CHAPTER 2

TRIBES OF KERALA: PROBLEMS AND WELFARE

2.1. Introduction

2.2. Definitions of the Tribe

2.3. Setting of Tribal Population in Kerala

2.4. Conditions and Problems

2.5. Tribal Development

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2.1. INTRODUCTION

Tribes constitute a unique, varied and important part of India. Most of them have their own languages, their own traditions, customs, myths and ritual practices, deities, arts and performances, etc. Many of these have now been changed by the many influences which surround them, but many have also retained their essential features. The tribes exist all over India, and can be found in every state. They have been mentioned throughout anthropologists as the 'pre-Aryan', 'pre-Dravidian', 'indigenous', 'aborigines', 'original inhabitants of the province' etc. A time came in the British establishment, during the colonial period, when it was felt that the colonists had to learn about their constituents and their culture in order to rule them efficiently. This was because Indian culture was so fundamentally different from the culture of the colonizers. A massive anthropological and archaeological campaign began in India, by the British in the mid-18th century, to identify the people they were controlling this campaign, they soon realized, due to the great variety of cultures and peoples in India, became a difficult and arduous process. They began to try to classify the people of India into district categories and labels. They found one such group scattered all over India that was 'culturally distinct' in customs, religion, language, etc. and who adhere to now of the wider creeds. The label 'Primitive Tribes' was the name given to this large group which existed throughout India.

The tribes were very different throughout India, having distinct customs and traditions of their own, but the British could find no category of these various people, and ignorantly grouped them all together. This category was broken up into regions and such classifications such as 'forest' or 'hill' tribes were given. Many of the tribes remained in isolation of their own will, or because of entrenchers (dominating cultures) arriving into their land, and
Tribe of Kerala

decided to, or had to, withdraw into the hills and forests where they lived their own lives and for centuries, developed upon their own lives.

The Scheduled tribes are notified in 30 States/Union Territories and the number of individual ethnic groups notified as Scheduled tribes are 705. The tribal population of the country, as per 2011 Census, is 10.43 Crore, constituting 8.6 per cent of the total population. 89.97 per cent of them live in rural areas and 10.03 per cent in urban areas. The essential characteristics of these communities are primitive traits, geographical isolation, distinctive culture and shyness of contact with outsiders. Educational and economic backwardness is also their common feature. As a result, the Scheduled Tribe communities suffer from illiteracy, poverty and ill health by and large. To ameliorate their condition, the constitution of India has several special provisions for promoting educational and economic interests of the scheduled tribes and to protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.

Many of India's tribes are believed to have been the original inhabitants of India. They are more or less have escaped absorption and were able to maintain their own independent existence, while others were often completely assimilated. The tribes of India have often been overlooked by the academic world and are often exploited by politicians of India. These people have often been confused as constituting one group, but are in fact very diverse communities and can be found all over the subcontinent. However, much of their history and modern situations have taken similar paths.

In Kerala, the situations of the tribal communities have been varied. 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 and even the kings of the land till they were defeated by the 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.

The scheduled tribes of Kerala constitute a rich, unique, varied and critical element of Indian tradition. The scheduled tribes are at different stages of social, cultural and economic development. The cultural pattern varies from tribe to tribe and region to region. Many tribes have or have had their own language or dialect, their own 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 tradition have remained and have been equally influential.

The tribes of Kerala are in the track of a struggle that has created consternation in the ruling circles in the state. A considerable sum is being spent in the tribal areas; it has not led to any development there. There are not many lavatories or even walls. Many homeless tribes sleep under the sky. The actual beneficiaries of pro-Adivasi schemes are most often the tribal welfare officers, some politicians and a few paper organisations. The tribes do not have any right, even in places where the government had started Adivasi rehabilitation works. They have been so marginalized in the development process that more than three-fourths are landless and their social indicators like health, education, welfare etc. remaining very much below the state average. Fundamental to the trivial question in Kerala is providing them with land and implementing effective measures for their social development.

2.2. DEFINITION OF THE TRIBE

As a matter of fact, there is no precise definition of the term 'Tribe' on which there can be general agreement. It is generally applied to a community or a cluster of communities characterized by a common territory, language
and a cultural heritage, on an inferior technological level. For long, solution to the problem of definition of a tribe has been eluding the administration. Anthropologists and sociologists have attempted different definitions.

The Oxford Dictionary of English (2010) defines the word ‘tribe’ is “a racial group, especially one united by language and customs, living as a community under one or more chiefs”.

Webster's New World Dictionary of the American language (1974) defines 'tribe' as "a group of persons, families or clans believed to have a common ancestor, many tribes form a close community under a leader or chief, any group of people with the same occupation, ideas".

Concise Oxford English Dictionary (2011) gives a definition that "a social division in a traditional society consisting of linked families or communities with a common culture and dialect".

Any aggregate of people united by ties of descent from a common ancestor, community of customs and traditions, adherence to the same leaders. This definition is from Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of English language (1996).

Constitution of India defines, “the tribes or tribal community or parts or a group within tribes or tribal communities which may be specified by the President of India by public notification”.

Dictionary of Anthropology (E B Tylor, 2011) defines as a tribe, “a social group, usually with a social area, dialect, cultural homogeneity and unifying social organization. It may include several sub-groups such as sibs or villages. The tribe ordinarily has a and may have a common ancestor, as well as a patron deity. The families or small communities making up the tribe are linked through economic, social, religion, family or blood ties.
D.N. Majumdar (1961) defines a tribe as "a social group with territorial affiliation, endogamous with no specialization of functions ruled by tribal officers, hereditary or otherwise, united in language or dialect, recognizing social distance from other tribes or castes.

The Imperial Gazetteer (1973) had defined, “a tribe as a collection of families bearing a common name, speaking a common dialect, occupying or professing to occupy a common territory and which is not usually endogamous though originally it might have been.”

Deogankar (1994) defines, “as a social group, usually with a social area, dialect, cultural homogeneity and unifying social organization. It may include several subgroups such as sibs or villages. The tribe ordinarily has a leader and may have a common ancestor as well as patron deity. The families or small communities making up the tribe are linked through economic, social, religious family or blood ties”.

Hassan gives (1992) a definition as, “a tribe is a collection of families or groups of families bearing a common name, the members of which occupy the same territory, speak the same language and observe certain taboos regarding marriage profession or occupation and have developed a well assessed system of reciprocity and mutuality of obligation”.

For long, solution to the problem of definition of a tribe has been eluding the administration. Anthropologists and sociologists have attempted different definitions. This indicates that different authors have given importance to different aspects or characteristics and there is no universally accepted definition of a tribe. However a consensus may lead us to identify and define any group as a tribe which displays the following characteristics.
Tribes of Kerala

(1) A definite habitat and area.
(2) A unified social organization based primarily on blood relationship.
(3) Cultural homogeneity.
(4) A common scheme of deities and common ancestors.
(5) A common dialect with a common folklore.

2.3. SETTING OF TRIBAL POPULATION IN KERALA

As per the Amended by TheScheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Act 2002 (Act 10 of 2003) vide part-VIIKeral-Second Sheduled notified in the Gazette of India, dated 8.1.2003,G.O.(Ms) No.06/2014/SCSTDD dated 29.01.2014, the Government of Kerala has enlisted 37 Adivasi communities in the state as Scheduled Tribes. The total Scheduled Tribe population returned in the 2011 Census is 4,84,839. Out of this 4,33,092 are in rural areas and 51,747 in urban areas. In terms of proportion, the Scheduled Tribe population constitutes 1.45% of the total population. The proportion during the last census was 1.14%. Thus, there has been an increase of 0.36% in the proportion during the last decade. The highest proportion of scheduled tribe has been recorded in Wayanad (18.53%) and the lowest in Thrissur (0.30%). Most of the Scheduled Tribe population of the state inhabits in the Western Ghats, in proximity to the forest ecosystem. Scheduled tribe communities of the state can broadly be classified into four categories, viz., hunters and gatherers, agricultural labourers, shifting cultivators and settled cultivators, based on their traditional economic activity. However, today majority of the ST population is landless agricultural laborers.

Scheduled tribe population in the state belongs to 37 distinct communities. They are households in the State. Wayanad has the highest
concentration of scheduled tribes (ST) in the state. 35.66 percent of the scheduled tribes population in the state is in Wayanad, which accounts for 17.11 of the total population of that district. Idukki comes next with 15.65 percent of the scheduled tribes (ST) population in the state followed by Palakkad (11.05 percent), Kasaragod (9.12 percent) and lowest in Alappuzha with 0.87 percent. About 5 percent tribes live in tree holes and caves in interior forest regions. They are the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups of Kerala and have mainly five clans. CholaNaikkar, Kattunaikkar, Kurumbar, Kadar and Koragar. Their clan based villages are called Oors. There are about 670 Oors with a total population is nearly 17,000. Proto-tribes depend for livelihood mainly on forest produce, thus they collect and sell outside.

