CHAPTER – II

TRIBALS IN INDIA
The Tribal Andhra Pradesh is varied in ethnic composition and cultural patterns. The Scheduled areas constitute an important tribal belt of the Eastern and Western Deccan and sprawl from the scattered hill ranges of the Adilabad district in the west to the irregular ranges of the great Eastern Ghats bordering Orissa through the continuous hill ranges touching the borders of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra in the middle. A small patch of Scheduled area is situated in the heart of Andhra Pradesh covering the Amarabad plateau in Mahaboobnagar District and Nallamalai hill ranges in Kurnool District. The Scheduled area of 11,595 sq. Miles is distributed over 8 districts of Andhra Pradesh covering 4,346 scheduled villages. Thus most of the tribal area is bordering on the States of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa. The numerous tribal groups inhabiting the region are distributed on either side of the border. The border tribes who indulge in crossing over the borders in search of better occupation and marital relations are Gond, Kolam Naikpod, Pradhan, Koya, Bhagata, Valmiki, Savara, Khond, and Gadaba constituting about one third of the total scheduled tribes population of Andhra Pradesh. The remaining scheduled tribes population of Andhra Pradesh, such as Yanadi, Yerukula and Sugali are mostly scattered amidst the plains living non-tribals. Even some of the hill tribes are found living in the adjoining plains areas in symbiosis with plains people. The total population of the thirty three scheduled tribes is 13.24 lakhs
constituting 3.68% to the total population of the State. 5.31 lakhs of Scheduled tribes population is encompassed in the 24 tribal development blocks while 5.03 lakhs live in plains areas amidst non-tribals. The rest (2.90 lakhs) are concentrated in pockets situated inside and outside the scheduled areas. Amongst the four Southern States, Andhra Pradesh has the largest concentration of Scheduled Tribes.¹

The ethnic, social, economic and cultural complexities, the tribes of Andhra Pradesh reflect a miniature tribal India. Chenchus and Yanadis exhibit Negrito strain whereas the Khond and Savara slightly resemble the Monogoloid stock. The rest of tribes have proto-Austroloid characteristics.

The social structures of the tribes in Andhra Pradesh is also marked by bewildering regional and ethnic diversity. Most of the tribal groups inhabiting the agency tracts of Adilabad District are characterised by a well developed four fold phratry organisation. At the other extreme of the tribal belt, the Savara social organisation is peculiar by the absence of clan organisation. And in between these two extremists exist the tribes like Koya, Konda Reddi, Bhagata, Mukha Dora, Manne Dora and Valmiki, who have non-totemistic clans. Again the Khond and the Gadaba depict different social organisation with loose phratry organisations which is the product of the prescribed and prescribed marital relations and the traditional bond friendship. Besides the horizontal
stratification in each tribe, the various tribal groups of the region have been socially stratified into a hierarchy with superior status groups like Bhagatas occupying the highest rung of the social ladder and Valmiki occupying the lowest round, with other tribal groups occupying the intermediary rungs according to the status criteria decreed by tradition and reflected in their commensal and other behavioural patterns.²

Ritually, there are broad similarities between the various tribal groups inhabiting the state. The most striking similarity is the existence of Bhima cult among all the tribes of Andhra Pradesh and many of them trace their mythical origin to the Pandavas, especially Bhima. Further all of them perform the first fruit eating festivals, fertility festivals and certain seasonal festivals. The performance of life cycle ceremonies at the family level resulted in the evolution of propitiation of ancestral spirits and the consequent individual religious functionaries. While almost all the tribal groups either ignore or prohibit women from actively participating in ritual proceedings, the Samanthas bestow special ritual status on their women as is evident from the institution of 'Pejjini' the priestess, who plays a dominant role in seasonal as well as life cycles ceremonies.³

In the sphere of economy also, the tribes of Andhra Pradesh present a heterogenous structure. While the jungle folks of Nallamalai and
Amarabad plateau have a subsistence economy, living by collecting forest produce for their food and working as forest labour to earn a little money to meet their meagre requirements. The plains living tribals, Yerukula and Yanadi are earning their livelihood by pursuing various professions which include indigenous and mid-wifery, catching rodents and snakes for skins and venom, pedlery, domestic work, domestication of pigs, etc., which compel them to lead seminomadic life. On the other hand, most of the tribes inhabiting the forest tracts and billy regions mainly subsist on agriculture of one type or other. The tribes like Samanthas, Gadabas, Konda Reddis, Savaras etc., which are mostly confined to hilly tracts mainly subsist on shifting cultivation as the flat land available for settled cultivation is very limited. The tribals who are confined to foothills and flat lands of the agency areas thrive on settled plough cultivation and lead a sedentary life. The Koya, Bhagata, Valmiki and Naikpod are mostly settled cultivators. But these groups sometimes resort to shifting cultivation, if enough land is not available for dry or wet cultivation. In between these food gatherers and cultivators are pastoral tribes like Banjaras and Goudus rear cattle for commercial purposes and the Amarabad bulls are a well-known breed specially developed by Banjaras of the region. Forest plays a vital role in the economy of all the forest dwelling tribes for forests provide them with food in the form of tubers, roots, leaves, fruits, flesh of animals and birds and cures illnesses by supplying medicinal herbs. Skins, hides, horns of wild game and minor forest produce are exploited for commercial purposes. This agro-forest based
economy is subject to vagaries of nature. The rocky terrain, infertile soil, freak nature, extreme seasonal conditions, lack of perennial sources of water, predatory birds and animals and the parasitic hold of money lenders and plains sowcars forced them to live in perpetual poverty. Especially, with improvement in transport and communications and eradication of malaria, many plains people have migrated to the hitherto inaccessible and inhospitable areas in search of livelihood as traders and agriculturists and are mostly responsible for reducing the poverty stricken tribals to farm labourers by alienating their lands through usury and deceitful business transactions.4

