were enacted by the government but the non-tribals found the loopholes to their advantage. This double edged nature of State policy in one of the facets of the existing contradictions in the Indian Tribal Society. The process of land alienation is not an accidental one, but it has arisen because of the concerted efforts of the antagonistic class interest that are operating in the tribal areas. This is not just migration of the non-tribals into tribal areas rather there is a
history behind this migration and the State has supported the migrant non-tribals to the settle down in the tribal lands. (Ramdas Rupavath, 2009)

**Development Induced Displacement**

Infrastructural development projects carried out by states, often with the assistance of the international community, frequently result in the displacement of peoples from homes that stand in the way of dams, highways, or other large-scale construction projects. New standards are emerging for states to address the displacement consequences of development. World Bank estimates that only in post 1990s the construction of 300 high dams displaced four million people each year, urban projects have displaced 6 million people worldwide each year.

Ongoing industrialisation, electrification and urbanisation processes are likely to increase, rather than reduce, the number of programmes causing involuntary population displacement. Causes or categories of development-induced displacement include the following: water supply (dams, reservoirs, irrigation); urban infrastructure; transportation (roads, highway, canals); energy (mining, power plants, oil exploration and extraction, pipelines); agriculture expansion; parks and forest reserves; and population redistribution schemes.

**Indebtedness**

Majority of the tribes live under poverty line. The tribes follow many simple occupations based on simple technology. Most of the occupation falls into the primary occupations such as hunting, gathering, and agriculture. The
technology they use for these purposes belong to the most primitive kind. There is no profit and surplus making in such economy. Hence their per capita income is very meager much lesser than the Indian average. Most of them live under abject poverty and are in debt in the hands of local moneylenders and Zamindars. In order to repay the debt they often mortgage or sell their land to the moneylenders. Indebtedness is almost inevitable since heavy interest is to be paid to these moneylenders. Landlessness has been arguably the major cause of indebtedness among the agriculturist tribals in India. In India 58% of the tribal people Below Poverty Line with a high concentration in states like Andhra, Rajasthan, UP, Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal. The land alienation with its long history has natural consequence of indebtedness, which further lead to dispossession of tribal land.

The poverty, land alienation indebtedness and landlessness is working a cyclical way. Economically indebtedness is an outcome of a) deficit family income and b) social compulsions. Since ethnographic study has show the self contained tribal life among the hunters and gatherers and their lack of concept of loan and interest, it is reasonable to believe that indebtedness is an outcome of interaction between non tribal and tribal people. The tribal’s lack of education and understanding of loan and interests have provided the incentives to the non tribals to systematically exploit them.

**Bonded Labour**

The United Nations sees bonded labour as a special kind of forced labour (1956). However in India bonded labour is characteristically more
complex. Several features of bonded labour in India is typical in its character and the degree of acceptance level.

However, among tribal India, the causes demand multispectral analysis.

1. Agricultural Sector
   - Land alienation.
   - Denial of access to Common Property Resources.
   - Socio-economic dominance of certain groups
   - Changing labour requirement with capitalist investment.
   - Social rituals, illness and substantive absence of cash resulted in indebtedness and bondage (e.g. Kol Tribal bondage in Mirzapur district of Southern UP).

2. Brick Kilns

   Employment through middlemen who are paid from wages of the labourers.

   Part of the payment is made on weekly basis and bulk payment is made on end of the month and season as result labourers become bonded.

3. Stone Queries, Crushers and Miners

   Small scale and localised quarrying and mining invite labourers from nomadic tribes and rural poor. They are irregularly paid and are made bonded without proper work place protection. Instances are reported from Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.
4. Power Looms and Hand Looms

Especially reported from Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. The bondage is formed on the basis of capital and material investment by outsiders.

**Issues Related to Health**

Tribal people from their basic ways of living in remote places and shyness of mixing with community at large frequently are worst sufferers of health hazards. Leprosy, skin disease, tuberculosis, anaemia and diarrhoea are very common among them. The health hazards related to pregnancy and malnutrition are faced by more than 90 per cent of the tribal.