A survey conducted by the Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA, 2011) in association with local bodies in the State and the Scheduled Tribe Welfare Department, reveals the pathetic condition of the scheduled tribes in Kerala. There are 4,614 landless tribal families in the state. More than 55 percent of tribes live in dilapidated houses. As many as 1,252 tribal hamlets are not electrified. 24,289 families do not hold ration cards and half of the population of scheduled tribes is deprived of pure drinking water. More than 1300 tribal settlements face threat from wild animals. There are 887 unwed mothers and 20,301 widows among scheduled tribe women. Only 17 percent of them get a pension. Many families do not have access to medical care. There are 4,036 are differently disabled and 2386 are mentally challenged. 40, 323 are suffering chronic diseases. The literacy rate among the scheduled tribes is 72.77 percent in this state that boasts of 96 percent literacy rate. Most of them drop out of schools at primary level. 77, 680 people in the age group of 15-59 are unemployed. These include 2112 graduated, 200 postgraduates and 2066 people with professional qualifications.
The population of scheduled tribes in each district and their percentage distribution in each district is furnished below:

**Table 1**

**District-wise Tribal Population of Kerala**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>ST to total Population</th>
<th>ST within Communities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kasargod</td>
<td>48857</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>10.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kannur</td>
<td>41371</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>8.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayanad</td>
<td>151443</td>
<td>18.55</td>
<td>31.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kozhikode</td>
<td>15228</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>3.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malappuram</td>
<td>22990</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>4.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palakkad</td>
<td>48972</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>10.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thrissur</td>
<td>9430</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>1.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ernakulam</td>
<td>16559</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>3.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idukki</td>
<td>55815</td>
<td>5.04</td>
<td>11.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kottayam</td>
<td>21972</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>4.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alappuzha</td>
<td>6574</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathanamthitta</td>
<td>8108</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kollam</td>
<td>10761</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>2.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thiruvananthapuram</td>
<td>26759</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>5.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2011 Census

Thirty seven scheduled tribal communities have been notified in the scheduled tribe list of the states. Based on their traditional economic activity, they can broadly be classified into four categories, as hunters and gatherers, agricultural labourers, shifting cultivators and settled cultivators. However,
Today majority of the tribal population is landless agricultural labourers. Most of the tribal population of the state inhabits in the Western Ghats, in proximity to the forest ecosystem. Apart from the agriculture related works, a considerable number of the population is involved with the collection of non-timber forest produces. Community wise tribal population and their livelihood sources are given in Table 2.

**Table 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No</th>
<th>Tribe</th>
<th>Livelihood source</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Adiyans</td>
<td>Labourers</td>
<td>11526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Arandan, Aranadan</td>
<td>Hunters and gatherers</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Eravallan</td>
<td>Agricultural labourers</td>
<td>4797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Hill Pulaya, Mala Pulayan, KurumbaPulayan, KaravazhiPulayan, PambaPulayan</td>
<td>Agricultural labourers and non timber forest product collectors</td>
<td>2959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Irular, Irulan</td>
<td>Settled cultivators and agricultural labourers</td>
<td>23721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Kadar, Wayanad Kadar</td>
<td>Non timber forest product collectors</td>
<td>2949</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Kanikaran, Kanikkar</td>
<td>Settled cultivators and agricultural labourers</td>
<td>21251</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Kattunayakan</td>
<td>Non timber forest product collectors</td>
<td>18199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Kochuvelan</td>
<td>Non timber forest product collectors</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Koraga</td>
<td>Basket making and agricultural Labourers</td>
<td>1582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Kudiya, Melakudiya</td>
<td>Settled cultivators and agricultural labourers</td>
<td>785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Kurichchan, Kurichiyan</td>
<td>Settled cultivators</td>
<td>35171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Kurumans, Mullu</td>
<td>Settled cultivators</td>
<td>24505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Kurumbas, Kurumbar, Kurumbean</td>
<td>Non-timber forest product collectors</td>
<td>2586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Maha Malasar</td>
<td>Non-timber forest product collectors</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Malai Arayan, Malai Arayan</td>
<td>Settled cultivators</td>
<td>33216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Malai Pandaram</td>
<td>Non-timber forest product collectors</td>
<td>2422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Malai Vedan, Malavedan</td>
<td>Non-timber forest product collectors</td>
<td>8149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Malakkuravan</td>
<td>Non-timber forest product collectors</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Malasar</td>
<td>Labourers, collecting forest produces</td>
<td>3195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Malarayar</td>
<td>Non-timber forest product collectors</td>
<td>1568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Mannan</td>
<td>Settled cultivators</td>
<td>9780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Marati</td>
<td>Agriculture, Animal husbandary, Basketry, carpentry</td>
<td>27824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Muthuvan, Mudugar, Muduvan</td>
<td>Non-timber forest product collectors and farming</td>
<td>23746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Malayen, Nattu Malayan, Konga Malayan</td>
<td>Non-timber forest product collectors</td>
<td>5917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Palliyar, Palliyan, Palliyar, Paliyan</td>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>1464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Paniyan</td>
<td>Agricultural labour</td>
<td>88450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Ulladan, Ullatan</td>
<td>Non-timber forest product collectors</td>
<td>16230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Uraly</td>
<td>Hunters and gatherers</td>
<td>11179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Mala Vettuvan</td>
<td>Food gatherers</td>
<td>17869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>Ten Kurumban, Jenu Kurumban</td>
<td>Farming</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Thachanadan, Thachanadan Moopan</td>
<td>Plantation workers</td>
<td>1745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>Cholanaickan</td>
<td>Fishing and forest product collectors</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Mavilan</td>
<td>Marginal farmers, agricultural labourers, wage labourers</td>
<td>30867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>Karimpalan</td>
<td>Collecting charcoal (kari), hunters, food</td>
<td>14098</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to their historical ethnic and social, cultural relations, the tribal communities living in different regions may be divided into seven tribal zones by Velappan,(1994). They are Kasargod, Wayanad, Attappady, Nilambur, Parambikulam, Idukki and Travancore.

2.3.1. KASARGOD ZONE

This zone includes two Taluks of Kasargod district, Kasargod and Hosdurg. The name, Kasargod is said to be derived from the word Kusirakood meaning Nuxvomica forests (Kanjirakuttom). Kasargod district was formed on May 24, 1984, with the intention of maximizing attention on the development of backward areas that with the formation of the new district, comprising the erstwhile Kasargod and Hosdurg Taluks, it has become possible to develop this coastal area fruitfully. As per 2011 Census, there are 48857 scheduled tribes in the district and this comes 3.75 percent of the total population. There are three types of Scheduled tribes are presented in the district. These can be named as Koragas, Maratis and Malekudiyans. The Koragas are one of the particularly vulnerable tribe, living in the Kasargod Taluk only. These people are backward financially, educationally and as well as culturally. Among them Maratis are educated and culturally forward in comparison to the other tribes in the district. Malekudiyans are marginal farmers. The Tribal Department is implementing many schemes for the development of the tribes in the District. Like the Scheduled caste people, Scheduled tribes also maintain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Tribe</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Kasargod</th>
<th>Hosdurg</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Vetta Kuruman</td>
<td>Agricultural labourers, mngrega.</td>
<td>739</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Mala Panickar</td>
<td>Agricultural labourers</td>
<td>1023</td>
<td>474</td>
<td>549</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
their own culture, customs and rituals. A brief profile of these tribal communities as follows:

**Koragas**

In Kerala, the Koragas are distributed in Kasargod and Manjeswaram blocks of Kasargod district. ‘Kora’ means sun and it is said that they worship the sun and hence the term ‘Koraga’ originated from it. They live mostly in rural areas and are distributed in 43 settlements. According to the 2011 census, their population is 1582 consisting 778 males and 804 females. Koragas have their highly distinct and unique folk culture. They speak Tulu and Kannada. The principal occupation of Koragas was basket making and food gathering. They are experts in basketry and weaving a variety of items like winnowing fans, cradles and baskets. They collect the raw materials like bamboos, canes and creepers available from the nearby forests. Currently the community faces severe health problems. They are financially, educationally and culturally backward. Koragas can march ahead through planned development. A concerted effort has to be made for their economic development and redeeming them from the disparities in social position as well.

**Maratis**

The Marati community distributed in the Hosdurg and Kasargod Taluks of Kasargod district of Kerala. According to some activists, the Marati community, which migrated from Maharashtra to the hilly areas of the district in the early 18th century, does not follow the tradition and culture of the tribes. The Marati speaking in the district was excluded from the list of Scheduled Tribes following a study carried out by the Kerala Institute for Research Training and Development Studies of Scheduled Caste and Tribes (KIRTADS) in 2002. National commission for Scheduled Tribes, Government
of India is reincluded this community in the scheduled tribe list of Kerala according to the Order No.16/01/inclusion/2012/RU-III dated 12.07.2012. Maraticommunities are educationally and culturally forward people than other tribes in Kasargod. They speak a common tribal dialect Marati which does not have any script and different from Marathi language. This language is totally unique and not understood other people in this area. Community's traditional occupation is marginal farmers.

**Malekkudiyas**

Malekudiya is one of the most backward communities in Kasaragod district. Malekudiya means the ‘children of hills’. They are very poor. They believe in spirits and worship ancestors. A few collected minor forest produce; which they sell in the market. They are engaged in plantation as labourers and agricultural labourers. Only few of them are having few cents of land for cultivation and having coconut plants. The spoken languages are Kannada and Malayalam. Being a community having a population of 785 (Census, 2011), their development plans are to be focused on family based projects. Those living in remote and isolated areas do not have adequate infrastructural facilities for their total development.

2.3.2. WAYANAD ZONE (STUDY AREA)

Nestled among the mountain of the Western Ghats, lies Wayanad, one of the loveliest hill stations of Kerala. The name, Wayanad, is believed to have been derived from the word, *Vayalnadu*, meaning the land of paddy fields. The present district of Wayanad was carved out, from the parts of Kozhikode and Kannur districts and came into being on 1st November 1980 as the 12th district of Kerala. Wayanad, the panoramic hill of Malabar in the Northern Kerala situated above the sea level ranges between 700 meters to 2100 meters is a homeland of various tribal communities. As per 2011
Census, there are 151443 scheduled tribes in the district and this comes 18.55 percent of the total population. The literacy rate of Scheduled Tribe is 65 per cent. The tribal people in Wayanad are found in remote areas. They depend on labour in agriculture and plantation work for survival, since they have little or no land. The absence of land holdings, education and health facilities are acute among these tribal people. They mainly consist of various sects of Paniyas, Kurichians, Adiyas, Mullakurmas, Uralikurumas and Kattunaikkans etc.. A brief profile of these tribal communities as follows:-

**Paniya**

Paniyas are the major tribal community of Wayanad. ‘Pani’ means labour and ‘Paniyan’ signifies ‘one who works’. Paniyas, as their name indicates were workers and during earlier time, the landlords used to sell them as bonded labour, along with the plantation. According to their oral tradition, they lived freely in Ippimala, a mountain near Banasura Peak in Wayanad and was enslaved by the farming immigrants of the early centuries. According to 2011 Census they consist of 69116. Curly hair, thick lips, and dark complexion are the physical appearance of the tribal people. Community is landless and their major economic activity is agricultural labour. The language spoken by them is Paniyabhasha. It is a combination of Malayalam and Kannada. Due to the various tribal welfare programmes by the government, a change has set in the lives of Paniyas.

