CHAPTER-III

HISTORY OF KOLI-MAHADEV TRIBE IN STUDY REGION
DURING PRE-INDEPENDENCE ERA

3.1 INTRODUCTION:

Notwithstanding the far reaching effects of Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization in the name of economic reforms in late 1990’s undertaken by the Government of India, a tribe in study region has still maintained their primitive traits, distinctive culture, geographical isolation and shyness in contact with community at large. Among these much remarkable aspect of tribal life is the emigration which has taken place time to time since far ages.

3.2 MIGRATORY HISTORY OF KOLI-MAHADEV TRIBAL PEOPLE IN STUDY REGION:

The history of migration of the prominent tribes like Ho, Munda, Koli, Bhil and Santhal etc. goes dates back up to the 1000 A.D. The attack of Gajhani Muhammad who invaded India many times. In the early beginning of 13th to 14th century Allauddin Khilji (1294 A.D.), consecutive six years attack of Mallik Kapoor (1306 to 1312), Mubarak Khilji (1317 to 1318) and Muhammad Tughalak (1325 A.D.) etc. Mughal rulers invaded and ruled over these tribals. In true sense, the history of migration of tribals in study region starts after Aryans invasion. The attack of Mughals was also so fierceful as the attack of Agasti Rushi in 8th century. Meanwhile, there was a so dreadful famine between the years 1396 to 1407. The famine is called as “Durgadevi Famine”. In those days there were no means of livelihood. Therefore, these tribals might have migrated towards south in Balaghat hilly ranges (Marathwada), East

After going through the negotiation with old persons in Koli-Mahadev tribe of study region, it is found that these people have migrated from *Mushki Mudgal* which is in state of Andhra Pradesh (Hyderabad State). Now a day, then settled themselves at *Badami* again fighting against contemporary ruler of Badami. They migrated to the West to settle themselves at the present place of residence.

In the emigration chapter of Satara District Gazetteer, it is clearly stated that a great number of people from the Man, Khatav, Khanapur and Tasgaon division left the district in the early days of distress, some of them went North and North-East to Bombay and Berar and Khandesh and others went to South-West to Konkan. The people who left the district were those in charge of cattle who usually had no stock of grain and no credit of these three classes, the labourers were the numerous. The small land holders took with them their pair of bullocks and a cow or both and left nothing behind but an empty house and barricaded door. Some of them went to Berar are believed to have found openings and settled of the labouring classes, the better off left first and found work in distant parts: others went to the public work and remaining wandered back in much distress and others especially the women hung abord the villages living next to nothing and dyeing in thousands on the first fall of rain.

In the discussion of old persons, it is also seen that only two persons survived from the attack of Mughaly troops named *Chimaji and Kammanna* the real brothers of each other as their ancestor was one.
Map No. 3.1
Study Region in Bombay Presidency
(Before 15 August 1947)
Many stories of tribal life are based on mythology but one of the real life stories to be told about the Koli-Mahadev tribe in study region is to be found in the old records of ‘Helavi’ (a record keeper of old ancestry) that the Kulpurush of these tribesman was Bambaji whose children Chimaji and Kamanna were taken up for nurturing by the Patil of ‘Shettihali’ who would came for hunting in the huge jungle of Chinchane and Kamewadi. After some days it is observed that a cow directly comes to the place where village Chinchane is located and she would shed milk in ant hills, to observe the fact one day a Patil of Shettihali followed the cow and he observed the scene with naked eye.

On the same night Masanai, the Sthaldevi went in the dream of Patil of shettihali and told him that he has to restore the children under his patronage conducting their marriage rituals and Patil of Shettihali restored these children. Now-a-day, these villages in study region are called Chinchane and Kamewadi. Till date the first offering of coconut during religious occasion is handed over to Patil of Shettihali and the tradition is still in practice.

The tribal village Chinchane came to be known after Chimaji and Kamewadi came to be known after Kamanna in study region. No marriage kinship between both these villages has been taken place till date. The tribal village Kalyanpur and Bukkihal in study region are supposed to be migrated from old Chinchan another wing. There is no marriage kinship between Patils of Chinchane and Kamewadi.

They took the name Mahadev Koli as their abode was in Shambhu Mahadev Hills which is spread up from North-West to South-East in Southern Maharashtra (Satara, Sangali, Kolhapur and Solapur), North Karnataka (Belgaum, Bijapur, Dharvar and Raichur) and Western Andhra Pradesh. It is the admitted fact that the Garo, Khansi and Jaitiya
tribes are known by their place of abode in the hilly ranges of North-East India.

