

BULLETIN OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT MUSEUM

THE TAMIL NADU TRIBES

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Compiled by

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Edited by the

DIRECTOR OF MUSEUM, MADRAS

New Series-General Section-Volume XVI NO.3

Published by
DIRECTOR OF MUSEUMS
Government of Tamil Nadu
2006



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(Papers presented at the Seminar on "The Tamil Nadu Tribes" organized by the Government Museum, Chennai on 8th September 1973 in connection with the Silver Jubilee Celebration of Indian Independence)

New Series - General Section - Volume XVI No. 3



DIRECTOR OF MUSEUMS, CHENNAI - 8
2006

Printed at Government Central Press, Chennai

First Edition : 1990
Second Edition : 2006



Director of Museums, Chennai - 600 008.

Price : Rs.65/-

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EDITORIAL NOTE

It was in 1972 that the subject of Ethnology was included as one of its disciplines in this Museum by Dr. George Bidie. Thereafter the Anthropological collections have grown gradually and steadily through the untiring efforts of the District Collectors, the succeeding Superintendents and the Curators in-charge of the Anthropology Section.

But in the last two decades, the field trips and surveys by the Section were conducted in such a way that almost all the major tribes in Tamilnadu have been covered district wise-i.e.in Madurai, the Pulayan, Paliyan and Muduvan, while in Coimbatore, the Irulas, Pulayan, Iravallar and Malasar; in North Arcot, the Maliyalis, Lambadis (B.C.), and Irulas; in Tiruchirappalli, the Pachai Malaiyalis; in Dharmapuri, the Chitteri Malaiyalis and Lambadis (B.C.); in Salem, the Kolli Malaiyalis; in Erode, the Sholagas; in Tirunelvely and Kanyakumari, the Kanis; and in Ramanasthapuram, the Kattunaickens. Further, during this period only, the largest populated hill tribe of Tamilnadu, the Malaiyalis was studied comparatively at Pachaimalai, Kollimalai, Kalvarayan, Chitteri, Yercaud, Shevaroy, Jawadhi and Yelagiri hills and their agricultural appliances were collected for the Museum.

With this enriched anthropology collection, three new galleries were thus opened during this decade - the Folk Arts, the Puppets and the Physical Anthropology galleries - and we had organised special exhibitions such as the Lambadis of Tamilnadu, the Hill dwellers of Tamilnadu, the Tamilnadu Tribes, etc.

Thus, the Madras Government Museum is the only prime Government Institution in the State, actively involved in projecting the life and culture of these tribals through their permanent displays, special exhibitions and publications.

There are 42 tribals in Tamilnadu with a total population of 5.20 lakhs as per 1981 Census. The papers presented at the seminar on the Tamilnadu tribes held in the Museum in 1973 form a part of the Silver Jubilee celebrations of Indian Independence held in the Museum at that time. I hope, that these papers on Tamilnadu tribes will serve as a useful and purposeful bulletin of this Museum to numerous research students in the field of Anthropology trying to understand the life and patterns of the tribals in Tamilnadu.

MADRAS-600 008,
6th June 1989.

G. KESAVARAM,
Director of Museums,
Government Museum, Madras-8

II. WELFARE MEASURES TAKEN FOR SCHEDULED TRIBES IN TAMILNADU

*A Paper by Thiru M. K. Gomethagavelu, I.A.S.,
Director of Harijan Welfare Department,
Government of Tamilnadu, Madras.*

The Tribes. - There is no satisfactory definition either in the constitution or anywhere, for the term "Tribes". To an administrator, the term 'tribe' means group of citizens who are the special responsibility of the President of India. To an anthropologist, it means a special field for a study of a social phenomenon. But, however, all these impressions are correct. These groups are presumed to form the oldest ethnological sect and therefore they are called 'Adhivasis' which means an earlier inhabitant. The International Labour Organisation has classified such people as 'Indigenous'.

The Tribal population of the Tamilnadu State, as per 1971 Census, is 3 30 lakhs, which is only 0.78 per cent of the total population of the State. The largest concentration is in the Salem District (39.98 per cent), followed by North Arcot (23.53 per cent), Chingleput (10.45 per cent), Coimbatore (7.99 per cent) and South Arcot (5.37 per cent). There are 42 Tribal Communities in Tamilnadu. The more important among them are Malaiyalis, Irulars, Kattunaickens, Paniyans and Pulayans. The tribals live scattered in hilly areas and forests slopes of hills and their socio-economic development is solely conditioned by their environment. Since, they live in interior forests and mountains, they are far away from the centres of civilisation and are not aware of the amenities of towns and cities. The very existence of the tribals has depended during these centuries of their forest and mountain existence, upon the principles of challenge and response. Rigorous climate has not driven them away from their home lands nor obliged them to abandon their way of life. The tribals are open, frank and simple. The point for decisions is whether to allow them in their existing way retaining their present identity or to change their habits and way of living.

