

# **CHAPTER – I**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Development involves mobilization of Natural Resources, Augmentation of Trained Manpower, Capital and Technical knowledge-how and their utilization for the attainment of constantly rising National goals, higher living standards and the change over from a traditional to a Modern Society. Likewise tribal development creates a challenge the policy makers, administrators and social workers of all the countries in the world. In many countries of like Latin America, Brazil and Mexico, various tribes are still in the Stone Age. The South African tribes are virtually slaves of the white minority. The Soviet Union is the only country in Europe which has made remarkable efforts for tribal development.

Tribals are homogeneous and indigenous communities in India. Many of them are still lived in a primitive with a basic life style. Anthropologists call them ‘Aboriginal’ because they are living in the Primitive life style. After the African countries, India has the largest tribal population in the world. According to Ponraj, there are around 580 tribal groups in India. Generally the word ‘Tribal’ regarded to all tribe but they do not form a uniform race and they belong to various ethnic backgrounds.

There are countless hidden and obvious differences within themselves tribal are believed to be the original inhabitants of the country. For this reason they are called ‘Adivasi’. Their history starts even before Paleolithic period. They are also termed as ‘animists’ because their religion is based on the spirit worship. They were compelled to shift to their present habitat, as they were unable to defend themselves against the invading people like the Aryans and Mangolians who came with mechanical equipment to safeguard their interest. Thus, the original people have to take shelter in mountainous ranges and thick forests, whereas a considerable number of them are still found divided into a large number of tribes and sub-tribes. It is a generally accepted fact that the tribals are one of the suffering communities in our country. Most of the tribal in India are found Backward and exploited by others in

various ways. For this reason Indian Government takes them special status for their development and Welfare.

The constitution of India has given much considerations and assurances. They have been categorized as Scheduled Tribes (ST) for the administrative purpose. The Government of India extends its support, and other material welfare for their developments. But it is really regrettable that the implementation of the constitutional rights is very poor. Most of these tribal communities are struggling even to survive in the day to day life.

Tribals are homogeneous and indigenous communities in India. Many of them are still live in a primitive and a unsophisticated life style. Anthrologists call them 'Aboriginal' because they are living in the primitive life style. After the African countries, India has the largest tribal population in the world. According to Ponraj S.D. (1996:15) there are around 580 tribal groups in India. Generally the word 'Tribal' regarded to all tribe but they do not form a uniform race and they belong to various racial backgrounds. They have innumerable inward and outward differences within themselves.

Tribals are believed to be the original inhabitants of the country. For this reason they are called 'Adivasi'. Their history starts even before Palaeolithic period. They are also termed as 'animists' because their religion is based on the spirit worship.

It is a generally accepted fact that the tribals are one of the suffering communities in our country. Most of the Tribals in India are found backward and oppressed, by others in various ways. For this reason Indian government is giving them special status for their development and welfare. In the constitution of India they are given much considerations and assurances. They are been categorized as Scheduled Tribes (ST) for the administrative purpose. The government of India extends supports, and other material welfare for their developments. But it is really regrettable that the implementation of the constitutional rights is very poor. Most of these tribal communities are struggling even to survive.

In these days, government is providing them free land and housing facilities. Many of the Paniyas are privileged to receive these benefits from the government. It is also noticed that there are many Paniyas who migrate from the interior places to town area for education or in search of job, later they make their huts wherever they get convenient places. This fact is very clearly illustrated in the recent census records. (Ref. attached in the appendix) The Paniyas have urban and rural population. According to the census report of 2001, the Paniya population in Kerala is 81,940; in that the rural population is 79,337 and the urban population is 2,603.

In some places, it was also observed that Paniyas were brought to the estate area for work by the landowners, and later they were given place to make their huts, and then settle in the borders and corners of estates. These days many are seen migrating to Aralam farm, where government is providing free land to them.

There is no sufficient record of their origin and history; only available resources are some legends, myths and oral traditions. According to one of the tradition which widely spread among them of their origin is as follows. 'The Paniya's original place was believed to be Ippimala. Mythically there was a temple on Ippimala called Ippimalamyla for the god Ipimalateyya. One Embrachan (Embrandiri is Brahman priest) and a Gounder priest performed the puja, and Uralikuramam (an artisan tribe in Wayanad) cleaned the temple. He came across two children, a girl and a boy, and they fled at the sight of Uralikuraman, who, with the consent of the priest, caught them and reared them in captivity. All attempts to trace their kith and kin were futile. The boy and the girl assisted those in the temple and when they grew up, the temple priests and Uralikuruman made them to get married. They had ten children, five boys and five girls. When those children grew up, they separated and later married. According to myth they were the foremost ancestors of the Paniyas, who refer to them as pantirappanmaara, meaning ten ancestors. The Paniyas venerate them with giving significance place, especially the first two who are separately referred to as Ippimalamuttasi and Ippimalamutappe'. (Kulirani, 1984).

The earliest record of their existence and history recorded in the government of census is 1891. It is recorded as: 'The number of Paniyas, returned at the census,

1891, was 33, 282 and nine sub-divisions were registered; but, as Mr. H.A. Stuart, the Census Commissioner observes, “Most of these are not real and none has been returned by any considerable number of persons”. Their position is said to be very little removed from that of a slave, for every Paniyas is some landlord’s ‘man’ and though he is of course, free to leave his master upon some conditions. He is at once traced and good care is taken that he does not get employment elsewhere. In the fifties of the last century, when migration from south took place the planters first began to settle in the Wynad, they purchased the land along with the Paniya workers who were already living in it, who were practically slaves of the land-owners and later stage became the agricultural labours. (Channa C.M. 2004: 5222.)

The present study is about a tribal group mostly found in three states of South India, namely Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Though their presence is spread through out different districts of these states, This study is limited to the Paniyas of Kannur district of Kerala. This study is to analyse the social structure, issues and challenges of the Paniyas in the context of modernization and their social change.

The paniyans are the most characteristic representatives of the Dravidian Tribe extended by the admixture of the Aryans, Scythians and Mongoloid elements. It is believed that their original occupation is Agriculture labour but they are also famous for hunting wild animals with spear and nets. Mostly paniyans are found to be very backward in Education and Economic status. They have been far away from the main stream of development. Most of them are found in the forests and Remote Hills.

Government of India categorized the paniyans as primitive tribes in constitution as scheduled tribes to give a special status and consideration. Paniyans have been in constant contact with the people of the surrounding communities. This influence leads them into many changes in their societies, beliefs and practices. The Industrialization and Urbanization also have played a remarkable role in the process of social transformation among the Primitive Paniyan Tribal Groups in India.

In modern days many of the paniyans have been influenced by Urban Culture by their dress style, food habit, and socio-economic status. This study discusses about the present days life style of paniyans. It is based on one settlement to another

settlement in appearance, socio and economic status of the paniyans and their living environment conditions.