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TRIBALS IN KERALA – A SITUATIONAL OVER VIEW

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ABSTRACT.

Tribal development issues, their autonomy and integration have challenged India's economy since the British rule. Though India has made immense progress in almost all segments of the society, the tribals remained outliers unaffected by any kind of advancement. The complexity of the tribal sub nationalism pose serious threat to the community's development over time. The paper discuss the state of the tribals of Kerala, who are kept away from the so called Kerala Model of Development. All developmental aspects of the society are centered towards the mainstream population who exclusively reap all the benefits of developmental programmes implemented by the government and other institutions. The governmental monopoly over the forest accelerated the exploitation of the tribals creating land alienation issues.

Key words: Scheduled Tribes, PVTG's, Kerala Model, literacy, health.

INTRODUCTION

Articles 342 and 366 (25) dealing with Scheduled Tribes in the Constitution of India provide for as under: -

“342. The President may with respect to any State or Union Territory, and where it is a State, after (1) consultation with the Governor thereof, by public notification, specify the tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities which shall for the purposes of this Constitution be deemed to be Scheduled Tribes in relation to that State or Union Territory, as the case may be;

Parliament may by law include in or exclude from the list of Scheduled Tribes specified in a notification issued under clause (1) any tribe or tribal community or part of or group within any tribe or tribal community, but save as aforesaid a notification issued under the said clause shall not be varied by any subsequent notification”.

366 (25) : “Scheduled Tribes” means such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this Constitution (Indian constitution).

There are 36 communities enlisted in the Scheduled Tribes list of Kerala, majority being settled in Wayanad district. The tribes in Kerala are categorised in to Particularly Vulnerable Tribes (PVTG’s), Marginalised Tribes and Minorities by the ST Development Department. Among these communities the Paniyas are the largest in terms of total population in the state (22.5%). The second largest community is the Kurichyan forming 9 % of the total tribal population.

Table No: 1

Tribal communities in India			
1. Adiyar	11. Kurichchan (Kurichiyan)	21. Mannan	
2. Aranda (Arandan)	12. Kurumans	22. Muthuvan	
3. Eravallan	13. Kurumbas	23. Palleyan	
4. Hill Pulaya	14. Mahamalar	24. Paniyan	
5. Irular,	15. Malai Arayan (Mala Arayan)	25. Ulladan	
6. Kadar	16. Malai Pandaran	26. Uraly	
7. Kanikkaran, Kanikar	17. Malai Vedan (Mala Vedan)	27. Mala Vettuvan	
8. Karimpalan	18. Malakkuravan	28. Ten Kurumban,	
9. Kattunaickans	19. Malasar	29. Thachenadan,	
10. Kochuvelan	20. Malayan	30. Cholanaickan	
11. Koraga	11. Mavilan	11. Malapanickar	
12. Kudiya, Melakudi	12. Malayarayar	12. Vettakuruman	

Source: Scheduled Tribe Development Department, (2013)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The data used in the present study is secondary data .The data from Scheduled Tribes Development Department, Government of Kerala, Kerala State Planning Board, and Census of India 2011 are systematized for portrayal of the status of tribal population in the state.

DATA AND DISCUSSION

a) Distribution and population trends

Table No: 2

District	Scheduled Tribe population (2011)	%
Kasargod	48857	3.8
Kannur	41371	1.6
Wayanad	151443	18.5
Kozhikode	15228	0.5
Malappuram	22990	0.6
Palakkad	48972	1.7
Trissur	9430	0.3
Ernakulum	16559	0.5
Idukki	55815	5
Kottayam	21972	1.1
Alappuzha	6574	0.3
Pathanamthitta	8108	0.7
Kollam	10761	0.4
Thiruvananthapuram	26759	0.8
Kerala	484839	1.5

According to 2011 census, there are 119,788 tribal households in Kerala. The tribal population of the state is 1.5 % of the national population. Wayanad district has the highest number of tribal concentration in the state. More than 70 % of the tribal population are seen in the districts of Wayanad, Idukki, Palakkad, Kasargod and Kannur .The overall sex ratio among the tribes is 1035 females for 1000 males.

