

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS & TRIBAL  
MOVEMENT IN ADILABAD DISTRICT OF  
ANDHRA PRADESH : 1980-1990**

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This is to certify that the dissertation entitled 'SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS & TRIBAL MOVEMENT IN ADILABAD DISTRICT OF ANDHRA PRADESH : 1980-90' submitted by Rupavath Ramdas in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy, has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this or any other university. To the best of my knowledge, this is a bonafide work of the candidate.

I recommend this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

  
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*R. Ramdas*  
RAMDAS R.

TO

THE TRIBAL PEOPLE OF INDIA

AND

MY PARENTS :

RUPAVATH JAYARAM & SONEY

BHEEMINEE (Grand Mother)

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## PREFACE

The key understanding of research work in all dimensions and in evaluating it objectively depends getting at its core, at the methodological assumptions which gave it the shape it possesses. To examine these it is necessary to look at the process in which they evolved. The object of the present research was to understand the nature of the Tribal Phenomenon. An initial attempt was made to reach this understanding by examining its causes.

The Tribal revolt was seen through the abstract glasses of a Naxalite movement or a peasant revolt, thus denying and failing to explain the specificity of tribal revolts.

However, this study is an attempt to understand the socio-economic and political structures which forced the tribals of Adilabad areas of Andhra Pradesh, to organise themselves and fighting from 1940's for the redressal of their grievances. Among the major questions which we shall attempt to answer are how did the tribals react to the alienation from the social, land alienation, to indebtedness and oppression? What was the role of violence employed by the landlords, moneylenders and government in aggravating the movement? What was the leadership is the organization of discontented tribals in the growth. The study basically aims at understanding nexus between politics and violence in the specific context of the tribal movement in Adilabad area.

## CHAPTER - 1

### TRIBAL MOVEMENTS IN ADILABAD: A FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

There have been many uprisings by the tribal population of Andhra Pradesh both in the colonial and post colonial period. In more recent times, violent clashes between the tribal people and the police have become a major political phenomenon in the tribal belt stretching from the districts of Srikakulum to Adilabad. The present study is an attempt to analyse the tribal movement in Adilabad in its most recent phase over a period of ten years between 1980 and 1990. While many tribal revolts have taken place since colonial times in this area, they have been both sporadic and short lived. The present movement is a well organised movement in which for the first time the large mass of the tribal population has taken part. Hence, the study focuses on the underlying causes and the nature as well as the strategies of mobilisation used by the leadership. A brief attempt has also been made to analyse the achievement of the movement.

The existing literature on this movement-both journalist and academic-describes it either as a Naxalite or Peasant movement. However, such characterisation does not explain its underlying causes its specific nature. The basic hypothesis underlying this study is that it is the very



pattern of development adopted since Independence which underlies these revolts. Government policies towards the tribal population have resulted in social alienation backwardness, exploitation and extreme poverty. Hence, it is to socio-economic factors that the causes of tribal movements are traced. Political factors, such as mobilisation by leftist political groups, ideology and organisation alone undoubtedly important but could not have succeeded in the absence of the socio-economic condition mentioned. The study shows that the movement was directed both against the feudal landlords and contractors i.e. "non-tribals" in the district as well as the state, and its apertures of "suppression, as Chapter V shows, in its violent phase it even become for a short period an attempt at overthrowing the existing system through armed ruggle. The movement did not succeed in any dramatic change in the existing political and economic conditions of the tribals but as Ranga Rao has pointed out, "it brought about significant changes in the traditional distribution of power in Agrarian Relations.<sup>2</sup>.