The per capita health expenditure among tribal is higher than regular population. Many Scholars have focussed on health and poverty as maintaining a strong interrelationship where the nexus is found to work as a double edged sword. (www.tribalhealth.org)

**Infrastructure Facilities**

The available health infrastructure, i.e. number of health care centres, professionals and distance is considered to be determinants of the quality of health care facilities available. However, many recent studies have shown that sometimes even if health care facilities are available tribal tend to depend on their traditional system. The World Health Report (2000) therefore have stressed on the importance of health delivery in health outcomes, also stressing on the awareness generation about hygiene and available health infrastructure.
It emphasised more on the role of indirect intervention where removal of chronic poverty and a culture change was thought to be the prime factor for improvement of health and hygiene.

**Housing**

Housing facilities being most fundamental requirement of human survival and a question of identity requires special attention. In India in 1996, 28% of the tribals were without houses (Economic Survey 1998). The situation is even more dreadful while tribals are displaced and/or affected by development projects or natural calamities.

For the first 25 years of independence, the problem of rural housing did not receive special attention from the government excepting the rehabilitation of 5 lacks refugees till around 1960s. and part of Community Development Programme in 1957, which resulted only in formation of 67000 houses.

However, major initiative was started in 1980s when the construction of houses becomes major activities of the Employment Guarantee Programme which began in 1983. The major scheme which provided an integrated approach on rural housing started in 1985 launched under rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP), which further gets integrated to the Jawahar Rojgar Yojna (JRY) in 1989. This scheme is known as the Indira Awas Yojna which targets. For the year 2011-12, a sum of Rs. 20 lakhs has been provided for this schemes.

Below Poverty Level people in rural areas belonging to SCs and STs

Freed bonded labourers
BPL who are general castes
Widows and single women
SC/ST victims of atrocity or natural calamities
Physically handicapped.

The Major Schemes Programme of The Ministry of Tribal Affairs Special Central Assistance & Grants Under Article 275(1) of The Constitution

Special Central Assistance is given to States/UTs to supplement their efforts in tribal development through Tribal Sub-Plan. This assistance is basically meant for family-oriented income-generating schemes in the sectors of agriculture, horticulture, minor irrigation, soil conservation, animal husbandry, forests, education, cooperatives, fisheries, village and small scale industries and for minimum needs programme. Grants are also given to States/UTs, under the first provision to article 275(1) of the Constitution to meet the costs of projects for tribal development and for raising the level of administration of Scheduled Area therein on par with the rest of the State/UT. Part of the funds are utilised for setting up of Residential Schools for providing quality education to tribal students. (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2010).

Scheme For The Development Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs)

Based on pre-agricultural level of technology, low level of literacy, declining or stagnant populations, 75 tribal communities in 17 States and 1 Union Territory of Andaman & Nicobar Island, have been identified and categorized as Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs). Considering the vulnerability
of these groups, a Central Sector Scheme was introduced in the year 1998 for the all round development of PTGs. The scheme is very flexible, and covers housing, infrastructure development, education, health, land distribution/development, agriculture development, cattle development, social security, insurance, etc. During 2007-08, comprehensive long term “Conservation-cum-Development (CCD) Plans” for PTGs has been formulated for Eleventh Plan period through baseline surveys conducted by respective State Governments/Union territory. These Plans envisage a synergy between efforts of State Governments and nongovernmental organizations. (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2010)

**Boys/Girls Hostels For Tribes**

Girls’ hostels scheme was started in Third Five-Year Plan with the aim of providing residential facilities to tribal girls in pursuit of education. Central assistance of 50 per cent cost of construction to the States, per cent to the Union Territories is provided under the scheme. During 1999-2000 funds were released to the States/UTs for construction of 29 Girls’ Hostels and 11 Girls Hostels during 2000-2001. Boys hostels scheme was started in 1989-90 under the same pattern as the Girls’ Hostels. During 2000-2001, funds were released for construction of 15 boys’ hostels.