Table no: 3

District wise number of families

District	Families	%
(1)	(2)	(3)
Thiruvananthapuram	5183	4.80
Kollam	1303	1.21
Pathanamthitta	1791	1.66
Alappuzha	872	0.81
Kottayam	4353	4.03
Idukki	14315	13.26
Ernakulum	2370	2.20
Trissur	1481	1.37
Palakkad	13223	12.25
Malappuram	3656	3.39
Kozhikode	2680	2.48
Wayanad	36135	33.47
Kannur	9005	8.34
Kasargod	11598	10.74
Total	107965	100

b) Tribal habitation

The tribal communities of the state mainly inhabit the Western Ghats in close affinity with the forest ecosystem. The number of households in the tribal settlements in Kerala vary from 20 to 100 households. The tribal habitations are characterized by compact structures and strong racial boundary based on kinship. The transformation of the tribal community to the present habitation was marked by their movement from food gatherers to food producers. The tribals also live in semi-permanent constructions that are allotted to them by the Forest Department. Some are settled near perennial streams or rivers.

Table No: 4

Distribution in settlements

(1)	Number	%
(1)	(2)	(3)
Thiruvananthapuram	: 226	4.75
Kollam	: 26	0.55
Pathanamthitta	: 43	0.9
Alappuzha	: 34	0.71
Kottayam	: 101	2.12
Idukki	: 299	6.28
Eranakulam	: 61	1.28
Thrissur	: 59	1.24
Palakkad	: 426	8.95
Malappuram	: 229	4.81
Kozhikode	: 126	2.65
Wayanad	: 2167	45.51
Kannur	: 353	7.41
Kasaragod	: 612	12.85
Total	: 4762	100

c) Accessibility to tribal settlements

Motorable roads connect 60% of the tribal settlements in Kerala. 1225 settlements are connected by footpaths. While 8% of the total settlements have no connectivity, some are connected with the help of ferry boats. Even though road connectivity is said to have reported for many settlements, footpaths are only available at a distance of more than 10 kms away from the settlements.

Table no: 5

Accessibility to settlements

District	Motorable Road	Only Foot Path/ Foot Step	Road Connectivity	without Culvert/ Foot Bridge	No Connectivity	Country Boat/ Motor Boat	Others	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	
Thiruvananthapuram	: 125	63	13	17	5	3	226	
Kollam	: 17	8	1				26	
Pathanamthitta	: 27	12	3		1		43	
Alappuzha	: 22	10		1		1	34	
Kottayam	: 69	20		4		8	101	
Idukki	: 172	74	18	25	5	5	299	
Ernakulum	: 39	14	7	1			61	
Trissur	: 42	12	1	4			59	
Palakkad	: 284	82	23	19	1	17	426	
Malappuram	: 132	56	4	28	2	7	229	
Kozhikode	: 75	25	7	19			126	
Wayanad	: 1197	644	54	200	1	71	2167	
Kannur	: 250	72	3	19		9	353	
Kasargod	: 424	133	11	29		15	612	
Total	: 2875	1225	145	366	15	136	4762	

d) Access to educational institutions

The educational backwardness of the tribals of Kerala can be mainly attributed to the inaccessibility to the formal education system. More than 117 settlements in Kerala have anganwadis that are more than 5 kms away. About 903 settlements with Single teacher Schools, 576 settlements with Lower Primary Schools, 2197 settlements with High Schools, 1301 with Upper Primary Schools and 2762 settlements with Higher Secondary Schools are located at a distance of more than 5 kms from the settlements.

Table No: 6

Educational Institution	Number of educational institutions						
	Within Settlement	Within 0.5 km	0.51.0 km	1.02.5 km	2.55.0 km	Above 5 km	Not Specified
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Anganwadi :	1236	356	938	1686	244	117	185
Single Teacher Institute/ M.G.L.C/ Peripatetic School	224	72	70	280	322	903	2891
Continuing Education Centre :	155	69	112	629	609	1330	1858
Lower Primary School :	68	220	423	2046	1318	576	111
Upper Primary School :	26	137	240	1519	1442	1301	97
High School :	4	76	120	906	1394	2197	65
Higher Secondary School :	2	53	88	668	1123	2762	66
Vocational Higher Secondary School :	4	24	35	232	383	3745	339

e) Access to health institutions

Inaccessibility of the tribal settlements to the basic health care institutions is the major cause of severe health issues faced by the tribes. About 2139 settlements with Primary Health Centres, 3150 settlements with Community Health Centres, 4604 settlements with District Hospitals, 3238 settlements with Ayurveda Hospitals and 3242 settlements with Homeo Dispensaries are located 5 kms away from the settlements.