### **Review of Literature**

Much work has been done on both the conditions of the tribal population, and various movements in India. However, very few focus on Adilabad district. Two types of writings can broadly be identified in the literature on

tribal in Andhra Pradesh. Some writers such as Von-furer-Haimendrof has in a pioneering anthropological work described the culture, life style and economic conditions of the gonds and other tribals in Andhra Pradesh.<sup>3</sup> His work shows exploitation of tribals by landlords and illegal occupation of large areas of tribal land by non tribal. In a case study of three villages in the tribal area of Warangal district, Janardhan Rao found large scale alienation of land by local feudal landlords which the state government was unable to check.<sup>4</sup> A study of politics of tribal exploitation leading to poverty and backwardness has also been attempted.<sup>5</sup> Most of these works focus on less of agricultural land and forests which have traditionally prominent a livelihood to the tribal population.

Other works have in contrast focused upon various tribal results since the colonial period. Some writers such as A.R. Desai have viewed tribal movement as part of the Peasant struggle taking place during the colonial period against feudal oppression.<sup>6</sup> Raghaviah identified at least 80 tribal revolts during the colonial period included in which the Rampa rebellion in East Godawari (1778-1947) and others in Andhra Pradesh. He has pointed out that there have been continuous tribal revolts and armed insurgency in parts of India since independence. The movements in Naxalbari and Srikakulum he points out helped to shape the tribal movement in Adilabad in the 1970's.<sup>7</sup> The movement after independence

are directed against both non tribals directly exploiting the tribals and against the existing power structure of the state.

A survey of tribal movements by the Anthropological survey of India towards the end of 1976 identified thirty six on going movements. <sup>8</sup> Singh has pointed out that an important aspect of these movements is that they are concluded in secular terms and do not have the messianic quality of earlier movement, nor is charismatic leadership as important. He found that land alienation and loss of control over parts were two common factors underlying these movements. The gond's of Adilabad he points out initiated a movement in 1970 for their right to land. Hence, economic factors emerge as important in the present context. <sup>9</sup> However, very little literature exists on Adilabad district which make the present study worth while. Moreover very few works have tried to present a link between the pattern of development in post independence in India, the resulting socio-economic conditions and the tribal movements in recent years.

#### **Pattern of Development and Its Impact**

The policies adopted by the Central State Governments in India towards the tribal population has passed through a number of phases. The first time that the Congress party took formal note of the tribals was in 1946 on the eve of Independence. In the early phase of tribal

planning the major dilemma faced by the government was the need to strike a balance between the tribals need for economic development and the continuation of their precious" culture. Following the advice of verier Eleven Nehru formulated five principles which attempted to strike a balance between the "isolationist" and "assimilationist" policies i.e. between doing too little and doing too much. These principles were (1) Tribal rights to land and forest should be respected (2) Tribals should be encouraged to maintain their own traditional arts and culture (3) An attempt should be made to train a team from among the tribals for administrative and development. Too many outsiders should not be introduced. (4) Over administration and multiplicity of schemes should be avoided (5) Results were to be judged not in terms of statistics but quality of human character evolved.

However, given the framework of macro planning, very little of tribal culture could be protected, nor could special attention be given to their needs. Hence two problems for the Congress in the early years were, the inter related issues of tribals progress and tribal integration. Thus, policy towards tribal communities-in Andhra Pradesh and elsewhere largely followed the safeguards and special provisions given in the constitution such as reservations of seats in the legislature and the services. Some schemes were started to help tribals set up cottage industries, provide

educational facilities, irrigation etc. The attitude of Congress run state governments like Andhra Pradesh also were ambivalent. though many initially followed the rules set up by the schedule areas and schedule tribes commission set up by the government of India in 1960 which attempted to preserve tribal culture and identify this position was gradually abandoned. By the 1960's under pressure of governing such a large country the Congress notion of tribal development and economic development became synonymous.<sup>11</sup>

It is also important to note that the various state governments also never allocated a substantial budget for tribal welfare and development. Table 1 shows that it was only in the 5th plan that there was an increase in the amount allocated to tribal development.

