CHAPTER II

TRIBAL EDUCATION-
A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

- Tribal Education in India
- Constitutional Safeguards for Tribal Communities
- Distribution of Tribes in Kerala
- Problems of Tribal People
- Approaches for Tribal Development
- Programmes for Tribal Upliftment
- Tribes of Wayanad
Tribal Education in India

The Scheduled Tribe population represents one of the most economically impoverished and marginalized groups in India. There are more than 400 tribal groups among the scheduled tribe population, each with their distinct cultures, social practices, religions, dialects, and occupations. Thus, the different tribal groups are highly heterogeneous, and their differences are a function of the environment in which they live, the degree of exposure to the mainstream Hindu population, government involvement in their daily lives, their economic status, and past history. The tribes are scattered in all States and Union Territories in India except for the states of Haryana, Punjab, Delhi, and Chandigarh. The tribes are heavily concentrated in the northeastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland although they constitute a small percentage of the total tribal population in India.

The total number of tribal communities recognized by the government as Scheduled Tribes is 572 in number. Scheduled Tribes are those tribal communities who have been listed so by the President of India in keeping with Articles 341 and 342 of the Constitution. These tribal communities mainly live in Scheduled Areas, or those outlying areas, which during the British times did not come under the direct purview of civil, criminal and revenue administration.

Scheduled Tribes in India are generally considered to be ‘Adivasis,’ meaning indigenous people or original inhabitants of the country. The tribes have been confined to low status and are often physically and socially isolated instead of being absorbed in the mainstream Hindu population. Psychologically, the Scheduled Tribes often experience passive indifference that may take the form of exclusion from educational opportunities, social
participation, and access to their own land. All tribal communities are not alike. They are products of different historical and social conditions. They belong to different racial stocks and religious backgrounds and speak different dialects. As a result of being distanced by the Hindu population, many tribes have retained their social, religious and cultural practices, as well as their distinctive languages.

The tribal population constitutes a majority in the northeastern states of Mizoram (94.5%), Meghalaya (85.9%), and Nagaland (89.1%). Tribal men and women in Mizoram, Meghalaya and Nagaland are isolated from the mainstream Hindu population and their cultures and practices. Although tribes comprise a large proportion of the total population in the northeastern states, they account for a small (12%) percent of the tribal population in India. Numerically, the tribal population is very high in the central state of Madhya Pradesh and the western states of Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra. Together the four states account for about 50% of the total tribal population in India.

Due to the lack of exposure to the mainstream Hindu population, the tribes in northeastern India have not been influenced or pressured to adopt Hindu social and cultural practices and have maintained their heritage and social practices. On the other hand, many tribes in central and western India who are in close proximity to the mainstream population have adopted many Hindu practices in order to be accepted by the higher caste population. Differences in tribal religions also affect their educational attainment. The vast majority of the tribal population in Mizoram, Meghalaya, and Nagaland are Christians. Christian missionaries encouraged the tribal population in these states to pursue education and emphasized the importance of becoming literate. The vast majority of the tribes in central and western India are Hindus.
Literacy and educational attainment are powerful indicators of social and economic development among the backward groups in India. During the British rule there was no organized method to educate the tribal communities except for the work undertaken by Christian missionary organizations in some regions in India. Currently, the tribes lag behind not only the general population but also the Scheduled Caste population in literacy and educational attainment. The male-female gap in literacy and educational attainment among the scheduled tribes is significant although this is a common trend among both the Scheduled Castes and the general population. This trend reflects the social and cultural trends and degrees of gender inequality in India.

**Table 2.1**

*Literacy Rate in India-2011*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Literacy Rate</th>
<th>Male Literacy Rate</th>
<th>Female Literacy Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Andaman &amp; Nicobar Islands</td>
<td>86.3 percent</td>
<td>90.1 percent</td>
<td>81.8 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>67.7 percent</td>
<td>75.6 percent</td>
<td>59.7 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>67.0 percent</td>
<td>73.7 percent</td>
<td>59.6 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>73.2 percent</td>
<td>78.8 percent</td>
<td>67.3 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>63.8 percent</td>
<td>73.5 percent</td>
<td>53.3 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Chandigarh</td>
<td>86.4 percent</td>
<td>90.5 percent</td>
<td>81.4 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Chattisgarh</td>
<td>71.0 percent</td>
<td>81.5 percent</td>
<td>60.6 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Dadra &amp; Nagar Haveli</td>
<td>77.7 percent</td>
<td>86.5 percent</td>
<td>65.9 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Daman &amp; Diu</td>
<td>87.1 percent</td>
<td>91.5 percent</td>
<td>79.6 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>86.3 percent</td>
<td>91.0 percent</td>
<td>80.9 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Goa</td>
<td>87.4 percent</td>
<td>92.8 percent</td>
<td>81.8 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>79.3 percent</td>
<td>87.2 percent</td>
<td>70.7 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>76.6 percent</td>
<td>85.4 percent</td>
<td>66.8 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Himachal</td>
<td>83.8 percent</td>
<td>90.8 percent</td>
<td>76.6 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Historical Overview

The literacy rate in India has improved a lot over the last one decade, especially after the implementation of free education in the villages; the literacy rate has gone up tremendously in states like Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan. As per the data published by the 2011 census, India has managed to achieve an effective literacy rate of 74.04 per cent in 2011. In the 2001 census, the country's literacy rate stood at 64.8 per cent. The most notable thing that came across in the 2011 census is the sharp rise in the literacy of females over males. There are almost 74 percent literates that constitute the total population of India aged between seven and above. Some of the States and Union Territories like Mizoram, Tripura, Goa, Kerala, Puducherry,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Male Literacy Rate</th>
<th>Female Literacy Rate</th>
<th>Total Literacy Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 Jammu and Kashmir</td>
<td>68.7 percent</td>
<td>78.3 percent</td>
<td>58.0 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Jharkhand</td>
<td>67.6 percent</td>
<td>78.5 percent</td>
<td>56.2 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Karnataka</td>
<td>75.6 percent</td>
<td>82.8 percent</td>
<td>68.1 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Kerala</td>
<td>93.9 percent</td>
<td>96.0 percent</td>
<td>92.0 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Lakshadweep</td>
<td>92.3 percent</td>
<td>96.1 percent</td>
<td>88.2 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>70.6 percent</td>
<td>80.5 percent</td>
<td>60.0 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Maharashtra</td>
<td>82.9 percent</td>
<td>89.8 percent</td>
<td>75.5 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Manipur</td>
<td>79.8 percent</td>
<td>86.5 percent</td>
<td>73.2 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Meghalaya</td>
<td>75.5 percent</td>
<td>77.2 percent</td>
<td>73.8 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Mizoram</td>
<td>91.6 percent</td>
<td>93.7 percent</td>
<td>89.4 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Nagaland</td>
<td>80.1 percent</td>
<td>83.3 percent</td>
<td>76.7 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Orissa</td>
<td>73.5 percent</td>
<td>82.4 percent</td>
<td>64.4 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Puducherry</td>
<td>86.5 percent</td>
<td>92.1 percent</td>
<td>81.2 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Punjab</td>
<td>76.7 percent</td>
<td>81.5 percent</td>
<td>71.3 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Rajasthan</td>
<td>67.1 percent</td>
<td>80.5 percent</td>
<td>72.7 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Sikkim</td>
<td>82.2 percent</td>
<td>87.3 percent</td>
<td>76.4 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>80.3 percent</td>
<td>86.8 percent</td>
<td>73.9 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 Tripura</td>
<td>87.8 percent</td>
<td>92.2 percent</td>
<td>83.1 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>69.7 percent</td>
<td>79.2 percent</td>
<td>59.3 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 Uttarakhand</td>
<td>79.6 percent</td>
<td>88.3 percent</td>
<td>70.7 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 West Bengal</td>
<td>77.1 percent</td>
<td>82.7 percent</td>
<td>71.2 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INDIA</strong></td>
<td>74.04 percent</td>
<td>82.14 percent</td>
<td>65.46 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Census of India, 2011*
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Chandigarh, Lakshadweep, Daman and Diu, Delhi and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, have done extremely well by attaining a literacy rate of almost 85.

Table 2.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Scheduled Caste</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Scheduled Tribe</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Persons</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>15.06</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>8.89</td>
<td>13.37</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>8.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>20.04</td>
<td>5.06</td>
<td>12.77</td>
<td>16.92</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>10.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>27.91</td>
<td>8.45</td>
<td>18.48</td>
<td>22.94</td>
<td>6.81</td>
<td>14.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>45.95</td>
<td>19.45</td>
<td>33.25</td>
<td>38.45</td>
<td>16.02</td>
<td>27.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>63.66</td>
<td>37.84</td>
<td>51.16</td>
<td>57.39</td>
<td>32.44</td>
<td>45.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>73.00</td>
<td>52.10</td>
<td>62.80</td>
<td>70.70</td>
<td>52.10</td>
<td>61.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: GOI, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Selected Educational Statistics 2004-05 and NSSO

In rural areas, the demand for education among the poorer sections of the population is much lower than it is in urban areas. Poor women in rural areas have to work in order to cope with their daily living and do not place a high value on education unless it is linked to vocational training. Additionally, in remote rural areas where a good infrastructure is lacking, tribal women find it difficult to have access to schools. Many are not even aware of the existence of schools in their areas due to lack of communications and networks. The northeastern states of Mizoram, Nagaland, and Meghalaya show high literacy rates, along with Himachal Pradesh in north India and
Kerala in south India. On the other hand, tribal literacy rates are much lower in the states of Rajasthan, Orissa, and Madhya Pradesh.

**Constitutional Safeguards for Tribal Communities**

Soon after India won independence, the national leadership drafted the charter of her social, cultural, economic and political destiny in the form of the constitution of India, and the secular nation comprising several castes and creeds, colours and communities, languages and sub-cultures came to have the most sacrosanct scripture of its political unity and identity. In consonance with the spirit of the ‘Preamble’, the constitution was committed to the ideals and tasks of a welfare state, making several provisions to safeguard and promote the interests of the weaker sections of the people, especially the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes that form a sizeable section of the country’s population.

**Pre-Independence Period**

Promotion of planned efforts for the development of backward communities particularly for the tribal groups had its foundation in pre-independent India. More or less in pre-independent era, the tribal communities were self-governed with their own political structures, which were headed by hereditary chieftains and kings. The entry of British into India and bringing tribal dominated areas under their hegemony was strongly opposed in some regions of the country. Revolts and rebellions by the tribals against the British expansionistic approach were a regular phenomenon. For instance, the Ghumusara uprising of khonds (1835-37), Sampalpur uprisings (1857-64), the anti-feudal Bhuiyan and Juanga movement (1867-68 and 1891-93), Nilgiri peasant uprising (1930), Kol Rebellion (1821), Santhal Rebellion of 1855, the Koya Movement of 1879, the Sardari Agitation of 1887, the Rampha Rebellion of 1911, Gond and Kolan Movement of 1941-42.
This led the British to formulate special administrative arrangements and special programmes for the tribal people and for the development of tribal dominated regions.

The Scheduled District Act of 1874 bestowed a special status for the tribal dominated areas of old Madras Presidency and restricted the application of general rules in these areas. It formulated the concept of ‘Scheduled Districts’ with special Civil and judicial administration.

Realizing the backwardness of tribal areas, the Indian Education Commission of 1882 had made few suggestions for preferential treatment of tribal children through non-payment of school fees and provision of additional grants for schools located in tribal areas.

The first half of the 20th century had the impact of Government of India Act 1919 and Government of India Act 1935, which created a good number of partial and fully excluded areas.

Soon after the declaration of Communal Award on 17 August, 1932 by the then British Prime Minister Ramsay McDonald the depressed classes for the first time were recognized as ‘minority community’ and were granted assured representation with separate electorate for a period of twenty years.

The Government of India Act 1935 went a step further and classified the areas inhabited by tribals as Excluded Areas and partially Excluded Areas for smooth administration.

After an appraisal of various approaches and strategies adopted for the development of tribal communities in general and education in particular, it is evident that before Independence the British Government had followed a policy of ‘Isolation’ and ‘amelioration’ approach and no deliberate attempts were made for their development in general and in education in particular.
The development was very insignificant except the sporadic intervention of Christian missionaries which was confined mostly to the north-eastern region of the country.

**Post-Independence Period**

After Independence, the Constitution of India made various special provisions for their social, economic and educational development. The members of the Constituent Assembly while framing the Indian constitution made a critical review of such privileges and formulated prescriptive benefits for the tribal people. Considering the difference on the qualitative and quantitative bases of both the SCs and STs, constitutional experts preferred to make different footings for the minorities, which are known as constitutional safeguards. For the Scheduled Tribes, the basic thrust and access was into the natural resources endowed to them and assuring the tribal people to take advantage of the benefits of sponsored development.

The constitutional safeguards convey the concern of the nation in regard to the scheduled tribes in terms of their educational and economic betterment, their protection from social injustice and exploitation as found in various manifestations of discrimination and prejudices, and development of their general way of life. The creation of scheduled and tribal areas, preference in admission to educational institutions and public services are some of the mechanisms which tend to fulfill the objective of the constitution.

There are almost twenty Articles and two special Schedules in the Constitution of India which elaborately explain the protective privileges meant for the tribal people. These provisions were embodied in the constitution of India and came into force on 26 January, 1950.

In the constitution Part C of the Article 244(1) provides that the expression ‘Scheduled Areas’ means such areas as the President of India may
by order of 1950, 1975, and 1977 declare to be Scheduled Areas. The President may at any time by order: (a) direct that the whole or any specified part of a scheduled area shall cease to be a Scheduled Area or a part of such an area; (b) increase the size of any Scheduled Area in a state after consultation with the Governor of that state; (c) after, but only by way of rectification of boundaries of any Scheduled Area; (d) on any alteration of the boundaries of a State to be or to form part of a Scheduled Area.

Article 15 (4) prohibits any form of discrimination on grounds of religion, caste, sex, place of birth maintained by State or dedicated for the use of general public. Clause 4 of this Article empowers the state to make any special provision for the advancement of socially and educationally backward classes or for the Scheduled Communities.

Article 16 (4) under Fundamental Rights is another exception to the right of equality of opportunity in the matters of public employment. The State can make provisions for the reservation of seats and appointment in favour of backward classes if not represented adequately.

As per Article 17, all citizens shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression, to assemble peacefully and without harm, to form associations or unions, to move freely throughout the territory of India, to reside and settle in many parts of the territory of India, to acquire, hold and dispose of property and to practice any profession, or to carry on any occupation, trade or business. However, important exceptions have been made to some of the fundamental rights for protection of the interest of the members of the Scheduled Tribe.

In effect of this Article, Parliament of India has made an enactment viz., untouchability (offences) Act 1955. In later period, the protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 was enacted in 1976 to rename and amend the
untouchability (offences) Act, 1955, making the punishments under this Act more stringent by setting up of special cells, special courts, mobile squads, provision or legal aid, etc. The cases registered under the Act have been declining as observed that there were 3,148 cases registered during 1992 which has been reduced to 778 registered during 1998. *(Annual Report of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, 1999-2000)*.

Parliament passed another important Act in 1989 for taking measures to prevent the atrocities. This Act known as the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes *(Prevention of Atrocities)* Act 1989, became effective from 30 January, 1990.

Article 19 (5) while it provides free movements, residence and acquisition or sale of property to all its citizens in the Indian territory, however, it reserves the right to protect the interests of the members of Scheduled Tribes by arresting the transfer of property particularly from tribal communities to non-tribal, ones except under special conditions.

Article 23 eliminates the system of serfdom, bondage and other forms of forced labour and provides that any contravention of this provision shall be an offence. Though this Act does not mention SCs and STs, despite the fact that the majority of the bonded labour belong to SCs and STs, this Article has a special significance for these communities.

Article 29 (2) that provides for cultural and Educational Rights, is controlled by clause 4 of Article 15, incorporated in the constitution by the First Amendment Act, 1951. This has also brought Articles 15 and 29 in line with Articles 16 (4), 46 and 140 and made it constitutional for the states to reserve seats for the backward classes of citizens in public educational institutions. All the educational institutions under direct control or receiving
grant-in-aid follow the reservation policy of 15 percent for SCs and STs in the matter of admission.

Article 39 says that the state shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing adequate means of livelihood for all, and the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment.