Since time immemorial the tribal societies developed indigenous institutions of social control for sustaining harmonious intra-tribal and inter-tribal relations in Andhra Pradesh. In the backdrop of their cultural pluralism and social stratification there is ample scope for friction and maladjustment. This situation assumes special importance in view of the multi-ethnic composition of the tribal villages in Andhra Pradesh. But the temporary phases of conflict and tension never pose a serious threat to the peaceful life in village as these traditional institutions promptly reconcile the hostile factions. Every tribe has its own community council presided over by a hereditary head man. The village level council is composed of such elders drawn from various tribes. While family feuds, violations of sexual, commensal and other prescribed norms and taboos are the main concern of the individual tribal council, breaking of the tribe
endogamy, thefts, certain disputes over land and other forms of property and
celebration of village festivals fall under the purview of the village council. One
distinguishing feature of the tribals of East Godavari, Visakhapatnam and
Srikakulam tribal areas is the existence of 'Muttadari' system' which is a relic of
the British feudal system in which a hereditary 'Muttadar' is the head of a group
of village. He collects land revenue and pays a fixed Kattubadi' (revenue) to the
Government. He is the custodian of law and order of the area. For his services
he retains the land revenue collected in excess of the 'Kattubadi' amount and
enjoys rent free lands. In course of time these authoritarian leaders assumed all
pervasive powers and became the supreme authorities in all walks of tribal life.
The prevalence of 'Muttadari' system almost reduced the tribals to serfdom.5

**Development Programmes in Andhra Pradesh**

It was to this socio-cultural matrix that a new dimension has been
given by the introduction of Community Development Programme and the
consequent instrumentality of Panchayat Raj intended to uplift the tribals and
achieve rapid integration with the larger society of the region and the nation. The
integrated approach has been envisaged for the all round development of tribals
during the three plan periods with the inauguration of Multi Purpose Projects in
four tribals pockets, namely, Uttnoor in Adilabad district, Narasampeta in
Warangal district, Paderu and Araku in Visakhapatnam district where the largest
number of which are concentrated. Today there are as many as 24 Tribal

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Development Blocks with a scheduled tribe population of 5.31 lakhs covering major portion of the scheduled area in Andhra Pradesh. Here it is very important to note that only 40% of the scheduled tribes are deriving the benefits of the intensive programme of tribal development as they are living in Tribal Development Blocks. The rest of the scheduled tribes inhabiting plains and tribal pockets are denied the benefits of the tribal development programmes. Spectacular results have been achieved in the introduction of improved agricultural practices like use of improved seeds, implements, fertilisers and insecticides, transplantation of seedlings and some of the commercial crops like chillies, tobacco, sugar cane, potato etc. Another noteworthy feature is rejuvenation of the cooperative movement by introducing a new institution the Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Tribes Cooperative Finance and Development Corporation which is largely contributing for infusing vitality into tribal economy by arranging organised marketing system and providing agricultural credit facilities through a network of Primary Societies and Purchase and Sales Depots for the exclusive benefit of tribals. The overall performance of the programmes did not yield the expected results in other fields like industry, social education, women welfare and youth welfare. The programme sometimes fell short of targets because of the following reasons.\(^6\)

1. Stereo-typed programmes have been introduced without taking into consideration the felt needs of the people.
2. Lack of follow-up financial provision resulted in half finished works.
3. Introduction of too many programmes resulted in diffusion of effort.
4. The programmes are devoid of tribal bias due to lack of knowledge of tribal beliefs and customs.
5. Failure of leadership to provide the necessary guidance due to absence of enlightened leadership who are well versed in the intricacies of statutory provisions and administrative procedures.
6. Introduction of sophisticated institutions like Mahila Mandali and youth club failed to appeal to the mind of ignorant tribal women and youth.
7. 'Master of fact' approach of the official functionary and the consequent indifference to convince the tribal of the benefits of the innovations.
8. Chronic ignorance and proverbial apathy of the tribal to adopt innovations.

In view of the above mentioned factors, the hiatus between one tribe and the other on one hand and between one tribals on the other is yet to be bridged.