**TABLE-1, OUTLAYS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN FIVE YEAR PLANS  
(RS. IN CRORES)**

Plan Period	Total Plan outlay	Tribal Development	Percentage
First Plan (1952-56)	1,960	19	.89
2nd Plan (1956-61)	4,672	41	.87
3rd Plan (1961-66)	8,577	51	.60
Aromal Plan (1966-69)	6,756	35	.52
Fourth Plan (1969-74)	16,160	84	.52
Fifth	39,322	1,182	3.01

Source: Statistical Diary of India, 1989, Bureau of Economics and Statistics, New Delhi

By the 1960's the reigning model of development perceived tribal development as a problem of sectoral development and permission of critical inputs. Tribals would share also in the general development taking place.

Whenever Programmes were made by the government at the centre and often at the state level has taken recourse to setting up a commission for suggesting changes.<sup>10</sup> Beginning with the commission in 1961 under UN Dhebar a number of them have been appointed. During the 1971 Parliamentary election Mrs. Gandhi used the slogan of "garibi hatao" and Congress economic policy took a turn towards the left. Hence in 1972 the planning Commission prepared a detailed guidelines for tribal development based on the concept of "area development" focusing on development of tribal communities. Tribal "blocks", "growth Centres" and an integrated tribal development program was evolved. However tribal areas remained the backward periphery areas and th growth centres often emerged as focal points of exploitation of the tribals as the succeeding chapters show in the case of Andhra Pradesh.<sup>12</sup>

The political dimensions of tribal development hence became important in the 1970's. Lender this distribution of spoils to the elite groups, consolidation of vote banks et. became important. In the 1980's though nomenclatures may have changed, the basic rationale has

remained the same the input-output model impressed from above, though care has been taken not to break down the structure fully. However as chapter V shows demands from within the tribal community and violent tribal uprisings may force the government in Andhra Pradesh and other states to re think tribal policy.

The pattern of development impressed by the Indian State since Independence has led to three inter related consequences. (a)poor socio-economic conditions (b) Social alienation (c) resentment and movements against non tribals and the local power structures. Social alienation, an aspect dealt with in detail in Chapter II is also a result of this process. The third major dimension arising from the developmental process, and to which both poverty and alienation contribute, is tribal protest due to massive expropriation of their resources and intensified exploitation. Poor Socioeconomic conditions have created frustration and resentment and contributed to tribal movements. Hence tribal movements in the 1980's in Andhra Pradesh arise from the very pattern of development followed since Independence. Keeping this theoretical framework in mind, the tribal movement in Adilabad from 1980-1990 is analysed. A brief profile of Adilabad district is presented below.

## ADILABAD DISTRICT: A PROFILE

Andhra Pradesh is a large state occupying fourth place in the Indian Union covering an area of 1,06,286 sq.miles. The tribal agency part of the state roughly covers 29,683 sq. miles.<sup>13</sup> Adilabad is the second largest district in Andhra Pradesh and looks like a tiger seated on a hill looking back towards the Bastar area. A little less than half is covered by forest. Adilabad district is bounded by the Karimnagar and Nizamabad district of Andhra Pradesh on the South and North and the Chanda and Nanded districts of Maharashtra on the east and west respectively. The district Gazettes of Adilabad mentions that the Penganga river lies in the north, the Wardha in the north east, the Pranhita in the east and the Godavari in the South of the district. Most of the rivers in and around Adilabad are tributaries of the Godavari and this river exercises great influence on the social and cultural life of the tribals. The predominant soils are black cotton and soundy loams.<sup>14</sup> According to the 1981 census, the total population is one lakh seventy thousand out of a total population of 12 lakhs 88 thousand. There are 409 "scheduled" villages out of a total 1609 villages. Table 2 shows the total and the tribal population since independence in Andhra Pradesh.



**TABLE-2 TOTAL AND TRIBAL POPULATION IN ANDHRA PRADESH  
(LAKHS)**

Year	Total Population	Percentage risk	Tribal population	Percentage risk	Percentage of total tribal population
1951	312.60	-	17.70	-	2.46
1961	359.83	15.15	13.24	71.95	3.70
1971	435.03	20.90	16.58	25.23	3.80
1981	535.50	23.60	31.76	91.51	5.90

Source: Statistical Abstract of Andhra Pradesh 1960 and 1983  
Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Hyderabad.