As already stated the tribal population of the State is only 0.78 per cent of the total population. The tribal population of the State is scattered, sparse and in isolated groups, except in Kolli Hills and Yercaud in Salem District-where two tribal Development blocks at the rate of one each were started during 1965. Except in these areas, there is no tribal concentration. Therefore, the "area concept" cannot be applied to the tribals of the State. The Scheduled Tribes are very backward, socially, economically and educationally.

The tribals are generally primitive in nature. They have their own characteristics, customs, habits and manners. They are shy and do not easily mingle with others. Their birth rate of females during the last 40 years is greater than the males. It is only through social and moral education, they are to be encouraged to have intercaste marriages with non-tribals. The question here again is whether it would be possible unless the tribals are educated to realize their rights and

responsibilities, in society, we cannot be content and complacent that we have done anything for their welfare. The Welfare schemes so far undertaken for improving the downtrodden section of the society are as follows: No area in the State has been declared as scheduled areas since the tribal population is scattered. As there are no scheduled areas in Tamilnadu, it is not mandatory for the Government of Tamilnadu to establish a tribal advisory council with reference to the provision of the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution of India. However it was considered desirable to have an advisory council at State level to advise the Government on matters relating to the advancement of the Scheduled tribes. Accordingly a State Tribal Advisory Council to advise the Government on the implementation of the Welfare scheme for Scheduled Tribes has been constituted. The chairman of the Council is the Minister for Harijan Welfare. The council meets once in 4 months and takes decision on the suggestions put forth by its members.

Education.- The level of literacy among the Scheduled Tribes, according to 1961 Census is 5.91 per cent against 31.41 per cent for the entire population (1971 census details are not available). The literacy among the tribal males is 8.93 per cent and females is 2.73 per cent. Therefore, it is clear that the tribals are lagging far behind the general population in literacy. Though the Country's growing education consciousness has reflected among the tribals also, it cannot be said that they have attained the normalcy in education. The educational backwardness of the tribals has a bearing on their environment and economical soundness. For a tribal family to send its grown up children to school is an economic preposition and entails dislocation and loss of division of labour, the family gets. Girls help their mothers in their household chores and the boys their fathers in the field of agriculture. Further, the tribals are not in a position to send their children to the schools, with proper clothings, books, slates, etc. Therefore, unless the tribals are provided with everything free of cost they cannot be brought into the educational fold. With a view to achieve this object, the State Government with whom "Education" lies as one of the primary responsibilities, are taking all efforts to educate the tribals. The Government are running 74 Residential Schools, 1 Nonresidential school and 15 hostels for the tribals in the State. About, 5,000 tribal boys and girls are benefitted by these institutions. In the tribal residential schools and hostels the tribal students are provided with free books, slates, clothings (two sets per year), food and shelter. In short, the Government have taken, complete charge of the education of the tribal student.

In addition to this, voluntary organizations which now take interest in doing welfare work for Scheduled Tribes are running residential schools for which financial assistance is advanced by the State Government. In Tamilnadu, 4 residential schools and 1 hostel run by voluntary organisations as detailed below are receiving assistance to maintain the schools and hostels.

(1) and (2) Tribal Residential school for boys and girls run by Sri Sarguru Sarva Samarasa Sangam at Coonoor.

- (3) Thakkar Baba Gurukulam at Niragachimund run by the Servant of India Society.
- (4) Tribal residential school at Kallar in Coimbatore District, run by Sri Sarguru Sarva Samarasa Sangam, Coonoor.
- (5) The Palanimalai Adivasigal Seva Sangam at Thandigudi in Madurai district (Hostel).

To shed the shyness of the Scheduled Tribes and to allow them to mix with others, the following ratio is adopted in admitting boarders in the Hostels:

	* per cent
Scheduled Tribes	60
Scheduled Castes	30
Backward Classes	10

The development of Scheduled Tribes has a bearing on their physical and mental development. To ensure both mental and physical development the Scheduled Tribes staying / studying in Government Tribal Residential school and Hostels are supplied with milk, mutton and eggs.