**Cultural Dynamics**

In spite of long standing contacts between the tribals and non-tribals the social life of the tribes is still custom-bond as marriage by capture, elopment, levirate, excommunication and expiatory rituals, exogamous phratry
and clan organisation, which are entirely absent among the non-tribals of the region are socially approved among the tribals.

The ritual practices in Andhra Pradesh are more characterised by bloody practices, ritual dances, music and song and strict observance in every detail of the ritual on every important social and religious occasion. Their religious practices are nearer to animism. Another noteworthy feature of tribes of Andhra Pradesh is that only a handful of them are converted to other faiths. As such adherence to conflicting religious faiths and consequent frictions have seldom posed serious threat to the social harmony in the tribal villages. Further, many of them worship even non-tribal deities and it is a common sign that the idols like Rama, Hanuman and Ganesh find a place along with the tribal deities.

Education is a vital factor in accelerating integration. While non-tribal societies are progressing at a general speed, the tribal societies are moving at snail's pace and the gap between the two societies remains as wide as ever, if not more. The economic backwardness of tribal household, non-production oriented educational system, stereotyped syllabi and curricula, disinterested teaching staff, lack of persuasion and follow up employment programme suited to tribal conditions are some of the major hurdles standing in the way of bridging the gap. According to 1961 census only 4.41% of the tribals are literate in Andhra Pradesh while at the State level 21.20% are literate. The ground to be covered is
so vast that one is left to wonder whether this could be achieved at least within a reasonable period of a decade or two.

Unlike non-tribal societies, the tribal societies in Andhra Pradesh suffer from lack of enlightened leadership to fill the political vacuum created by the introduction of Panchayati Raj. Most of the tribal Samithi Presidents and Sarpanches belong to neo-traditional category of leadership as the traditional leaders could successfully capture the statutory leadership because of their long standing traditional hold. But when it comes to actual discharge of their duties according to statutory provisions, these neo-traditional leaders have been floundering as neither traditional decrees nor thorough knowledge of the intricacies of the rules and regulations come to their rescue because the former are out of context and in the latter they are ignorant. A tribal Sarpanch is more successful as traditional leader rather than as a satisfactory leader. As the Samithi level the situation is still ambiguous. Plains settlers play a dominant role in the election of the tribal Samithi President. Such a President functions without spontaneous popular support or the skill of a seasoned politician. This analysis ultimately leads us to the question whether this super structure of institutionalised leadership in tribal areas is ahead of times.

**Protective Legislation**

It is into this vacuum that certain leftist movements infiltrated taking advantage of simmering discontent caused by the nefarious activities of non-
tribal merchants, money lenders and agriculturists who alienated fertile tracts
tribal lands through illegal and reprehensive means of money leading and
business and the consequent reduction of the real tribal owner to the position of
farm labourer. In accordance with the provisions of the constitution, several
welfare legislations such as Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Areas Land Transfer
Regulation 1969 and Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Area Debt Relief Regulation II
of 1960, have been enacted in order to protect the rights of tribal on land and
from the exploitation of money lenders. Besides these, the State Government
have passed several Acts and Regulations exclusively to safeguard the interests
of Scheduled Tribes of the State. Even after the enactment of all these
protective legislations, neither land alienation nor the activities of private money
lenders could be effectively curbed due to cunning manocureability of the
provisions of the Acts by the money lenders. The socio-economic surveys
conducted in Chintapalli and Bhadrachalam Tribal Development Blocks bear out
that the provisions of Section 3 of the Land Transfer Regulation I of 1989 have
been circumvented in as many as 40 and 31 land alienation cases recorded in 8
and 7 villages of Chintapalli and Bhadrachalam Tribal Development Blocks
respectively. The end product of this situation is the formation of a psychological
chasm between tribal and non-tribal or in other words aggrieved and oppressor.
Extending, of the forest boundaries upto the village and restricting the operations
of Podu’ cultivation without providing immediately alternative livelihood led to the
frustration of the tribal.8
Communication and Contact of Tribals in Andhra Pradesh:

Until the first quarter of the 20th century the tribal areas had been in virtual isolation but for the contacts with an insignificant number of plains inherent traders who used to sell salt, spices and clothes to the tribals in exchange of their hill produce. Even this delicate link is subject to the vagaries of seasonal variations and agency diseases, especially black water fever and malaria. After stabilisation of British rule all over India in the later half of the 19th century the wings of the government administration had been slowly extended to the tribal areas. The British started a sort of indirect rule over these inaccessible and unhealthy areas through feudal intermediaries like the local Rajas, Zamindars and Muttadars who are directly responsible to the Government Agent of the district. Only in times of disturbances the government directly came into contact with local tribals and passed certain pacifying legislations. Thus the British exercised loose administrative control over the tribal areas.