**Adiya**

The word ‘Adiya’ or ‘Adiyan’ means “slaves”. Adiya families are concentrated mainly in Wayanad. About 99.80 per cent of the Adiyan population is settled in Wayanad district alone (Socioeconomic survey, 2008). Adiya population numbers 11,221 consisting of 5389 males and 5822 females. In Wayanad District, Adiyas are found in 9 Grama Panchayats.
Adiyas are the landless agricultural labourers of Wayanad. They were subjected to the worst form of bonded labour till 1976. Their culture and economy are languishing by the traits of the boded labour system. The Adiyas are known as 'Ravulayar' traditionally. The Adiya, like the Paniya, is one of the slaves sects in Kerala migrated to Wayanad from Coorg of Mysore region. But they have a distinct social identity. The name Adiyahave originated from an old rule, they should maintain a distance of six feet away from the landlords. In Wayanad, they are mostly seen in different parts of Mananthavady Taluk and Pulpally Region of Sulthan Bathery Taluk. The language spoken by this group is Adiya, a mixture of Kannada and Malayalam (Adiyabhasha). The majority of them are landless; with only a small section of them are cultivators. Gaddika is a famous art form of Adiya community.

**Kattunaicka**

The population of the kattunaickan community in Wayanad comes to 17051 (11.13 per cent of the total tribal population in the district) and are mainly found in the Sulthan Bathery Taluk of the district. They have been classified as “Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group” by the Government of India. Owing to their relative isolation from the rest of the communities. The term kattunaickan is derived from the words, ‘kattu’ (forest) and ‘nayakan’ or ‘naickan’ (lord). Thus Kattunauckan literally means lord of the forests. Basically Kattunaickans are forest dwellers and hence their social life and economy are forest based. They are known as Tenkurumar since they collect honey from the forest. They are experts in bamboo cutting and other related works. They have all the physical features of a hill-tribe. Their language is a mixture of all Dravidian languages. They worship animals, birds, trees, rock, hillocks and snakes. They are firm believers in black magic and sorcery. They also worship their ancestors, along with worshipping Hindu deities. They
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Kurichians are one of the most developed tribes in Wayanad district. There are 5812 households in the district with a population of 25266 (Census, 2011). They are the first agricultural tribe to have settled in the district. The majority of them have land holdings, and agriculture is their principal economic activity. The word Kurichian came from two words ‘Kuri and Chiyan’. ‘Kuri’ means target and ‘chiyan’ means those who hunt or shoot at the target. They are very efficient in using bows and arrows. They practice untouchability towards all castes other than Brahmans. They have clean food habits and keep their houses, premises and dress always clean. Kuichians are mainly located in Mananthavady, Vythiri and Sulthan Bathery Taluks and forms 17.40 per cent of the total tribal population of the District. The most interesting thing about the Kurichians is that they hold a position of high esteem among other tribes in Wayanad. Many of the excommunicated Kurichians are now educationally and economically better compared to the traditional Kurichians. This community is claiming to have a higher status over the rest of the tribal communities in Wayanad. Many of the tribal
community members are actively involved in politics and have strong political affiliation.

**Uralikuruma**

UraliKurumas are the most versatile and colourful tribal people, is one of the artisan tribes in Kerala. There are 6472 Uralikurumar constituting 4.23 per cent of the total tribal population in Wayanad (Census, 2011). They are mainly found in Sulthan Bathery and Mananthavady taluks in Wayanad, concentrations in Thirunelly, Pananmaram, Poothadi, Noolpuzha, Mullankolli, Kamiyampetta, Ambalavayal and Nenmeni panchayats. They involved with basketry and pottery. Today, most of the Uralikurumas are agricultural laborers. Only a negligible section of them has any land holding. Uralikurumas are also called Bet Kurumas. The tribes in Wayanad speak a mixture of Kannada and Malayalam languages. They have no ethnic affinity with the other Kuruma tribal community of Wayanad.

**Mullu Kuruma**

Amongst the Kuruma tribes in Wayanad the Mullukurumas consider themselves superior to the other Kuruma sects. There are 20983 Mull Kurumas in the district (Census, 2011). Mullu Kuruma, found mainly in the Sulthan Bathery Taluk of the district form 17.51 per cent of the total tribal population of Wayanad. This Malayalam speaking tribal community is believed to be the descendants of Vedas, the ancient rulers of Wayanad. The older generation speaks a dialect of their own and new generation has switched over to Malayalam. Mulla Kurumas are settled agriculturists. The main crop is paddy and staple food is rice. They also rear cattle. They were also experts in hunting, which is a part of their culture. The Mulla Kuruma is one of the tribal communities in the state that has benefitted to a certain extent the welfare programmes of the state. It is found that many of the Mulla
Kurumas are active in the public life and even they have representation in the Kerala Legislative Assembly.

2.3.3. NILAMBUR ZONE

Nilambur is a beautiful town on the bank of the Chaliyar River at a distance of about 70 km from Calicut, located in the Malappuram district of Kerala. Nilambur is renowned for the oldest teak plantation in the world, the Conolly's Plot, just 2 km from town. The place is also noted for the world's first Teak Museum, vast rain forests, waterfalls and ancient Kovilakoms - residences of maharajas. As per 2011 Census, there are 22990 scheduled tribes in the district and this comes 0.56 percent of the total population. The native adivasis mainly consists of various sects like: Aalar, Aranadan and Cholanaickans.

Aalar

Aalar people are tribes, but not listed in the Scheduled list of tribes in the Kerala State. They are a small number of people found Nilambur, Malappuram district. The Aalar, also referred to as Alahmar or Alan, in the singular, owe their name to a combination of two Malayalam words - aal (people) and Allah (cave) to cannote that they are cave dwellers. The Aalar have a patois of their own, locally called the Allar bhasha, which is a debased form of Malayalam and has no script. Forest is the major natural economic resource of the Aalar. The community is landless. The traditional occupation of the Aalar is foraging, hunting. In addition, they engage in other occupation like animal husbandry, a collection of minor forest produce as non-skilled daily wage casual labourers for their subsistence. A majority of the Aalars are illiterate. Lack of awareness and poor economic conditions are the main reasons for dropouts from studies.
Aranadan

Aranadan community is found only in the Nilambur forests of Malappuram District. There are 80 families of Aranadan community with population of 247, consisting of 107 ales and 140 females (Census, 2011). The community name is derived from two local terms, ‘Aravam’ means snake and ‘Nadan’ means countrymen. They are one of the diminutive tribal communities. The Aranadan are also known by the term Eranadan. The name 'Aranadan' might have originated from their earlier lifestyle of spending half the time in the jungles. They speak in a dialect of their own, which seems to have the influence of Malayalam, Tamil and Tulu. The Aranadan have no interaction with any of the other communities living in the neighborhood. Hev were expert hunters and food gatherers with little interest in agriculture and cattle rearing. They used to hunt pythons and extract oil which was used as a remedy for leprosy. They also collect minor forest produces. The deforestation and strict enforcement of Forest laws have threatened their livelihood pattern. The Aranadan accept all types of food and water. The Aranadan's attitude towards formal education is negative. Boys and girls, who usually study up to primary level, dropout due to poor economic conditions and the illiterate social background. Many of them are dependent on shop keepers and money lenders for their immediate needs. The community as a whole is very backward in terms of social and economic status. Owing to multi-sectoral development and the exorbitant exploitation from the migrants, made this tribal community detrabilised and the victims of the violations of their basic human rights.

Cholanaikan

Cholanaickans are found only in the evergreen recess of the forests of the Ghat section of Karulai and Vazhikkadavu forest ranges in the Nilambur Valley of Malappuram District. They have been geographically isolated and
leading a life fully with dense tropical rain forest environment. There are 101 Cholanaickan families with the population of 409 and all are settled in 3 Grama Panchayats namely; Amarambalam, Karulai and Vazhikkadavu of Malappuram District. The population includes 223 males and 186 females. (Socioeconomic Survey 2008-2010). The community has been recognized as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) poised to get more attention (Madhava Menon, 1996).

Although the group calls themselves as 'Cholakkar', they are known as Cholanaickan to the non-tribes who first came in contact with them. Since they inhabit the cola (forest) and naikkan means 'king', the community is called Colanaickan (king of the forest). It is amazing that there was no mention about the Cholanaickan by any of the earlier writers of the tribes of Kerala till 1973. It is also a mystery how this group remained unknown to the outside world for centuries, even though they had contacts with outsiders for procuring certain commodities such as rice and cloth. Cholanaickan have a dialect which is spoken among them. In their dialect we can distinguish words from Kannada, Tamil and Malayalam languages. The forest is the major economic resources for this community. Foraging, fishing and hunting are the three major activities. The Cholanaickans are the only group in India who live in caves. They are the only classical food gatherers living in the mainland of our country. The caves give them shelter, protection and identity.

2.3.4. ATTAPPADI ZONE

Attappady is an area classified as the first integrated Tribal Development Block of Kerala and forms part of Mannarkkad Taluk of Palakkad district. It is situated north of Palakkad town, close to the Tamil Nadu border in the east. There are 192 tribal hamlets and 10000 families in Attappady populated by three tribal groups, namely Irulas (82.3 %) of the total tribal population), Muduga (9.6 %) & Kurumbas (4.6 %). Among them
Kurumbas are the most primitive, whereas the Irulas are numerically dominant and more advanced. The overall literacy rate of Attappady is 49.55%, in sharp contrast to the rest of Kerala. Not surprisingly, 83% of the population live below the poverty line (Census, 2011).