Table No: 7

Health Institutions	Access to Health Institutions								
	Number of Settlements								
(1)	Within 1 km	12.5 km	2.5-5 km	5-10 km	10-25 km	25-50 km	50-100 km	Above 100 km	Not Specified
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Primary Health Centre :	389	554	1531	1320	702	97	19	1	149
Community Health Centre :	191	237	695	1198	1411	441	95	5	489
District Hospital :	18	24	77	293	862	2356	970	123	39
Ayurveda Hospital/ Dispensary :	243	280	866	1312	1508	229	122	67	135
Homoeo Hospital/ Dispensary :	245	289	805	1242	1474	303	162	61	181

f) Literacy

According to the 2011 Census, the literacy rate of the tribals were estimated to be 74.44% which was far below the state average of 93.91%. The literacy rate of tribals in Palakkad district was found to be the lowest as 57.63%. The district wise literacy rate of tribals are given below.

Table No: 8

Literacy rate and illiterates

District	Population (Above 5 Years)	Illiterates	%	Literates (Including Neo literates)	Literacy Rate
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Thiruvananthapuram	15712	1589	1.62	14123	89.85
Kollam	4120	747	0.76	3373	81.87
Pathanamthitta	5792	666	0.68	5126	88.50
Alappuzha	2793	375	0.38	2418	86.57
Kottayam	15519	883	0.90	14636	94.31
Idukki	48616	8410	8.55	40206	82.70
Ernakulum	7999	1585	1.61	6414	80.19
Trissur	4984	1601	1.63	3383	67.88
Palakkad	41881	17743	18.03	24138	57.63
Malappuram	12561	4207	4.28	8354	66.51
Kozhikode	9633	1695	1.72	7938	82.40
Wayanad	137374	39349	39.99	98025	71.36
Kannur	34265	7791	7.92	26474	77.26
Kasargod	43729	11745	11.94	31984	73.14
State	384978	98386	100	286592	74.44

g) Employment status

The employment pattern of tribals mainly falls in to three categories; the forestry sector (which consist of traditional occupations, collection of forest produces and herbal plants and other forestry related activities), the agricultural sector (which consist of animal husbandry practices and other farm activities) and the non - agriculture and allied sector (which consist of employment in MGNREGS, petty trades, plantation works, other private sector jobs etc.) About 8.2% tribal families are engaged in forestry sector, 69% in agricultural sector and 20% in non-agriculture and allied sector. There are 2% tribal families living without any income.

Table No: 9

Sector of Employment

Sl.No	Sector of Employment	Families		Persons Above 5 Years	
		Number	%	Number	%
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1. Forestry Sector					
1	Collection of Forest Produces	1967	1.82	4261	1.11
2	Traditional Occupation	366	0.34	1287	0.33
3	Collection of Herbal Plants	330	0.31	651	0.17
4	Worker -Forest Area	6151	5.70	10939	2.84
	Sub Total	8814	8.17	17138	4.45
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
2. Agriculture and Allied Sectors					
1	Agriculture	13174	12.20	28514	7.41
2	Animal Husbandry	764	0.71	4114	1.07
3	Worker – Agriculture Sector	61122	56.61	111636	29.00
	Sub Total	75060	69.52	144264	37.48
3. Non Agriculture and Allied Sectors					
1	Petty Trade	205	0.19	340	0.09
2	Worker- MGNREGS	2520	2.33	11752	30.05
3	Worker – Non Agriculture Sector	10956	10.15	19794	5.14
4	Plantation Labour	533	0.49	1321	0.34
5	Govt./Quasi Govt Employment	5973	5.53	8966	2.33
6	Permanent Worker in Private Sector	530	0.49	1759	0.46
7	Permanent Worker in Forest Area	90	0.08	189	0.05
8	Permanent Worker in Plantation Sector	240	0.22	755	0.20
9	Others	1134	1.05	790	0.21
	Sub Total	22181	20.53	45666	11.86
	No Income/Employment	1910	1.77	177910	46.21
	Total	107965	100	384978	100

CONCLUSION

The over view of the tribal communities in Kerala shows a different picture interms of demography, habitation, literacy, health care and educational attainment from the general population. The development of tribals is clearly an outlier to the unique development experience of Kerala. All socio economic development indicators remained more or less the same for the tribals when the general population performed well in almost every realm of the economy. The structural conversion of the state – its accelerating dependence on the service sector couldn't be applied so far to the tribals. The tribals of Kerala still remains outliers to the developmental aspects of the state.

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