### 3.3 RESEARCH ON KOLI-MAHADEV TRIBE DURING PRE AND POST INDEPENDENCE ERA:

Due to the bless of the British Empire, the Queen Victoria II gave ordinance to collect information regarding the tribals residing in hilly terrain throughout the country in 1869. As a result the Gazetteers of each district having authentic information have formed. The initial attempt after independence was made by Dr. Govind Sadashiv Ghurye, the Founder of Sociology Department in Bombay University, mentioning in the early introduction of the book ‘Mahadev Koli-1955’ that due to lack of fund, I am unable to conduct the survey of Mahadev-Koli’s in other part of Maharashtra, i.e. the Bombay state. He described that Mahadev-Koli people use the Kannada dialect like Hule (Tiger), Kus (a small child), Unde (edible form of rice floor) and Phadaki (a piece of cloth) etc. It makes clear that the Mahadev-Koli people, who have been declared as genuine Mahadev-Koli tribal in Specified Area of 1956, must have migrated to the existing place from North-Karnataka. Ghurye has clearly mentioned in the book that, he has written that book in the flattery of his friends. It has not been included research work. He has not conducted any field work. Another researcher Shri. Govind Mogaji Gare, who had hold the post of the Director of Tribal Research and Training Institute, Pune in his book ‘Sahyadriteel Mahadev Koli-1974’, it is clearly stated that Mahadev Koli tribals reside in the Mahadev and Balaghat hills, around 14th century these people might have migrated towards Ghats, some settled themselves in Konkan and some migrated to North up to Ghod river. In his article published in 1966 ‘Mavalche Mushafiri’, he has clearly stated that Mahadev-Kolis are scattered up to Belgaum, Bijapur,
Dharwad and Raichur in Sahyadri ranges. Although he has failed in conducting the research on tribals residing outside the specified area especially the Forest Labour Co-Operative Societies to be found in study region, Despite of that he has been awarded the degree of doctorate. There is no impartial approach in his research work.

3.4 A BRIEF REVIEW OF FOREST LABOUR CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY IN STUDY REGION:

Forest Labour Co-operative Societies were established for the socio-economic development of tribals during pre-independence era. The first Chief Minister of Bombay State, Shri. B.G. Kher announced the policy of establishing forest labour co-operative societies in Bombay region, with main objective to eliminate middlemen or inter-midiaries from forest activities and keep away the tribals from exploitation so as to bring them in the main stream of the country. According to the policy of the government one of the FLCS was establish on 17th Jan, 1948 in study region i.e. ‘The Jungle Dhande Kamkari Sahakari Utpadak Sangh Ltd, Chinchane-Kamewadi, Tal. Belgaum, Dist. Belgaum’; it is not mentioned in the research work of Dr. G.M. Gare, it makes clear that neither the research of G.S. Gurye nor Dr. G.M. Gare conducted in post-independence era merely based upon benchmark survey in specified region. It is not based upon field work. Moreover, the survey has not been conducted at grass root level.

3.5 THOUGHTS OF EMINENT SCHOLAR, THINKERS, SOCIOLOGIST AND ETHNOLOGIST ON KOLI-MAHADEV TRIBE:

The description of Mahadev-Koli tribe in study region is very clearly made in the book ‘The Tribes and Castes of Bombay Presidency’.
by R.E. Enthoven, the eminent ethnologist and ICS Superintendent of Ethnology in 1922, that the original occupation of Mahadev-Koli is supposed have been that of an infantry soldier. There are now husband men, cattle keepers and some are village labourers. Some are hereditary ministrants at Mahadev Temples and to take themselves the offering laid before the God. It is a fact that till date the worshippers of all Mahadev Pindis to be found in the surrounding area are the Mahadev-Kolis of study region, such record is found in the revenue department. Giving detailed explanation over the Mahadev-Koli in Kolhapur, it is stated that, they also gather slakes, sell lime nodules and catch and sell fish. Many are land holders and many Kolis are employed, as watchman and considerable numbers are Patils or village head-mans and few are Deshmukhs or hereditary district officer. It is accepted fact that the surnames of all Mahadev Koli people in study region especially Chinchane-Kamwadi are Patils and on 6th May 1864 the ‘Patilki Vatan’ has been offered by the British Commissioner Goland Saheb for their service as servant (village headman) to the Mahadev-Kolis of study region.

The eminent scholar, thinker and editor of ‘Maharashtra Dnyankosh’ Part-XI Poona, Page-832, Shri S. V. Ketkar has clearly stated about The Mahadev-Kolis in Kolhapur district as the original place may be the Mahadev and Balaghat hilly ranges on the Western border of the Nizams State. Around 14th century, they came to Poona and spread from there towards north and west in Konkan area. One of the man, Popera went to Jawhar as per the order of a Sadhu and won over the Worli king of Jawhar. Thus, he became the first man of Jawhar State. There is a story that he won Gambhirgad and other 22 forts and declared as his “Jahagir”.