**Kurumbas**

Kurumbas are distributed in Attappady block Panchayat of Palakkad District. They are the earliest inhabitants of Attappady area. The Kurumbas are considered as the earliest tribal inhabitants of Attappady. When the Badugas started colonizing the Nilgiris, these people moved down to the Attappady valley. They are the smallest among the three tribal groups of Attappady. The traditional social organization of Kurumbas is similar to that of Mudugar and Irular communities residing in that area. After an initial period of nomadic life, they must have taken up shifting cultivation; their main occupations are hunting and food gathering. All these people have their settlements inside the forest, and until recently they had hardly any contact with the outside world, not even with the Irulas and Mudugas. They maintain a community life by sharing labour and food with others in the hamlet as and when required. Moopan is the man who decides about the common issues affecting the hamlet. He is the connecting link between the outside world and the families, especially between the Government and tribal community.

Kurumba community is settled in Agali and PudurGramaPanchayats of Palakkad District. There are 543 families with a population of 2251 consists of 1128 males and 1123 females (Census, 2011). The language spoken by them is a mixture of Tamil and Malayalam. Kurumbas mostly living in the Reserve and Vested Forest areas have been practicing shifting cultivation called ‘Panja Krishi’. They cultivate Ragi, Thuvara, Chama etc. They are expert in cattle rearing. They are also collectors of non timber forest produces. Due to the low literacy rate and development Kurumbas are considered as the most
Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups in Attappady. The younger generation of the Kurumba community has shown more interest than others in organizing themselves and getting educated (Madhava Menon, 1996).

**Muduga**

The Muduga community is settled around the Malleswaram peak in Attappady, Palakkad District. Until independence, Muduga community was dependent on shifting cultivation, trapping of small animals and a collection of minor forest produce. The very foundations of their resource bases have been shattered now. The forest has been “nationalized” shifting cultivation is severely put down. Hunting and trapping become severely punishable offences if done by the tribal people. The virtual disappearance of natural vegetation has destroyed the utility of the remaining forests as reservoirs of minor forest produce (Madhava Menon, 1996). As a result, this tribal community has also been compelled to take up the agricultural labour under the settlers’ exploitative attitude.

Mudugas are the second largest tribal community in Attappady. There are 1274 families and 4668 population of Muduga community. The population consists of 2225 males and 2443 females. This community is settled in Agali and PudurGramaPanchayats in Attappady (Census, 2011).

It is believed that the Mudugas were the original inhabitants of Coimbatore and later moved westward due to persecution and exploitation by more dominant communities. In their cultivation, they do a mixed sowing of ragi, thuvara (red gram), other minor millets, etc. They have more contact with the settlers from the plains of Coimbatore and Kerala. They have a dialect of their own known as ‘Muduga Bhasha’. Land alienation is the major problem faced by this community and encroachment of Muduga land, mostly by Malayali settlers was not uncommon in the past. The literacy rate among
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Mudugas is higher when compared with the other class. The growing contact between the Mudugas and settlers has resulted in the advancement of the former.

Irulas

Irula community is distributed in Palakkad district and they are mainly concentrated in Attappady region. The name indicates their very dark complexion (Irul- black, night darkness) (Madhava Menon, 1996). Irulas are the numerically dominant and are relatively advanced among the three tribal groups in Attappady. They have probably occupied this area after the Kurumbas and Mudugas. They mostly inhabit the eastern half of the valley and are found residing in more than 95 settlements, distributed over all the three Panchayats of Attappady. Irula population comes to 26525 (Census, 2011). They have the credit of being the fifth largest community of Scheduled Tribes in Kerala. They constitute 6.22 per cent of the Scheduled Tribes. They have a dialect of their own called ‘Irula bhasha’, which has more affinity to Tamil.

They were formerly shifting cultivators, but due to land alienation, they now practice settled agriculture. At present, those who possess small plots of land near their villages perform dry land agriculture mainly with cotton and indigenous grains. Attappady falls under rain shadow region and as such the important crops raised by them under dry farming are Ragi, Chama, Cholam, Thuvara, Kadala etc. They depend more upon the farms of adjacent settlers for employment. Now the Irula community has become the victims of the human rights violations of the migrants from the plains, which resulted losing their right to live as a human being with rights equal to the rest of the society.
2.3.5. PARAMBIKULAM ZONE

Parambikulam zone is situated in Palakkad district. It is a famous wildlife sanctuary with an extent of 274 km² within 76°35’ and 76°50 E longitude and between 10°20’ and 10°26 N latitude. The sanctuary is contiguous with the natural forests of Sholayar and Vazhachal in Trissur district.

Parambikulam Wildlife Sanctuary is the homeland of four tribal communities viz, Kadar, Malasar, Muduvan and Malamalasar who are appreciably different in their cultural, socioeconomic and spatial organization. It was during 1906 Sri. Ananthakrishnan, the ethnographer for the Dewan of Cochin officially enlisted these communities. Linguistically these communities are classified as Dravidian. These four ethnic groups are settled in six colonies. There are around 277 households having population around 1100 (Census, 2011). They are part of this forest since time immemorial and have a symbiotic relation with the forests. Each of these ethnic groups has its own distinct form of worship, culture, language etc.

Kadar

The word ‘Kadan’, in Malayalam means, the dweller in a forest. The Kadar may be considered as the best representative of the integrated food gathering tribes of South India. In Kerala, they are found in Palakkad and Thrissur districts.

Kadar otherwise known as Kadir (Thurston, 1906) is the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group of Anamalai Hills. They are short stature, dark-skinned and flat nosed. Their original language is a mixture of Tamil and Malayalam. Traditionally, they used to live in neatly constructed bamboo huts, thatched with teak leaves. The main livelihood was collections of Non Wood Forest Products (NWFP). They are non-vegetarian by habit, but Cycas seeds...
are frequently consumed. They never used to rear cattle and consume a milk product which is changed now.

**Malasar**

Malasar are known by different names such as Malayar or MalaiArasar. They are mainly concentrated in Parambikulam area. The Malasar is the generic name for three groups of tribes as Maha or MalaiMalasars, MacharivanMalasars and Nattu Malasars. They believe that they originally lived in KonguNadu, now comprised in Coimbatore District (Madhava Menon, 1996). There are 1267 Malasar families with population of 4201. It consists of 2115 males and 2086 females (Census, 2011). Malasar used to live in small hamlets abutting the forest on the hills of Anamalai, Palakkad and Darapuram. Malasars are sturdier in build but do not have the characteristic features of hill men. They speak a mixture of Tamil and Malayalam. Wild yam has been their staple food and now they prefer rice. They are known to cultivate ragi and other minor millets. Malasars are traditionally Non Wood Forest produce (NWFP) collectors and also used to work as labours. They have lost their command over resources and now they depend upon manual labour to eke out their living. Community specific programmes are to be chalked out to address their development in future.

**Muduvar**

Muduvar also known as Mudugar are traditionally cultivators living in the hills of Anamalai and Idukki areas. It is believed that Muduvar previously lived in the plains, but driven into the hills by the Muhammadans invades towards the end of the 18th century. They speak a dialect closely related to the Tamil with few Malayalam words. They practiced slash and burn cultivation. Thurston (1906) found a mixture of west coast and east coast cultures in them.
Their craftsmanship with bamboo is evident from their neat and flat roofed huts.

Malamalasar

Mala Malasar, living in inaccessible high forests of Palakkad District, is numerically the smallest Scheduled Tribe community of Kerala. Malamalasar are also known as Mahamalasar and Malaimalasar. They are taller than Malasar, well built, dark brown and have prominent nose and thin lips. They are generally nomadic who shift their settlements frequently within a small place. They used to live in fragile huts called “Chalai” located in rock shelter/caves. They speak a dialect, officially named as Malasir. There are 40 families (Census, 2011) of Maha Malasar community and all are settled in Muthalamada Grama Panchayat, Palakkad District. They are still primitive and have not taken to agriculture and they do not worship any specific god. One of the first ever website for a tribal community is dedicated to this community. They are also the victims of exploitation from the plains people and are the worst sufferers of their human rights.

2.3.6. IDUKKI ZONE

Idukki the 'spicy district' which has got its own territories with its natural heritages and seccresies is the second largest and prominent place in Kerala where the number of scheduled tribes and tribal ambiguities exist. This beautiful High range district is geographically known for its mountainous hills and dense forests. Almost all the scheduled tribes are living in the extreme remote hilly banks and in the deep interiors of thickly growing forests of this district. Even though a state like Kerala is well known for its high literacy rate and cultured habits, in the interior corners of this state, may be the most uncivilized "Adivasis" with their own unique culture and religion-spiritual religious regulations and customs are abiding.
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Among these tribes, Muthuvans, Hillpulayan, Mannan and Oorali are the most prominent tribes. Some Malapandaram and Palian families are also found existing in this district with their apathy and reluctance for Socio-Developmental Programs. But among these socially retarded tribes the Malayaraya and Ullada factions are little more elevated groups. Until now they have been co-operating and trying to reach and join the social-benefit programs seriously. The following clans are found in the scheduled tribes:

Mala Arayan
Mannan
Muthuvan
Uraly
Paliyan
Hillpulayan
Malapandaram
Ulladan
Malayan

Mala Arayan

The Mala Arayans mainly found in woodlands of Idukki district. They are mainly distributed in Meenachil taluk of Kottayam District and Thodupuzha taluk of Idukki district. Mala Arayan population comes to 16158, consisting 8049 males and 8109 females (Census, 2011). The word ‘Mala Arayan’ means ‘lord of the hills’. They are the clans of hill tribes who are a little more civilized and have fixed abodes on the slope of high Mountain ranges. Several tribes have thrived in the state of Kerala for ages. Amongst these, the Mala Ayrayans remains stand apart in terms of ethnicity and cultural exuberance. Mala Ayrayans have maintained the uniqueness in socioeconomic and also in educational perspectives.
Tribe of Kerala

The Mala Arayan tribes have secured tremendous achievements in the field of education and academics. After conducting numerous surveys and research works about the prospects of employment and education, it has been rightly found that this majority of people who are employed in the several Government offices. These tribes have their own style of building houses. Hence also these tribes are depicting the lustrous prospect of development. Now a day, these Mala Arayan tribes have actively been involved in several of the social and developmental programs that have been undertaken recently.