**Ashram School in Tribal Areas**

This Centrally-sponsored scheme was started in 1990-91 to provide Central assistance to the States and Union Territories on 50 per cent and 100 per cent basis, respectively. During 1999- 2000 were released for construction of 36 Ashram schools.
Vocational Training Centers For Tribal Areas

The scheme aims at upgrading the skills of the tribal youths in various traditional/modern vocation depending upon their educational qualification, present economic trends and the market potential, which would enable them to gain suitable employment or enable them to become self employed.

Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India

The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED) was set up by the Government of India in 1987, with the prime objective of providing marketing assistance and remunerative prices to ST communities for their minor forest produce and surplus agricultural produce and to when them away from exploitative private traders and middlemen.

Post Metric Scholarship For Scheduled Tribes Students

The objective of the scheme is to provide financial assistance to students belonging to Scheduled Tribes pursuing Post-Matriculation recognized courses in recognized institutions (w.e.f 2010). The scheme covers professional, technical as well as non-professional and non-technical courses at various levels and the scheme also includes correspondence courses including distance and continuing education.

Girls’ Hostels For Scheduled Tribes

The scheme of Girls’ Hostels, which started in the Third Plan, is a useful instrument of spreading education among the ST Girls, whose literacy still
stands at 34.76% as per 2001 census as against the general female literacy of 54.28%. Under the scheme, Central assistance is given to States/UTs for construction of new hostel buildings and/or extension of existing hostels. In this scheme the cost of the construction of the hostel building is equally shared between the Centre and the State in ratio of 50:50. In case of the UTs, the Central Government bears the entire cost of the building.

**Boys Hostel For Scheduled Tribes**

The objectives, terms and conditions as well as the pattern of assistance of this Scheme are same as that of the scheme for Girls’ Hostels. The scheme is in operation since 1989-90. The scheme of Boys’ hostels has been merged with scheme of girls’ hostels in the Xth plan.

**Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship Scheme (RGNF)**

This Scheme was introduced in the year 2005-06. Under the Scheme, fellowship is provided to the ST students for pursuing higher studies such as M.Phil. and Ph. D. The maximum duration of a fellowship is 5 years. Every year 667 fellowships are to be provided to the ST students. The scheme is being implemented by University Grant Commission (UGC) on behalf of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs. Any ST student who has passed post-graduation from a UGC recognized University can apply under the scheme

**Tamilnadu Government Adi Dravidar Welfare And Development Schemes**

The total population of Tamilnadu as per the 2011 census is 4.09 lakhs. Of which, 118.58 lakhs (19%) are the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and 6.51 lakhs (1.04%) are Scheduled Tribes. As per the 2011 census the provisional
The total population of Tamilnadu is 721 lakhs. Sustainable development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is the prime objective of this Government. With a view to ensure socio-economic and educational development of the Schedule Castes / Scheduled Tribes on par with that of the General public the Tamil Nadu Government allocates funds under various schemes and creates infrastructural facilities like provision of drinking water, link roads, house-sites. (www.tn.gov.in/policynotes/policy_2011)

**Education**

Literacy level is one of the main indicators of the socio economic condition of the Society and the relative employment opportunities are largely depend upon these criteria. There is a considerable gap in the literacy level of the Tribal people with that of overall literacy level. In Tamilnadu, the general literacy level is 73.45% as per 2001 census. However, the corresponding level of literacy among the Tribal people is 41.53% only. The gap in the female literacy is still more glaring reflecting the high level of illiteracy and dropouts among the Tribal Girls. Therefore, Government of Tamilnadu has been providing greater importance for the implementation of schemes promoting education among Tribals particularly among the girl children. Several measures which are taken up by the state government are mentioned below. 297 Tribal Welfare schools and 2 Ekalavya Model residential schools are run by welfare department. Most of these schools are functioning predominantly in and near the Tribal habitations. (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2010)
Upgrading The Merit of Scheduled Castes / Scheduled Tribe Students

The Scheduled Tribes students who have scored highest marks in X standard are unable to get admission in XI standard in reputed private schools. With a view to make them enable to compete more effectively for admission to Professional courses, the Government have ordered to upgrade the merit of 300 Scheduled Tribes students studied in Government / Corporation / Municipal / Government Adi Dravidar Welfare schools by admitting them in reputed private schools during the year 2007-2008.