In the field of primary and secondary education, there is visible but slow progress. The Scheduled Tribes received education only from recent years. There is, therefore, paucity of Scheduled Tribe students at Collegiate level. The position is expected to improve only in due course. All the Scheduled Tribe students studying in colleges are granted scholarship irrespective of their parents' income and irrespective of the religion which they profess. In spite of the liberal concessions, only a few scheduled tribe students have pursued their studies and availed the concessions. During 1972-'73, a sum of Rs. 1.10 lakhs, was spent for granting scholarships to scheduled tribe students. The Tribal day scholars in the schools run by Forest Department are provided with midday meals. The non-tribal students studying the tribal schools are also supplied with midday meals.

A Pre-Examination Training Centre is also functioning in the State from 1966 onwards to train Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe candidates for I.A.S. and I.P.S. Examinations conducted by the Union Public Service Commission. At present 22 Scheduled Castes, 2 Scheduled Tribes and 2 Denotified Tribe candidates are undergoing training in the Centre. To educate the tribals of the State, the Government spends about Rs.27.00 lakhs annually

So far 5 Scheduled Tribe candidates trained in the Centre have got selection in the All India Services and allied services as given below:-

Year.	Number of Scheduled Tribes Selected for appointment	State to which they belong to
(1)	(2)	(3)
1968-69	1 I.A.S.	Assam
1970-71	2 I.A.S.	Megalaya
	1 Central Services I and II.	
	1 I.P.S	Kerala

Economic Development. - The efforts and expenditure on educating the tribals can only be an investment which cannot produce immediate economic results. Agriculture is the main stay of the tribal population. 60.49 per cent of the tribals are depending upon agriculture either as cultivators or as agricultural labourers. Out of the total population of 2.52 lakhs (1961 Census) 1.09 lakhs are non-workers, out of 1.43 lakhs of workers, 58.22 per cent are cultivators, 20.65 per cent are agricultural labourers, 7.35 per cent are engaged in other works like fishing, forestry, etc. The average land holding of a tribal is 2.5 acres in Kolli hills and 1.3 acres in Yercaud Block in Salem District. The tribals are exploited by the middlemen. To prevent them from being exploited by the middlemen, Multi - purpose Co-operative Societies have been started for the tribals in the forest areas. At present, 7 Co-operative Marketing Societies, 6 Multi-purpose Co-operative Societies are functioning in the State for their benefits. To augment their income, Cottage Industrial Centres are also run. Work Centres for the benefit of tribal women are also maintained. These institutions are either under the control of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies/Khadi and Village Industries Board/Director of Industries and Commerce/Director of Women's Welfare, but financed by the Harijan Welfare Department.

To promote the standard of living of Scheduled Tribes whose mainstay is agriculture, the following assistances are given:

Scheduled Tribe agriculturists are supplied with a pair of plough bulls and agricultural implements and seeds free of cost, at a cost not exceeding Rs. 500 per individual. The scheme was implemented in the Second and Third Five-Year Plans and also in 1966-67 and 1967-68 with subsidy of Rs.400 per individual. The amount has been increased to Rs. 500 per individual from 1971-71. Scheduled Tribe agriculturists are also granted a subsidy of Rs. 2,000 per individual for sinking of Irrigation wells. The scheme was implemented in the Second and Third Five-Year Plan and also during 1966-67 to 1970-71. The rate of Rs. 1,500 was increased to Rs. 2,000 from

1970-71. For this purpose a sum of Rs. 3 lakhs is spent every year. Government cultivable poramboke lands are assigned to Scheduled Tribes for cultivation. In hilly tracts 3 acres of dry or 1 1/2 acres of wet land are assigned free of cost to Scheduled Tribes. The Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes are given second preference in the assignment of lands.

The above schemes help the financially weak Scheduled Tribes to stand on their own legs by sinking irrigation wells of their own and by purchasing plough, bulls, seeds, etc. As already mentioned, the Scheduled Tribes live in forest and hilly areas. There is ample space for the development of horticulture. In Attur Taluk of Salem District, one Horticultural Assistant is working for giving technical advices for improving both horticulture and income of the Scheduled Tribes. For the development of horticulture in Kolli hills, the Government spends about a lakh of rupee annually.

The Scheduled Tribes who are trained in skilled works like carpentry, blacksmithy etc., are supplied with tools and implements worth Rs. 300 to 350 each to enable them to stand on their own leg. In addition, the tribal artisans like carpenter, blacksmith and barber are supplied with the tools and implements to carry on with their trades with advanced tools, etc.