The advent of independence heralded a new era of positive approach by directly coming into grips with the problems of tribals. For the first time, the government administrative machinery directly came into contact with the tribals. The activities of certain voluntary organisations like Bharatiya Adimjati Sevak Sangh, Sramika Dharam Rajya Sabha and Servants of India Society received impetus due to the benevolent attitude of the government by way of liberal grants and the sincere efforts of social workers like Thakkar Bapa.
and Mandeswara Sarma in promoting tribal education and associated welfare programmes. Further, the extension of Community Development Programme into tribal areas gave fillip to the development of communication on a large scale and the consequent relations with the tribals. Construction of major Hydro-electric projects like Machkund and Sileru and large scale exploitation of forest wealth and minerals such as iron ore, manganese, lime stone and coal opened up tribal areas by laying up of all weather 'pucca' roads and railway tracks through the length and breadth of the tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh and the neighbouring states. A giant step forward in this direction is the laying of the prodigious D.B.K.Railway cutting across the hitherto inaccessible and isolated tribal habitations of Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh, connecting important iron ore and other mineral mines with the major sea part of Visakhapatnam and other nerve centres' of transport and communications and industries of the country. The project promises vast employment opportunities and closer contacts with the outside world with the introduction of Passenger traffic in the near future. Certain public health programmes like National Malaria Eradication Programme and Yawa Eradication Programme have yielded fruitful results and the hitherto inhospitable areas have became congenial for habitation of plainsmen. Hence many plains people who could not make out their livelihood in their native habitat, began migrating to the virgin lands of tribal areas and started systematic exploitation of the tribals. Along with them their superior technology, knowledge of improved agricultural practices and certain vices and
veneral diseases have also been spread in the tribal areas. But in general while the tribal could not derive the benefits of the superior technological knowledge due to his ignorance and economic backwardness, he slowly expired the vices of the plainsmen and lost his valuable land to the non-tribal through gambling, drinking illicit liquor, sophisticated food, and dress and decoration and consequent indebtedness. Thus this contact situation instead of helping the tribal to slowly imbibe the cultural traits of non-tribals to his advantage, resulted in maladjustment between the tribal and non-tribal.

Further, the introduction of a network of communications on a large-scale and welfare institutions like Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Tribes Cooperative Finance and Development Corporation has resulted in rapid monetisation of the economic transactions, by supplanting the traditional barter system of the tribes. This switch over to monetary economy resulted in multiplication of wants without a corresponding increase in means to satisfy them.9

The introduction of community development programme in the plains areas improved socio-economic conditions of the plains men and brought them almost to take off stage, whereas the tribal societies could not reap the full benefits of the programmes and catch up with the fast progressing plains people because of their traditional economic and cultural drawbacks. The age-old differences in the levels of social and economic life of the tribals and non-tribals

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could not be wiped out. Even after the implementation of multiple developmental programmes, the tribal could not 'jump the gap' and catch up with the plains people as their pace of progress is not fast enough. The introduction of numerous development programmes and their haphazard implementation confused the ignorant tribal, necessitating radical reorientation of Tribal Development Programmes to suit the needs of the tribals.\textsuperscript{10}

The recent restiveness in the tribal belt of Coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh especially in Srikakulam district is a sign of the malady plaguing the minds of tribals. It is not enough to recognise and suppress the symptoms, and radical treatment is imperative to cure the root cause of the disease by proper diagnosis and correct prescription.

The first and foremost remedy lies in providing properly reclaimed lands to as many landless tribals as possible since land is the cherished possession of the tribal and the most important source of income. All potential irrigation sources must be harnessed on a war footing and the improved agricultural practices, suitable strains of seeds, cattle breed and implements should be evolved and diffused through perseverance and persuasion. To achieve the emancipation of the tribals from the vicious hold of money lenders and sowcars sufficient agricultural loans should be issued and improved marketing facilities for their bill produce should be provided by strengthening the
activities or cooperative institutions like A.P. Scheduled Tribes Cooperative Finance and Development Corporation. The survey and settlement must be expedited to confer the long awaited ‘patta’ rights over the land for the tribal cultivators so as to allay the fears of losing his land and make him credit worthy too.

Immediate framing of rules and the effective implementation of various protective legislations through a specially fabricated machinery should be given top priority in dealing with land alienation cases and cases of violation of Money Lenders Regulation in order to curb the activities of money lenders and sowcars. The cooperative institutions have a specific role in providing the much needed credit facilities to tribals. As poverty breeds contempt and contempt leads to unrest, special programmes should be evolved for the advancement of relatively backward groups in order to alleviate the social and economic inequalities existing between one tribe and the other. Education is a sine-qua-non for rapid integration. The stereotyped education system should be remodelled so as to shift the stress from literacy-based education to production-based education. Special attention should be paid to teaching tribal lore and at the same time to inculcate a spirit of nationalisation by incorporating approximate lessons stressing national unity and the vital role of the tribal in preserving the integrity of the country through dance, drama and songs. The key to gauge the feelings and needs of the tribals lies in evolving enlightened leadership. To fill
the existing vacuum secondary system of leadership should be nurtured so as to provide the progressive type of leadership, for effective implementation of development programmes. Both national and provincial leaders have an august duty in the evolution of responsible leadership by providing necessary guidance and training. The voluntary organisations can spot the talents in their plastic age and project them at the appropriate moment to the mature politicians. Experience proved that integrated approach of Community Development Programme has, not come up to the expectations as it resulted in diffusion of human effort and finance. Hence under present economic stringency selective approach should be preferred to bring the tribal economy to take off stage. Specific programmes are to be evolved on the basis of the felt needs of the tribals living in (a) forest and hilly tracts, (b) plain areas and (c) tribal pockets as the economic and social environments of these groups markedly vary.¹¹