Article 45 notes that the state shall endeavour to provide free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years. At the beginning of this protective measure, it has been indicated that it should be for a period of ten years from the commencement of the constitution.

Article 46 looks at the promotion of educational and economic interests of weaker sections of the people and, in particular, of the SCs and STs, and shall specially protect them from social justice and various forms of exploitation. In order to give effect to this Article, the constitution Act of 1951 has amended Article 15 and 29 on Fundamental Rights.

Article 275 (1) provides grants from the union to certain states for tribal development. The creation of sixth schedule for the formation of autonomous regions and regional councils as regards the management of resources according to the customs also receives directions under this Article. Thus the entire welfare programme for the STs is based on Article 46, whereas, the required funds are provided under Article 275 (1)

Article 320 (4) provides that Public Service Commission need not be consulted in respect of the manner in which any provisions referred to in clause 4 of Article 16 may be made or as regards the manner in which effect may be given to the provisions of Article 335.
Article 330, 332, 334 and 335 ensure reservation for the SCs and STs in the Loksabha (Article 330) and State Legislative Assemblies (Article 332). Though such reservations were to be ceased but on the expiry of a period of 40 years from the commencement of the constitution, i.e., in 1990 (Article 334) it has been repeatedly amended and the duration has been extended. However, it has been amended for 10 years that is upto 2000 AD and for another 10 years, that is upto 2010 AD.

Article 335 explains that the claims of the members belonging to SCs and STs as regards reservation to the posts and services of the union and states as far as possible may be consistent with the maintenance of efficiency of administration. The quota was fixed keeping in mind the population size of the two groups at the rate of 15 percent for the SCs and 7.5 percent for the STs. Though a change in population size has been observed in both the groups, the reservation share of these groups has not changed overtime.

Article 338 explains about the appointment of Special Officer, which clearly spells out, that the President of India will appoint a Special Officer for the SCs and STs to assess their welfare activities. The primary responsibilities of the special officer are to investigate all matters relating to the implementation of safeguards provided for them in the constitution.

Article 339 (2) further empowers the Union Executive to issue directives to a state as to the drawing up and execution of schemes specified in the directives to be essential for the welfare of the STs in the State.

The impact of constitution privileges on the STs highlights the uneven impact of such privileges on the tribal communities, which is basically due to the variations in the levels of development between one tribal region and another, and among tribal communities. Consequent upon this, there has emerged a small elite class among the tribes, who have been benefited from
the protective discrimination, while majority of the tribals have faced more hardship or have remained where they were before the formulation of these policies.

Six decades of experience on tribal development in India reflect that the goal of all-round development of the tribal communities as conceived in the Indian constitution has raised certain basic issues before the nation. These issues may be recognition or rights of tribal people over natural resources like land, water, forests and mineral resources, crisis in tribal identity, educational attainment etc. However, it is very difficult to say that since independence and from the formation of Indian Constitution, the Social-economic conditions of these communities have not changed much. It is a fact that as long as the disparity between the tribal groups on one side and non-tribal on the other prevails, the constitutional goal of building one socio-economic order remains a day dream.

**Distribution of Tribes in Kerala**

The “Scheduled tribes” of Kerala constitute a rich, unique, varies, and critical element of Indian tradition. The scheduled tribes can be found in every state of India. Many tribes have, or have had, their own language or dialect, their own traditions, customs, myths and ritual practices, deities, arts and performances, etc. Many of these have been changed, developed, or even deteriorated over time, and being highly influenced by their surroundings. However, many of the fundamental and essential elements of their culture and traditions have remained and have been equally influential.

In Kerala, the situation of the tribal populations has been different. Many tribes had previously lived in isolated forests, jungles, or hills, and therefore lived relatively independently. Other tribes were forced by encroachers to inhabit these same previously uninhabited regions. Many
believe that some of these tribes were in ancient times rulers of some of the land till they were defeated by invaders and either escaped or were sent to live in the forests.

Regardless, they are inextricably linked to the forest, previously being their main source of livelihood. All the tribes have an extensive knowledge of the forest, its flora and fauna, which resulted in an impressive system of traditional medicine. They lived very much in tune with the forest. However, today the tribal people have generally been forced out of the forests by the government or business corporations and given land which they now occupy (hamlets). Houses were built by the government, but as you will soon see, these buildings were often unsuitable for the environment and were nowhere as useful as the traditional huts tribals built, and in which many still live in.

The tribes of Kerala today are mainly agriculturalists, although the forest is still an important part of their lives. The main crops farmed by all the tribes and other communities in the area are paddy, raggi, dhal, plantains, chillies, and turmeric. Most of the tribes are forest-dwellers and food-gathers. Increasingly, they are found living on the fringes of the forests near the highways and the villages of the plainspeople, yet apart from them. This frontier existence of the tribals is highly symbolic. They are caught between two worlds. Their forest home cannot support them any longer, for food in forests is getting scarce because of the state policy against deforestation.

As in other parts of the country, the tribes in Kerala constitute the weaker section of the population. Tribal concentration in Kerala is very low and they constitute only 1.14% of the total population. Wayanad has the highest tribal concentration in the state. More than 37% of the scheduled tribes are concentrated in Wayanad district. Idukki account for 14%. The lowest proportion of tribal population is in Alappuzha district (0.15%).
Kasargod and Palakkad together constitute more than 19% of the scheduled tribes in the state.

As amended by the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes Order(Amendment Act) 1976 and as Amended by the Constitution(Scheduled Caste) Orders (Second Amendment) Act,2002 (Act 61 of 2002)vide Part VIII-Kerala-Schedule I notified in the Gazette of India, dated 18 December,2002) and (as Amended by the Scheduled Caste Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Act 2002 (Act 10 of 2003)vide Part VII Kerala-Second Schedule notified in the Gazette of India dated 8 January,2003), the various tribes in Kerala are:

1. Adiyan
2. Aranda (Arandan)
3. Eravallan
4. Hill pulayan (Mala Pulayan, Kurumba Pulayan,Karavazhi Pulayan,Pamba Pulayan
5. Irular, Irulan
6. Kadar
7. Kammara (in the areas comprising the Malabar district as specified by sub-section (2) of Section of the states Reorganization Act, 1956 (3) of 1956)
8. Kanikaran, Kanikar
9. Kattunayakan
10. Kochuvelan
11. Kondakapus
12. Kondareddis
13. Koraga
14. Kota
15. Kudiya, Melakudi
16. Kurichian
17. Kurumans
18. Kurumban
19. Maha Malasa
20. Malai Ariyan
21. Malai Pandaran
22. Malai Vedan
23. Malakkuruvan
24. Malassar
25. Malayan (Excluding the areas comprising the Malabar District as specified by sub-section (2) of section 5 of the states Reorganization Act, 1956 (3) of 1956)
26. Malayarayar
27. Mannan
28. Marati (in Hosdurg and Kasargod Taluk of Kasargod District)
29. Muthuvan, Mudugar, Muduvan
30. Palleyan
As per the Government order No. 5389/G1/2003 SC/ST DD/ dt 23-03-2003, the Maratis were deleted from the list of scheduled tribe in 2003 and two other tribes viz., Mavilan and Karimpalan are included in the list. Thus at present there are 36 approved tribal communities in Kerala.

Among the scheduled tribes, the numerically dominant ones are the Paniyans, Mala Arayar, Kurumans, Kurichiyans, and Irulas. The numerical strength of each remaining tribe is more or less 1000. Adiya, Cholanaickans, Kattunaickans, Kurumbas Kadars and Koragas (constituting about 4.8% of the tribal population) are categorized as primitive groups.

The tribal communities in Kerala have been divided into seven major territorial groups taking into account their historical, ethnic, socio-cultural and religious background (P.K.G.Mathur, 1977). The seven groups are given below:

(i) **Kasaragode**

The Koragas and the Marathis are the two major tribal communities inhabiting this region. The Koragas are one of the most backward tribal communities of Kerala whose main occupation is basket making. They eat stale flesh which is their tastiest food.
(ii) **Wayanad**

The main tribal communities inhabiting this region are the Kurichians, Paniyans, Uralikurumans, Mullakurumans, Kattunayakans, Adiyans, Kadars etc. They are mainly shifting cultivators, food gatherers and hunters.

(iii) **Attappady**

This is a forest region situated in the Mannarghat taluk of Palakkad district. The main tribal communities of this region are Irulas, Mudugars and the Kurumbas.

(iv) **Nilambur**

This is also a forest region which is situated in the Eranad taluk of Malappuram district. The main tribal communities living in the thick forest are the Cholanaickans, Aranedans, the Allars, the Paniyan and the Kurumans. The Cholanaickans are the most primitive tribal community of Kerala and live in caves. They are food gatherers and collectors of minor forest produce.

(v) **Parambikulam**

This region is in the Chittur Taluk of the Palakkad district and the most important tribes are the Kadars. Their major occupation is food gathering and collection of minor forest produce.

(vi) **Idukki**

This region comprises the mountainous taluks of Thodupuzha, Udumbanchola, Devikulam and Peerumedu. Idukki has an area of 5068 Sq. k.m. and half of the area is covered by government reserve forests. The main tribal communities inhabiting this thick forest region are the Uralies, the Muthuvans the MalaArayans, the Mala Ulladans, the Hill Pulayans, and the Palliyans.
(vii) **Thiruvananthapuram**

This zone consists of Nedumangad and Neyyattinkara taluks of Thiruvananthapuram district. The Kanikkar is the major tribal community living in this area. Many of them are food gatherers and shifting cultivators, but a number of them have taken up permanent cultivation for their livelihood.

The Paniyans, Kurichians, Kurumans, Kanikarans and Irulas are the numerically largest tribal communities in the state.

The primitive tribal groups constitute nearly 4.8% of the scheduled tribe population in the state. According to the survey by the Forest Department (in 1992) 17,156 scheduled tribes are living in the interior forest in 671 settlements. They still practice customs and conventions that are unknown to the larger society. The Cholanaickans (the cavemen of Kerala), partly live in caves particularly during the monsoon.

Owing to peculiar settlements and occupations, the scheduled tribes are concentrated in certain regions of the state (Narayanan, 1973). The Western Ghats region that dominates the cultural geography of Kerala is an area where most of the tribes live. Regional distribution of tribal population in Kerala is given in Table 2.3.
Table 2.3

**District wise figures of Population, Growth, Sex Ratio and Literacy Rate in Kerala-2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Male Population</th>
<th>Female Population</th>
<th>Growth</th>
<th>Sex Ratio</th>
<th>Literacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alappuzha</td>
<td>1010252</td>
<td>1111691</td>
<td>2121943</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>1100</td>
<td>96.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ernakulam</td>
<td>1617602</td>
<td>1662258</td>
<td>3279860</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>1028</td>
<td>95.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idukki</td>
<td>551944</td>
<td>555509</td>
<td>1107453</td>
<td>-1.93</td>
<td>1006</td>
<td>92.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kannur</td>
<td>1184012</td>
<td>1341625</td>
<td>2525637</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>1133</td>
<td>95.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kasaragod</td>
<td>626617</td>
<td>675983</td>
<td>1302600</td>
<td>8.18</td>
<td>1079</td>
<td>89.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kollam</td>
<td>1244815</td>
<td>1384888</td>
<td>2629703</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>1113</td>
<td>93.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kottayam</td>
<td>970140</td>
<td>1009244</td>
<td>1979384</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>1040</td>
<td>96.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kozhikode</td>
<td>1473028</td>
<td>1616515</td>
<td>3089543</td>
<td>7.31</td>
<td>1097</td>
<td>95.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malappuram</td>
<td>1961014</td>
<td>2149942</td>
<td>4110956</td>
<td>13.39</td>
<td>1096</td>
<td>93.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palakkad</td>
<td>1360067</td>
<td>1450825</td>
<td>2810892</td>
<td>7.39</td>
<td>1067</td>
<td>88.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathanamthitta</td>
<td>561620</td>
<td>633917</td>
<td>1195537</td>
<td>-3.12</td>
<td>1129</td>
<td>96.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thiruvananthapuram</td>
<td>1584200</td>
<td>1723084</td>
<td>3307284</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>1088</td>
<td>92.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thrissur</td>
<td>1474665</td>
<td>1635662</td>
<td>3110327</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>1109</td>
<td>95.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayanad</td>
<td>401314</td>
<td>415244</td>
<td>816558</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>1035</td>
<td>89.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the 2011 census, the total population of Kerala is 33,387,677. Previously, in the 2001 census the population was 31,841,374. The male population from the entire population of Kerala is 16,021,290 and the female population is 17,366,387. The total population growth since the last
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census was 4.86 percent and the population of the state forms 2.76 percent of the entire population.

The Sex Ratio in Kerala is 1084 for each 1000 male and has increased from 1058 per 1000 males since the last census of 2001. The child sex ratio is 959 per 1000 males and has decreased as compared to 965 in the 2001 census. Kerala has a Literacy rate of 93.91 percent, with male literacy at 96.02 percent and female literacy at 91.98 percent. In figures, the total literates in Kerala are 28,234,227 out of which the males and females are 13,755,888 and 14,478,339 respectively.

More than 70 percent of the tribal population in Kerala resides in four districts viz., Wayanad (37.36%), Idukki (14.00%), Palakkad (10.89%) and Kasargod (8.33%). During the decade 1981-1991, the rate of growth of tribal population in the state was 22.75 percent as against the general growth rate of 14.32 percent. The sex ratio of tribal population was 996 females per 1,000 males. The total number of tribal households as per 1991 Census was 69,441. The highest number of tribal households is in Wayanad district (23,287) followed by Idukki district (11,516). The lowest is in Alappuzha (651).

At the district level, Paniyan have the highest percentage in the total ST population in Malappuram (56.3%), and Kannur (54.9%). Kurichians have their highest percentage in Kannur (40.2%). Among the other larger tribes Kanikaran are primarily concentrated in Thiruvananthapuram district (90.3%) and Mala Arayan in Kottayam district (61.9%)

Kerala is running through the advanced phase of demographic transition: a situation in which low birth rate and low death rate accompanied by slow growth of population. It may be seen that the rate of general population of Kerala has been decreasing. But the tribal population throughout the period has been showing an unusual trend unlike the case of
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the general population. The decadal growth rate of tribal population during 1991-2001 at 13.47 was 4.1 \% higher than the growth of the total population.

Table 2.4 shows that Tribe wise classification of families and members in Wayanad district.

**Table 2.4**

**Tribal communities in Wayanad District-2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No.</th>
<th>Tribe</th>
<th>No.of Families</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Adiyan</td>
<td>2570</td>
<td>5378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Wayanad Kadar</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>KattuNaickan</td>
<td>4371</td>
<td>8490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Kurichian</td>
<td>5815</td>
<td>12862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mala Arayan</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Paniyan</td>
<td>15876</td>
<td>33639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ulladan</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Thachanadan Mooppan</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Karimpalan</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>VettuKuruman</td>
<td>1700</td>
<td>3188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Kurumar/Mullukurumar</td>
<td>5139</td>
<td>10430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>36140</strong></td>
<td><strong>75352</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Scheduled Caste</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>197</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Population** **36140** **75549** **77654** **153203** **100.00**

*Source: Report of KILA 2010, Govt. of Kerala*

The table 2.3 shows that among the tribal communities in Wayand, Paniyas are the numerically dominant group. There are 15876 Paniya families
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consisting of 69116 members. Next in size is the Kurichya community with a total population of 25279 forming 16.5% of the total ST population in Wayanad District. Altogether there are 36140 tribal families with 152830 members.

The Central and State government have made significant efforts for development of Tribes. Though, even after six decades of development efforts the ST continue to constitute relatively the most backward and vulnerable section of the population with an extremely weak economic base.

Problems of Tribal People

The tribal people of Kerala have lived deep in the forests and high in the mountains for thousands of years. The tribals who live in Kerala are most likely the descendants of tribals who lived in the mountains of the area as far back as 10,000 years, the time period that holds the first evidence of the inhabitants of Kerala. They remained virtually unaffected by the surrounding areas. The tribes were able to maintain their own religion, social organizations, rituals, festivals, architecture, and agricultural systems. They were the lords of the forest and had free range over anything the forest had to offer, as well as all of the land they could possibly use.

Eventually things had begun to change rapidly for them. During the nineteenth and twentieth century, most of India had become accessible by road or rail. This made it easy for the booming population of India to spread into areas previously inaccessible. Some of these areas came very close to the areas that were inhabited or used by the many tribes of India. These new settlers encroached upon the tribal land and managed to claim or take it in several different methods of exploitation and trickery.