In his thesis, ‘Sahyadriteel Mahadev-Koli 1974’, Dr. G.M. Gare has mentioned that he receives the information of 12 clans among
Mahadev-Kolis, when he went door to door, in fact there are 24 clans among Mahadev-Kolis as per Maharashtriya Dnyankosh, where are other 12 clans? Dr. G.M. Gare has failed in giving explanation about other 12 clans. It is evident that the research of Dr. Gare on Mahadev-Koli based upon benchmark survey of 1971, it is in complete, half hearted and without conducting the spot survey in tribal domain of hilly region in Western Maharashtra, Vidharbh, Khandesh, Konkan and especially in study region.

There are 24 septs in this tribe and more than 280 subsections. There are Deshmukhs, Jahagirdar and Patils etc. among them. In old days, the marriages were occurring among Maratha and Kolis. These people are sharp in brain and physically strong. These women are having smart beautiful structure and are more beautiful than Kunbis. They are very fond of beautiful dresses. The men wear ‘Bandi’ and ‘Langot’. The main occupation is of agriculture and soldiery, sometimes hunting and preparing charcoal. They are intelligent, sharp and of strong memory power. They use good idioms. Women in Mahadev-Koli tribe are fond of golden ornament. They have struggled for independence as they are fond of free life. Their deities are Khandoba, Bhairoba, Bhawani, Mahadev, Masnai (Kamalja) and Banshankari of Badami (Kamalja).

It is remarkable to note that Mahadev-Kolis of study region were involved in Quit India Movement of the year 1942, 8 people from study region from Chinchane-Kamewadi were jailed and sentenced. Some were underground to help the fighters on front. The detailed history of tribal freedom fighters in study region is to be found in the ‘Hindalga Prison’ of Belgaum district and Vijay-Stmbha incarnated before the Panchayat Samiti, Tal. Chandgad, Dist. Kolhapur. The information regarding freedom fighters in study region is to be found the book ‘Swatantry Sainik Charitrakosh’ (Khand-3) composed by Maharashtra Rajya, Paschim Vibhag, Darshanika Vibhag, Maharashtra Shasan, Mumbai.
During pre-independence era various Census Commissioners and noted thinkers have used various names for the generic term “Koli”. Some have called as Aboriginal, Forest Tribes, Wild Tribes, Primitive Tribes and some have classified it as Scheduled Tribes.

Table No. 3.1 clearly shows that year and categories under which the tribes were enumerated by various commissioners.

**Table No. 3.1**

*Year and Categories under which the Tribes were enumerated by Various Commissioners (1871-1951)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Census Report</th>
<th>Officer Name</th>
<th>Use of Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1871-72</td>
<td>Memorandum on the Census of British India</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Aboriginal / Hill Tribes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td>Bombay Presidency General Reports and Tables Part-II</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Intermingled/ Isolated Tribes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>Operation and Results In The Presidency of Bombay Including Sind Volume-Text</td>
<td>J.A. Baines</td>
<td>Forest / Aboriginal Tribes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>Census of India Volume-IX Bombay Part-I Report</td>
<td>R.E. Enthoven</td>
<td>Wild / Forest Animistic Tribes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>Census of India Volume-I India Part-I Report</td>
<td>E.A. Gait</td>
<td>Primitive / Aboriginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>Census of India Volume-I India Part-I Report</td>
<td>J.T. Marten</td>
<td>Forest / Hill Tribes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Census of India 1931 With Complete Survey of Tribal Life and System Volume-I</td>
<td>J.H. Hutton</td>
<td>Primitive Tribes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Census of India 1931 Volume-I India Part-I Report</td>
<td>J.H. Hutton</td>
<td>Primitive Tribes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>Census of India 1941 Volume-I India Part-I Tables</td>
<td>M.W.M. Yeatts</td>
<td>Tribes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>Census of India 1941 Volume-III Bombay Tables</td>
<td>A.H. Dracup</td>
<td>Tribes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>Census of India 1951 Volume-IV Bombay Saurashtra and kutch Part-II A</td>
<td>J.B. Bowman</td>
<td>Scheduled Tribes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During pre-independence era various Census Commissioners has used various names for the generic term “Koli”. Some have called Koli as a Jungle Tribes, Intermingled Tribes, Isolated Tribes, Wild Tribes and Primitive Tribes.

Table No. 3.2 clearly shows that Koli as a tribe of Bombay presidency in pre-independence era (1871-1941).