Besides the approach at state level, through the Tribal Development Blocks, the problem is to be tackled on a regional basis in view of ethnic, cultural, economic and linguistic similarities and geographical contiguity in the distribution of certain tribal groups such as Pradhan, Koya, Savara, Khond, Kotia, Valmiki, Bagata etc., in the neighbourhood of and an either side of the borders of one or two neighbouring States. An integrated area development approach may be adopted to suit the homogeneous communities, by taking into consideration regional natural resources; ethnic identity and occupational
similarities, needs of communication and transport, local agricultural and minor forest produce potentialities and net work of marketing system for providing an outlet for agency produce Special machinery and finance may be provided in addition to the development machinery and finances channelled through the Community and Tribal Development Programmes of respective States. Special programmes like industries, transport and communications, major and medium irrigation programmes, higher education and electrification can be more fruitfully tackled on a regional basis rather than at block level. For this purpose a national level body 'should undertake preliminary survey for carving out tribal belts and evolving suitable plans for each belt.

However, it is very important to remember that the same principle cannot be applied for evolving comprehensive programmes of development aimed at integrating the tribal groups with the society at large as the factors of discontent and maladjustment and the nature of felt needs vary from region to region. The existing hiatus between tribals and non-tribals must be bridged to achieve integration. The modus-operandi for this herculean task is by the fruitful exploitation of the natural resources to the advantage of local tribals, improving education facilities by establishing craft based residential schools, linking every nook and corner of the tribal areas through a network of communication facilities, dispelling ethnocentricism of non-tribal communities and by initiating a process of cultural exchange between the tribal and non-tribal.
SOCIO-CULTURAL PROFILE OF TRIBES OF ANDHRA PRADESH

The Indian cultural heritage comprises of a wide variety of complex as well as simple but rich folklore found among the tribals living in the forest clad mountainous and hilly tracts of India. More than 300 main tribal communities are distributed from Himalayas down to Indian Ocean and from the Arabian sea to Bay of Bengal and Eastern Frontiers. The origin and original settlement patterns, peregrinations and their inter-relations with other communities are lost in the mist of antiquity. But the oral traditions, mythologies, folk tales, historical evidences partly revealed their hoary past. Tales, which are customarily distinguished from myths because of their secular character, are often regarded as an unwritten record of tribal history. The total population of Scheduled Tribes in the country is 683.91 lakhs and they constitute 8.08% of the total population as per 1991 Census reports (the Scheduled Tribe population State-wise is furnished in Annexure I). The tribal population of Andhra Pradesh works out to 6.14% to the total tribal population of the country.

The concept of Tribe varies from State to State or area to area depending upon local socio-economic conditions of particular community and the consequent inclusion of a particular group in the list of Scheduled Tribes or Scheduled Castes. A community may be Scheduled Tribe in one State and it may be Scheduled Caste in another State and same may be backward class or forward class in another State. For example, Lambadas or Banjaras or Sugalis are Scheduled Tribes in Andhra Pradesh, but they are classified as Scheduled
Castes in Karnataka and Union Territory of Delhi and Backward Class in neighbouring Maharashtra. Korcha community which is synonymous of Yerukula tribe is in the list of Scheduled Castes in Karnataka State and in Andhra Pradesh, they are Scheduled Tribes. Similarly, ‘Goudu’ is Scheduled Tribe within the Agency tracts of Andhra Pradesh but they are not recognised as Scheduled Tribes in adjoining State of Orissa even though they are predominantly found in tribal areas of, Orissa State. This kind of anomalies lead to emigration of identical communities from a State where they are not Scheduled to a State where the same group is scheduled in order to utilise the benefits under the garb of Scheduled Tribes.13