Within the short time of twenty to thirty years, the tribals had lost much including, in some cases, their independence and usually their land to
moneylenders who established themselves in the tribal areas. During the early twentieth century the leaders of India, during their fight for freedom, were attempting to uplift the people of India. Naturally their concentration was on the poorest sectors of the country. The tribal areas fit nicely into this segment of the population, so in their attempt to ‘uplift’ the tribal people, they attempted to bring them into the broader framework of Hindu culture. Originally a ten-year plan was developed for tribal upliftment, but these ten years has expanded into the present, and has yet to be completed.

Moneylenders, encroachers, traders, and missionaries who came to the tribal areas for personal gain over the past two hundred years have created a myriad of problems that the Indian Government, anthropologists, and social workers have had a great deal of trouble solving. Hundreds of people have been employed to try to solve the problems of the tribals.

**Indebtedness**

Indebtedness is probably the most difficult of the problems of the tribes, and surprisingly one of the hardest to overcome. Indebtedness has been the cause of all types of exploitation of the tribes. It is also one of the major causes of tribal land loss. Indebtedness has run rampant through almost all of the tribal villages throughout India.

Indebtedness is a particularly great problem for many of the tribes in Kerala. From time to time, social obligations need to be met, for instance marriage, puberty, birth, death, or any other occasions that call for a festival or celebration; also, if there is an occasion when self-sustenance is being threatened, for instance during the dry periods when food is scarce and there is the threat of starvation. During these times, it is necessary for the impoverished tribal people to take out one loan or another.
There are several co-operative credit societies established by
governments, but naturally these come with their own problems. Such
institutions are situated in areas far from the tribal habitats, which make it
difficult for the tribals with no transportation and no money to get there. If a
tribal does find a way to reach one of these establishments, there are other
more difficult obstacles to overcome.

For one, there are documents that need to be read and signed, and
difficult procedures that need to be fulfilled. Then, the tribal needs to find
some type of security and a guarantee of repayment to fulfill the needs of the
creditor before any money can be disbursed. There is also the added
frustration of the processing time between application and the date when the
tribal has to find his way back to the office to receive the loan; the norm for
this period is usually a couple of months. The part of this procedure which
makes it the least desirable for the tribal people is that these loans are only
given out for productive purposes like the improvement of their agricultural
practices, buying equipment, soil conservation, improved cultivation, etc. The
government offers no loans for any festivals, rituals, consumption, or life
sustaining goods.

Alternatively there are the independent moneylenders. These are
people who come in from the plains and cities. These men come into tribal
areas and set up shop right near the tribal hamlets, only a quick walk away
from any tribal abode. These independent moneylenders are always friendly
and welcoming to the tribals any day of the week. They do not demand any
type of laborious contract reading, no guarantees, and they will grant money
to any tribal person under any condition. The money lender well often inflate
the sum of money lent in his record books, or if an oral contract is taken, the
creditor can put whatever he wants into his books, with the knowledge that
the tribal will in no way be able to afford court fees.
The tribal who has borrowed money from one of these people almost always becomes a type of property of the creditor, who forces that tribal to give up things he would not normally part with. In many cases the debtor is forced to almost become the bonded laborer to his creditor, to work for him for an amount of time drastically unequal to the amount of money borrowed. In most cases the debtor is forced to turn over whatever land he may own to the creditor, which leaves him with nothing.

Often the tribal is unable to repay his debts, and so the debt consequently falls on his son, and in some cases even his son is unable to repay his father’s debt and it can go into even the third generation. Indebtedness seems to be a plague for which there is no cure for the tribal people. Indebtedness is therefore both a cause and effect of poverty in the tribal hamlets.

According to Mathur, 1977, for the Irula tribe in Kerala, another type of money lending exploitation occurs. The Irulas, who are mostly illiterate, are unaware of weights and measures, and are not honestly kept updated on the current wholesale prices of the goods that either they grow, or that are able to gain from the limited forest they are allowed to exploit. In effect, when they sell their goods a large weight measure is used, but when they are purchasing goods a small weight measure is used. The same method is used against them while trading goods.

At the same time, these traders who are also creditors will advance loans for social obligations, or for subsistence at exorbitant rates of interest, with the understanding that the tribals will repay them with agricultural or forest produce. In effect, when the harvest time comes most of the crop, which normally is used for sustaining life until the next harvest, is already spoken for by the debt to the creditors, and very little is kept. This creates yet another cycle of indebtedness.
There is also a system of mortgaging land to a creditor called *bogikaraya*. In this system the land is mortgaged to the creditor at any given amount. The tribal has to pay back the loan, usually in five years, with a high rate of interest. If the money is not paid the land is forfeited to the creditor. In many cases the tribal person is only capable of repaying the interest, so a loss of land occurs as well as the remaining debt.

The government has to be able to grant low interest loans to the tribal people without the hassle of distant travel, laborious paperwork, and long lag time between application and loan. Then the tribals would be able to repay the non-government moneylenders and break the cycle of poverty due to money lending. This, in conjunction with officials who monitor the tribal areas, represents a true effort to try really cracking down on moneylenders and making the punishments stick. These two acts could really make a difference in the damaging effects of money lending in tribal areas.

**Access to Forest Land and Produce**

The forest has been an integral part of the lives of the tribal people for thousands of years. It has always been a source of livelihood for the tribal people. Their houses were made from goods found in the forest, a great deal of their food was foraged from the forest, and many of their rituals and customs demanded use of the forest. Many items of worship like stones and certain types of plants and animals have always been taken from the forest.

The tribal economy is based on the use of the forest. The forest has been an integral part of their lives since the beginning of their existence. The tribal people consider themselves the lords of the forest, but at the same time, they know that they belong to the forest. The tribals had been enjoying this freedom of unharnessed use of the forest since the beginning of their
existence, but since the nineteenth century their ability to use the forest has been rapidly decreasing.

The forests had been the source of much of the money gained by the tribals. Without access to the forests, not only is their amount of money greatly decreased, but also many of their cultural and ceremonial activities, needed to be curtailed. They also lost access to materials necessary for building their traditional houses, as well as other implements for the home.

The forest officials also gained a lot of power that enabled them to take away more of the rights of the tribals and to exploit them in various ways. For instance, forest officials can arrest any person they suspect of being linked to any offense committed against the forest. This type of arrest is punishable with one month imprisonment or more. They can also confiscate items such as cattle, carts, tools, or items from the forest if they believe that the person is involved in a crime against the forest. These forest officials are also protected by laws that give them a license to exploit.

The tribals are extremely angered by the exploitation and double standard committed by the forest officials. They are arranged by the accusations that they are destroying the forests, when they only take small amounts of wood for fuel and house construction and repair. They are angered by the fact that they are no longer allowed to take the small amounts of produce from the forests themselves.

They are angered by the fact that the Government is making laws that are supposed to protect the forest, when they are making every effort to destroy it for profit. The forest department seems to be indifferent to the fact that they are drastically harming the lives of the people who depend on the forest for their livelihood.
Occupation

Agriculture has been the primary source of subsistence for the tribal people of Kerala for hundreds of years. The method of agriculture that has always been used by these people is a method called shifting cultivation.

In the scientific world of India, there is much disagreement in the question of shifting cultivation. Many believe that shifting cultivation is a harmless practice that is almost a part of nature, while others believe it to be a completely destructive affair that is extremely ruinous to the environment. It has been claimed that it destroys valuable forest, deprives people of the benefits of forest produce, affects rainfall and, most dangerously, causes soil erosion.

The change from shifting cultivation also needs to be a gradual one, since immediate replacement could be very damaging to the tribal people. A change from shifting cultivation to settled cultivation would also create a complete change in the lifestyle of the people in many other ways. In Kerala since shifting cultivation has been made illegal, many of the tribes still spend six months in their settled homes during the agricultural season and six months in the forests. They are unable to adapt to settled life. This is a many-faceted problem that goes far beyond simply changing an agricultural method.

Many of them have not come to the stage of using plough. The Kurichians, Mala Arayans, Kanikkars and Adiyans are more advanced cultivators among them. Mala Arayans, Mavilars and Kanikkars use wooden plough for cultivation. They cultivate rice, ragi, tapioca, ginger, cardamom, pepper and other consumable products as conditions permit.

Collection of minor forest produce is the next important occupation practiced by them. Certain tribal communities such as Kadars, Malapandarams, Mala Ulladars, Mala Malasars, Kattunaickans, Arandans,
Mannars, Uralies etc, barter or sell those forest products to the non-tribals. They are experts in the felling and collection of timber, bamboo, seeds etc. Hunting of animals is also a principal occupation among the tribals and is practiced by Malavetans, Mala Ulladans, Kurichians, Malapandarams etc. Netting, angling and catching fish by various methods are the main occupations during certain seasons among the tribal communities. Basket and mat making are very common among Malavelluvans, Mavilans, Koragas and Mavilans. Honey gathering is still a paying occupation among some of the tribes of Kerala.

The needs of forest preservation and the stringent forest rules introduced in consequence have forced many tribes to adopt agriculture, but crude are the ways of farming among many tribes and religious beliefs and practices often militate against the use of improved seeds, manuring or irrigation. Large number of tribal people has been detribalized. Their natural habitat has been found to be incapable of maintaining their growing population and the sanctity of their moorings has been reduced on account of the pressing needs of feeding mouths, which previously found forage for themselves in the forests or in the tiny terraces they built up for agriculture. The integrated village life to which the tribal people were tuned, no longer affords security to the tribals, while the needs of industrial life are now being met by importing labour from the tribal areas, particularly from those areas where contacts with civilization have disorganized social life. The details of tribal workers are given in the table 2.5.
Table 2.5

Distribution of Scheduled Tribe workers in Kerala

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>ST (%)</th>
<th>Total Population (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46.04</td>
<td>31.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>55.14</td>
<td>47.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>36.90</td>
<td>15.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Cultivators</td>
<td>16.66</td>
<td>12.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Agricultural labourers</td>
<td>55.47</td>
<td>22.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Livestock, Forestry, Fisheries, Housing, Plantations etc.</td>
<td>15.47</td>
<td>9.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Servicing &amp; Repairs</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Household Industry</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>2.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Trade &amp; Commerce</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>12.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Transport &amp; Communication</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>5.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Other services</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>15.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Tribal sub Plan Annual Report-2000

Out of the total tribals, agricultural labourers constitute 44.04% in Wayanad District. In respect of cultivators, Idukky is ranked first (38.55%) followed by Wayanad (21.48%), Thiruvananthapuram (11.98%) and Palakkad (11.03%). The tribals have the monopoly in collection of minor forest produces. Food gathering, hunting and fishing are their main sources of income. They have their own indigenous system of medicine and still majority of them have firm belief in it. The number of tribals engaged in the organized sector including government/public sector is only minimal.
As far as the industrial sector is concerned the tribal participation is comparatively less. Similarly the self-employment venture of tribals in the services sector is also very poor. In the services and organized sectors there exists a lot of scope for further development of tribals. Involvement of tribals in technical and professional education is highly essential for their development.

Seasonal unemployment particularly in the monsoon season is one of the main problems being faced by the tribal families in the State. More than 75% of the tribal families are agrarian based and as such the ups and downs occurring in the agriculture sector naturally affects the tribals also.

The tribe usually changes their occupation from one to another depending upon the availability of job, climatic conditions and variations in seasons.

Large scale immigration of settlers and continued deforestation has disturbed the subsistence economy of the tribes folk. Landless labourers among tribe folk are found more in the northern districts of Kerala because of migration to tribal settlement of peasants from the Travancore area. The tribe folk of Kerala were food gatherers and hunters, shifting cultivators, farm labourers and agriculturists (Mathur, 1977). At present, most of them are agricultural labourers. The proportions of tribe folk in all other occupations are small. The work opportunities, even in the agriculture field, are shrinking.

**Housing**

Most of the tribes have a distinct social organization with a ‘Headman’ (called Mooppan, Thalayalan, Mootukani etc). The huts of the tribes are made of bamboo and thatched with leaves, straw or grass. They also inhabit in caves or pits in the ground or in the hollows of big trees in particular
seasons. Stone walls are not popular and there is no masonry work, except among the advanced sections of Kanikkars, Mala Arayans and Kurichians.

Their houses are unhygienic. But being poor they are bound to live in the same house. Unhygienic conditions affect the health of the tribals. The houses of tribals lack windows and holes for the entrance of air and light in the house. This affects the skin and health of the tribals.

Housing is a critical problem of Scheduled Tribes. At the close of the 8th Five year plan the estimated number of houseless ST families was 12,700. Besides them there were 17,000 tribal families with dilapidated houses and also demanded houses during 9th plan period. Housing was the first priority item during the 9th plan and budgeted an amount of Rs.1323.00 lakhs for housing and a total number of 2938 houses were constructed by the ST department alone. Out of this, Rs. 313.32 lakhs budgeted for primitive tribes housing and it completed 569 houses. The Scheduled Tribes Development Department, Rural Development Department, Forest Department, KSDC for SC/ ST, Housing Board, Local Bodies is the major agencies, involved in tribal housing in the state. Local bodies alone could sanction and construct more than 20,000 houses during 9th plan period (1997 – 2002). The survey done by the ST Development Department in 2000–2001 reveals that there were 9374 houseless ST families in the state.

The details of land distributed as on 30-11-2009 and decided for distribution are furnished in table 2.6.
Table 2.6

District-wise distributions of surplus land to ST on 30-11-2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name District</th>
<th>Number of beneficiaries</th>
<th>Land distributed (Area in acres)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thiruvananthapuram</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kollam</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>5.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathanam thitta</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alappuzha</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kottayam</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>27.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idukki</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ernakulam</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thrissur</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>10.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palakkad</td>
<td>1384</td>
<td>602.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>malappuram</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>27.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kozhikode</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayanad</td>
<td>2376</td>
<td>994.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kannur</td>
<td>2150</td>
<td>510.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kasaragod</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>278.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>7529</strong></td>
<td><strong>2465.37</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey and Land Records Department, Govt. of Kerala-2009

The state has constituted the tribal mission in November 2001 as per G.O (P0 No. 63/2001SCST DD) dt.09-11-2001 mainly for facilitating the distribution of the identified lands to the tribals in a phased manner within a stipulated period of time and to help them resettle sustainably using the land they received as basic input.

A total extent of 2467.53 acres of land has been distributed among 7529 Scheduled Tribes families in Kerala as on 30-11-2009. In Wayanad district 994.08 acres of land has been distributed among 2376 families.
As for the Kerala Land Reforms Act, 1962, the SC/ST families are eligible for 50% of the land identified as surplus land in the state. The state has so far identified 1,39,8332 acres of surplus land and 66,731 acres distributed. Under this programme tribal families were given 5,601 acres covering 8089 tribal beneficiaries. The balance 73161 acres of surplus land still remains undistributed.

The Govt. of Kerala framed a new Act viz., Kerala Scheduled tribes Restriction of Transfer of Lands and Restoration of Alienated lands) Act, the Act has been brought into force with effect from 24-01-1986. As per this Act all transactions of tribal lands to non-tribals between 01-01-1960 and 24-01-1986 are valid. But if the area of land transferred to the non-tribals is less than 2 hectares such transactions are not valid. In such cases the affected tribal is entitled to get an equal extent of land from the Government. Demand for 5 acres of land for all land less families was the main issue raised by the tribals during their agitation from August to October 2001. At the time of settling the tribal agitation, the Government agreed to distribute land to tribals from minimum of 1 acre to a maximum of 5 acres subject to the availability of land and to resettle them by providing all necessary amenities. Government has also decided to purchase private land as part of distribution of land to landless tribals. The areas decided are 1000 acres in Pathanamthitta district, 3250 acres in Palakkad district and 814.44 acres in Wayanad district.

Health and Sanitation

The tribals live in the villages surrounded by hills, forest, sea, islands, rivers etc. In these areas they lack communication facilities. Due to lack of communication facilities, they are not able to attain the benefits of the programmes related to general health, family welfare, communicable diseases, sex linked diseases etc.
Tribals live in such an area where one has to face a number of difficulties in going and coming. Due to these difficulties, government doctors, nurses, health servants etc, posted at health centers, health sub-centers or referral hospitals do not want to live in tribal area.

