CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The tribal population is identified as the aboriginal inhabitants of our country. They are seen in almost every State of India. For centuries, they have been living a simple life based on the natural environment and have developed cultural patterns congenial to their physical and social environment. References of such tribal groups are found even in the literature on the ancient period, right from the Ramayana and the Mahabharatha periods.

Broadly speaking the tribals may be geographically located in four groups:

i  North-east India : Assam, Manipur, Meghlaya, Nagaland.
ii  Eastern India : West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa.
iii  Central and Western India : Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, part of Maharashtra and Northern Andhra Pradesh.
iv  Southern India : The Hilly regions of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Western and Northern Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

1.1 Meaning of 'Tribe'

As the name implies, tribals are 'Adivasi' or original dwellers, living in the subcontinent from unrecorded time and possibly driven into the forests by more
aggressive settlers - Aryans being the earliest one to socially subjugate them. In order to resist complete domination, tribals evolved their distinct identity through endogamy, their cropping pattern, hunting and food gathering. Above all, in their intensely personal relationship with the forest around them, they formed perfectly balanced rhythms which can best be described as symbiotic.\(^1\)

According to L.P. Vidyarthi; the tribe is a social group with definite territory, common name, common district, common culture, behaviour of an endogamous group, common taboos, existence of distinctive social and political system, full faith in leaders and self-sufficiency in their distinct economy.\(^2\)

P.G. Krishnan defines “tribe is a social group of simple and kind, the members of which speak a common dialect, have a single government act together for common purposes and have a common name, a contiguous territory, a relatively uniform culture or way of life and a traditions of common descent.”\(^3\)

A.B. Bardhan defines the tribe as “course of socio-cultural entity at a definite historical stage of development. It is a single, endogamous community with a cultural and psychological make up.”\(^4\)

According to D.N. Majumdar the tribe is “a collection of families or common group bearing a common name, the members of which occupy the same territory, speak the same language and observe certain taboos, regarding
marriage, professions and have developed a well assured system of reciprocity and mutuality of obligations.\textsuperscript{5}

Kamala Devi Chatopathayaya defines "a tribe ordinarily has an ancestor or a patron deity. The families or groups composing the larger units are linked through religions and socio-economic functions."\textsuperscript{6}

In Irish history, however, the term meant families or communities of persons having the same surname. In certain other areas of Western countries and certain period of history, it stood for a division of territory allotted to a family or community.\textsuperscript{7}

Similarly various authors have described the tribes by different nomenclature. Dr. Ghurya named them 'backward Hindu', Dr. Das and Das rename them as 'submerged humanity'. The other names are Aboriginals, Primitive tribe, Adivasi, Vanyajati, Vanavasi, Adimjati etc. In the ancient literature of India such as the Vedas, the Puranas, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the tribals appeared as Nishad, Sabarars, Kiratas, and Dasyas. They are believed to be the earlier among the present inhabitants of the country.

The term 'tribe' have not been defined clearly anywhere in the Indian constitution. Only the term 'Scheduled Tribe' explained as "the tribe or the tribal communities or parts of or group within tribes or tribal communities". These
groups are presumed to form the oldest ethnological sector of the people.  

The term 'Adivasi' (Adi = original and Vasi = inhabitant) has become current among certain people. The International Labour Organization has classified such people as 'indigenous'. According to ILO conventions the aboriginals or tribals have been defined as the "tribals or semi tribal groups of the independent countries deprived socially or economically and having their own customs, traditions and traits or they have their own special customary laws/ conventions."  

1.2 A Note on Constitutional Safeguards for Tribals  

Pre-independence tribals living in forests, hills and even on the plain were isolated from the mainstream. The status of the tribals were unsatisfactory during princely and colonial region. It was a policy of neglect and saga of exploitation. Due to this, their land and forest were slowly and gradually grabbed by the rich people like landlords and money lenders. They were turned into bonded labourers, leading a life of extreme poverty and misery. The excessive encroachment on their rights in forest land led to an expression of anger in the form of riots. Thus independent India inherited a complex tribal problem from the British colonial system. The major thrust is to solve the tribal problem in view of our commitment to the objectives of social justice, social, economic and political equality of status and opportunity as enshrined in the preamble to the
constitution. The makers of the constitution paid special attention towards the
tribal problems and tried to eradicate it for ever.