Table No. 3.2
Koli as a Tribe of Bombay Presidency
In Pre-Independence Era
(1871-1941)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Census Report</th>
<th>Officer Name</th>
<th>Use of Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td>Bombay Presidency General Reports and Tables Part-II</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Koli as Intermingled/Isolated Tribes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>Operation and Results In The Presidency of Bombay Including Sind Volume-Text</td>
<td>J.A. Baines</td>
<td>Koli as Tribes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>Census of India Volume-IX Bombay Part-I Report</td>
<td>R.E. Enthoven</td>
<td>Koli as Tribes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>Census of India Volume-I India Part-I Report</td>
<td>E.A. Gait</td>
<td>Koli as Tribal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>Census of India Volume-I India Part-I Report</td>
<td>J.T. Marten</td>
<td>Koli as Tribes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>Census of India Volume-VIII Bombay Presidency Part-I General Reports</td>
<td>D.J. Sedgwick</td>
<td>Koli as Tribal</td>
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<td>Census of India 1931 With Complete Survey of Tribal Life and System Volume-I</td>
<td>J.H. Hutton</td>
<td>Koli as Primitve Tribes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>Census of India 1941 Volume-I India Part-I Tables</td>
<td>M.W.M. Yeatts</td>
<td>Koli as Tribe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table No. 3.3

Census of India, 1931 Bombay Presidency Part-II Tables
(A.H. Dracup and H.T. Sorley) Total Aboriginal and Hill Tribes
(Primitive) Koli-Mahadev

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Bombay City</td>
<td></td>
<td>37</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Northern Division</td>
<td>Thana</td>
<td>5443</td>
<td>2511</td>
<td>2932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Central Division</td>
<td>Ahmednagar</td>
<td>31258</td>
<td>15389</td>
<td>15869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Khandesh East</td>
<td>901</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nashik</td>
<td>30571</td>
<td>15439</td>
<td>15132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poona</td>
<td>36843</td>
<td>18183</td>
<td>18660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Satara</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Solapur</td>
<td>2224</td>
<td>1039</td>
<td>1185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bombay Suburban</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>102286</td>
<td>50887</td>
<td>51399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4* Southern Division</td>
<td>Belgaum *</td>
<td>263*</td>
<td>161*</td>
<td>102*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bijapur</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kolaba</td>
<td>1767</td>
<td>1255</td>
<td>512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>2050</td>
<td>1428</td>
<td>622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Sind</td>
<td>Hydarabad</td>
<td>4738</td>
<td>4738</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Karachi</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Larakana</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nawabshah</td>
<td>5139</td>
<td>2617</td>
<td>2522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sukkur</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thar parkar</td>
<td>26006</td>
<td>13717</td>
<td>12289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>36402</td>
<td>21417</td>
<td>14985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Bombay State and Agencies</td>
<td>Jawhar</td>
<td>1669</td>
<td>873</td>
<td>796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bhor</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Akalkot</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jath</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Khairpur</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>2285</td>
<td>1214</td>
<td>1071</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sr.No.1 to 5 + Sr.No. 6 Total

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sr.No.1 to 5 + Sr.No. 6</td>
<td>146218 + 2285 = 148503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sr.No. 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>76277 + 1214 = 77491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>69941 + 1071 = 71012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[(* This sign Indicate the Total Aboriginal and Hill Tribes (Primitive Koli-Mahadev) in Study Region]
Table No. 3.3 clearly shows that, Total Aboriginal and Hill Tribes (Primitive) Koli-Mahadev in study region.

Since the census operations conducted in Pre-independence India, the census of the year 1931 is a unique in its perspective. First ever time in the history of census, in the 1931 census had been carried out on the basis of caste and tribes so that accurate figure of Aboriginal and Hill tribes (Primitive) including depressed class, other backward class will be obtained. After the year 1931, no census has been conducted on the basis of caste.

The total tribal population of Koli-Mahadev tribe in study region is clearly showed in the Census of India -1931, Bombay Presidency, Part-II, in the Southern Division of Belgaum district. It counts 161 male and 102 female out of 263. With the view to develop social and economical condition of tribals and by the virtue of the decision of Government of Bombay State, the Forest Labour Co-operative Society have been formed form 1946. The Forest Labour Co-operative Society in the name of ‘The Jungle Dhande Kamkari Sahakari Upadak Sangh Niyamit, Chinchane-Kamewadi, Tal. Belgaum, Dist. Belgaum established on 17th January 1948.

3.6 SUMMARY:

This chapter provides the information about the status of Koli-Mahadev tribes in study region during pre and post independence era. As except British researchers, sociologist, thinkers, scholars and ethnologist, not a single scholar has attended in study region to conduct the survey of social, educational and economic development of Koli-Mahadev tribe during post-independence era. After independence, the politicians within state and country have vested interest only. They do not consider about the well being of tribals in study region. The information is useful while the streamlining the various development plans for tribals in the study region, barring the misconception of Koli-Mahadev tribal community.
REFERENCES:

(English Books)


(Marathi Books)

(Census Reports)

17. Memorandum on the Census of British India 1871-72, (1875).


(Reports English)