Tribals have their own medicine men for the treatment of diseases. The medicine men have knowledge of medicinal plants. They also prepare medicine from the medicinal plants and bones, teeth, tails, skin, horns, oil of wild animals and birds. They also perform magic to curb the illness. Their treatment causes death to a number of tribals each year in absence of proper knowledge of diagnosis and medicine.

The tribals do not have pumps for drinking water. They have to depend on ground water or well. Still majority of tribals have to use the water of ponds for cooking, eating and drinking purposes. They wash clothes on the banks of the same pond. Animals are also washed in the pond. Such activities make the water contaminated. It affects the health of tribals adversely by causing diseases like jaundice, diarrhea, pox, typhoid, gastric asthma, skin diseases etc.

**Malnutrition**

Majority of tribals are illiterate and poor. They do not have sufficient yield from their fields from which they can meet the consumption need of the whole year. Due to recent forest policies, nationalization of minor forest produce and control of non-nationalised items of MFP by local contractors or traders, tribals are now not in a position to collect a number of edible roots, shoots, barks, leaves, flowers, fruits etc., which they used to consume raw or cooked. This has affected the caloric value taken by the tribals adversely. As a result, tribals are now facing the problem of nutrient deficiencies and malnutrition. Previously, tribals used to do hunting in the forest. They are
used to eating flesh of birds and animals, which used to provide their bodies with animal protein. But now they are prohibited. As a result, they have to suffer from protein deficiencies.

According to the cultural traditions of the tribals, when the food is ready, it is first served to children and the aged. As women are involved in serving food, they are expected to eat food at the least. On many occasions, they have to face the situation of food shortage. In this situation they remain hungry or half-fed. The situation brings malnutrition among the tribals.

**Literacy of the Scheduled Tribes**

Government support and facilities provided to the tribes in the field of education have been made available to them since 1951. But all sections of the ST population have not been in a position to utilize them.

The Central and State Governments have provided the students belonging to the ST with incentives, including scholarship, reservation of seats in educational institutions and government offices and development of separate hostels, Ashram schools etc. It can be easily inferred that an adequate spread of literacy among the ST is likely to enable them to compete with the upper classes on an equal footing in the long run.

Earlier, the welfare activities in the State for tribals mostly concentrated on educational programmes. Economic development of these communities leading to the creation of substantial assets and ownership of instruments of production through income generating training programmes received attention only from the 6th Five year plan period. Compared to the general education level the status of tribal education is far below.
The tribes of Kerala have been exposed to formal education recently. Their response to formal education and programmes of literacy has varied from community to community. (Moniz Raza, 1985)

It was noted in the early 1960s that while among the Pulayas, Mala Arayans, Irulas and Kanikkars, the percentage of literacy (according to 1965 figures) was about 20 to 25 percent, it was only 10 percent among Kurichians, Kurumans, Mannans, Maratis and Kattunayakans and as low as 5 percent among the Paniyans, Muttuvans, Adiyans and Eravallavans. (Krishna Iyer, 1962)

It is usually held that the incentives provided by the government, voluntary organisations and other agencies for the educational development of tribesfolk through special programmes and literacy drives have not yielded significant results in Kerala. There have been variations in the intensity of effort put in by the different agencies in different regions. Tribal literacy is, in general, lower in the northern districts than in the southern districts of the state. Two-third of the district in Malabar region has the literacy rates lower than the state average.

Kottayam has the highest tribal literacy and Palakkad has the lowest. Despite the efforts by the Central and State Governments, the Scheduled Tribes do not seem to have made appreciable headway in literacy and education. A few states, particularly in the north-eastern regions, have achieved high levels of literacy among scheduled tribes, levels exceeding even those of the general population. Kerala ranks the fifth in terms of tribal literacy, the states with higher ranks being Mizoram, Lakshadweep, Nagaland and Sikkim that have predominantly large tribal population.

Enrolment of Scheduled Tribes students at school levels is given in table2.7.
Table 2.7

*Enrolment of ST students at School Levels in Kerala* (As on 01-10-2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>ST</th>
<th>Percentage to Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LP</td>
<td>1665993</td>
<td>33781</td>
<td>2.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UP</td>
<td>1452540</td>
<td>24449</td>
<td>1.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS</td>
<td>1427293</td>
<td>15882</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>4545826</td>
<td>74112</td>
<td>1.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Directorate of Public Instruction (2009), Govt. of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram*

The percentage of Scheduled Tribe students in total enrolment also went up only marginally from 1.15 percent in 2001-02 to 1.23 percent in 2003-04. But the absolute number of Scheduled Tribes enrolled went up from 58859 in 2001-02 to 60339 in 2003-04. Also the vast majority of the students are in government schools and government aided schools. In 2004, 42.08% of the SC/ST students were enrolled in government schools, 56.39 percent in government aided schools and 1.53 percent in private unaided schools. The proportion of Scheduled Tribes in Lower Primary and Upper Primary schools during 2008-09 is relatively higher than their population percentage. In high school section the percentage of scheduled tribe students is a little less than their population percentage.

The women literacy rates for tribal population in the large states of India such as Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa are around 10 percent. And for Rajasthan, it is as low as 4 percent. Viewed against, such a black scenario, Kerala presents a much better position with the tribal women in the State having an overall literacy rate of 51 percent.
The literacy level of the tribe folks lag far behind those of the other sections of the population. Further, despite rapid growth rates of literacy among scheduled tribes during 1961-1991, the gap between them and the other social groups in absolute terms remains virtually undiminished.

The social and economic conditions prevailing in the tribal settlements are not conducive for better education. Lack of sufficient educational institutions in tribal areas, poverty, inability to catch the children from pre-primary level, lack of nutritional and health care programmes, poor enrolment, drop out etc. curtain the effective educational development among scheduled tribes. The standard wise details of drop-out among scheduled tribe students in Kerala during 2007-08 is given in table 2.8.

### Table 2.8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Government Schools</th>
<th>Private Aided Schools</th>
<th>Private Unaided Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ST Students</td>
<td>Drop out</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>4251</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>4.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>4600</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>3.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>4372</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>2.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>4506</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>4.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>4381</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>5.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>4159</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>4.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>3312</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>5.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>3394</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>8.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>3028</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>9.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>2375</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38378</td>
<td>1912</td>
<td>4.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Directorate of Public Instruction, Govt. of Kerala, 2008*
Among the Indian States, Kerala has achieved the distinction of the state having the lowest dropout rate among school students. In the year 2006-07 drop out ratio among school students in Kerala was 0.81 percent. The drop out ratio in lower primary section, upper primary section, and high school section were 0.59%, 0.52%, and 1.38% respectively. Among the districts, Wayanad has the highest dropout ratio in the lower primary section (1.89%), Upper primary section (1.92%) and High school section (2.56%). Drop out ratio among scheduled tribe students is 4.18%.

The school drop-out rate in Kerala is much lower than the rest of India. One of the reasons for the low rate is the policy of whole promotion followed from one standard to the next.

**Land Alienation**

Alienation of land is a serious problem faced by tribals. Their lives depend on agriculture more than any other factor. They had access to more land than they could possibly use. In recent years, since the non-tribals started encroaching on the tribal areas, accessibility to this land has decreased greatly.

The main reason for the tribals of Kerala to be alienated from their land is their extreme poverty. These poverty stricken people have been forced to result to borrowing money from unscrupulous non-tribal money lenders who easily take advantage of tribal people by forcing them to sign bogus papers or falsifying verbal or written agreements. When the tribal are unable to pay this inflated amount, money lenders often usurp large sections of their land.

The government of India has also a major cause of land loss of the tribals. Much of the land that was once owned by tribals has been taken by the government in order to instate national parks, tourist attractions and biological parks.
Land alienation has many drastic effects on the tribal people in Kerala, going far beyond simply losing land for agriculture. The loss of land is creating homelessness, poverty and a feeling of hopelessness in the tribals.

The depletion of forests, increased soil erosion, decreased productivity on the one hand, and land alienation and increasing poverty on the other, has pushed the tribes into a crisis of survival. With the breakdown of traditional livelihood patterns in the past few decades, the intricate relationship that were traditionally woven amongst various Adivasis communities in each of the geographical niches have all but collapsed or weakened rapidly. An official enquiry conducted by the State government on instructions from the Supreme Court confirmed the existence of bonded labour in Palakkad and also in Wayanad and Pathanamthitta districts. Hunger deaths are also prevalent, which are dismissed mostly as death due to ill health. Hydroelectric projects and dams have resulted in the increase of the landless as in the Idukki, Chimmini and Karapuzha projects. Wild life sanctuaries and national parks such as in Periyar and Wayanad, have all thrown out thousands of Adivasis from their hearths.

The Keral Scheduled Tribes (Restriction of Transfer of Lands and Restoration of Alienated Lands (Act1975 and 1999 passed by the legislative Assembly was brought into force with effect from 01-01-1986. The Act was intended for restricting the transfer of land by members of Scheduled Tribes in the State, and also for the restoration of lands alienated by such members.

Government has also decided to purchase private lands as part of distribution of land to landless tribals. The areas decided are 1000 acres in Pathanamthitta district, 3250 acres in Palakkad district and 814.44 acres in Wayanad district.
Approaches for Tribal Development

The social workers, anthropologists, politicians, sociologists and missionaries have attempted many approaches to assisting the tribal people in their development. Three major approaches have been suggested.

Segregation

Since the tribals of India were not in the eye of the rest of the world until the coming of the British and their Christian missionaries, the British were the first to be in the role of assisting the tribals, since they were the rulers of India at the time. The British during their period of rule over India had adopted the policy of segregating the tribal people from the rest of India. The basic outline of the policy was to discourage the entry of non-tribals into tribal areas. One method of insuring this was not to allow any roads or means of communication in the tribal areas.

Within the tribal areas, entry was permitted only to a selected few, i.e. Government officials, moneylenders, and businessmen. Since the areas that these men were now entering were ‘isolated’, they apparently felt that they were privileged to interpret the laws in these areas. Therefore they took to exploiting the tribal people, their land, and the surrounding forests.

In 1939 Verrier Elwin introduced the idea of turning the tribal areas into a ‘national park’, with tribal people as ‘museum specimens.’ This idea advocated isolation of the tribals in specific areas, with communication cut off from the tribals to the outside world. In 1941 Elwin had advocated ‘isolationism’, meaning that tribals were not to leave the specified areas, and only certain people were allowed to enter, for specific reasons.

After India gained its independence from Britain in 1947, the policy of segregation of the tribals remained basically the same with some slight
variations. By the late nineteen fifties and early nineteen sixties, some of the true problems of the tribes were being realized. It was recognized that the tribals were being alienated from their land, and indebtedness was becoming a major problem. They had realized that the tribals were easily being taken advantage of, and that measures had to be taken for their protection.

After close examination of policies and programmes adopted through successive five year plans a new concept of Tribal sub-plan came into existence. The distinct feature of sub-plan-approach for Tribal development was narrowing the gap between the level of development of Tribes and other areas and improving the quality of life of the Tribal communities. Three basic parameters of the tribal situation in the country were recognized in the formulation of the concept of sub-plan. First, there is variation in the social, political, economic and cultural milieu among the different tribal communities. Second, their demographic distribution reveals their concentration in parts of some states and dispersal in others. Third, the primitive tribal communities live in secluded regions.

Apart from core economic sectors like agriculture, animal husbandry etc. education has been accepted as a primary input not only for economic development but also for strengthening the confidence of the tribal communities so that they can meet the new challengers in terms of some degree of equality.

One of the major downfalls of this administration was that only the areas that were labeled as ‘scheduled areas’ were granted this assistance. At this time very few areas received this label, and most of the areas that fell into this category were in the northern and central sections of the country. This policy of creating scheduled areas also seems to be a double-edged sword. It excluded a large percentage of the tribal areas from receiving assistance from the government, and the tribal areas that it did assist were given the feeling of
receiving special privileges because of their status as “backward”. This in turn separated the tribals from the rest of the Indian population.

In 1950 this separation was enhanced when the president, under Article 343, created a list which put certain tribes in the category of scheduled Tribes. This list was constantly being revised, and was eventually encompassing most of the tribes.

After the first ten-year plan for tribal upliftment, several five-year plans were instated. Within these separate five-year plans, money was set aside by the government for ‘tribal welfare’, although much of this money was being reserved for tribal development. The problem was that much of this tribal development money was not being allocated for tribal development.

Assimilation

The assimilation approach has been the most widely accepted approach to tribal upliftment. The idea behind assimilation is that the tribals should be assimilated with their non-tribal neighbors, and should accept and become a part of their culture. If this type of assimilation were to occur, many languages, cultures religions, festivals, as well as many other individual cultural attributes would disappear.

India is a place where many different cultures have become and settled, and have lived simultaneously next to other cultures without having to adopt the ways of their neighbors. In many cases small portions of the greater Indian population even ended up adopting the cultures of the new minorities. India is a place where different cultures flourish side-by-side. The base of Indian culture, ‘unity in diversity’, does not mesh with the program of tribal assimilation. It seems foolish and futile to expect the tribal people to assimilate into the culture of the Indian majority when they have such a deep and ancient culture of their own. The tribesmen who would become
assimilated would become low caste, and in many cases they would become some of the lowest castes.

Many of the tribes have become Hinduized and practice a modified form of Hinduism. This could be considered a partial assimilation, which is the result of semi-isolation, so as not to allow for full assimilation. Very few of the tribes have actually been able to escape Hinduism completely, and these are only the groups that are living deep in the forests. Many of the tribes have also become Christianized. One of the major problems that are created by assimilation in the tribal regions is religious assimilation. When a tribal person becomes converted into one of these religions, new needs are created: for more clothing for temple or church, for more money for offerings, for more festivals which they cannot afford. All of these needs are created without much satisfaction, and the true needs of the tribals are inadvertently neglected.

Integration

The approach of integration seems to be the least harmful approach to the inevitable meshing of tribal and the broader Indian cultures. Former Prime Minister of India Jawaharlal Nehru was one of the finest advocates of this approach. In 1958, Nehru had given five fundamental principles to the upliftment of the tribes. After the principles were outlined, many anthropologists, social workers, and government employees who had been working on programness for tribal upliftment agreed with Nehru. The principles are:

(i) People should develop along the lines of their own genius and we should avoid imposing anything on them. We should try to encourage in every way their own arts and culture.

(ii) Tribal rights to land and forests should be respected
(iii) We should try to train and build up a team of their own people to do
the work of administration and development. We should avoid too
many people introducing too many outsiders into tribal territory.

(iv) We should not over administer these areas or overwhelm this with a
multiplicity of schemes.

(v) We should judge results not by statistics or the amount of money spent,
but the quality of human character that is evolved.

Nehru was advocating tribal upliftment even before he became the first
Prime Minister of Free India. Nehru, along with many others associated with
the tribals, wanted this integration of the tribals with the non-tribals of India
to work. This approach does seems to be the most effective, and could be of
great importance to tribal upliftment, but in conjunction with the previous
plans it also opens doors for exploitation of the tribals. Before this plan could
work there need to be strict limitations and a great deal of education, not only
of the tribals but also of the plains people, and any people surrounding the
tribes.

Programmes for Tribal Upliftment

The phase between 1947 and 1952 has witnessed structural change in
total administration of the country. During the first five year plan the
‘Community Development’ approach was adopted. Depending upon each
state government’s interpretation and translation of Article 46, varied growth
of education took place in various states. The Dhebar Commission (1961)
made revealing observations on education. The education provided in a
mechanical manner without much planned efforts, according to the
commission, resulted in high wastage, stagnation and non-participation. The
Dhebar Commission also suggested a comprehensive educational model for
tribes whose problems are unique. In the Third Five Year Plan the
expenditure on Tribal welfare went up to Rs.5.40 crores and the integrated development benefits have been made available to all the tribal areas through 500 Tribal on the basis of recommendations made by the Elwin Committee and the Dhebar Commission. During this plan, economic uplift was given top priority followed by education, health, housing and communications.

In Kerala there have been many government as well as non-government organizations set up with the interest of tribal upliftment. The state has constituted a Tribal Mission in November 2001 as per GO (P) No.63/2001/SCST DD dt. 9.11.2001 mainly for facilitating the distribution of the identified lands to the tribals in a phased manner within a stipulated period of time and to help them resettle sustainably using the land they received as basic input. The Mission is empowered to distribute land to tribals from minimum of one acre to a maximum of 5 acres subject to the availability of land and to resettle them by providing all necessary amenities.