Identical nomenclature of certain communities, sometimes based on identical traditional occupations within the State also is leading to much confusion and facilitating these non-tribal caste groups to claim Scheduled Tribe social status. The Kammara caste group people (which is included in State B.C. list) who are blacksmiths in the plain areas, are also claiming as Kammaras of Agency tracts for the sake of cornering the reservation benefits of Scheduled Tribes. These two are quite distinct communities and they differ widely in their customs, traditions, habits and values. The social organisation of these two communities and associated ritual practices are diametrically opposite to each community. Like wise Goudu of Agency tracts (Pastorals) are included in Scheduled Tribe list but Gowda, Gamalla, Goundla or Ediga of plain areas who
are traditional toddy tappers are included as Backward Classes. Both communities are distinct and different. The High Court in its Writ Appeal No.439 of 1980 also clearly brought out this distinction between these two communities and Gowda or Gamalla people even residing in Agency areas cannot be recognised as Scheduled Tribes. In view of identical nomenclatures, - some of the plain people belonging to Kapu, Reddi, Thoti, Bagata, Mannervarlu, Samantha or Samantiya, Benatho Oriya or Bentho Oriya, Holva, Boya Valmiki, Pala Ekiri etc. communities are managing to produce Scheduled Tribe Certificates. Some of the people belonging to Pala Ekiri caste are styling themselves as Erukula and are producing bogus tribal certificates. Some of the communities, who even without any kind of identical nomenclature, are also fraudulently claiming as if they belong to some of the sub-divisions mentioned under certain generic names or main group. For example, Mannevarlu under Kolam, Bentho Oriya under Kotia, Lingadhar Koya under Koya etc., eventhough they do not actually belong to these sub-divisions. “Since these words enable parts of groups of a tribal community to be specified under a single entry of the Scheduled Tribe order, it follows that the communities mentioned against the entry are those which have mutual affinities among them as being included in the same tribe. The entry has to be interpreted accordingly”.14

There is mushroom growth of sham tribals to enjoy the unintended concessions and privilege in the fields of education, employment and
developmental activities. Unless this process of pseudo tribalism is strictly controlled the genuine tribals cannot be developed as envisaged in the Constitution.

Andhra Pradesh is the traditional home of nearly 33 tribal groups and most of these communities are found inhabiting in the border areas of Andhra Pradesh in the North and North-East. The list of recognised Scheduled Tribes of Andhra Pradesh is furnished in Annexure it. Identical tribal groups are found in the border areas of Maharashtra in the North and Madhya Pradesh and Orissa in the North-East. Out of 33 recognised Scheduled Tribes in Andhra Pradesh, 30 groups are mostly found living in teh sprawling 30030 Sq. kms. of Scheduled areas and contiguous non-scheduled sub plan area in the districts of Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, East Godavari, West Godavari, Khammam, Warangal, Adilabad and Mahboobnagar. The Scheduled area in the State which is the chief habitat of tribal groups of Andhra Pradesh constitutes 11% of the total geographical area of the State. The density of population in tribal areas is 125 persons per Sq. Km. as against 194 in the plain areas. In addition to Scheduled villages, non-scheduled villages on the basis of contiguity and predominant tribal population are included in Tribal Sub Plan / I.T.D.As. Visakhapatnam District is having highest number of scheduled villages and Mahabobnagar is having the least. With regard to area, Khammam District is having largest geographical area under scheduled areas.
On the basis of geo-ethnic characteristics, the tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh can be divided into the following five geographical regions:

1. Gond-Kolam Region – the tribal areas of Adilabad district.
3. Khond-Savara Region – Tribal areas of Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram and Srikakulam districts.
5. Plain Areas – Areas of habitation of Yanadis, Yerukulas and Banjaras or Lambadas.

1. Gond-Kolam Region:

The Adilabad district situated in the extreme Northern part of Andhra Pradesh is part of Gondwana region and identical tribal groups are found in the adjoining districts of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. This district has natural boundaries of important rivers i.e., Penganga in the North, Wardha in the North-East, Pranahita in the East and Godavari in the South. Most of the rivers in and around Adilabad are tributaries of Godavari and this river exercises great influence in socio-religious lives of tribals of the region. The predominant soils are black cotton and sandy loams. Cotton is the important commercial crop.
grown in this region. The important minerals available in this district are coal, limestone, manganese and clay. The district is having one of the richest forests and area covered by forest works out to 42.43% to the total geographical area.

2. Koya-Konda Reddi Region:

The Koyas are found all along the Godavari river is starting from Karimnagar to East Godavari and West Godavari districts. The Konda Reddis are inhabiting on either side of Godavari banks from Bhadrachalam area of Khammam district to Devipatnam and Polavaram areas of East Godavari and West Godavari respectively. The Sabari and Kinnerasani are other important tributaries of Godavari in Khammam district. This district is endowed with most varied types of minerals. Coal deposits are extensively found in the traditional habitat of tribals on either side of Godavari gorges. Iron ore, limestone, marble and dolamite are also found in larger quantities.

The East Godavari and West Godavari districts were formed in 1925 from erstwhile Godavari district. Good miscellaneous by dedicuous and semi evergreen forests are found in these two districts. The total forest area in East Godavari is 3,23,148 hectares and this constitutes 29.9 percent to the total geographical area of the district. In West Godavari district, total forest area constitutes only 10.4 percent. The mighty Godavari greatly influenced the socio-economic conditions of Koyas and Konda Reddis. as the lands situated on either side of Godavari are extremely fertile, non-tribals in large numbers
immigrated to the tribal areas and occupied the fertile lands. Commercial crops like tobacco and chillies are widely cultivated mostly by non-tribals. This river facilitated the movement of non-tribals from widely populated plain areas of East Godavari and West Godavari is sparsely populated tribal areas through mechanised boats and launches.