Incentive to Tribal Girls

Incentive to girls are provided from 1994-95 to encourage the enrolment of girls and to avoid their dropouts. Under this scheme, the Government is giving a sum of Rs.50/- per month to each student as incentive for 10 months of the year. Totally, Rs.500/- has been given as one lump sum to Tribal girls, who are studying in Standards III to V.

Facilities for Improvement of Education

Plastic frame slates are supplied to students of Government Tribal Residential schools at free of cost to attract students in I standard. Text books are supplied at free of cost to all the students studying in Standard I to XII by the Education Department and note books for students from Std. III to X in Tribal Residential schools and Tribal and Adidravidar converted to Christianity.
students studying in schools run by School Education Department, from Std IV to X are supplied with free note books by Tribal Welfare Department.

**Free Supply of Bicycles**

The scheme for the supply of free bicycles to Adi Dravidar/ Tribal / Adi Dravidar converted to Christianity girls studying in XI and XII Standards was introduced during 2001-02. Similarly, this scheme was also extended to Boys from 2005-06. These two schemes are still continued.

**Steps to Improve The Standard of Education**

Steps are taken to improve the quality of education in the schools run by this Department.

**Special Coaching**

Students in Standard X and XII who are of average and below average standard are identified and special attention is given for improving their educational performance. Special coaching is given to such students of X and XII standard so that they could perform well in the public examinations. Common examinations are conducted strictly on the lines of Public Examinations to identify the below average students to pay special attention towards them. (w.e.f. 2007-08) (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2008)

**Special Orientation Training For Teachers**

The teachers working in the Adidravidar and Tribal welfare schools who are teaching English, Science, and Mathematics are given Orientation Training
which is imparted through the DTERT (Department of Teachers Education Research and Training) by using modern methods of teaching and new techniques.

**Library Facilities in High/Higher Secondary Schools**

The scheme of providing library facilities in schools is implemented right from 1981-82 and books worth of Rs.1000/- per High/Higher Secondary School is provided every year. Apart from this, the Government has ordered to purchase “Manorama Year Book” and “Competition Success Review” to all High/ Higher Secondary Schools and all hostels so as to improve the general knowledge of the students.

**Provision of House Sites For Tribes**

The Department of Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare has been distributing free house site pattas to the poor houseless Adi Dravidar and Tribal families whose annual income is less than Rs.40, 000/- in the rural areas and Rs.60, 000/- in the urban areas.

**Payment of Grant For Funeral Rites**

The Government has sanctioned a scheme for grant for financial assistance to Adi Dravidar/ Tribal and Adi Dravidar converted to Christianity to meet the expenditure connected with funeral rites on the death of a member of their family. These benefits are distributed through the respective local bodies.
Cottage Industries Training Centers

The Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department allocates required funds to the Director of Social Welfare for maintaining the Cottage Industries Training Centers. One training centre in Tailoring and Weaving is maintained at Pechiparai in Kanniyakumari district by Social Welfare department.

Tribal Sub Plan (TSP)

The Constitution of India has incorporated several special provisions for the promotion of education and economic interests of Scheduled Tribes and their protection from social injustice and all forms of exploitation. These objectives are sought to be achieved through a strategy known as the Tribal Sub-Plan strategy, which was adopted at the beginning of the Fifth Five Year Plan. (P.S.K. Menon, 2003).

Integrated Tribal Development Programme Areas in Tamil Nadu (ITDP)

Integrated Tribal Development Programme (ITDP), which are generally contiguous areas of the size of one or more blocks in which the ST population is 50% or more of the total population. As far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, the ITDP areas are taken for implementation of welfare schemes for Tribes. In Tamil Nadu, 10 ITDP areas covered in 7 districts.

Assistance to Particularly Vulnerable Tribes

Among the Tribals, the most backward Tribals have been identified as Particularly Vulnerable Tribes adopting the following yardstick.
1. Pre Agricultural level of technology
2. Dwindling population and
3. Low literacy level.