The concern of the constituent members of the constitution for protection
and promotion of the interests of the deprived sections is amply reflected in the
preamble of the constitution which was amended in 1976. It succinctly proclaims
the aims and objects of the constitution, i.e., to constitute into a Sovereign,
Socialist, Secular, Democratic Republic.

The Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission for the Tribal
Welfare and Development, 1961 headed by Sri U.N Dhebar observed that the
constitution arranged for the provision of resources and provided the required
institutional apparatus. Some of the safeguards for the tribals in the constitution
were initially in co-operated for ten years. In fixing this period, the constitution
had envisaged an effective follow-up programmes which would have obviated
the need for their continuance. This hope has not materialised and the period has
been extended. But it is observed that this has not been due to any deficiency in
the constitution itself. It is the result of deficiency in performance.10

The constitution deliberately laid emphases on both aspects - protective
as well as developmental. The members of the constitution were keen that the
tribals join the mainstreams of the national life, in order to retain their traits and
cultural heritage. Keeping this in view, the tribal status in constitution,
therefore, made special provision for their social and economic development. The provisions are contained in Articles 46, 244, 330, 332, 334, 335, 338, 339, 342 and schedules V, VI to the constitution of India. The constitution also permits for change in laws, according to the tribal situation in concerned area.

1.3 Concept of Development

The term development has been used in a wider sense. The purpose of development is to provide increasing opportunities to all people for a better life. It is essential to bring about more equitable distribution of income and wealth for promoting social justice and efficiency of production, to provide a greater variety of facilities like education, health services, nutrition, housing etc.

According to ILO, Development involves 'humans' as distinct from material product. It is defined as a process which involves improvement in the quality of life of weaker sections and a greater participation and involvement of the masses in the process of decision making in the economic, social, political and cultural life of a society. To Denis Gonlet "development is not a cluster of benefits given to the people in need, rather a process by which a populace acquires a greater mastery over its own destiny." Schumpeter defines development as only such changes in economic life that are not forced upon it from without, but arise by its own initiative from within.
According to Dedley Seers, “Development means creating condition for the realisation of human potential.”

Development is an elusive concept and evolves mobilization of natural resources, augmentation of trained manpower, capital and technical know how and their utilisation for attainment of constantly multiplying national goals, higher living standards and the change over from a traditional to a modern society. The essence of development is generally perceived as industrialisation and modernisation. Development is a multi-dimensional and multi-linear process.

Development is usually conceived as an aspect of change that is desirable, broadly planned and administered or at least influenced by governmental action. Thus the concept of development consists of (a) an aspect of change (b) a plan or prediction and (c) involvement of the government for the achievement of that planned or predicted goal. The term development is also used for the process of allowing and encouraging people to meet their own aspiration.

The main aim of development is to increase national as well as per capita income and to raise the standard of living of the people and secure justice, freedom, equality and security for them in society. The focus of development is now increasingly on (a) equitable distribution of wealth and income (b) full utilisations of manpower. (c) better utilisation of natural resources, and (d)
Hence, Development means change plus growth i.e., it includes growth, modernization, increase in social facilities, etc.

1.4 Tribal Development: Meaning and Scope

The goal of tribal development in India were best summarised in Nehru's forward to Verrier Elwin's Book on NEFA. It is otherwise known as "Tribal Panchsheel." The Nehru's Panchsheel (five point) are:

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

ii. Tribal right in 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. Some technical people from outside will no doubt be needed, especially in the beginning. But we should avoid introducing too many outsiders into tribal territory.

iv. We should not over administer these areas or overwhelm them with multiplicity of schemes. We should rather work through and not in rivalry to their own social and cultural instructions, and

v. We should guide results not by statistics or the amount of money spend but by the quality of human character that is involved.
This five point formula enunciated by Nehru stand as the corner stone of the India's government policy. This was further elaborated by Elwin, who emphasized the need for the tribal people to come to terms with their own past avoiding danger of pauperism and without creating a sense of inferiority. Elwin stressed on recognising the contribution of the tribal people in helping the Indian Society as a whole, so that they may feel as they are the part and parcel of India as any other citizen.18