3. Khond-Savara Region:

The Khond-Savara Region is one of the significant tribal habitat having common tribal groups in adjoining Orissa State which was formed in 1936. This region spreads from forest and hill tracts of Srikakulam and Visakhapatnam districts and these hill ranges form part of Eastern ghats. Winter is extremely cold and summer will be pleasant with salubrious carnate. The Nagavalli, Vamsadhara, Suvarnamukhi, Vegavathi, Mahendratanaya, Gomukhi and Chempavathi (Gosthan) are important rivers in Srikakulam district. These rivers mostly traverse in the tribal areas of Srikakulam and Vizianagaram districts but tribals are not benefited. South Indian moist deciduous mixed forests are found. The Sal forests are also found in this region only.

Machkund (fish tank) is one of the important rivers which forms boundary between Orissa and Andhra Pradesh in the North-Eastern part of Visakhapatnam district. The same river is known as Sileru in Chintapalli and this river joins Sabari river. The Machkund river profoundly influenced the socio-
religious lives of tribals of Paderu region. A section of Bagatas whose can name is Matsya (fish) worship fish of a pond near Paderu area. Sarada river which originate in the Madugula hills flows through Chodavaram, Anakapalli and joins into Bay of Bengal. Visakhapatnam district in rich in its forest resources especially minor forest produce. The forest spread over an area of 4,70,813 hectares and this area constitutes 41.50% to the total geographical area of the district. The maximum height in the hilly areas is 1,680 metres. Southern tropical semi ever green forests. Southern tropical moist deciduous forests, tropical by deciduous forests are found in this district. One of the highest broad-guage railway lines pass through the enchanting mountainous tracts of Anantagiri and Araku areas of Visakhapatnam district. Srikakulam District was formed out of original Visakhapatnam district in the year 1950 and again Vizianagaram district was carved out of adjoining areas of Srikakulam and Visakhapatnam in the year 1979.

4. Chenchu Region:

The traditional habitat of Chenchus is found in contiguous forest tracts of Nallamalai hills in the districts of Guntur, Prakasam, Kurnool, Mahaboobnagar, Nalgonda and Vikarabad areas of Ranga Reddy district. Much of the area of these Nallamalai hills through which Krishna river flows is presently declared as Tiger Project area.
The Nagarjunasagar-Srisailam Tiger Sanctuary extends over an area of 3568 Sq.kms. in the districts of Guntur, Prakasam, Mahboobnagar, Nalgonda and Kurnool. It covers 124 villages of which 31 are Scheduled villages. The total population in these villages is 23,404 of which 3,972 are Scheduled Tribes and they mostly belong to Chenchus, a Primitive Tribe. An extent of 13,457-50 acres of cultivated area is included in Tiger Project area.

The Chenchus of this area are more or less at food gathering stage of economy and they largely by hunting and collection of roots, tubers, honey and other minor forest produce.

5. Plain Areas:

Yanadi, Yerukula and Lambadas are only important numerically predominant tribal groups found in the plain areas of the State. These three groups were recognised as Scheduled Tribes from 1956 onwards in Andhra region and from 1977 throughout Andhra Pradesh. Even-though they inhabit the same area along with other caste groups, their settlements are found in separate localities or hamlets. The settlements of Yanadis are found on the river and canal banks as their main source of livelihood is fishing. The Yerukulas who are mainly who are mainly pig rearers and basket makers live in mixed villages maintaining symbiotic relations with non-tribal groups. The settlements of Lambadas are found in separate hamlets (tandas) nearer to hill areas or pastures where they could rear their cattle. Once Lambadas were nomadic group but in
modern times, they are becoming cultivators and rearing of cattle has become their secondary occupation. Yerukulas are found throughout the State: Lambadas are mostly distributed in the Telangana region and sparsely in Rayalaseema and coastal areas except in Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam and East Godavari districts. The Yanadis are predominantly found only in Andhra region. Eventhough these groups are living in the midst of other non-tribal communities, they are able to preserve their socio-cultural identity of their own.16

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

The total Scheduled Tribe population in Andhra Pradesh is 31.76 lakhs according to 1981 census reports and their population increased by 15.18 lakhs (91.67%) when compared to 1971 census reports. This abnormal growth in Scheduled Tribe population is due to inclusion of Lambada, Yerukula and Yanadi communities of Telangana region in the list of Scheduled Tribes in 1976 by removing area restriction. The tribal population in the State constitute 5.93% to the total population of the State. The details of tribe-wise population as per 1981 census reports are furnished in Annexure VI. The Lambadas are numerically predominant tribal group and Koyas occupy the next position. The Yerukulas and Yanadis possess equal number of population. Lambadas emerged as the largest tribal group (36.42%) and Koya, Yerukula and Yanadi groups occupy next positions.
As seen from 1991 census reports, highest Scheduled Tribe population is found in Khammam district (5.59 lakhs) and Visakhapatnam district comes second (4.69 lakhs), Hyderabad district is having lowest tribal population (0.29 lakhs). The district-wise population of Scheduled Tribes (1991) and their growth from 1951 to 1991 are furnished in Annexures VII, VIIA & VIIIB. The total Scheduled Tribe population in Andhra Pradesh as per 1991 Census is 42 lakhs and they constitute 6.32% to the total population of the State.