Mannan

Most of the Mannan families are staying in the Adimali, Kattappana, and Nedumkandam Block Panchayats. In some of the areas of Azhutha, Devikulam and Idukki Block Panchayats also one could detect their presence. Nearly 97 per cent (9064) of Mannan community are inhabitants of Idukki District.(Census , 2011). They are a special and particular type of tribes with unique customs and hereditary traditions. They have a King and they keep the honor of the Kingship preciously. They have been following the traditional regulations till now. They stay mainly in the forest inland and government allotted plots. When the government banned the deforestation these families made a great exodus to the civilized places and were forced to restrict themselves in the allotted plots with their own culture. In addition to their own cultivation in the allotted farm lands, they collect forest products (wealth) doing manual labor and cattle breeding as their occupations.

Their literacy rate is far below the national average literacy rate. Their economic stability and fundamental needs of a nominal living are below average and it is found that the surroundings are very pitiful and degrading if we make an honest evaluation. It is shocking to see that the Mannan men and women are over-addicted to liquor and other intoxicants, and the knowledge
for a hygienic life is negligibly absent. Most of the Mannan families do not have a suitable dwelling place, nor the basic needs for a good living.

**Muthuvan**

They are a special tribe mainly living in the deep and dense forests inland of Devikulam, Adimali, and Nedumkandam block Panchayats. They had been tamed by the mesmerism of nature and were forced to unite and co-operate with the natural phenomena respectfully and living very secluded with their own heritage. They drink water from the deep forest streams (brooks), eating wild roots and living a simple life. They are exclusively different from the other factions of the tribes in many factors.

They are very reluctant and afraid of being united with the other clans of the tribes and civilized people. They like to live a secluded life, fostering their own culture. Since they are in the deepest parts of the forest, they are illiterate, ignorant and very superstitious. The lack of basic centres of health, education, and other facilities stops them to know about the necessities of life. Their economic, social and educational improvement is negligible and it has been a phenomenon for centuries. Almost 90% of the people are living in bamboo huts. Their reluctance and refusal of social development has been little bit changed and they are being motivated continuously for a better life.

Their women are strictly prohibited from having any relationship with the outside world other than their bamboo huts. They are severely secluded in the huts, not allowed even to talk to other men. Literacy is a difficult term for them and the knowledge for a good life is less that their present state in the latter half of the 20th century is not different from the fate of the first men. They begin consuming tobacco at an early age and more over their men are too much addicted to liquor and other intoxicants. They cultivate ragi in their own farms. They have 3 to 10 acres of forest lands for cultivation. But the
unfortunate thing is that cardamom and other refined forest products, they collect are being devalued and Muthuvans are being exploited by the mediators superbly. Their ignorance in the modern farming methods and their inability to invest money for agriculture are being exploited. They have been continuously left to suffer even though they work and toil. Their huts are very much congested and stay close to one another. Their lack of awareness in sanitation and health programs puts them in a battalion of infectious diseases and this leads to the untimely death of Muthuvans.

Uraly

Except in Devikulam and Thodupuzha block Panchayats, the Uraly are active in other places of the Idukki District. They are 1894 families and 6823 population of Uraly community in Idukki District (Census 2011). Uru is a cluster of families and Alunnavan means one who rules. It is said that Uralys were from Madurai Kingdom and first settled in Neriyamangalam. Following the construction of Idukki dam, they have also been rehabilitated in various colonies. The language of Uraly is a mixture of Malayalam and Tamil. They possess endemic customs and regulations, but are very backward in educational aspects. Even then they have the third position among the tribes in literary and basic educational realms. Agriculture is their main occupation. But they also engage in cattle breeding and collection of forest products.

Paliyan

The Paliyan are found in the Idukki district of Kerala. Their main concentrations are in the Peerumedu and Udumbanchola taluks. There are 423 Paliyan families with a population of 1484, consists of 741 males and 743 females (Census, 2011). They have very little farm lands and most of them are engaged in manual labor and in the collection of forest products. Even though
they have their own slang and dialect their literacy rate and basic educational prospects are considerably less.

**Hill Pulayan**

Hill Pulayas are found only in Idukki district. They are mainly concentrated in Kanthallur and Marayur Grama Panchayats. Hill Pulayas have 960 families with a population of 3415. There are 1709 males and 1706 females in the community (Census, 2011). Most among them do not have their own lands. They stay in small huts in the banned secluded government plots and other forest areas. They do manual labor and collection of forest products is another means of their income. They speak Tamil and follow their own unique and hereditary customs and they have their own primitive arts. Their educational level is absolutely nil. Due to the lack of sanitation facilities and better life prospects most of them are unhealthy. They are keenly interested in knowing and learning modern developments and programs of the world. They prefer to learn jobs which may help them to earn a better income. One section of the Hill pulaya is traditionally skilled in the art of weaving and their ability is being exploited often by the mediators in the barter.

**Malapandaram**

A few Malapandaram families are staying in the Azhutha block Panchayat in the Idukki district. Malapandaram community has 13 families and with a population of 49 (Census, 2011). The population includes 27 males and 22 females. Partially gypsy typed, they differ from other factions in language and custom. Collection of forest products and exchanging is their main occupation. It is important to provide them the basic necessities of life to ensure their improvement in social-cultural and spiritual levels.
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**Ulladan**

Except in the Devikulam, Azhutha and Kattappana block Panchayats, Ulladans are found, mixed and relating with other tribes and living in harmony. Social, educational, and cultural developments they are almost equal to the Ooralies in status. There are 819 families of Ulladan community in Idukki district and their population is 3025 consisting of 1488 males and 1537 females (Census, 2011). Like other scheduled tribes they also engage in agriculture and in the collection of forest produces, especially the honey collection. Some among them are even serving as Government employees. Those among them who stay in the plains are doing woodcutting and yacht making. Today a major section of them are agricultural labourers. Ulladans who are settled in urban and semi-urban plain areas have responded to development and progressed in their own way.

**Malayan**

Malayan community is mainly settled in Ernakulam, Thrissur and Palakkad Districts with one or two scattered families in Pathanamthitta and Idukki districts. There are 2 families with the total population of 7 in Idukki district, consisting 3 males and 4 females. Bamboo - cutting, fishing, manual labor and forest wealth collection are their main jobs. They lease their farmlands and do manual labor in it. They are keeping an average rate in educational and cultural programs. They consume alcohol and tobacco lavishly. They are found to be very unhealthy due to their habits.

**2.3.7. TRAVANCORE ZONE**

This zone includes the rest upto Thiruvananthapuram includes part of Idukki, Pathanamthitta, Kottayam, Kollam and Thiruvananthapuram districts. The prominent tribal groups in this area include Malavedan, Kanikkar, Ulladar and Mala Arayan.
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**MalaVedan**

Mala Vedan tribes are quite significant and stand apart amongst other tribal communities of Kerala. They are mainly concentrated in the districts of Kottayam, Kollam, Alappuzha, Thiruvananthapuram and Pathanamthitta. They are also scattered in the neighbouring areas. They are considered to belong to ‘Pre-Dravidian Race’. They speak a dialect of Tamil and Malayalam. There are 1223 families with a population of 4373, consisting 2102 males and 2271 females (Census, 2011). Hunting and gathering of forest products are the main occupation of these communities. MalaiVedan tribes have followed the lifestyle of nomads and kept on migrating from place to place. They speak in their local dialect known as Malavadan language. It belongs to the famous Dravidian language family group. Many of the MalaVedan tribes also identify it in different names like Malavetan, Towetan, Vedans etc. Dialects like Vetan, Vettuvanetc are widely popular among this MalaiVedan tribal community. In the contemporary period, the MalaiVedan tribes can speak in languages like Malayalam and Tamil also. These MalaiVedan tribes follow the practices and rituals of the local region.

**Kanikkar**

The Kanikkar are also known as Kani, are found in extreme South India, around the Agasyakutam and Mahendragiri peaks of the Western Ghats in Thiruvananthapuram district and Kollam district. In Kerala their main concentrations are in Nedumangadu Taluk. They were called ‘kanikkar’ by the sage Agastya, signifying ‘hereditary proprietor of the land’. ‘Kani’ means land and ‘Karan’ means owner. The knickers have an allegiance to Travancore Kingdom and they visit the Raja annually to present hill produces and in turn receive gifts from the Raja.
There are 5849 Kanikaran families with a population of 19358, consisting 9157 males and 10201 females (Census, 2011). One of the traditional occupations of the Kanikkar was shifting cultivation of paddy and ragi. Hunting, gathering of minor forest produces, fishing and trapping of small animals and birds, animal husbandry is some of the traditional occupations. Now they practice settled agriculture like cultivation of rice and tapioca. The major cash crops raised by them are canut, pepper, ginger, turmeric, cashew etc. There are a number of medicinal herbs in the ‘Agasthyakoodam’ peak and their traditional knowledge system is noteworthy as they are able to identify appropriate herbs for curing almost all diseases. Kanikkar living in the plain areas along with other communities have improved much in their lifestyle while those living in the interior forests called ‘Malamkanis” are still deprived of the basic amenities of life.

**Ulladar**

Ulladar communities are seen in the forest as well as coastal areas. The Alternative name of these communities is Ulladan. There are 2536 families in this area with a population of 8987, consisting 4402 males and 4583 females (Census, 2011). Their main occupation of those on the hills used to be cutting trees, collection of fire woods while those who are in the coastal area engage in making country boats and its maintenance. Some of them are also experts in catching turtle with a special type of rode (Amakkole).