Dr. B.S. Guha explained the tribal welfare goals in such a manner that “schemes for tribal welfare must fulfill two essential conditions namely, conformity to the social values and patterns of the people for whom they are intended and the psychological receptivity and ability of the tribal population to absorb them. Theoretical perfection of a scheme or its suitability to people in general must not be regarded as the criterion for tribal people. Ignorance of these basic facts and inability to appreciate them are responsible for the failure of many developmental programmes which by themselves are unexceptionable.”19 Dr. Guha further commended about tribal development that, isolation and absence of interaction with other communities are injurious to the people. The views put forward here are motivated by these consideration only and not framed with the purpose, conscious or unconscious of attempting to keep the tribal people as "museum specimens" as is so often wrongly attributed to the anthropologists. To allow a tribe to retain its traditional value and the mode of
life in its natural setting and give it the chance to develop along its own genius is the very reverse of the 'museum specimens' idea!  

Tribal development aims at increasing the incomes and strengthening the material aspects of tribal culture through better utilization of the environmental resources, i.e., forests, minerals, flora and fauna, agriculture, animal husbandry, industrial potential as well as skill of the tribal people.

The goals of tribal development can be summarised into

1). Long term objectives and
2). Short term objectives.

The long term objectives are (a) to narrow the gap of development between non-tribals and tribals. (b) to improve the quality of life without disturbing their ethnicity.

The short term objectives are-

(a) elimination of exploitation by all means, by rapid socio-economic development,

(b) improving organisational capabilities and

(c) building up inner strength of the tribal people.

Tribal development is often taken as synonymous with rural development. The tribal situation in the country presents a varied picture. Some areas have
high tribal concentration, while some have no tribals. The developmental parameters of each tribe is different and it depend on the inhabitants and their settling conditions. The tribal development scene was critically reviewed on the eve of Fifth Plan. The review of the first Tribal Plan 1974-79 was also discussed in the report of the working group on tribal development, during the Sixth Plan (1980-85) under the chairmanship of B.G. Deshmukh. In respect of “tribal concentrated areas”, it was decided to accept an area development approach with focus on a family oriented programme for tribals and for dispersed tribals.

1.5 Approaches for Tribal Development

There are mainly five approaches which have been employed so far in the welfare of tribals in India. The approaches are:

i  Political approach.

ii  Administrative approach.

iii Religious approach with special reference to missionary approach.

iv  Voluntary agencies approach.

v  Anthropological approach.

1.5.1 Political approach

The political approach for the tribal welfare may be understood in the context of the pre and post-independence period. The colonial rule created “excluded” and “partly excluded” areas and gave separate political representation to the tribes. Nationalists opposed these measures as part of a diabolic conspiracy
to a new separatism.

After independence, the constitution has given the tribals a number of safeguards by considering them to be the weaker section of the population. In the first instance a period of 10 years was given to achieve the goal, but as the problem was too complicated to be solved through a single decade, it has persisted through decades.

1.5.2 Administrative Approach

The administrative approach is closely followed by the political approach. The government of India has constituted a vast administrative machinery for tribal welfare.

At the State level, the governor has been made responsible and on his behalf the chief minister and welfare minister are in charge of the special schemes to be implemented in the tribal areas. In some major concentrated tribal areas, the State has an independent tribal welfare ministry. The welfare ministry is advised by two bodies. The Tribes Advisory Council and the Tribal Research Institute are framing the political programmes for tribal welfare.

1.5.3 Religious Approach

The religious approach has been attempted by different religious agencies like Christian missionaries, the Ramkrishna mission, the Arya samaj and other
local religious institutions which are engaged in the welfare works for the tribals.

The Christian missionaries have been active in tribal India. For both types of work, spiritual and material, the missionaries did realize the importance of understanding the tribal culture and language. Missionary welfare activities have been viewed by different persons in different ways.

1.5.4 Voluntary Agencies Approach

Under the voluntary agencies approach social workers, social welfare agencies, social movement agencies, social reformers, etc., are working to uplift the weaker section of our society in their own ways. Voluntary social services organizations have done considerable humanitarian work in the tribal areas but their idealism and spirit of service have not been matched by their understanding of tribal organisation, values and problems.

1.5.5 Anthropological Approach

Anthropologists believe in the ultimate integration of tribes into the mainstream of national life. After independence, some anthropologists came out with several papers and addresses, dealing with the importance of applied anthropology in tribal welfare programmes. The various tribal research institutes are engaged in conducting researches on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled
Tribes. Besides, many University Departments in the country undertake research on them.