The Scheduled Tribe Development Department has the nodal responsibility for administering various development schemes and formulation, implementation and monitoring of various plan schemes. It was in 1975 that a separate department was set up to supervise the tribal development activities. The Director of the department will be the supervising authority over the tribal development activities. Thiruvananthapuram is the head quarters. The following offices namely Nedumangad, Kanjirappally, thodupuzha, Attappadi, nilambur, Wayanad and Kannur are the places where 7 ITDP offices function. Punalur, Ranni, Moovattupuzha, Thamarassery, Mananthavady, Sulthan Bathery, Kasaragode are the other 7 tribal development offices which carry out tribal development activities.

In addition there are 48 tribal extension centers which are active in tribal belts. The department runs a number of institutions like Hostels,
Balavadis, Nursery Schools, Training Centres, Dispensaries, Mobile Employment Exchanges and Midwifery Centres.

A state Tribal Advisory Committee is constituted to monitor the welfare activities of the Department with the Minister for Tribal Development as Chairman and Director of Department as Convener. A District Working Group also functions to prepare plans and to implement them.

Education

The backwardness in education is an important cause for economic backwardness. It is in the light of this fact, the Central and State Governments attach greater importance to Scheduled Tribes’ economic progress. A major part of the money set apart for economic development is being spent on education.

Balavadis

Under this scheme 43 Balavadis were set up. This excludes the Balavadis run by Social Welfare Department. The scheme is meant to develop aptitude in learning; to encourage children for accelerating the development of their intellectual capacity to make them strongly attached to hygienic circumstances.

Nursery Schools / Single Teacher Schools

The Scheduled Tribe Development Department runs 14 Nursery Schools and 12 single Teacher Schools. The children studying in Nursery Schools are given, free mid-day meals and dress in addition to lump sum grant. Admission is being given to children of 3 to 5 years old. The Single Teacher Schools was set up with the intention of creating awareness about education, health and cleanliness of the surroundings among the scheduled
tribes, especially among those who dwell in forlorn areas and to spread education among their children.

**Educational Facilities up to the High School Level**

Apart from giving full fee concession to all scheduled tribe students, lump sum grant and special stipend are also being given to them. In the case of students who fail in the final examinations of one class they are given half the amount of lump sum grants. They are also being offered all other concessions in full. Special care is being taken to distribute the lump sum grants. They are also being offered all other concessions in full. Special care is being taken to distribute the lump sum grant before the end of the first month after the opening of the school.

**Hostel Facilities**

One hundred and eleven pre-matric hostels and 3 GRB schools are being run to help the education of scheduled tribe students. Those students who do not stay within reasonable distance from the schools are the beneficiaries. 30 students are given accommodation in each hostel. On the basis of available space, more students are admitted to hostels. In the hostels 10% of accommodation is being reserved for students of other communities. The inmates are provided with free meals, two pairs of dress in a year, educational aids and notebooks. Hostels function under the supervision of a warden, assisted by other employees, watchmen, cooks, etc. In order to provide the students with assistance to learn comparatively difficult subjects, facility for private tuition also is arranged. Until now there are only 33 hostels with permanent buildings. Approximately 6000 students have been provided with accommodation in one hundred and eleven hostels and 3 GRB schools.
Promotional Prize to Students

Students who get either 45% or higher marks in the 8th and the 9th class are given Rs 50 and those who get 45% or more mark in the 10th class examination, are given Rs 200 as encouragement grant. Students who pass the S.S.L.C, Pre-degree, Degree examinations in the first class are offered Rs. 2500, 3000, 3500 respectively as encouragement for further studies. In addition to the above, encouragement is being given to 20 students in a district who pass the S.S.L.C examination with high marks at the rate of Rs. 1500 in the case of the Malappuram, Waynad and Palakkad districts, and in the case of other districts same amount is given to 10 students each. In the case of Pre-degree and Degree students 5 students each, who have scored highest marks from Wayanad, Palakkad and Malappuram districts are offered an award of Rs. 2000; in the case of the other districts, 2 students each are given Rs. 2500 as encouragement.

Assistance for Study at Tutorials

Students who fail in the S.S.L.C examinations are given assistance in the following manner. Lump sum grant Rs. 100 Monthly Stipend Rs. 600 (60 x 10), Tuition fees Rs 450. Assistance is being made available to students who fail in Pre-degree examinations also.

Educational Recreation Centers

Educational recreation centres are being run in the scheduled tribes residential centres. These centres are being provided with furniture, books, newspapers and recreational aids.
Bharatha Darsan / Kerala Darsan

30 boys who score high marks in S.S.L.C examination are selected for Bharath Darsan programme of 20 days whereas 30 girls students are selected for Kerala Darsan Programme.

Encouragement in Athletics and Art forms

Prizes are given to scheduled tribes students who score victories in art and sports activities at the state level in the following manner. Those get the first and second places at the state level competitions, prizes are given at the rate of Rs. 400 and Rs. 300 respectively. Apart from this, scheduled tribes students are admitted in the sports hostels run by Scheduled Caste development Department and further training in arts & Sports is imparted.

Model Residential Schools

In order to provide high quality education to students belonging to scheduled tribes, Model Residential Schools have been opened, one at Nallurnadu in Wayanad for boys and another at Kattela in Thiruvananthapuram for girls. A maximum of 30 students are benefited by this provision by which 27 students from among the scheduled caste, scheduled tribe candidates and three from other candidates belonging to other communities are selected on the basis of a state level admission test. Thus a total of 30 students are given admission in these schools. There is a proposal to start more schools of this kind.

Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Ashram School

Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Ashram School has been started in Noolpuzha Panchayath in Wayanad district, with the purpose of giving accommodation and coaching to efficient tribal students. Every year 30 boys and girls are admitted to the first year class of the school.
Provision for clothing

Every year 2 pairs of uniform is given to each students belonging to lower primary classes of the tribal schools.

College Education

Students of the scheduled tribes are being exempted from paying fees including the examination fee. In addition to the above, they are given lump sum grant and monthly stipend at various rates. The stipend for the first 4 months is given as advance immediately after the college opening, in view of the possible delay in scrutinizing the applications. Government is paying special attention in this manner because they want the provisions to be implemented smoothly without fail. In order to provide adequate hostel facilities to students admission is given to them in cosmopolitan hostels and other recognized hostels. Educational assistance is offered to students undergoing studies in other states also.

Grant to Parents

The parent who send his/her kid regularly to school will get an annual grant of Rs. 100/-

Employment

Under the tribal sub plan schemes, all the state departments spent 2% of their development resources for schemes beneficial to scheduled tribes. Unemployed young men and women are given financial assistance for self-employment, special employment schemes for women belonging to scheduled tribes, training schemes for educating young men and women for securing employment etc. are implemented for tribals in Kerala.
Programmes for Training in Job

In order to make increased employment facilities for scheduled tribes students, 26 employment training centers have been established for their benefits under the employment authorities. The period of training is two years. 12 young men are given training at a time. The trainees are being given Rs. 200 per month in the first year and Rs. 150 in the second year as lump sum grant; they are also given Rs 150 per month as stipend. The materials required for training purposes is also given. There is a proposal to expand the training schools by adding new courses in consultation with N.C.V.T.

Financial assistance for appearing for Interview

Traveling allowance will be given to the candidates who appear for interviews conducted against vacancies in the central and state government services. They are paid either the exact bus fare or second class train charges.

Pre-examination Training Centers

For training candidates for appointment to the vacancies notified by the Kerala Public Service Commission, Union Public Service Commission, Banks and other institutions of public sector, 3 Pre-examination Training Centers (PETC) are functioning in Thiruvananthapuram, Ernakulum and Kozhikode districts. The candidates are given monthly stipend for this training.

Technical Training in Private Institutes

Monthly fee concessions and stipend are made available for scheduled Tribes candidates studying in private institutes giving technical training courses.
Employment oriented Education and other Technical Training

10% of seats available in all ITI’s in the state are reserved for scheduled tribes and scheduled castes candidates. In addition to fee concessions, lump sum grant and monthly stipend are given. Training is given in motor driving, Autorikshaw driving and Tractor driving etc.

Assistance for AMRID

To find out training for self-employment, vocational training, camps of leadership training and providing tutorial facilities for students failing in S.S.L.C. and Pre-degree examinations etc. have been taken up along with efforts to undertake various development activities for the young men and women belonging to Wayanad district. The Ambedkar Memorial Rural Institute for Development at Kalpetta is being given assistance for various above said development activities.

Mobile Employment Exchange

In order to give information regarding the employment opportunities arising in government and non-government institutions and for enabling registration in employment exchanges and to ensure the maximum number of employment to the scheduled tribes, one mobile employment exchange is functioning at Mananthavadi and another at Thodupuzha.

Mahila Samajams

In order to develop social leadership qualities and organizational skills, financial assistance is given for organizing Mahila samajams which work for the development among young women belonging to scheduled tribes. The maximum assistance is Rs. 5000.
Health Protection

The Scheduled Tribe people generally dislike the adoption of modern medicine system. But because of the continued indoctrination and sweeping social changes their dislike towards the modern medicine system is gradually vanishing. In the dwelling places of the Scheduled Tribe people 17 Ayurvedic dispensaries, one Ayurvedic hospital, 3 Allopathy hospitals and 5 Midwifery centers are functioning at present. Under the Ayurveda department in Attappadi, Nilambur and Wayanad areas mobile medical units are working for the benefits of the Scheduled Tribe population.

As a part of the Mananthavady Health Project, a hospital has started for the scheduled tribe. The aim of the project is to provide modern medical facilities. Research and awareness about the diseases prevalent among the scheduled tribes are going on in connection with Mananthavady Health Project.

Special Central Assistance

By augmenting tribal sub plan schemes, various programmes are being undertaken every year. The schemes are helpful for economic development. Major programmes which are being implemented:

(i) Financial assistance is given to landless scheduled tribe people for purchasing agricultural land.

(ii) The most backward tribal settlements are selected and programmes implemented for the all round development of the place.

(iii) Programmes are implemented for the agricultural development of the scheduled tribes.
(iv) Unemployed men and women are given financial assistance for self employment.

(v) Tribal farmers are given bullock meant for ploughing the land.

(vi) Training Schemes are implemented for educated young men and women for securing employment.

A brief introduction to 5 different tribes under study is given in the following pages.

**Tribes of Wayanad**

Wayanad has a history and mystery, culture and social epistemology yet to be discovered. It is located at a distance of about 76 km from the seashore of Kozhikode in the Western Ghats. This hill station is full of forests, wild life and plantations. The name Wayanad is believed to have derived from the word- Wayan Nadu (the land of paddy fields).

A native Adivasi mainly consist of various sects of Paniyas, Kurumas, Adiyas, Kurichiyas, Kattunaickans etxc. They have their own special life styles, culture, traditions, customs and religious practices. Tribals donot have a written script. Their history can be traced only through their oral traditions and religious practices. Now a days many tribals blindly follow the modern culture. As a result they are losing their language, unique culture, land etc.

**Paniyan**

The Paniyan’s origin according to them was in a place called Ippimala. Mythically there was a temple on Ippimala called Ippimalamyla for the god Ippimalateyya. One Embrachan (Embrandiri, Brahman Priest) and a Gounder priest performed the Puja, and Urali Kuruman (an artisan tribe in Wayanad) cleaned the temple. He came across two children, a girl and a boy, and they
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fled at the sight of Uralikuruman, who, with the consent of the priest, caught them and reared them in captivity. All attempts to trace their kith and kin were futile. The boy and the girl assisted those in the temple and when they grew up, the temple priests and Uralikuruman got them married. They had ten children, five boys and five girls. When those children grew up, they separated and later married. According to myth they were the foremost ancestors of the Paniyan, who refer to them as pantirappanmaara, meaning twelve ancestors. The Paniyan venerate them, especially the first two who are separately referred to as Ippimala muttasi and Ippimala mutappe (Kulirani, 1984).

Thurston (1975) mentioned that ‘a common belief based on their general appearance, prevails among the European planting community that the Paniyans are of African origin and descended from ancestors who were wrecked on the Malabar coast. This theory, however, breaks down on investigation. Of their origin nothing definite is known’. He adds: ‘the word Paniyan means labourer, and they believe that their original occupation was agriculture’.

The Paniyan are distributed in Wayanad District and the adjoining Kozhikode, Kannur and Malappuram districts, and Gudalur Taluk of Nilgiri. The total population of the Paniyan in Wayanad as per 1971 Census was 45,562, but it has increased to 56,952 during 1981 Census.

The Paniyan have only a spoken language without any script, which they use with the kin groups. The dialect contains words from Tamil, Tulu and Malayalam languages. The language and script used with others is Malayalam.

The Paniyan men do not have any identifying dress or head gear but the women can be identified by their particular way of wearing of sari called
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cela, which they warp around the body under the shoulders reaching down to the knee. One corner of it is taken from behind over the right shoulder and tied to the top end of the front portion over the chest. A long narrow piece of cloth called aratti is tied around the waist. Colour of the aratti has regional varieties. In Mananthavady area, it is red while in Kalpetta and Sultan Battery it is black (Kulirani, 1984). Women wear three types of ear ornaments, which they themselves make, murula (a piece of light wood with conch shell in the groove at edges); ole (one dried of pandanus leaf); chootumani (dried pandanus leaf rolled with a central cavity, filled with bees wax, on the side of which small red seeds are fixed).

Thurston (1975) writes: ‘Paniyan are a dark skinned tribe, short in stature (157.4 cm) with broad nose (nasal index 95.1) cephalic index (74)’. Sarkar (1954) reported arch (1.29%), whorl (57.99%) and loop (40.72%). He also reported the blood group frequencies of Paniyans, ‘O’ (22.4%), ‘A’ (64.2%), ‘B’ (7 to 8%) and ‘AB’ (5.7%).

The Paniyan are non-vegetarian but avoid beef. Their staple food is rice. Ragi is also used. Pulses used are gram and tur. They use leafy vegetables, land crabs, tender bamboo shoots. They also consume roots and tubers. Fruit consumption is occasional. They accept milk and milk products. The Paniyan smoke beedis/cigarettes and chew betel leaf with tobacco and arecanut. Snuff is not used by them. Some of them, males and females, are addicted to alcoholic drinks purchased from the liquor shops.

The Paniyan are divided into various lineages known as illam. Members of an illam trace their lineage from a common ancestor. They believe they are descendants of Ippimalamuttappe and Ippimalamuttasi and their children, after them they were given ten kulam names (kulam is equivalent to gotra or clan), which they could not tell. They were collectively referred to as pantirappanmara. There are innumerable illam among the
Paniyan, but four *illams* are associated with a special status; these are Koyimutan, Motettan, Nattilapadan and Padikan. Among the Paniyan, *illam* regulates the marriage, *illam* is exogamous in nature (Kulirani, 1984). Self-perception of the community vis-à-vis other communities in local social hierarchy is low. Similarly, the community’s perception by other communities is also low. They are not aware of the *varna* order.

The Paniyan practice endogamy at community level, but exogamy at *illam* level. Consanguineous marriages are not allowed. Girls get married between the ages of 16 and 18 years and boys between 18 and 25 years. Mode of acquiring a mate is by negotiation. Marriage symbols among the Paniyan are the *thali* and nose-ring. Bride-price (*kanam*) is payable both in cash and kind. Divorce is permitted for either sex with social approval. If the demand for divorce is from the husband’s side, he has to give a new pair of clothes and half of the bride-price to the wife and this is known as *silai kal* and the money paid is *silvana*. If the wife opts for divorce, then her parents are expected to pay back half the bride-price received. When the wife dies, the husband has to pay compensation to her father or her elder brother. After divorce the liability of children is on the mother. Widow/widower and divorcee remarriages are permissible.

A few important changes are reported in marriage customs. There is a slight rise in the age at marriage for both boys and girls and preferences for ‘arranged’ marriage. The payments in kind which are made to the girl after *thali kettukalyanam* are made mostly in cash, payment of *anjai* by every husband to their in-laws is done only for two to three years after marriage and then it is discontinued. Incidence of divorce shows decline.