**MalaArayans**

The MalaArayans are found in the Changanasseri Taluk of the Kottayam district. There are 2881 Mala Arayans families in this area with a population of 10939, consisting of 5454 males and 5485 females (Census, 2011) .(see Idukki Zone)
2.4. CONDITIONS AND PROBLEMS

The tribal humanity of India belongs to the lowliest, the lost and the last sector of our society. Their human rights, even in their forest dwelling, are denied and defeated, notwithstanding the constitutional concern for them. When they are harassed and harried, they find themselves helpless and forlorn. When laws are made to seemingly sustain their claim to social justice, they are rarely implemented and remotely given the look of reality. When in militant despair tribes ask for what is due to them, dubious agreements are entered into and procrastination in implementation is a common consequence. Kerala is no exception to the scenario of deception. Several tantalizing strategies and evasive legislations have put out tribal hopes. And political parties of all hues and pretenses have victimized these unfortunates by legal devices and sloganeering contrivances.

The tribal people of Kerala have lived deep in the forests and high in the mountains for thousands of years. The tribes remained virtually unaffected by the surrounding Indian, Hindu culture or any of the many cultures and religions that have settled or visited the surrounding areas. The tribes were able to maintain their own religion, social organisations, rituals, festivals, architecture and agricultural systems. They were the lords of the forests 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 19th and 20th century, most of India had become accessible by road and rail. This made it easy for a booming population of the country 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. These new settlers encroached upon the tribal land and managed to claim or take it in several different methods of exploitation and trickery. Starting in the 19th century the tribal
people were exploited and taken advantage of in many different aspects. Within the short time of twenty to thirty years, the tribes had lost their independence and their land to money lenders who established themselves in the tribal areas. Money lenders, encroachers, traders, and missionaries who came to the tribal areas for their personal gain. Over the past two hundred years have created a myriad of problems that the 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 tribes.

It is true; Kerala on the whole has achieved tremendous heights in social development, more in the area of human resource development. Sad to say, this achievement, as pointed out by many social scientists, lacks integrity and comprehensiveness, which is manifested in the still existing backwardness of the tribal population. Taking into account their backwardness, planners and policy makers at the time of independence adopted special protective and development measures in our constitution. In addition to the special provisions and efforts of the government, several voluntary agencies are also working in the country for the socioeconomic development of the tribes. Despite all these efforts by the government and voluntary agencies, the majority of the tribe, still live in conditions as their predecessors lived a century ago. Their condition is even worsened than their predecessors due to exploitation by the non-tribes.

There are so many factors responsible for the backwardness of the tribes. One of the major reasons is the lack of participation of the tribes in policy planning and implementation of development programmes. The technocratic approach of the development programmes and neglect of the human dimensions in the development process led to the failure of most of the development programmes. Under such circumstances there is a need to evolve
a new developmental approach in which participation would get prime importance.

The major problems faced by the tribes of Kerala can be laid out in eleven categories.

Land Alienation

Poverty and Indebtedness

Access to the forest land and produce

Agriculture

Education

Housing

Alcoholism

Sexual Exploitation

Unemployment

Health and sanitation

Malnutrition

2.4.1. Land Alienation

Land alienation is a major problem faced by the tribes in Kerala. The excessive dependence of tribal communities on land for their income and employment makes land alienation and landlessness a major livelihood concern for tribal people. Owning enough land to conduct agricultural activities has become a major problem of the Kerala tribes in recent years. These people had once been the lords of the land they lived on. They had access to more land than they could possibly use. In recent years, since the
The main reason the tribes of Kerala have been alienated from their land is their extreme poverty. As mentioned in the section on indebtedness, these poverty-stricken people have been forced to borrow money from unscrupulous non-tribal moneylenders who easily take advantage of tribal people by forcing them to sign bogus papers or falsifying verbal or written agreements. When tribes are unable to pay these inflated amounts, moneylenders often usurp large sections of their land. In this type of situation the tribal helpless. The moneylender threatens to take the issue to court, knowing that the tribes could by no means afford court fees, or the time a court case would take. Therefore the tribe is forced to surrender to the moneylender. The tribes thus becomes involved in a vicious cycle of indebtedness, because without land, he can acquire no money; thus he is forced to borrow more money, which causes him to lose more land.

The state funds cooperative credit societies, but this type of loan is very difficult for the tribe to receive, because of transportation costs, time commitment, and the fact that these credit societies only lend money to tribes for specific purposes such as agricultural or building expenses. Many times tribes need money for such social purposes as fairs, festivals, funerals, weddings, etc.

Land alienation has many drastic effects on the tribal people in Kerala, going far beyond simply losing land for agriculture. The Indian government is also a major cause of land loss of the tribes. Much of the land that was once owned by tribes has been taken by the government in order to instate national parks, tourist attractions, and biological parks. The loss of land is creating homelessness, poverty and a feeling of hopelessness in the tribal people.
government, which puts thousands of dollars into tribal development, is creating many of the problems these people are facing.

2.4.2. Poverty and Indebtedness

Problem of indebtedness in tribal areas in Kerala seems to be the root cause and output of poverty. The tribal people are living in an economic condition which provides them livelihood only for a few months. Not finding the existing livelihood sources as sufficient, and with limited alternatives the tribal people quickly and easily go to non-tribes who- ever available within their access for seeking help from them both in cash and kind. The education and awareness level of the tribes is much below the average level. The Majority of the tribes is half fed and do not possess proper house and facilities. They need money for the purposes like marriage, death, festivals, ceremonies, rituals, worship, treatment of disease, etc. In the absence of any savings, tribal people have no other alternatives to meet these expenses. They borrow money from landlords and moneylenders. On several occasions the tribal people are unable to repay the loan within the stipulated time as per the terms and conditions of the moneylenders. Consequently, they have to transfer the land by oral lease, mortgages, usufruct oral agreement.

There are many causes of indebtedness among the tribes in Kerala. They are illiteracy, unemployment, poverty, decrease in forest employment, land alienation, lack of loan from banks for unproductive purposes, expensive customs, drinking habit, low price of agricultural and forest produce and increasing health problems.

The poverty and indebtedness lead the tribes to some problems. They are crime, prostitution, physical and mental torture and exploitation. Indebtedness is both cause and effect of poverty and land alienation. Unless the tribal people are saved from Indebtedness and the accompanying evil of
land alienation, is unlikely that any legislation will prevent them from transferring their land to landlords and moneylenders by sale, mortgage, gift or lease.

Indebtedness seems to be an endless cycle that the tribal people are incapable of freeing themselves from. They seem to accept indebtedness as a normal inescapable part of their lives. It has become part of their existence. Since indebtedness is such a great problem for the tribes, clearly it has been a problem that many of the people working for tribal development would like to remedy. The Fifth Schedule of the Constitution gives the governor of each state the power to regulate all business of money lending when the tribal population is involved. In addition to this, many states have created their own laws or acts that enable them to further regulate money lending. In Kerala, in 1958, the Kerala Money lending Act was passed. But even with these regulations, money lending has carried on in these tribal areas as it always has. It seems that none of the people who are required to enforce these laws are very committed to doing so. Also, when a moneylender is caught, it has been difficult for the authorities to make any of the penal provisions effectively.

The government has to be able to grant low interest loans to the tribal people without the hassle of distant travel, laborious paper work, and long lag time between application and loan. Then the tribes 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.
2.4.3. Access to the forest land and produce

The forest has been an integral part of the life 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 the 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 tribes had been enjoying this freedom of unharvested use of the forests since the beginning of their existence, but since the mid-nineteenth century their ability to use the forest has been rapidly decreasing.

For hundreds of years, since pre-Biblical times, the Indian people had been utilizing the forest for goods like teak and sandalwood, and had been trading them all over the world. The East India Company and then the British Government had caught on to the great wealth of the forest. They had decided that the timber that already existed in the forest could be exploited to create a large profit. At the same time, they had geological surveys in the forests that discovered a wealth of valuable minerals and plants.

In 1894 in the Report of the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission, it was outlined that basically the forest along with its goods was there for the benefit of all of the people. It said that usually the forest is there for the benefit of the people who live near it and have been using it. But in the case of possible benefit for the rest of the country, the rights and privileges of the minorities must be limited to the gain of the general public. With this
In 1894, the forest officials began their term of authority over the tribal people, which have lasted into the present.

In 1952, after India had gained its independence, these forest regulations had to be rewritten. Unfortunately, the rewritten policy took away more freedom from the tribes than they had previously. In the new policy the tribes were no longer able to use forestland for cultivation. The new policy withdrew the right of tribes to gain produce from the outlying areas of the reserved forests. The new policy even took away the private forests of the tribes and applied fees for the grazing of tribal animals in the forests.

It is recognized that some rights of the minorities should be taken away for the good of the masses, but when this is done, certain concessions should be made to compensate such a great loss to these people. It is necessary to teach these people how to make their own compensations for these losses. The forests had been the source of much of the money gained by the tribes. 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 tribes 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's 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. For instance, civil suits cannot be brought against a forest official if it is believed it is in good faith. The authorities in this case will almost always side with the forest officials over a
tribal. They also cannot be criminally prosecuted for offenses committed by mistake. Also, no type of prosecution can be made without the approval of the government, and the rank of the forest official determines who will give the approval.

With all of these causes, the forest officials have no fear when it comes to taking advantage of or exploiting the tribal people. The tribes have been denied all of the benefits of the forest, including produce that in no way will be missed by the forest after its removal. In many cases the forest officials will take this produce themselves, and either use it or sell it for their own personal gain. These forest officials know that this type of harassment of the tribal people is extremely undesirable. In some cases, officials exploit tribal women sexually or make them into maidservants in exchange for leaving the tribal people alone.

The tribes are extremely angered by the exploitation and double standards committed by the forest officials. They are angered 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 smaller amounts of produce from the forests, which would have no negative effects on the forests themselves. And mostly they are angered by the double standards of the contractors going into the forests and cutting down huge sections to take timber. Their trucks are loaded well over the limits applied, by law, while tribes stand by watching with their hands tied. Forest officials watch contractors stray well beyond legal zones and overload their trucks, while tribes are not allowed to take home a simple log to cook dinner or repair their dilapidated houses. Tribes feel that the government puts forth laws to make the lives of tribes harder, and to benefit crooked contractors and forest officials. 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, so that they can exploit the tribes and the forest for their own monetary benefit.