Whatever the approaches are being taken, it is important to integrate the tribal people in the national mainstream. But the problem is that national mainstream is very wide. Unfortunately the main propose to integrate these tribals with the mainstream is left aside since there are innumerable problems that have emerged on account of their so called integration in the national mainstream: The important problems identified as the “Chaos of Values” and “Counter Values” and the consequent break up of the social structure. The contacts of the tribals with the urban people have also created problems of adjustment. The tribals suffer also due to inferiority complex. There are problems of alienation of land in their native places. The fertility of land also get reduced due to carelessness. There is heavy economic loss due to indiscriminate deforestation. Owing to the impact of governmental programmes and modernisation, tremendous changes took place in the living conditions of the tribal community. The tribals in India are passing through a phase of economic change along with the rest of the society. Modern technology and concepts are penetrating their culture. The factors that are shaping the future of the tribal welfare are (a) education, (b) exposure to urban market forces (c) the co-operative movement and (d) banking.
1.6 Research Problem

The tribal development measures adopted during the second half of this century are found to be insufficient in improving the economic conditions of the tribals. Even after the introduction of several welfare measures, the tribals are still facing several economic and social constraints. Therefore, it is necessary to evaluate the various developmental programmes undertaken during the last five decades. Moreover, an analysis of the socio-economic development of tribals in Kerala and the extent of the human development they achieved are also imperative.

1.7 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

i) to trace an overview of tribal population in Kerala with special reference to Wayanad.

ii) to evaluate the tribal development programmes and the role played by the government.

iii) to identify the role of non-governmental organizations in the tribal development.

iv) to analyse the socio-economic profile of Paniya tribal community in Wayanad.

v) to make a comparison between the Paniyas and the mainstream population on the basis of human development indices.
1.8 **Methodology**

In order to measure the socio-economic development of tribals in Kerala, the researcher relies on United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) methodology of constructing human development indices like Human Development Index (HDI), Human Poverty Index for developing countries (HPI-1), Gender Disparity Index (GDI) and Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM). These indices were formed for both tribals and non-tribals in order to facilitate comparison in their human development. Other relevant tools have also been employed.

1.9 **The Data Base**

Both primary and secondary data are used in the study. Available secondary data are obtained from Census of India Publications; Tribal Welfare Department, Kerala; Planning Board, Kerala and the Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP), Wayanad. Publications of Non-Governmental Organisations like Sreyas, Fedina, High Land Development Agency (HILDA), Wayanad Social Service Society (WSSS), Solidarity are also used to analyse the participation of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in the tribal development programmes. Since the available secondary data are found to be inadequate to carry out a comprehensive analysis of the objectives of the study, a primary survey was conducted.
1.10 The Study Area And Sample Design

A stratified sampling technique is used for the primary data collection. Household Survey was conducted with questionnaires and interviews (as shown in Appendix I) in Pullpally and Mullankolly villages of Sulthan Bathery Taluk of Wayanad District in Kerala. There are many tribal communities spread throughout the Wayanad district. As it is extremely difficult to conduct an elaborate study on all these tribal communities, the proposed study is confined to the Paniya community, the major tribal community in Wayanad. For empirical support, 270 households from Paniya tribal community and 100 households from non-tribal groups were selected and relevant data collected in order to compare their socio-economic development.

1.11 Reference Period

The primary data were collected from March 1st 2000 to May 29th 2001.

1.12 Organization of the Thesis

The thesis is divided into nine chapters. The first chapter serves as an introduction. A review of literature related to tribal studies is carried out in the Second chapter. A note on the policies, plan and programmes for tribal development in India since independence is sketched in the Third chapter. The Fourth chapter gives a brief account of the tribals in Kerala and Wayanad district in particular. Fifth chapter gives an overview of the role played by the
government in tribal development. Sixth chapter sketches the role of non-governmental organizations in tribal development. Seventh chapter presents an insight into the socio-economic profile of the Paniya tribe in Wayanad. In the eighth chapter, a comparison between Paniya tribal community and the mainstream population on the basis of human development indices is attempted. Finally the ninth chapter presents a summary, major findings and implied policy suggestions.
NOTES AND REFERENCE


18. Ibid. p. 40.

19. Dr. Prakash Chandra Mehta, op. cit, p.11.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid. p.23.

23. Ibid