The most common type of family (*kudumba*) found among the Paniyan is of the nuclear type. The main reason for the prevalence of nuclear family is the high dependence on wage earning. Through wage earning, they are unable
to support and sustain large group. Some extended families of patriarchal type are reported, but, we cannot call them vertically extended because married sons living in the same hut are found to maintain a separate hearth, even though there is great co-operation and exchange of cooked food. Interpersonal relationships are cordial with economic co-corporation and reinforcement. The status and role of the father, mother and children are very clear cut. Husband and wife work in unison in bringing up the children. As wife and mother, she plays the major role in running the household, cooking, husking, cleaning, washing and feeding children. The wives also go for gathering edible leaves, tubers, and land crabs. Daughters are also taught the above activities from their young age. During the ‘busy’ agricultural season when both parents are fully engaged, the daughters are left in charge of the household and they look after their younger siblings. In the family, father is the most respectable person, whose decision is honoured by all.

The Paniyan have double descent system in which both paternal and maternal sides have equal importance (Kulirmani, 1984). Most of the Paniyans follow the patrilineal inheritance and the immovable properties are inherited by the sons. Daughters get the share in property in the event of absence of male heirs. But, matrilineal inheritance is also reported in case of those who have opted for matrilocal residence even though such younger brother, whoever is senior in age. Rise in formation of nuclear families is reported.

The Paniyan women have roles in agricultural operations, animal husbandry, bringing potable water, collection of fuel and other economic activities. They participate in social functions, ritual and religious spheres, but they do not have a leading role in the political sphere and in mechanisms of social control. They do not have decision-making powers and cannot control expenditure though they contribute to family income.
Naming ceremony is observed by the Paniyan on punniyaham day in case of the first child only. The child is given a bath by the father’s sister and adorned in new dress. Then she calls the name in the presence of all relatives. First cereal feeding ceremony is observed during the fifth month and is called pullane choruttae. Presence of paternal and material uncles and aunts is a must in this ceremony for either sex in the presence of mother’s brother.

It is the duty of a Paniyan’s maman (mother’s brother) to find out a suitable bride for his nephew. Betrothal known as thalikettu kalyanam takes place at the girl’s house. After a brief ceremony, the semmi declares the betrothal and the date of marriage and the girl and boy then meet. Marriage rituals are performed at the bride’s house. The procession goes to the bride’s house; and waits outside the courtyard. Marriage ceremonies start by invoking the karnemare (ancestor’s spirit) of the bride’s father’s illam by the semmi, who officiates as the religious functionary. Tiruvanakettu (tying the mundu to the bride and groom), vellam marikal (blessing of the newly married couple), arupatinaalu (bride-price collection), mandipanam (lap fee to the wife’s mother’s sister) rituals are completed. Nuptial ceremony is performed at the bride’s mother’s house.

The main economic resource of the Paniyan is labour as most of them are landless. Later, they were held as ‘bonded labour’ until that system was abolished by central legislation. A few got lands allotted under the provisions of the Kerala Land Reforms Act. They cultivate ragi and different varieties of pumpkins. In the past, the forest was also an economic resources but after massive deforestation of revenue forests by the immigrant encroachers only the reserve forest remained but with entry restrictions. However, during rainy season, children and women gather roots, tubers, mushrooms, edible leaves and bamboo shoots from these forests. During monsoon, they also do some fishing.
The Paniyan purchase essential requirements from the market generally on cash basis, though in the past, some barter transactions also took place. The Paniyan families used to attend the Vallurkavu festival during March-April. Landowners would pay various advances in cash and kind to the Paniyan, thus binding them to work for them at reduced wages; they used to get subsistence during slack seasons and occasional gifts.

Among the Paniyan, traditional caste council exists, headed by *semmi* and *karayma* as second in command. They function at *naadu* (territorial) level and are the pivotal forces who control the society. Succession to these offices is in the paternal line and order of succession is based on the principles of generation of age, subject to ritual ‘approval’ of *kaarneemare* (ancestor’s spirit). *Semmi* and *karayama* function together on most occasions. Their duties include settling disputes between persons within their *naadu* and keeping an overall control on the mode of behaviour of the people in accordance with the traditional norms of the society. Traditional village council has the power to impose cash fines and physical punishment in case of adultery, rape, elopement, disrespect for traditional norms, insult to traditional council and thief. They have also the power to give cash rewards. These organizations are gradually losing their authority.

The Paniyan profess Hinduism. Their supreme god is Ippimala teyya. Their family deity is Guliyan and each *illam* has *illateyya*. Some of them are Kutticattan, Anjilateyya, Kakuralamma, Valliacan, etc., who are tribal deities. Besides these, they have Tamburati, Pudari teyya, Pulpally Murkanteyyam. *Mantrakars* are sacred specialists who assist the *semmi* and his wife at birth, puberty, marriage and death rites.

Festivals are of social and religious significance like Vishukolu, which is observed in April-May (Medam) to offer thanksgiving to *teyya* and
karnenmara to ensure constant protection throughout the coming year, performed by semmi.

Maarikoolu which is observed in May-June (Idava) for Mariamma to cure chicken pox and smallpox, and performed collectively. Puttariunnu is observed in the month of October (Tulam) for karnenmara to celebrate harvesting performed by semi.

The community is not involved in socio-religious movements. Not many cases of conversion have been reported.

The Paniyan have an oral tradition and folk-songs are sung by both sexes. Folk-tales also exist. Dancing is an integral part of their life. Usually, the women dance slowly in increasing tempo to the music of vili (pipe) and muttum (drum) played by the men. They have a rich repertoire of songs.

The Paniyan accept food and water from other communities. Intercommunity marriages were not permitted, but are being increasingly reported. They share well water and water sources with other communities. They do not share crematorium with other communities.

The Paniyan’s attitude towards education is increasingly favourable. Mostly boys and girls study up to primary level and they drop out, mainly for economic reasons. Their attitude towards indigenous as well as modern medicine is favourable and they make use of both. The Paniyan’s attitude towards family planning is not favourable, which may be due to illiteracy and non awareness. Couples still prefer four or more children. Drinking water is available near their settlement and the source is dug well.

Under the self-employment programme the Paniyan have got assistance for poultry and animal husbandry. As part of the programmes for the rehabilitation of bonded labour, several schemes were implemented, e.g.,
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the Sugandhagiri Project, in which many Paniyan families have in addition to land, obtained steady employment and benefits such as housing, etc. The community is increasingly aware of their political rights and members are now able to ensure that they get proper wages under the provisions of the various minimum wage fixed under the law. Dissemination of information is through extension agencies and voluntary organisations. Fuel resource is firewood. The Paniyan avail of modern amenities and benefits like transistor radios, cinemas, hotels, electricity, midday meal for children, scholarships, ICDS, and rations through fair-price shops. The community is in a phase of rapid transformation.

Kurichian

According to Luiz (1962), Kurichian connotes good marksman and being good at shooting. The Kurichian themselves claim that they are descendents of the thekku perumbadan villali karinairs who were brought by Perumbadan in the south by Raja of Kottayam in his fight against Raja Veda Kings. They were experts in archery and hence were known as Villali Karinairs. They believe the name Kurichian was derived from the word kurinilam or kurichasthalam (appointed place) because the Kurichian punctually reported at the mustering place fixed by the Raja, who then praised them as Kuriyan, meaning precise, dependable. From Kuriyan it became Kurichian.

The Kurichian are segmented into four subdivisions, viz. Kurichian of Wayanad or Jati Kurichian who accepted the titular name Kurichian from the Kottayam Raja; Kunnam kurichian of Kannavam forest, Kuthuparamba; Anchilla Kurichian of Tirunelley who were excommunicated from the community for committing incest; and Pathiri Kurichian, who were excommunicated for adultery, levirate, sororate etc. and embraced Christianity. Intermarriage between the original Wayanad Kurichian and
Kunnam Kurichian is totally prohibited, but interdining is permitted. The Jati Kurichian considers the Anchilla Kurichian and the Christian Kurichian as untouchables.

They are distributed in Mananthavady Taluk, Vythiri Taluk, and Sultan Battery Taluk of Wayanad District in Kerala. The Kurichian speak and write in Malayalam within family and with others, though with a distinctive accent and intonation. Traditionally, women do not wear blouse; instead, a cloth is worn between right arm pit and left shoulder with a knot over the left shoulder.

The Kurichian are non-vegetarian who eat the meat of hunted game like rabbit, bear and deer, but do not eat beef. Rice is their staple food supplemented with tapioca, yam and pulses. They consume leaves of certain vegetables, along with the locally available vegetables and fruits. Men occasionally consume alcoholic drinks bought from market. Milk and milk products are consumed rarely. Men smoke beedis and cigarettes. Both the sexes chew betel leaves with arecanut, lime and tobacco. Pulses and vegetables are used increasingly. Fruits and meat consumption has decreased because of deforestation.

Nuclear, vertically extended and mixed extended family types are found among Kurichian. Some of them continue to live in joint family system and some mittoms accommodated as many as about hundred members. Property is owned collectively by the mittom. The eldest male member of the family known as karon or poopan has the authority in all matters and looks after the affairs of family. Normally, the karon is the odayakkaran and his wife is the odayakkarathi. The duties and responsibilities are distributed according to convenience. Kaikaran looks after matters relating to agriculture. The karyakartha takes care of management, viz. engaging labourers, supervision of farming, noting down the expenditure and keeping the account
of yield from agricultural lands. *Poopathi*, the wife of the *karnon* supervises the activities of female members in a family; she keeps the larder and looks after the cooking arrangements. The elders in the family are respected and obeyed. An individual can cut joke with his sisters-in-law and opposite sex cross-cousins and with his maternal aunt. Grandparents can cut jokes with grandchildren. Joking is avoided between siblings.

Cooking is the responsibility of the Kurichian women. The *poopathi* entrusts the job to one or more specific women. It is a convention that the husband of the woman who is in charge of cooking collects the firewood. Drawing water, washing vessels, taking care of the younger ones, sweeping, cleaning the house and surroundings are done by women. Men and women take part in weeding, transplanting, harvesting, winnowing and husking the paddy and plucking coffee seeds. They take part in economic activities and contribute to family income. They have role in special functions and rituals. Women under childbirth and menstruation are considered as impure and are not allowed to take part in any rituals and religious functions.

Among the Kurichian marriage is called *pennukonduvaral* meaning ‘bringing a women’. The auspicious day is fixed by the maternal uncles of the boy and girl. The *karnon* and his wife, the boy’s brother and his wife and two more relatives go to the girl’s natal home. The bridegroom does not accompany the party. They carry the bridal dress which includes a dhoti, upper cloth (*melkettu*) and some silver ornaments. When the bridegroom’s party reaches the bride’s place they are received by the girl’s side *karnon*. A feast is given to them. The *illathumoothathu* (the eldest women) receives the bridal dress from the party. The girl dons the bridal dress and is taken for worshipping the ancestral deities and then to the bridegroom’s natal home along with his party. When she reaches his place she is taken for worshipping his ancestral spirits. She is introduced to the inmates of his *tharawad*. On the
fourth day, a separate room is given to the boy and girl and they start living as husband and wife.

When a death occurs in the Kurichian community, the Nadumpoopan is informed of it first and it is he who sends news to the neighbouring households and the nearest relatives of the deceased through a special messenger. The Nadumpoopan presides over the funeral.

The economy of the Kurichian is based on agriculture. The cultivable land is generally owned by lineages. Some own land individually. Traditionally, they are shifting cultivators and hunters. But now they are settled agriculturists. Paddy is grown in wet lands. Cash crops like coffee, pepper, arecanut, ginger, turmeric, tapioca, plantain and coconut are grown on their homestead dry land. Some of them have taken to white-collar jobs and plantation labour. During harvesting and threshing, wages are paid in kind. Otherwise, their transactions are in cash. The rapid denudation of the habitat and the structures of Wild Life Protection Act have curtailed their hunting and outdoor life. Many have now become agricultural wage-labourers to make both the ends meet.

The Kurichian tribal council constituted by Poopans or Karnons of the various kulams is headed by the Nadum Karnan or Nadumpoopan. Nadumpoopan has obtained his rights as the headman of the council by virtue of his predecessors having settled in that area at first. The office of the Nadumpoopan is hereditary. The tribal council wields much power over the people and their territory and also has authority in political, social, religious and judicial matters. Disputes and petty cases are settled by the council. Adultery, violation of tribal norms and marriage within the clan or outside the community are viewed as serious offences. Excommunication is the usual punishment. Now cash fines are imposed on the offenders.
The Kurichian are Hindu tribal religionists. They worship Bhagawati, Malakkari, Athiraplan and Munnan daivam as their family and *kulam* deities. Ancestors or *Nikalayamuni* are also worshipped. They also visit the temples of Vishnu, Ayyappan or Sastha, Siva and Murugan. *Komaram* is their sacred specialist. Thulampathu, Theyyamthira, Puthari, Onam and Vishu are their major festivals which are of social and religious significance. The Kurichian have oral traditions. *Naripattu* and *Kumbhampattu* are their folk-songs sung by men. An interesting features of it is that at the height of the song, some get into trances and enact the role of animal ‘heroes’ like the tiger, and deer. They are skilled in archery. They make fairly complex bows and arrows. They are skilled in the craft of making umbrellas.

The Kurician accept water and cooked food from the Nambuthiri and of late from the Tamil Brahman and Nayar. Food cooked by the Paniyan, Adiyian and Uralikuruman is not traditionally accepted. They exchange uncooked food items with communities like the Nayar and Gowda; some of them even today do not allow the Paniyan, Parayan and Pulayan to touch their water sources or to enter their houses. They visit all Hindu shrines. They participate in traditional festivals like Onam, Vishu and temple festivals. During temple festivals, they receive the services of the Paniyan and Uralikuruman. The Paniyan applies firewood, while the Uralikuruman supplies winnowing fan and basket. A few members are employees in Government offices and in defence service. The Kurichian community has become politically conscious and formed their affiliations with political parties. A few members have contested and won in Kerala assembly elections. Cultivator labourer relationship and employer-worker relationship exist with other groups.

Their attitude is favourable towards traditional and modern medicare, and both are used. Couples prefer to have three children and use modern
methods of family planning. Drinking water is available within the locality from dug wells and pipes. I.R.D.P and I.T.D.P facilities are availed of. Dissemination of information is through extension agencies, political parties and voluntary agencies. A few settlements are connected with pucca roads. One has to walk five to six kilometers to reach some of their settlements. All modern amenities are availed of by the Kurichian.

The Kurichians have a reputation for fearlessness and trustworthiness. They were loyal fighters under the Pazhassi Raja who led a historical revolt against the British early in the 19th century. They still retain an innate nobility of bearing and behaviour.

**Kuruman - UraliKuruman**

The Urali Kuruman community is also known by different names, like Vettu Kuruman, Betta Kuruman and simply as Kuruman. Various etymologies have been propounded by Thurston (1975) and Luiz (1962). The elders of the community believe that they originated from union of human beings with gods and goddesses. They consider these mysteries which should never be revealed to ‘outsiders’.

In Kerala, the Urali kuruman are inhabitants of Wayanad District and H.D.Kote Taluk in Karnataka adjoining Wayanad where they are known as Betta Kuruman. Their settlements are on the tablelands of Western Ghats. Officially, the community is known as Kuruman, a Scheduled Tribe which comprises Mullu Kuruman also; hence their exclusive population figure is not available. They talk in a dialect of Malayalam with many words and phrases from Kannada. Those who have got formal education converse in Malayalam with others and use the Malayalam script.

In the past, the larger part of the Urali Kuruman’s food included a variety of wild yam, roots and tubers of the forest like noorang, narala and
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poithalappu, which they take along with the kanji (gruel) prepared from chama (a coarse grain). Now it has changed to rice and supplemented with these items. During the flowering season of bamboo (September to December) they collect the seeds and prepare tina (delicious food with honey). They even eat the remains of carcasses left by tigers. Beef is taboo. The use of cooking oil is new to them; they use coconut or palm oil. Pumpkin, cucumber, carrot and leaves are the vegetables used. Different varieties of fruits including wild fruits found in the forest are consumed. Milk and milk products were taboo once, but at present are taken along with tea and coffee. Men consume alcohol and smoke tobacco, which they purchase from the market. Betel-chewing, and with or without tobacco, is common among both the sexes. They are more vegetarian now due to non availability of wild life.