It has been felt, any amount of economic development cannot have the effect of redeeming the Scheduled Tribes from the strangle holds of the money-lenders. The attack on the indebtedness among the Scheduled Tribes should be two pronged i.e., they should be relieved from the strangle holds of the money-lenders by giving long-term loans and by augmenting their income. To achieve this, as a first step, a door to door survey on the indebtedness in Kolli Hills and Yercaud Block is being taken up to ascertain the depth of indebtedness of the tribals. The following laws are in force in the State to control money-lending, debt redemption and abolition of debt-bondage:

- (1) The Tamil Nadu Debt Conciliation Act, 1936;
- (2) The Tamil Nadu Pawn Broker's Act, 1973;
- (3) The Tamil Nadu Indebted Agriculturists Act, 1955 (Repayments of Debts); and
- (4) The Tamil Nadu Money Lender's Act, 1957.

Bonded Labour. - Indebtedness has led to the emergence of a system of bonded labour which is known by different names in different States. Under this system a tribal pledges his persons and sometimes members of his family, against a loan. He is released when the loan is repaid. Until then the tribal or his family is required to work for his creditor, the period of services varies from area to area and in some case families work from generation to generation at master's house. The tribes have no chance to repay the loan amount, and remain as debtors for life and their life is a life of perpetual serfdom under one master or another. In Tamilnadu, it is learnt, there are very few cases of bonded labour, in the interior parts of Coimbatore and Nilgiris districts. Even though there are very few cases of bonded labour, they could

not be checked since the tribals are not courageous enough to reveal this fact either to the Police or to other officials to do the needful. This system has not taken the shape to cause concern as in the case of other States. The Director of Harijan Welfare has proposed to make a personal study in this matter.

Health.-The tribals live in interior forests and on hills. Therefore, they are far away from the civilization and amenities available in towns and cities. They are fortunate in living in forest areas. But, they suffer from chronic diseases, the most prevalent are water borne. Therefore, there is imperative need to provide drinking water-supply. Drinking water wells are sunk at Rs. 5,000 wherever necessary, in the tribal areas. For providing drinking water facilities to the tribal hamlets a sum of Rs. 2.25 lakhs is spent annually.

Due to malnutrition the Scheduled Tribe children are physically weak with poor resistance. In order to give them nutritious diet, the Scheduled Tribe children studying/staying in the Government Tribal Residential Schools and Hostels are supplied with eggs, mutton and milk. The other tribal children are also provided with nutritious food through centrally sponsored scheme. This scheme is being implemented by the Women's Welfare Department. Multivitamin tablets are supplied to the tribals, free of cost.

Yaws used to be common among the Todas of the Nilgiris district and is rampant amongst tribals in the Kolli hills. The incidence of T.B. is also high. In order to give relief to the Scheduled Tribes, seven mobile medical units in Madurai, the Nilgiris, North Arcot, Dharmapuri, Coimbatore Tirunelveli and Kanniyakumari districts are functioning in the State, where there is heavy concentration of tribals. And it has also been proposed to start one more mobile medical unit for giving medical assistance to the tribals of Kolli hills. In addition to this, hospitals and dispensaries are run by the Government and local bodies, State Forest Department, private practitioners, Co-operative Societies in the Plantation areas and also by other voluntary organizations. Financial assistance is given to the deserving privately managed institutions wherever necessary. For instance, the Nilgiris District Adivasis Welfare Association, Coonoor is getting assistance to the tune of Rs. 10,000 per annum for running dispensaries for tribals.

In Madurai district, where the tribals are in some concentration, anti-malaria tablets are supplied to the tribals.

The students studying and staying in the Government Tribal Residential Schools and Hostels are periodically checked by the medical officers to arrest the development of chronic diseases and to maintain good health.

Housing.-The problem of housing is complicated by its enormous difference in climate, poverty of the tribals etc. This has to be viewed in the aspects on shelter, sanitation and comprehensive cost. The plight of the Scheduled Tribes is miserable. They live in illventilated huts put up in unhygienic conditions. They are also not economically sound to provide themselves with good houses. Unless they are provided with houses for their own and made to feel that they have got some interest, it will be very difficult to improve their lot. Therefore, houses are constructed and assigned to them. The cost of a single house comes to Rs. 1,600 in plains and Rs. 2,000 in hills of which 3/4th is subsidy and the rest as interest free loan, recoverable in 100 months equal installments. During the Fourth Five-Year Plan period, it has been proposed to construct 1,200 houses at a cost of Rs. 12 lakhs for Scheduled tribes. Ten per cent of the house sites allotted by the Tamil Nadu Housing Board are for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the new colonies that are coming up.