The following six tribal groups have been identified as Particularly Vulnerable tribal groups in TamilNadu. 1.Irular,2.Toda,. 3.Kota,4.Paniyan, 5.Kurumbas, and 6. Kattunayakkan, The population of PTGs as per 2001 census is about 2, 20,000 Special Programmes are formulated and implemented for them. They include distribution of sheep units, milch animals and provision of houses at free of cost. The schemes are formulated to cover all the tribal people in the villages. A special Vocational Guidance Centre is functioning in Ooty and this centre helps the tribal people for registering in employment exchange, for renewing the registration and imparting training to attend interviews etc.

**Assistance to Dispersed Tribes**

The Tribals living outside the Integrated Tribal Development Programme Area in a scattered manner is covered by this programme. For the benefit of dispersed tribes, the following schemes are implemented.

1. Primary Health Centre at Pechiparai in Kanniyakumari District.
2. Sericulture Farm in Shenpagathoppu in Virudhunagar District
3. Supply of Sheep units and Milch animals.
The population of the dispersed tribes is about 4.31 lakhs. Under this scheme the supply of sheep units and milch animals are provided to the dispersed tribes.

**Large Sized Multipurpose Co-Operative Societies (Lamps)**

Lamp Societies have been set up in all the Integrated Tribal Development Programme areas. There are 19 Large and multipurpose Co-op Societies in the Integrated Tribal Development Programme areas. These Large and multipurpose Co-op Societies provide short-term and medium-term interest free loans to the tribals besides consumption loans. Apart from providing loan to Tribals the Large and multipurpose Co-op Societies also supply essential commodities in 101 fair price shops. They also ensure reasonable return to tribal by way of collections of Minor Forest Products. (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2010)

**NGOs in Tribal Areas**

According to Locke (2003) the objectives can be briefly explained as follows:

a) Reorganising the activities of NGOs ensuring proper involvement of the target groups on strict democratic lines.

b) Reorganising and reviving developmental activities through organizing and activating groups in villages in the target area for sustainable Tribal community development.

c) Awareness-building, transfer of technology and skills for Tribal development
d) Promotion of intensive remunerative agriculture.

e) Supplementary income-generation measures in agriculture.

f) Promotion of indigenous low cost, community-based and participatory health-care.

The NGO initiatives aimed at development have a long history in India. The individual efforts of social workers are expressed in micro-terms but it deals with conditions that are caused by large macro-structures Khurane (2008, p.67). There are number of the NGOs working for the tribal development in India. The NGOs tackle development related issues and their ideological orientation differs widely.

The growing disillusionment and the resultant discontent among the masses gave birth to a number of the NGOs in 1960s in India. These grassroots movements are concerned with the plight of the exploited sections of society. They are part of the democratic struggle at various levels. The role of the NGOs is neither antagonistic Bulliyya (2009, pp. 89-90) nor complementary with the existing sectors. It is a role at once more limited and more radical, taking up issues that the political parties are unwilling to take up, coping with a large diversity of situation that governments and parties are unable to cope, encompassing issues that arise from not merely local and national but also international forces at work. The individual efforts are expressed in micro terms but it deals with conditions that are caused by large macro-structures. The NGOs are thus a part of a large movement for global transformations in which non-State actors on the one hand and non-territorial crystallizations on
the other are emerging and playing new roles. Most important role the Indian NGOs play is of a ‘watch dog’. (Koot. 2001).

**Activities of NGOs in The Tribal Areas**

All activities of the NGOs are aimed at social, economic, political & educational Development of oppressed people in the area. The activities stated by the respondent NGOs are listed below.

1. Comprehensive village development.
2. Activities related with education: Balwadi, supplementary classes for school-going children, school at the brick kilns, education to katkari women, hostel for children, motivate children to go to school.
3. Activities related with Women’s development: Formation of Women’s groups, saving group of women, training of self-employment, Women’s Co-operative Society, Income generation for women, Women’s employment, etc.
4. Youth development activities: Formation of Youth groups.
5. Health activities: Primary health care, health education, health project of family planning, traditional medicines.
7. Political activities: Awareness and training on Panchayat raj, electoral systems, human rights,
8. Counselling activities: Women’s counseling centre, Family counseling centre, Legal counseling.
10. Self employment: Guidance on self occupation, Handicraft development etc.
11. Protecting environment: - Horticulture on the barren land, Watershed development,
12. Anti liquor movement
14. Fighting against injustice.
15. Form co-operative societies of tribals such as Tribal societies, brick societies.