2.4.4. Agriculture

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, which entails cutting down the vegetation in a given area of land and burning it when it becomes dry. The original vegetation is cut down at the beginning of the dry summer season and burned shortly before the rainy season. Then, the farmer will scatter seeds of the desired crop, and nature takes its course for the remainder of the growth. The seeds are placed at the beginning of the rainy season and continue to grow until the rainy season is over. After one of these plots of land has been used for one or more seasons the soil is no longer very productive for agricultural purposes, so the original vegetation is left to grow back to its previous state. This type of agriculture has been practiced in India since at least the Neolithic age, eight to ten thousand years ago. This type of agriculture is necessary because the tribes need to have a method of farming that does not require extreme amounts of maintenance. While they are not committed to agricultural endeavors, they are in the forests collecting produce and conducting rituals.

Shifting cultivation is the only type of agriculture known by these tribal people who have been practicing this for generations. Much education is needed to train these people in alternative methods, and the means of carrying out this these new methods also need to be introduced. The geographic placement of the tribes also needs to be considered. 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. For instance, permanent settlements would have to be created. 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.

2.4.5. Education

The problem of education in Kerala, tribal children is different from that for many of the other tribes in India. Education is a very important in Kerala and has resulted in one of the highest literacy rates in the world. For many of the other tribal villages in India the education problem is rooted in a lack of schools, along with many of the same problems faced in Kerala. Many of the tribal hamlets in Kerala have their own schools, or have one in a hamlet nearby. The problem in Kerala is the low attendance rate of tribal children due to lack of interest or specific social factors. Another problem is lack of interest of the teachers, and a subject matter that does not always apply to the lives of tribal children.

2.4.5.1. Low Attendance

Several factors contribute to low attendance of tribal children in Kerala. The number one reason is rooted in the social economics of Kerala tribes. Most of the Kerala tribes are agriculturalists, and shifting cultivation has been eliminated in Kerala; therefore agriculture takes a lot of work that needs many hands. In order for a tribal family to have a successful crop, it is necessary for the adult members of the family to receive help in the upkeep of
the farms or with the caretaker of the home. Obviously, these poverty stricken people cannot afford to hire help, so they rely on their children. The children of tribal families are major contributors to the income of the family, whether they are helping their parents with agricultural work, taking care of the home, collecting goods for sale, or holding any number of jobs. It would be foolish to expect these parents to dislocate their children from this role so that they could attend school. When these children do attend school, they very rarely go past fourth standard. Most of the schools for tribal children only go up to fourth standard, after which they have to attend public school.

This is a problem that is very difficult to tackle. The problem has to do with the timing of the school day. The children cannot attend school during daylight hours because they would not be able to contribute to the economy of the home. Then there is the fact that the school cannot be held after daylight hours because there is no electricity in many of the tribal hamlets. Also, most tribal people go to sleep shortly after the sun goes down and wake up with the sunrise to start working. There is also the fact that if tribal children are dislocated from their customary working roles, when they become adults, they will be lacking in the life skills necessary to live in a tribal hamlet. The only solution, which is not the most desirable, would be to have half-days of school and to compensate the parents financially. Also the children are taught in Malayalam, so they find much difficulty understanding the subject matter. If the students do go beyond the fourth standard and end up in the local schools, they become ashamed of their tribal languages and refuse to speak them. They are also ashamed of their tribal origin and try to separate themselves from it as much as possible.

2.4.5.2. Lack of Teachers Interest

Many schools in the tribal areas are funded by the government, which means that the teachers in these areas are government-funded teachers who
Tribes of Kerala

are usually new to teaching and are assigned to these schools. They are forced to remain in these schools until a new teacher is appointed. This means the following:

1) They are usually transferred out of the schools after one year.

2) Since they are placed in these schools, they are usually not very enthusiastic about being there.

3) The schools are usually far from the homes of the teachers, which adds to their lack of enthusiasm.

4) The tribal hamlets are usually a very far distance through the forests and mountains, making it very difficult to leave.

This lack of enthusiasm of the teachers clearly has a drastic effect on student education. If teachers are not happy being in schools, it is hard to expect children to be happy there. There are also only two teachers for the entire school, with no administration. This means that the teachers are teaching the entire day with almost no breaks; so even if they do come in in the morning with some amount of enthusiasm, by the end of the day this is quickly lost. Also, there is no one to watch over them to make sure that they are doing their jobs correctly. There need to be teachers who volunteer to work in these schools and are willing to accept the far distance, the long hours, and the lack of transportation to and from the tribal hamlets.

2.4.5.3. Improper Subject Matter

The curriculum for tribal children is identical to that used for middle class children in the rest of India. It is of almost no interest to the tribal children, since they are unable to relate to the subject matter and therefore find great difficulty in paying attention in class. They also find little reason to go to school to learn this type of subject matter.
Tribes of Kerala

The curriculum consists of the scientific and technological conquests of India and the world, stories of the founders of modern India, history and geography of greater India, etc. Primary education for tribal children should begin with the history of their own tribe, the history and geography of the area where they live, the ecology of their region, tribal songs, dances, and instruments, and the myths and legends of their own tribe. They also need to learn how to cook, make clothing, farm, build houses, etc. These are essential skills they cannot learn while they are away at school.

This is not to say that the education of these tribal children should be limited to the above mentioned subjects. They should start with this type of curriculum in conjunction with math, reading, science, etc. As the students grow older, the progression from the local region can expand from their region to their district, to their state, and then to India, ending with the world. These children need a different type of preparation for adulthood, since very few of them will be able to afford college, and receiving jobs will be very difficult for them due to their caste ranking.

2.4.6. Housing

Housing is another problem that the government has tried to tackle without consideration of need, the environment, or availability of materials for upkeep. When housing is granted to the tribal people, the housing choice is done in a survey style, without attention being paid to individual needs. In many cases the tribes are unable to acquire the necessary materials to construct houses in their traditional style and method, because accesses to the materials which are found in the forest have been cut off.

When the government decides to construct houses for a tribal hamlet, an architect is hired who has probably never seen a tribal house. Then a plan for a house is created and this house is duplicated in tribal hamlets, regardless
of the environment, availability of materials, or the needs, religious beliefs, and tastes of the person who is to receive the house. These houses are usually made of brick with tiled roofs. This style of house would be ideal for some areas but is completely inappropriate for other areas.

2.4.7. Alcoholism

Alcoholism has been a deep-seated problem for tribes that has stemmed from a feeling of hopelessness, existed since the time when they were slaves. During the time when tribal people were slaves, their owners had great power and influence over them. They would go into the tribal villages and find the most submissive and obedient tribal men, and would make them village chiefs. Thus slave owners would have full control over the whole village. They would use these men to put forth their ideas, telling tribes that they were supposed to be slaves in life. They told them that even after death they would be slaves in the afterlife.

With these thoughts in the heads of the tribal people, there was a loss of all hope. They did not care what was to happen with their lives, because they were going to be slaves forever; not even death could change their position. With this loss of hope, tribal people became completely wreck less, and drinking became a favorite pastime.

Since tribal people had traditionally been involved in drinking, when the British ruled India they recognized this as a target area for the sale of distilled liquors. Government funded shops that sold liquor were set up near many of the areas populated by tribes. In this way tribes were able to get liquor whenever they wanted it, any time of the year. The amount of liquor consumption by tribes during this time skyrocketed.

After India gained its independence, many independent liquor shops opened in tribal areas. These shops still needed to have licenses that were
issued by the government. These shops saw that many tribal people were still making their own liquor and viewed this as a threat. They would hire men to enter the huts of tribes thought to be making their own liquor. If it was found that they were, these men would use force and threats to insure that they would no longer continue with this behavior. These shops would also hire men as vendors of distilled liquor to walk from hamlet to hamlet to sell liquor to tribal people. These shops would also give liquor to tribes with the understanding that they would pay later. This has become very popular for tribal youths, and has created debt for many tribal people. Like the moneylenders, transfer of land often pays off these debts. Quite often, also, tribal people end up taking money from traditional money lenders so that they can purchase liquor and again become indebted to them. Many times whatever small amount of money tribal people does gain from the sale of their small crops or forest produce goes directly to purchasing liquor. This again leaves them with no money and no option but to borrow from a moneylender.

2.4.8. Sexual Exploitation

Violence against women is a common phenomenon, happening in every part of the world, every society and community. The impact of violence against women is high among the most disadvantaged sections like poor and indigenous population. This creates high tension and destroys the peace of such community. Over exploitation of natural resources, the intrusion of outsiders into their territory, displacement from their land, loss of livelihood options are the indirect causes of violence against women in tribal communities. The women in the tribal community, as in the other communities, constitute half of the tribal population. The well-being of the tribal community depends largely on the status of their women. The problem of sexual exploitation is particularly acute in tribal areas.
The tribal women’s innocence and simplicity have been exploited by the non-tribes in sexual terms by promising marriage. There are several others who, while working as maids or casual workers on plantations and estates, are sexually abused by their masters. Government officials, the police, local people are also the partners and fellow conspirators for this brutal act against the tribal women. Rich landowners sexually exploit the tribal girls through temptation, kidnapping, cheating and rape. As a result of sexual abuse of women and adolescent girls by outsiders, many became unwedded mothers and can find illegitimate children of these mothers many tribal villages. Some of these tribal women end up in prostitution.

Ignorance about marriage and other laws among tribes is the root cause for the sexual harassment in the district. The tribal heritage does not equip the tribes to resist the outsider’s exploitation. They grabbed their land and sexually abused their women. The tribal community presents a picture of violating innocence.