Electrification of Tribal Colonies.- The tribal colonies of the State are being electrified wherever the adjoining villages have been electrified. To meet the capital expenditure on this, the State Electricity Board is being given subsidy every year. The programme of electrification of all villages in the State was obstructed by the financial unsoundness of the Panchayats to pay the consumption charges of the street light in the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe colonies. To overcome this, and to speed up this, the Government has undertaken the task of meeting the current consumption charges in respect of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe colonies electrified from 1970-1971 onwards. This has paved the way for the quick electrification of tribal colonies.

Roads.- Civilization and prosperity travel only by good roads. Lack of communication facilities (Roads) are the main bottlenecks in the implementation of the welfare programmes in the tribal areas. Therefore, the importance of communication in the tribal areas has constantly been emphasized. To improve the communication facilities, programmes of link roads are undertaken. Two major road works costing Rs. 7.50 lakhs each, in Pachaimalai hills, in Tiruchirappalli District are in progress. The works are executed by the State Forest Department. Further, it cannot also be taken for granted that the tribal pockets are completely isolated and inaccessible. Many of them are connected by Jeepable roads and the rest with at least bridle or footpaths. For providing communication facilities about Rs. 2.3 lakhs is spent every year.

Industrial Training.- To train the tribals in skilled trades like carpentry, blacksmithy etc., 6 industrial training, Training-cum-Production Centres are functioning in the State. The trainees of the Centres are given stipend.

Forest Utilization.- The tribals in forest are given rights to take free of charge fuel and timber of unclassified species and bamboos. They are allowed to graze their cattle in the forest areas freely, since they rear their cattle. The tribals are employed on payment of daily wages for carrying out works like sandalwood extraction, constructions etc. They are also employed as elephant men, watchers and foresters. Minor forest produce are leased out to the forest labour co-operative societies at concessional rates. They are also encouraged to take up Kumari cultivation in Salem District.

Co-operative Movement. -The Co-operative movement is not playing a vital role among the Scheduled Tribes. This is due to the antipathetic attitude of the tribals. Since Co-operative movement is not playing the expected role, the Scheduled Tribes still suffer from the strangle holds of money-lenders and traders. At present 20 co-operatives which comprise of seven Labour Contract Societies, 7 Marketing Societies and 6 Multi-purpose Societies are functioning in the State for the Scheduled Tribes. Only a few of them are functioning satisfactorily. These societies have been given financial assistance towards share capital, office equipment and for management. The multi-purpose co-operative societies were started to meet the needs like extending credit facilities, marketing the produce at reasonable price, procuring the commodities for distributing them among the members at reasonable price.

These societies are expected to improve the economic condition of Scheduled Tribes. But gradually these societies have stopped such activities and now they confine their jurisdiction within the task of advancing short term loan to the members. The societies are studied and financial assistance are granted to them on the recommendation of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies.

Tribal Model Village.- There are three model villages in the State, as detailed below, with all basic amenities:

- (1) Nedungala Combai, Nilgiris District;
- (2) Aggal, Nilgiris District; and
- (3) Kunjapanai, Nilgiris District.

Tribal Development Blocks.- Among the tribal development programmes the Tribal Development Blocks are the most important and more significant. The aim of these blocks are to bring about a rapid improvement in the economic, and social standards of the tribal people by selecting specially undeveloped but compact areas for multisided development. In our State there are two Tribal Development Blocks in Salem Disitric, one is at Yercaud and the other is at Kolli Hills. During Fifth Five-Year Plan, it has been proposed to have Pachaimalai Hills of Tiruchirappalli District, Gudalur of the Nilgiris District and

Chinnakalrayan Hills of South Arcot District where the tribals are in some concentration.

Loans for Petty Trades to Scheduled Tribes Members.- Government has recently passed orders sanctioning an amount of Rs. 0.25 lakhs to be advanced to Scheduled Tribes for starting petty trades and this would go a long way in improving their economic position.

To study the problems of the tribals to handle them in scientific way and to suggest radical methods in dealing with them, the question of establishing a research institute is under consideration.

Though Government strains to improve a lot the position of the Scheduled Tribes, their position will not improve unless they co-operate with Government. Of course there is some awakening among Scheduled Tribes in response to the measures so far undertaken, but to become on par with the advanced sections, the Scheduled Tribes should be further aroused.