The elders of the Urali Kuruman community say they belong to four groups (phratries) namely; Murtharae, Veltharae, Murkarae and Indumanne. The first two are considered brother groups and cannot intermarry; the third and fourth are a similar set. Each phratry has four to five keera (clan) such as Vogode keera, Nanchi keera, Vagare keera and Kupplichik keera. The men of a clan in one phratry can only marry women from a clan of the permissible phratry. But these rules are being relaxed; the younger generation is ignorant of them. At present the keera are renamed after gods and they believe they are the progenies of the concerned god. The community consider themselves of medium status. They claim superiority over other tribes of the area.

The Urali Kuruman are monogamous and neolocal. Mothuve madai (Marriages) are within the community and outside the keera. Adult and teenage marriages are practised, the latter preferred. The girls generally get married one or two years after puberty whereas for boys, it usually depends on his physical constitution. Divorce and desertion are common but are declining. Maladjustment, adultery, cruelty or impotency are sufficient causes
for getting divorce and it is completed when the headman is apprised of the intention. Compensation to the divorced is unknown but the children are always the liability of the father. Remarriages are allowed but should be without ceremony.

The Urali Kuruman’s settlements are of 10 to 15 huts. The members in a settlement are always closely related. In the centre of each settlement, there is an open shed named *chavadi* for the common use. The *chavadi* is used as dormitory for the young boys and bachelors. It is also used as a guest house. Each settlement has a headman, usually the eldest man of the settlement. Both the headman and his wife are respected and their decisions accepted. Conflict and confrontation arise mainly due to the check on the freedom of youngsters and on the challenge to the elder’s authority. A man avoids his mother-in-law similarly a woman, her father-in-law. The emergence of private property and restrictions on forest land has forced them to leave the collective life to a certain extent. The dormitory system is now a threat, but they still keep the collective consciousness.

The status of Urali Kuruman woman is low. In case of inheritance, the females are simply ignored. They accept that women are helpful in domestic tasks. Collections of fuel, bringing potable water, cooking and rearing of the infants are female responsibilities. They participate in economic activities along with their men, like basketry and pottery (the people are famous for their handmade pottery). They have a role in social functions but are debarred from political and religious spheres and doing the rituals. The mechanism of social control and the power of decision-making are completely vested in males.

When the Urali Kuruman’s child is in the tenth month the *paimagae paesu* (name giving) takes place. The *ajjan* (eldest male member of the clan) after performing an oblation to the clan deity and mystical communication, as
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it is believed, gives the name to the child. It is imperative that the name should be one of their ancestor’s. He utters it three times in the ear of the child. The present generation adopts one more name, which is usually ‘modern’ and would like to be known by it. First feeding of cereals to the child is also done by the ajjan, for which there is no fixed time, but only after the paimage paesu. After the age one year mandaku savuku (head shaving) is performed.

Traditionally, an Urali Kuruman’s girl, on attaining puberty, is segregated for 14 days; then the neeradava anade (puberty ceremony) is celebrated with feasting. Nowadays, the celebration of neeradava anadae with feasting is rare.

Mothuve (marriage) rituals take place either at the Urali Kuruman bridegroom’s residence or at the bride’s residence as decided through negotiations at the time is known as mothuve kallavae. If the rituals are decided to be held at the bridegroom’s residence, the bride along with her relatives reaches the bridegroom’s house and vice versa if it is at the bride’s residence. They then sit on a mat inside the hut. The sister of the bridegroom officiates at the ceremony. Tying the thali (a black beaded chain) is the most important part of the ceremony. After tying the thali, the close relatives from both sides should give presents to the couple usually beaded chains or bangles. At the close of the rituals the sister who officiates, distributes betel to the couple which they exchange and chew. This is followed by the feast. The consummation of marriage takes place at the bridegroom’s residence in the evening.

The Urali Kuruman buries the dead in a deep grave far away from their settlement. The chief mourner is his next brother or eldest son. Bijakalan is the priest for death rites. On the ninth day, the ceremony is closed with a
small repast to the immediate relatives. The pollution connected with death lasts for 15 days.

The major economic resource of the Urali Kuruman is forest, controlled by the government. The people possess land, usually one to two acres per family. Traditionally, they were nomadic food gatherers and hunters (Luiz, 1962). Hunting, scavenging, foraging and shifting cultivation were their traditional occupations. The forest and wild life protection laws have curtailed these. They are experts in basketry, handmade pottery and blacksmithy. Their present economy is centered on basketry and blacksmithy, since pottery making, though popular, gives them only very small income. Collection of minor forest produce and bamboo provides many with employment and subsistence. In recent years, they have started working as plantation labourers and forest guards. Many are now employed as daily wage casual labourers also. Only a very few have taken to settled cultivation. Perhaps because of taboo, they shun animal husbandry. Market and marketing facilities, daily or weekly, are available to them. Their collection of minor forest produce is now channelized through Girijan Cooperative Societies which protect them from exploitation by middlemen. However, forced to depart from their traditional access to the forest, more and more are compelled to seek casual wage labour. Child labour is not uncommon. Wages and transactions are in cash.

The UraliKurunan have the institution of muppan (headman) in each settlement. He is also called aijan in some settlements. Usually the eldest member of the settlement is selected as muppan and he holds this office for life. He is treated with respect and obeyed. In the past, excommunication, social boycott, physical and cash fine were awarded but the authority is being eroded.
The Urali Kuruman claim that they are Hindus. They have tribal deities, which they consider as god as well as the progenitor of the clan. They worship the spirits of the dead and make oblations in order to propitiate them. Calamities and epidemics are explained by them in terms of the action of spiritual agencies. Gods and goddesses of wider pantheon like Krishna, Vishnu, Siva and Durga are also worshipped. Tirunelli Temple and Valliyur Kavu are the usual centres of pilgrimage. Naridimale is considered as a mystical sacred place which none visited.

BJjakalan officiate at the ceremonies of the Urali Kuruman, directly or indirectly, connected with spirits and gods, and he is adequately rewarded for his services, both in cash and kind. He is the priest, doctor, exorcist, soothsayer, prophet, oracle and the evacuator of spirits. The office is not hereditary. Anyone can be a bijakalan provided one has the credibility and knows how to officiate at the rituals. Setting into trance is considered as an essential qualification. Onam, Vishu (Ugadi), Deepavali and local temple festivals are celebrated for only social significance.

The Urali Kuruman is known as an artisan community. Their material culture reveals their skill in crafts. The community is famous for handmade pottery. With bamboo and cane they manufacture beautiful baskets, chairs and other. They are experts in blacksmithy. Iron implements like arrow heads, knives of various types and axes are made. Recently, the government introduced wheel technology to their pottery. They have a very good collection of folk-tales. The present generation is shy of their songs and dances.

As an artisan community, the Urali Kuruman supplied agricultural equipments like baskets, bamboo umbrellas etc., to the other communities like the Kurichian, Nayar, Nambiar and Varriar of the area. Their blacksmiths supplied the arrow heads, knives and other iron implements, for which they
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were paid in paddy in the past and now in cash. They accept all kinds of food
and water from the Nambar, Nayar and Varriar but no from the Adiyar,
Paniyan and Kurichian. These restrictions are being relaxed, but most of their
neighbours still avoid taking food and drink from them. Wells and other water
resources are shared with other communities. They have access to the local
temples and participate in the local festivals and festivities. Elites have not yet
emerged.

The Urali Kuruman’s literacy level is very low. They rely on their own
magico-religious medicare, but in extreme cases, are not reluctant to resort to
more modern remedies. Couples prefer to have two or three children and
make use of modern methods. Generally it is vasectomy.

Drinking water is available within the Urali Kuruman’s locality from
springs, tube wells and ring wells. Provision for employment exists through
ITDP, RLEGP and NREP schemes. Some are self employed with the aid of
these schemes in basketry, blacksmithy and petty shops. A few own transistor
radios. The cinema is popular. For fuel they used firewood. Nutrition
programmes like midday meal to school children, ICDS and various schemes
of voluntary organization are available. They get their rations through fair
price shops which abound in Kerala. Savings and banking facilities are
unknown to them. For immediate needs they approach shopkeepers and
moneylenders.

Kattunaickan

The Kattunaickan are a Scheduled Tribe inhabiting Wayanad District.
They are also distributed in the adjacent districts in the States of Karanataka
and Tamil Nadu. Their synonyms are the Jenu Kuruba, Kattunayakan, Ten
Kuruba, Ten Kuruban, Jenukoyyo, Sholanayakas and Naickan (Thurston,
1975). The word is derived from kadu meaning ‘forest’ and nayakkan
meaning ‘leader’ or ‘head’ man. The concentration of the Katunaickkan is in Wayanad District. Ethnographic account does not exist on the Katunaickkan but there is a brief write up by Luiz (1962). It is believed that the Katunaickkan have immigrated to this place, and there are a number of myths revealing the story of their migration. They are also aware of their origin through a myth which says that the Katunaickkan are the children of Bheema (the second Pandava and son of Kundidevi) and Hidumbi of Mahabharata. The community perceives its distribution at regional level. Their settlements are in Edamala, Mullankolly, Chelur, Ashramakolly, Somadi, Kappuset, Chapala, Kurichipatta, Pakkam, Anappara, Kannurkunnu, Tariyode, Elikka, Udaraseri, Kalpetta, Muttimala, Ambuthi, Kolpara and in other areas of wayanad.

According to 1981 Census, the population of the Katunaickkan in Kerala is 8,803, and nearly 98 per cent of them are in rural areas. They are socially and economically backward. They have their own dialect which is used among themselves; with other non-tribals they speak Malayalam. Some of them are conversant with Kannada language. The script used by the younger generation and the medium of instruction in schools is Malayalam.

The Katunaickkan are non-vegetarians and also eat beef and pork. They consume gathered food such as wild tubers, roots, leaves, seeds, fruits, meat and fish. Rice, vegetables, dry fish, pulses, grains bought from markets also become a part of their diet. Both men and women chew tobacco, betel and consume alcoholic drinks. Smoking beedis and cigarettes is common among men. Coconut oil is the medium of cooking. The consumption of fruits, wild tubers, roots, leaves and meat is on the decrease as forest clearance has taken place in all parts of Wayanad.

The whole population of the Katunaickkan is grouped into two moieties, having a number of clans within each moiety. Each clan consists of
a number of households. Sometimes two or three settlements will be under the headship of a religious leader called mudali (clan chieftain), whose position is hereditary. The mudali has an enormous role during childbirth, puberty, marriage, death and during other important religious functions performed in the settlements. The people of Ashramakolly, Somadi, Madapally, Siyambam are considered to be of a single social group (moiety) and the people of Anappara, Chelur, Mullankolly belong to another moiety. Inter moiety marriage is not permitted. Violation of norms is very rare and whosoever violates their traditional customs is punished.

The Kattunaickan are well aware of the caste system but have no idea of varna. A Brahman is addressed as aruver (aruvandru – female). Tambra (tambratti – females) for Nayar, achcha (amma – females) for Thiya, ode (oduthi – female) for Chetti, chettan (chettathi – female) for christian, elanaru (eluthamma – female) for Mullukurumba, kutta (kuttachi – female) for the Paniyan are the other terms used by them.

Among the Kattunaickan, community endogamy and clan exogamy are the rules of marriage. Although mother’s brother’s daughter is preferred for marriages, father’s sister’s daughter is prohibited. All forms of sororate and levirate are prohibited. Marriage by capture (kattukondu vinde), marriage by elopement (odatu), marriage by service and marriage by negotiation are the modes of acquiring match. Divorce is permitted. Divorcees can remarry. Widow and widower remarriage are permitted. Children in such cases remain with their mother.

Nuclear family is the common type of family among the Kattunaickan. Size of the household varies from small (one to five) to large (nine and above). They follow patrilineal mode of descent and succession, and patrilocal residence pattern. Women have inferior status in the society but they have freedom to choose their mates. Avoidance relationship is noticed
between mother-in-law and son-in-law and between daughter-in-law and father-in-law.

The Kattunaickan women take part in all economic activities except hunting. Collection of wild plant food and fishing are mainly done by women of all ages, except children. Women also contribute to their economy as many of them are bonded labourers. Although women have a role in their socio-economic and religious spheres, they have an inferior status in their society.

Rituals connected with birth, naming, puberty, marriage and death are performed by the Kattunaickan. Childbirth is known as *kusu erika*. The mother and child are secluded for 45 days as pollution (*pula*), and separate vessels are kept for the mother for taking food and water. Usually, women in their settlement attend to the mother and child.

Marriage is known as *mude* among the Kattunaickans. In an arranged marriage, the *mudali* is informed first and in his presence the bride-price (*kana hana*) is given to the parents of the bride. Two pieces of clothes, a sari (*chela*), dothi (*koramundu*), rice and cash are also given. The boy sleeps in that house and if he is well after that, marriage is fixed. If the boy falls sick, marriage is not performed and he chooses another girl. Marriage badge (*mudathali*) is tied by those who are well to do.

In the case of elopement, if any one of them, boy or girl, falls sick, the reason behind the illness is sought through divination (*adikkadi*) and through oracle (*tirpu*). In some cases, the girl is sent back to her house, if decided through divination. Elopement takes place through love making (*pattaakkadu*). In order to understand the mind of the girl, a gift usually betel leaf, arecanut or tobacco is given to her first. If the girl accepts it is symbolically conveyed that she likes him and is ready for union with him through elopement or through other approved means. If she gives away the
When a death occurs in a Kattunaickan house, the mudali is informed first. He comes and decides other connected activities to be performed. Two plates containing water and gruel are offered to the spirit of the deceased for seven days. Betel leaves, arecanuts, beedi are also offered to the dead. Non-vegetarian food is avoided for seven days. A feast is arranged on the seventh day. Another important ritual (doda pola) is performed after a month. On this day, a chicken is cut and curry is prepared with potato, onion, cucumber, dhal and served. The mudali is gifted with rice, arecanuts, betel leaves etc. Ancestral spirits are consulted through oracle and future course of activities are decided. As the rituals are becoming expensive, nowadays most of them are avoided.

Labour is the primary means of livelihood and food gathering is the secondary source of subsistence for the Kattunaickan. The Kattunaickan are in different stages of development and based on their source of livelihood, they can be classified into four categories such as (1) food gatherers, and landless labourers (including bonded labourers) who work on the land and nearby forest regions for primary means of livelihood. Food gathering is a secondary source of subsistence for them; 2) temporary cultivators who own less fertile land which is insufficient for their living; 3) cultivators who own fertile land; and 4) employees as mahouts in forest departments and Devaswoms (temples).

Social control in the Kattunaickan is done through their traditional tribal council headed by a chieftain called mudali. His office is hereditary. He has enormous roles and duties to perform in the daily life of the Kattunaickan. He officiates as the clan leader at all rituals connected with birth, naming ceremony, adolescence or puberty, marriage and death. He also performs
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important roles during village festivals. He acts as a religious expert, a diviner and a medicine man. Those who deviate from their customary norms are punished, generally, by imposition of fine in cash. The decision on the nature, size and mode of payment of fine and other money transactions is taken by the *mudali* in consultation with other members of the settlement.

The Kattunaickan follow tribal religious practices. They worship ancestral spirits, forest gods, and the gods belonging to the greater tradition. They also believe in the invisible forces believed to be present in certain plants and animals. They also have village level deities and in order to propitiate them, offerings are made jointly. The 1981 Census returns record 99.53 per cent of the Kattunaickan as followers of Hinduism.

Daiva festival (*abba*) performed by them is almost like a harvest festival as the celebrations are concentrated on doll making and assigning a supernatural power to the dolls made of *ragi* flour. The use of other articles such as rice (*achiri*), coconut, (*tenginukkay*), banana (*bala hannu*), sandal wick (*udubathi*), camphor (*duppa*) shows the elaborate nature of the performance of rituals which must have been adopted from the ‘great tradition’. Divination, oracle and other traditional forms of communication with the invisible supernatural forces and ancestral spirits are the backbone of their religion. Due to the expensive nature of festivals, nowadays, most of them are ignored. If at all done, it is done in any one of the settlements once in four or five years.

The Kattunaickan are experts in basketry. They are in possession of a rich oral tradition. Both men and women sing songs narrating their origin and their relationship with other tribal and nontribal communities. Men play on musical instruments and drum.
The Kattunaickan have cordial relations with other tribals and non-tribals. They accept food from other tribal and non-tribal communities except the Paniyan, who are traditionally considered socially inferior to the Kattunaickan.