**Policy Intervention**

Strong tribal movements and protests have resulted in Supreme Court’s decision of forming 6th schedule and 5th schedule to protect tribal people from outsider’s exploitation. Analysis of forest policies show historically forest has been seen as a commodity. It was a view primarily related to colonial administrators. In post colonial period forest is continued to be viewed as a commodity but there was substantive concern for forest protection. This protection initiative ultimately resulted in forest protection at the expense of tribal rights.

**Forest dependency**

Indian tribes have historical connection with forest. They are functionally and emotionally attached to the forest. Functionally they collect Food, Fuel and Fodder three most vital ingredient of their daily life. These three was designated as Minor Forest Produce as its commercial value is lesser than timbers – hence the Major Forest Produce. However, with change in forest
policy these vital items of forest are now redesignated as Non Timber Forest Produce.

After independence, the nature of the Acts remained largely the same until 2006. When the demands of modern industries situated outside the tribal areas led to the commercial Exploitation of forests. These became then an important source of revenue in the state, and to regulate the extraction of timber and other produce large forest areas were designated as "reserved" and put under the control of a government department. Tribal communities dwelling in enclaves inside the forest were either evicted or denied access to the forest produce on which they had depended for many necessities. Thus arose a conflict between the traditional tribal ownership and the state's claim to the entire forest wealth.

The traditional de facto ownership of tribal communities has been now replaced by the dejure ownership of the state, which ultimately led to the exploitation of forest resources with total disregard for the needs of the tribal economy. In recent years many projects have been started which change the character of forests in such a manner that they serve exclusively commercial interests and no longer benefit the original forest dwellers. The natural mixed forests, which provided the tribesmen with the raw materials for many of their household implements, cane and bamboo for baskets, and such items of food as mangoes, tamarinds, jack fruits, mahua corolla, and edible berries, are being replaced by plantations of teak, eucalyptus, and various coniferous trees.
An extreme example of such a commercialization of forests at the expense of the local tribal population is a project in Madhya Pradesh where Rs 46,000,000 are to be spent on converting 8,000 hectares of forest in the Bastar Hills to pine forests to feed the paper pulp industry.

The national forest policy in 1952 clearly stated the national interest which much plausibly involved commercialisation. Forest policy of 1978, goes even further to classify forest into – reserve forest, protected forest and village forest which was based on Indian Forest Act of 1927 that totally curtailed tribal’s access even further.

However, throughout these phases tribal people protested frequently it resulted in killing of tribal people. For example in 2003 about 16 people were killed in Muthunga forest in Kerala as a result of their conflict with state machineries. However, in 2006 India reasserted tribal’s access and rights over forest land on which they have depended for centuries. This act is viewed by many as undoing the “historic injustice” to the forest dwellers with an emphasis on – Empowerment of local government, Addressing the livelihood securities of the people, Addressing conservation and ecosystems management from participatory perspective exemplified by Joint Forest Management

**Rehabilitation resettlement**

Indian land acquisition act being non participatory promotes a top-down process which coupled with lack of political will from the ministry of rehabilitation. Even the UN bodies are quite reluctant to take initiative for
proper rehabilitation and resettlement. Even today the guideline is restricted to affirmation of a few basic rights

- Right to participation of local people in decision making.
- Rights to life and livelihood
- Rights of vulnerable groups
- Rights to remedy
- Rights to remedy

However with this passive attitude the mitigation of the problem of displacement largely depends on activists and pressures of civil society themselves.

The above observations indicate the socio-economic background of the tribals, various problems faced by them and Government programmes for the welfare of them. In national and state level. It indicates that there is gap a in studies related to problems district level in the tribal society at district level. Hence, the present study tries to identify problems faced by tribals and needs of the tribal persons in Varusanadu Hills of south Tamilnadu in India.