**SPECIAL NOTE ON TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT-FURNISHED BY
THE SOCIAL WELFARE (RESEARCH CELL) DEPARTMENT IN
SEPTEMBER 1978**

The Tribal population in Tamilnadu is rather small in size. They are also scattered over a wide area. The Tribal population in Tamilnadu is 3.11 lakhs (1971 Census).

I. TRIBAL SUB-PLAN:

(a) *Identification of Integrated Tribal Development Project Areas.*- During the Fifth Five-Year plan period, a sub-plan was formulated for the welfare of the tribals. For this purpose the following nine Integrated Tribal Development Project (I.T.D.P.) areas were identified.

(1)	Kolli Hills	..	..	..	..	} Salem District
(2)	Yercaud	..	..	..	..
(3)	Kalrayan Hills	..	..	..	..
(4)	Aranuthumalai	..	..	..	..
(5)	Pachaimalai	..	..	..	..
(6)	Javadhi Hills	..	..	..	..	North Arcot District
(7)	Kalrayan Hills	..	..	..	..	South Arcot District
(8)	Sitteri Hills	..	..	..	..	Dharmapuri District
(9)	Pachaimalai	..	..	..	..	Tiruchirappalli District

A total number of 1.45 lakhs tribals (as per 1971 Census) residing in the above areas are now covered by the Sub-Plan.

(b) *Achievement.*- The total approved outlay for the Tribal Sub-Plan during the Fifth Plan was Rs. 842.54 lakhs. Under the Tribal Sub-Plan, from 1976-77 onwards, several development schemes such as agricultural development, soil conservation, animal husbandry, minor irrigation, co-operation, education, medical facilities, forestry, Road scheme, electrification, drinking water facilities establishment of pre-schools, village industries, etc., are being implemented to directly benefit the tribals. During 1976-77 programmes to the tune of Rs. 101.82 lakhs sanctioned and the expenditure incurred is estimated as Rs. 94 lakhs including the expenditure under general sector budget provision (tentative). During 1977-78, the outlay under Tribal Sub-Plan was Rs. 153 lakhs and the expenditure incurred is estimated as Rs. 144 lakhs which includes the amount spent from the general sector budget (tentative). The outlay for the Tribal Sub-Plan for the year 1978-79 is Rs. 200 lakhs.

(c) *Implementation.*-The respective departments have assumed full responsibility for development of the tribal areas in the respective sectors and sanctions are debited to the functional heads of the implementing departments. In all these departments, the concerned district level / Regional Officers are in charge of the implementation of schemes in the Integrated Tribal Development project areas falling within their jurisdiction. Implementation is co-ordinated at the Tribal Development Authority. There are also sub-Committees at the District level by the Collectors and at the State level by the Tamilnadu Tribal Development Authority. There are also Sub-Committees at the District level to assist the collectors in review. Expenditure and the progress of implementation are watched through monthly progress report.

II. Development of Primitive Tribes:

The Tribal Sub-Plan covers only 1.45 lakhs of tribal population. The others lie outside the Sub-Plan area. Notable among these tribals are the Primitive Tribes living in the districts of Coimbatore, Nilgiris, Madurai, Ramanathapuram, Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari. 17 Primitive Tribes have been identified in the State. Detailed Project Reports for the development of these primitive tribes have been prepared and sent to Government of India for approval.

III. Dispersed Tribal Groups:

The Tribal Sub-Plan and the special programme for the primitive tribes, will, between them, cover more than 75 per cent of the tribals in Tamilnadu. The remaining tribals are found to be very widely scattered both in the Sub-Plan districts and in other districts. Most of the dispersed tribal groups live in Chengalpattu district. Special individual family oriented programmes are being prepared to benefit these tribals under the Medium Term Plan (Tribal Sub-Plan).

Protective Legislation.- For the successful and proper implementation of the above schemes, it is essential that a conducive atmosphere free from exploitation, should prevail among the tribals. At present, most of the tribals are being cheated and exploited by others in dealings relating to land holdings, settlement of loans, etc., as most of the tribals are illiterate and less articulate. To protect them from such forms of exploitation, the Government have taken steps to bring forth the following two legislations:

- (1) For providing debt relief to tribals and
- (2) Prevention of land alienations in the tribal areas.

When both the above legislations come into force, it will support the process of implementation of the various development schemes for the uplift of the tribals. Besides the above, during 1978-79, it has been proposed to implement schemes for the dispersed Tribals and for tribals who are "Primitive" under "Advance Action".

By implementing all the above schemes, it is hoped that the welfare of the tribals who are the weakest of the weaker section of the society, will be properly taken care of.