The district-wise predominant tribal groups in the 9 Scheduled districts are as follows:

**TABLE – 2.1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Name of the Scheduled District</th>
<th>Predominant Tribal Groups</th>
<th>Percentage of S.Ts to total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Srikakulam</td>
<td>Savara, Jatapu, Gadaba, Konda Dora</td>
<td>5.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Vizianagaram</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>8.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Visakhapatnam</td>
<td>Bagata, Gadaba, Kammara, Konda Dora, Kotia, Khond, Mali, Manne Dora, Mukha Dora, Reddi Dora, Porja, Valmiki, Goud, Kulia</td>
<td>13.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>East Godavari</td>
<td>Koya, Konda Reddi, Kammara, Konda Dora</td>
<td>3.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>West Godavari</td>
<td>Koya, Konda Reddi, Yerukula, Yanadi</td>
<td>2.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Khammam</td>
<td>Koya, Konda Reddi, Sugali or Lambada</td>
<td>24.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Warangal</td>
<td>Koya, Lambada</td>
<td>12.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Adilabad</td>
<td>Gond, Kolam, Pardhan, Thoti, Lambada, Naikpod, Andh</td>
<td>16.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Mahboobnagar</td>
<td>Lambada, Chenchu, Yerukula</td>
<td>6.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Performance Budget, 2004-2005, Department of Tribal Welfare, Government of Andhra Pradesh.
The Scheduled Tribe population increased from 7.67 lakhs in 1951 to 13.24 in 1961 (72.62%) and from 16.57 lakhs in 1971 to 31.76 lakhs in 1981 (91.67%). There was substantial increase in Scheduled Tribe population in 1961 because these communities namely Lambada, Yerukula and Yanadi of Andhra area were included in Scheduled Tribes as per the Scheduled Caste & Scheduled Tribe Modification Order 1956. Similarly the Scheduled Tribe population almost doubled in 1981 when compared to 1971 census reports because the area restriction for the above three tribes was removed in 1976 and these groups residing in Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh also became Scheduled Tribes with effect from 27-7-1977. Similarly, the Scheduled Tribe population was chiefly found in only Scheduled districts as per 1951 census reports as hill tribes were alone included in the list of Scheduled Tribes in the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Order 1950. Out of total population of 7.67 lakhs in the entire Andhra Pradesh, 7.05 lakhs constituting 91.92 percent were found in Scheduled districts and rest of 0.62 lakhs were only found in the plain districts.17

**Demographic profile:**

The total tribal population of Andhra Pradesh according to 2001 census is 50.24 lakhs constituting about 6.59% of the total population of the State. The scheduled areas extend over 31,485 sq.kms. which is about 11% of total area of the State with 5938 villages distributed in Srikakulam, Vizianagaram,
Visakhapatnam, East Godavari, West Godavari, Khammam, Warangal, Adilabad and Mahaboobnagar Districts. There are no scheduled areas in the other Districts. There are 33 ST communities living in the State. Of the 50.24 lakhs tribal population, 30.47 lakhs are found in the above mentioned 9 districts. The remaining tribal population of 19.77 lakhs is distributed in the other districts. Areas inhabited by primitive tribal groups are remote areas of the ITDAs and MADAs are by and large lacking in necessary infrastructural facilities required for a minimum standard of living. The availability of infrastructure facilities in the tribal areas is far below the State and National averages. The General Literacy rate is 60.5 as per 2001 census. Poor infrastructural facilities, overall backwardness of these areas coupled with poor literacy rate have also resulted in increased hardship for tribals. Government accord high priority to the accelerated development of tribals by implementing welfare and developmental programs which help the tribals lead a better quality of life in terms of Health, Nutrition, Education and Employment etc.18

An Overview:

Andhra Pradesh is one of the premier states in India having considerable Scheduled Tribe population. The Scheduled areas constitute an important tribal belt of the Eastern and Western Deccan. The ethnic, social, economic and cultural complexities, the tribes of Andhra Pradesh reflect a miniature tribal India. These are broad similarities between the various tribal
groups inhabiting the State. In the sphere of economy also, the tribes in the State present a heterogeneous structure. The total population of Tribes in Andhra Pradesh as per 2001 Census is 50.24 lakhs constituting 6.59 percent of the total population of the State.
REFERENCES


3) Ibid. P.8.


7) Ibid. P.168.


9) NIRD: Workshop on Development Perspectives for Tribals, October-November, Hyderabad: 1990, Background material.


16) Ibid. PP.4-5.

17) Ibid. P.12.