The Kattunaickan’s attitude towards formal education is not very favourable. Literacy rate among them is very low. They make use of traditional and modern medicare. Family planning programmes have not evoked positive response. Drinking water is available within the locality and sources are the streams and ponds.

Developmental schemes implemented through various agencies have benefitted many Kattunaickans, but they are unhappy that the Government has not restored their lost land. Due to the introduction of tribal residential schools in tribal areas in Wayanad, the literacy level among the boys is steadily increasing. Firewood is the main source of fuel. Only a very few of them are engaged in cultivation.

Adiyan

The Adiyan are also known as Adiyar (Luiz, 1962). The word ‘Adiyan’ means ‘slave’ or ‘serf’ in Malalyalam. The community, however, prefers to be known as ‘Ravuler’, as they are known in Karnataka. Wives are referred to as Ratti and husbands as Ravulan.

The Adiyan community a Schedule Tribe is found distributed in Wayanad, the adjoining areas of Kannur District and Kodagu (Coorg) in Karnataka. Their dialect, Adiya Bhasha is influenced by Malayalam and Kannada, which they speak at home and with kin groups. With others they use Malayalam. The literates use the Malayalam script. The females of the community can be identified by the sindha ketu (the sari knot over the right
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The Adiyan are non-vegetarian, but avoid beef. Their staple food is rice, which they make into kanji (gruel). Pulses like gram, and roots and tubers like poola (tapioca), chena and kachil (two varieties of yam), constitute side dishes or substitute. Meat and fish were common side dishes but are now a luxury. Jack fruit is widely eaten.

Coffee and tea with/without milk are the Adiyan’s general nonalcoholic drink. Milk, buttermilk, curd etc. are also consumed. Both sexes occasionally consume country-made alcoholic drinks from the market. Smoking beedis-cigarettes is found only among the men, while both the sexes are fond of betel-chewing with tobacco. Surviving spouse of recently dead partners avoid nonvegetarian and oil-cooked food till the performance of kakapula (annual offerings for the dead).

The Adiyan have the mantu (clan) and mantu rules for the good conduct of their society. The mantu is named after the location of the settlements. They are not hierarchically ordered but regulate marriage alliances. Badakku (north) mantu, Thirunelli mantu and Pothur mantu are the main ones. Each mantu has five to ten chemmam (lineage), mainly to indicate descent and ancestry. The mantu and chemmam are exogamous units. They are not aware of the varna system. Their self-perception and the perception by others are low.

Adiyan marriages are always within the community and outside the mantu and chemmam. Consanguineous marriages were strictly forbidden in the past, but at present it takes place between the cross-cousins, both paternal and maternal. Sororate (junior) is permitted, but levirate and sororate (senior) are objectionable. The girls are usually married when below the age twenty
years and boys above twenty. It is imperative for marriages that the concerned parties, either the couples or their parents, get the sanction of the Nadukaran (chieftain) whose decision is the final. The thali and toe-ring are used as marriage symbols. The system of bride-price, given in kind to the bride’s parents prior to marriage, existed in the past. Now Rupees thirty is fixed as a token of ‘bride-price’ and given at the time of marriage to the Nadukaran (or the peruman, the eldest member of the mantu). The former gives a portion of this to the bride’s parents, the remaining being shared by him and his assistants. Monogamy is the form of marriage. They are either patrilocal or neolocal after marriage. Divorce is permitted among the Adiyan for either party, with social approval in cases of cruelty, adultery or maladjustment. If the husband opts for divorce, then compensation has to be given to the wife’s parents. The children are always the liability of the father. Widower and divorcee (male/female) remarriages are permitted. Widows are not allowed to remarry.

In an Adiyan family, the duty of the father is to take care of the children and to get them married in due time. He is treated with love and respect. He should keep a minimum of six feet distance when he talks to his daughters-in-law; a similar distance has to be maintained by a mother with her sons-in-law. Challenge to elder’s authority is generally the cause of conflict. The Adiyan are patrilineal. Linkages are cordial and collective consciousness high.

The Adiyan women enjoy equal status with their men. They have right to ancestral property and have roles in economic activities, viz. agricultural operations, animal husbandry and wage labour. They contribute to income, but control and decision-making are purely male prerogatives.

The Adiyan bury their dead in their own compound or outside, in the neighbourhood. The Nadukaran is the chief officiator at the funeral and the
eldest son or the husband, if alive is the chief mourner. The body is shaved, washed in warm water, decorated and covered with a new cloth. Before the body is taken to the grave, the Nadukaran and his two assistants, the Vathilae Kanaladi (the one who sits on his left side) and Mutha Kanaladi (the senior one, who sits on his right side) sing the death prayers, a song to propitiate the gods and spirits to the accompaniment of thudi muttu (the beating of drums). The grave is dug vertically and horizontally to form a chamber, usually in the north-south direction. After the prayers are completed, the body is taken to the grave in a procession only of males. The body is placed in the chamber which is filled with thorns and bushes, and then soil.

Pollution connected with death of an Adiyan lasts for 13 days. Family members avoid eating fish and meat and the use of oil during this period. On the 13th day, they offer a prayer and perform obsequies for the departed soul and the Chudalape (the god of grave) at the graveyard. If funds permit, they conduct a feast. When the wife or husband dies, the survivor has to observe the pollution with all its taboos and restrictions till the performance of the kakapula (annual rites for the dead), which is usually in March-April.

After the enforcement of the Bonded Labour (Abolition) Act, several Adiyan have been rehabilitated in State Government projects like Sugandhagiri, and Priyadarshini, where they as co-operative shareholders have been allotted rights and enjoy the benefits of the Plantation Labour Act. The rest, who continue as casual or agricultural labour, are protected by the Minimum Wages Act enforced in Kerala.

A few Adiyan have entered government service as forest guards, a few holding white-collar jobs or are teachers, and a few are doing business on a small scale. Animal husbandry, settled cultivation in homesteads and surplus land allotted under the provisions of the Kerala Land Reforms Act and daily wage, non-skilled casual labour are their subsidiary occupations. They go to
the daily or weekly markets for their needs and transactions are in cash. Wages for non-skilled work are paid in cash. Most of their children also work.

The Adiyan have the institution of *Nadukaran* for each of their settlements. Each *Nadukaran* nominates his successor before he passes away. He presides over the meetings of the *peruman* (elders) at which disputes, divorce matters, breaches of mores, etc. are debated and decisions taken. Disobedience entails excommunication. Many of these are now taken to the police station or court. The *Nadukaran* is assisted by one or more *Kanaladis* (priests), of whom the senior most is the *Mutha Kanaladi*. Anyone can be a *kanaladi*, provided he knows the details of all rites, rituals and duties. The traditional tribal council is rapidly losing powers and privileges.

The Adiyan are Hindus and worship deities of the Hindu pantheon. But they prefer their own gods and goddesses, viz. *Malankari, Pakkape, Muthumalape, Vankarai, Thalai Silavel*, to whom animals and birds are sacrificed. None of them has an image or temple of specific location. They worship the spirits of ancestors and believe in the existence of the soul after death. Thirunelli and Valliyoor temples are considered sacred places of worship.

The *Kanaladi* and *Gaddikakaran* (musician-cum-witch doctor) are the sacred specialists of the Adiyan. The *Kanaladi* performs the rituals connected with birth, marriage and death ceremonies. The *Gaddikakaran* plays the *gaddikae* (magical musical instrument) to cure diseases which they believe are due to the displeasure of ill-tempered gods and spirits. Onam, Vishu, *Kakapula* and the festival of the Valliyoor temple are celebrated. These fairs and festivals are of social, religious and socio-religious significance.

Some of the females of the Adiyan community are experts in body tattooing. They have a glorious collection of folk-songs. *Sopanappattu* and
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poigavanappattu are sung during marriages. Dance and music are an integral part of their life. Thudi (wasted drum) and koyal (a flute) are the two most commonly used musical instruments. Only the males are entitled to perform music and dance at ceremonies, but women join other dances.

The Adiyan accept all types of food and water from communities like the Nayar, Nambiar, Variyar and Marar but traditionally not from other scheduled tribes like the Paniyan, Uraky Kuruman, Mullukuruman and Wayanad Kadar. These norms are in the process of relaxation. They have access to public buildings, schools, temples, wells and other water sources like any other community. They participate in the traditional and local fairs, festivities and festivals. Political leadership has emerged up to regional/state level and one of them has been a member of the Legislative Assembly in Kerala.

The attitude of the Adiyan towards education is favourable and many children go to school. They use modern medicare but favour traditional ways. They use modern methods of (tubectomy) family planning. Couples prefer two or three children.

The Adiyan enjoy all modern civic amenities. The ITDP and The Western Ghat Development Projects have provided many of them with employment and rehabilitation.

Wayanad Kadar

The community known as Kaders, are also known as Wayanad Kadar. The prefix ‘Wayanad’ is used to distinguish this group from the Kadors of the erstwhile Cochin. The term ‘kadan’ in Malayalam means one who lives in the forest-by implication, uncivilized. The Wayanad Kadar are found only in the Wayanad district of Kerala. They do not have synonyms, subgroups and title. Regarding their origin and early history, they have no definite information.
Luiz (1962) writes ‘they claimed that they are the progeny of Nayars who were attached to the army of the early Kottayam kings and came to be known as ‘Kaders’, connoting people of the forest, after having settled in the forest tracts. They claim that they are autochthons of Kerala. This claim gains support from their dialect and features. They inhabit the hilly areas of Wayanad District and live in isolated huts called illams.

The Wayanad Kadar speak Malayalam within the family as well as with outsiders, and use the Malayalam script for writing. It is not possible to identify the Wayanad Kadar person from his dress.

The Wayanad Kadar are non vegetarian, and eat pork, but not beef. At present, rice is their staple food, but in the past, it was ragi. Their food items include locally available fruits, vegetables and pulses. They also consume roots and tubers, including those of wild varieties. They take coffee, tea, milk and milk products. Men drink alcoholic drinks such as arrack and toddy, which are available in the market. Their women also consume alcoholic drinks occasionally. Men smoke beedis, cigarettes and some of their women are not allowed to eat preparations of papaya, horse gram, turtle and veranus.

The Wayanad Kadar do not have major social divisions/groupings among them. However, they have tharavadus such as Chappeyan, Kodumchola, Ammarikannu, Kaniyangadam, Thelodanmaru and Pookkayanmaru. Their surnames are based on tharavdu names, and there is no change in their surnames in recent years. The main functions of the tharavadus are to regulate marriage alliances and to indicate descent ancestry. Self-perception of the community vis-a-vis other communities is low, the Brahman and Nayar are regarded higher to them in social status. They have almost equal status with the Thiya and Wayanadan Pulayan communities. They treat the Paniyan and Kurichian as lower to them. They recognize the varna system and place themselves in Sudra varna.
The Wayanad Kadar marries within the community, and prefers to marry father’s sister’s daughter and mother’s brother’s daughter. At present, the normal age of marriage of boys is 24-28 and of girls 18-24. The mode of acquiring mates is by negotiation or by exchange of sisters. Monogamy is the most common form. Polygamy was prevalent in the past. Polyandry was not reported. The thali is the symbol of marriage. Earlier, a bride-price called as muthachi panam was paid at marriage. Nowadays, dowry is payable in cash as well as kind. After marriage, residence is patrilocal. Divorce is permissible for both male and female with the approval of senior male members of the family or with the judicial approval. Maladjustment and cruelty are the major reasons for divorce. Divorce compensation is given to the aggrieved party or as per court’s orders. There is no hard and fast rule regarding the maintenance of children. Remarriage is permitted for widow/widower as well as divorcee.

The most common form in the Wayanad Kadar is the nuclear family. Vertically extended families are also found among them but are breaking up due to lack of affection and cooperation between the various members of the family. All the children have the right to their ancestral property. The eldest son succeeds as the head of the family. They maintain cordial relations with the other community members. ‘Earlier, they followed the succession through female marumkkathayam succession, but now have adopted the makkathayam patrilineal rule’. (Luize, 11962). Nowadays, both males and females inherit their ancestral property.

The Wayanad Kadar’s women have the right over their ancestral property. They have more or less equal role in contributing towards family income. They work as casual wage labourers and as baskets makers. Women help their male counterparts in agricultural operation and animal husbandry. Women perform all household duties such as bringing potable water and cooking food. Though they have a role in social, religious and ritual spheres,
they have no role in traditional dispute settling mechanism. The women have no part in politics. Though they have more or less equal role in economic activities, they do not have a role in controlling family expenditure.

The major natural resource for the Wayanad Kadar community is land. Their traditional occupations are hunting and gathering, basket making and wage labour. In the past, they were expert archers and a large number of dogs were employed for hunting. Those who own land cultivated paddy, *ragi*, tapioca, plantain, ginger, jack, mango etc. Others are engaged on daily wage basis as agricultural labourers, they are also engaged in animal husbandry, preparing baskets such as *vallakkotta* and *parambu* from bamboo, and a few of them are working in government/private service. They depend on the market for their requirements. The mode of transactions is in cash. Child labour exists. Changes that are observed are the rise in dependence on agricultural labour plantations and manual labour.

Among the Wayanad Kadar, the traditional caste council exists. It consists of elder persons from each *tharavadu Karnavar*, or *moopan*, is the head of the council. The main function is to resolve disputes among the community members and impose fines on those who are at fault. The community does not have any association or *sabha*. Nowadays, the caste council has lost its importance.

The Wayanad Kadar profess Hinduism. They worship Kodungallur Kali and Kariyathan as their community deities. They also offer sacrifices to Goddess Kali annually. In the past, when they were engaged in hunting, the liver and heart of the spoils were offered for the deities and deceased ancestors. The major sacred centers are Kodungallur, Sabarimalai, Palani etc. Sacred specialists are from the same community. Their role is to officiate in all rites and perform puja in their village Kali temple. The major festivals of the community are Onam, Vishu, Sivaratri, Makam, etc., which have got
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religious significance. Earlier, they used to celebrate the tenth of Thulam, as the day marks the commencement of hunting season.

The Wayanad Kadar have oral traditions such as folk-songs and folklore. Folk-songs are sung by both men and women during the ceremonious occasions like the puberty ceremony or marriage and they also participate in dance during the festival occasions.

Traditionally, the Wayanad Kadors were in the army of the Raja of Kottayam. They accept food and the water from Nambuthiri, Nayar and they exchange with the Izhava, Kuruchian, Thiya, Mullu Kuruman and Kunduvadiyan. Earlier, they did not accept food from the Wayanadan Pulayan, Mullu Kuruman, Muslims and Christians. Nowadays, no such rigidity is maintained. But, they do not accept food and water from the Paniyan and Kattunaickan. They share well, water, facilities of road, school with other communities and also visit the same religious shrines.

Most of the children of the Wayanad Kadar attend primary school and drop out due to economic reasons. Their attitude to indigenous traditional and modern medicare is favourable and they use both. They show favourable attitude towards family planning. Generally, women undergo sterilisation after having three children. They have drinking water facilities within their vicinity. Their water sources are dug wells, piped water, and hand pumps. They are aware of the IRDP and some of them who have benefitted by this programme are self-employed in agriculture and a few in cattle rearing. Dissemination of information is through extension agencies. They use firewood as the main fuel resource. Their fields depend on the rains. They use organic manure, chemical fertilisers and insecticides. They avail of other facilities like radio, post office, midday meal for school children, ICDS programme, and public distribution system. Their attitude towards savings is
not favourable, but they do not get heavily indebted to moneylenders and shopkeepers.

Apart from the above mentioned groups there are also smaller groups like Ulladan, Mala Arayan, Thanadan Mooppan and Karimpalan in Wayanad district. Some of the common features of majority of tribal communities in Wayanad are as follows:

(i) No script for their language
(ii) Lack of technical skills
(iii) Lack of education
(iv) Lack of interest in individual ownership of land
(v) Lack of interest to oppose others or challenges
(vi) Prefer community living
(vii) Worship forest Gods
(viii) Give respect to others
(ix) Accept the leadership of traditional leaders
(x) Marriage, death, reaching puberty age of girls etc. are considered as community events.
(xi) Interested in consuming alcohol
(xii) They have their own traditional art forms and folk dance
(xiii) During harvest seasons they perform festivals and rituals
(xiv) They are afraid of the souls of the departed
(xv) They are afraid of outside world
(xvi) They are fond of nature