2.4.9. Unemployment

Unemployment is a burning problem in the tribal areas in Kerala. The income and livelihood situation of tribal communities presents a mixed picture. The livelihood options of the majority of the tribal communities are dependent on the primary sector with very minimal dependence on other avenues on employment. Agriculture was a major source of income for any tribal communities. Some of the most backward tribes like Paniya and Adiya who have later shifted to plantation crops like cardamom, pepper, ginger, coffee, etc. The major reason for their over dependence on agriculture for their livelihood is their backwardness. The only possible employment option for them is to work either as agricultural or nonagriculturallabourers. As these employments are seasonal and limited, the tribes could get employment only for a certain period.
The employment diversification through forest based livelihood interventions is the prominence option for ever increasing employment crisis of these communities. So there is a need of shifting the employment opportunities focusing on forest based livelihood options. The policy makers and planners give more attention to formulate specific policies integrating forest based livelihood interventions implement efficiently for the all-round development of the tribal communities.

2.4.10. Health and Sanitation

Health is one serious problem among the tribal communities in Kerala. Due to ignorance the tribal communities not appreciate the modern concept of medicine, health and sanitation. They do not take much care about their own health. They have their own traditional remedies to cure the diseases. The health problems of tribal community are influenced by various factors, including social, economic and political ones. The health status of the tribes is very poor and worst because of their isolation, remoteness and been largely unaffected by the developmental process going in the country. The sanitation conditions in the tribal areas are very poor. The awareness among the community regarding sanitation is not adequate. The tribal people had no interest in personal toilets. There is enough space for using toilets. But they prefer open space for excretion.

2.4.11. Malnutrition

Malnutrition is highly widespread among the tribal communities in Kerala. In the sphere of health, malnutrition and communicable diseases are reported from the tribal areas in Kerala. Lack of nutritious food and proper health care for tribes has lead to such a devastating situation. The reasons for malnutrition are marginalization and impoverishment of tribal communities, lack of adequate food, nutritional scarcity, poor health care, etc. Protein
energy and anemia are the most common nutritional deficiency among the tribes in Kerala. Income is a main factor which affects the nutritional status of tribes. As per the survey conducted by the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), 572 children under the age of five in the tribal areas still remain malnourished. This is happening at a time when the central and state governments are spending in about Rs.500 crore under different special packages in the tribal areas to fight poverty and malnutrition and improving the living conditions of the tribes.

2.5 TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

The Development process is an ongoing one in all parts of the world. The word 'development' is used not only in the narrow sense of economic growth, but also to convey the movement of the whole system towards an ever large measure of power to the people for conscious participation in building their future. The ultimate purpose of development is to provide increased opportunities for a better life. More initiation of the forms of development, as found in economically developed societies, have not produced development in economically underdeveloped societies.

The dictionary meaning of the word 'develop' is to expand or to bring out the potentialities, capabilities or to cause to come to completeness or perfection, and development, gradual evolution or completion and the result of such an evolution or completion. Development presupposes an attitudinal change towards new values, ideals, plans and programmes. The process of development changes the ideas, values, traits, attitudes and behavior. Thus developments of persons - men or women - in turn mean awareness. Awareness includes self-awareness, awareness of what is going on with us and about the world around us; awareness of our own feelings and needs; awareness of the impact that the world around us has on us, and the impact
that we have or could have on the world; and in this interaction of the world as well as those blocking growth.

The term development is often used in the sense of growth, indicating a quantitative increase or progress in production, income, consumption of food, etc. and thus giving emphasis on the quantitative aspect ignoring the qualitative part of man. Community development as a programme was launched all over the country in the first five year plan. Community development is a very complex subject and development means systems towards an increasing measure of power to the people for participation in building their own future, higher production, equal distribution. The meaning of the community development is to improve the economic and social life of the weaker sections of the rural areas in the overall spectrum of development and growth.

In the post independent India, much attention is being given to a steady economic development which resolves round the rural areas. For an integrated sustainable development of rural areas, many programmes have been launched by the union and state governments since last 55 years. The main objectives of these programmes are to eradicate social and economic inequality to generate employment, to create some durable community assets, to increase the living standards and to develop minimum infrastructure for the villages. The constitution of India has guaranteed social equality and political justice to all. Irrespective of caste, color and race. It provides special measures for the weaker sections of the people including tribes. The basic ingredients of tribal policies are firstly, the tribal communities are to be integrated. Secondly, the socioeconomic development of the tribes shall be speeded up thirdly during the process of transformation, tribal culture will not be hasty and deliberately mutilated and finally, all sorts of expletive relationship with the tribes shall be done away forth with. The constitution of India has
provided three types of safeguards for the tribes, viz., and protective, political and developmental.

Tribal development has acquired paramount significance as an issue in India, where tribes occupy sizeable properties of the national as well as regional population. The irony of the development outcome is that most of the tribes one getting worse off than they were, even in the regions which have witnessed monumental urban and industrial development. Regional development projects have inevitably led to encroachment of natural resources. This further has inevitably led to encroachment into tribal areas which were once considered remote and inaccessible.

It has been observed that the impact of such development project resulted in displacement of tribes generally and persistently neglected aborigines in particular. The tribes confronted with the agencies of exploitation and waves of money lenders, contractors, traders and government officials like rent collections, police and excise personals. In spite of laws prohibiting dispossession of lands belonging to the tribes, there has been continued large scale land alienation cases among the tribes leading to their impoverishment.

Our approach to the development of millions of tribal people is characterized by social and historical forces. The tribes have been victims of the country's social conditioning, namely, colonial feudal domination, caste prejudices, illiteracy, poverty and isolation. The status of tribal society in the wider national civilization describes as segmentary and autonomous. They are portrayed as discrete categories having no linkage, what so ever with the happenings which took place in the mainline civilisation. They have never been described as past entities of the country's organic system.
The tribes suffered considerably at the hands of the local rules and the colonial powers. Their contact with the civilization brought them within the vertex of the new market economy and exploitation. A number of middlemen such as money lenders, traders and revenue farmers made their entry into the tribal heartland. These middle men were outsiders who took possession of tribal lands and ensnared the tribes in a wad of debt. The tribes who depended on forest and forest produce were denied access to it gradually by the feudal and colonial power. The ruled upsurges the forest lands and placed restrictions on access to forest products, forest lands and village common lands. Oppression and extortion by policemen and other petty officials further aggravated distress among the tribes. The system of beggar making the tribes performs unpaid labour-got intensified.

Since independence, India has tried her best for the development of the tribal people. Article 46 of the Indian Constitution envisages that "the state shall promote with special case the educational and economic interests of the weaker section of the people and in particular of the SC/ST and shall protect them all from social injustice and all forms of exploitation". A period of 10 years was set initially to achieve the goal but as the problem was deep rooted and may faceted it was extended by 10 years, every time after expiry of the period. The tribal development programmes don’t merely provide usual opportunities to develop a new pattern of agricultural production and now the economic basis for life, but also offers a chance to develop a new social relationship and new social structure in tribal society. Few are the instances in the country where the tribal development programmes fully adopted this pattern. Tribal development, more significant now as a new strategy of integrated tribal development programme, aims to improve the life of the tribes in the overall perspective of development and growth.

Any development strategy formulated for the tribal people without considering their social, cultural and economic development is sure to meet with failure. The programmes to be implemented in the tribal areas are to be
conformity with the social and cultural values and life of the tribes for whom these are intended. These have been many governments as well as non-government organisations set up with the interest of tribal upliftment. Many of these organisations have been complete failures for various reasons. Many have failed due to corrupt managers. These organisations have taken government money that has been set aside for tribal development and have used it for purposes that have done nothing for the tribes. The money is almost always spent on various items that the tribes never reap benefits from. Tribal people have lost all hope in receiving help from any non-tribes. There is a complete lack of trust among tribal people. They now expect that to help him or her. In the social-political front also the tribal people lost their stand. They lost their majority in the population counts, which significantly influenced political decisions. In the day to day administration the tribes were sidelined. The political institutions dominated by non-tribes have become stumbling block that humbled the feeble rumbling of the tribes at their thumb prints. Thus, they stand virtually alienated from their traditional surroundings and sources and pushed into a semi-modern life.

2.6. CONCLUSION

The scheduled tribes, who referred to as ‘Adivasis’, meant original inhabitants. For a long period of history, they were always socially and geographically isolated. They belonged to different races with diverse cultural characteristics, speaking different languages and spread across various ecological zones. The tribal communities in India have suffered from enjoying any meaningful development largely because of the policy implementation gap artificially created by the government and leaders. The consequences of this neglect resulted in tribal communities lacking access to primary needs such as water, food, shelter, health, education and sanitation leading to low life expectancy.

The tribes where ever they live are faced with many problems, which are of social, political, economic, cultural and educational in nature. Various
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schemes are being implemented for the development of the tribes in India particularly Kerala. Special tribal plans are intended to provide special protective measures to safeguard the interests of tribes and promote their overall development. Though even after about five decades of developmental efforts the Scheduled Tribes continue to constitute relatively most backward and vulnerable section of the population with extremely weak economic base. Their ignorance is exploited by many ways. Most of the tribes are agricultural laborers, they still face poverty. Because of the acute poverty, the tribes have been the victims of exploitation by money lenders, landlords, labour contractors, traders and officials.

The tribes in Kerala are leading a hard life and they have not been removed from the clutches of superstitious beliefs and practices. Their poverty coupled with illiteracy and ignorance is exploited by outsiders in their income generating activities. A good portion of the land in their areas has been legally transferred to non-tribes. They are emotionally attached to the forests and believe that their gods live in the forests. Now the tribes are engaged as wage labourers under local landlords and estates. Due to the contact with outsiders, their traditional way of living is slowly disappearing and they are eager to lead a life like that of mainstream society. Now they are trying to adjust with their social and biological ecosystem by all means as part of the adaptation. There is a need to evaluate the reasons of information lag between the development agencies and tribes. It is the time for the policy makers to redesign the developmental efforts with a view to access, perception and participation in the right perspectives.
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