**Table: 3: DECADE VARIATION IN POPULATION 1921-1991**

State/District	1921-31	1931-41	1941-51	1951-61	1961-71	1971-81	1981-91
Andhra Pradesh	+12.99	+12.75	+14.02	+15.65	+20.90	+23.10	+23.82
Adilabad	+15.31	+ 8.12	+ 9.95	+21.37	+27.65	+27.22	+26.92

Table 3 gives the decades of variation in the population of Andhra Pradesh and Adilabad district. These table shows sharp increase in the population of adilabad after independence. This is partly due to migration of tribal and non tribal population from the neighbouring districts of Andhra Pradesh as well as Maharashtra. Table shows the ratio of schedule tribes to the general population of the various taluks of Adilabad district. Only in six taluks out of 11 do the schedule tribes outnumber the non tribals. However, the a study of the various census of

Andhra Pradesh since Independence shows that many more taluks earlier had a higher ratio of tribal to non tribal population. Uttuoor taluk, in particular for example had hardly any non tribal population. Increase in communication and socio facilities such as roads, has led to large scale migration by non tribals. This has resulted in land alienation, cutting of forests and social oppression of the tribal population.

**TABLE 4: RATIO OF SCHEDULED TRIBES TO GENERAL POPULATION IN ALL TALUKS OF ADILABAD**

S.No.	Name of Taluk	General Population	Scheduled Tribe
1)	Adilabad	999	1030
2)	Uttuoor	975	998
3)	Wankadi	964	964
4)	Arifabad	953	961
5)	Sirpur	970	969
6)	Chinnur	968	955
7)	Lakshetpet	944	947
8)	Boath	1022	1029
9)	Khanapur	985	942
10)	Nirmal	1022	1000
11)	Mudhok	1004	947

Sources: Census of Andhra Pradesh series

In chapter II an attempt has made to describe the socio-economic conditions of the tribal populations of

Adilabad. It shows how the dual process of sanskritization and modernisation have resulted in not merely poverty but socio alienation chapter III described the process of alienation of land by non tribals. Occurring over a long time period of time it has resulted in a transformation of the pattern of land ownershi reducing the tribals to landless labour. They also face exploitation and feudal oppression from money lenders and landlords. The various land regulation acts have not been able to help the tribals. Chapter IV gives the results of a sample study undertaken of 8 villages in Adilabad district. The study found that while various governmental programmes have been put forward, they have not been able to ameliorate the conditions of the tribals. It is this socio alienation and the poor economic conditions which have provided fertile ground for the tribal movement described in chapter V mobilisation of the large mass of the tribal population has been possible in recent years due to rising expectations and unfulfilled promises.

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## CHAPTER - II

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF TRIBALS AND RESULTING SOCIAL ALIENATION

Since Independence many development schemes and protective measures have been attempted by the central and state government for the tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh. However, the conditions of majority of the tribals have deteriorated. While exploitation and backwardness are found in many communities and social groups in India, among tribes it has resulted in Social alienation. The existence of a distinct culture and life style make the problems of tribals different from those of other deprived groups in India. In this chapter, an attempt has been made to focus upon social alienation in Adilabad district, while specific economic problems such as land alienation have been dealt with in the next chapter.

#### **Tribal Society and Culture**

The tribals of this area belong mainly to the gond tribe. They form a socially dominant section among the rest who belong to the Bhil, Koya, Kolam, etc. tribes and are much fewer in number. Their mother tongue is Gondi, Tribal life among the Gonds exhibits unique symbiosis of man and nature. Their culture being an outcome of living with nature

and learning from it. Traditionally Pujaris also called 'Kolams', were a priestly class who performed rituals and were the medicine men and storey tellers of the tribe. They enjoyed social prominence together with the tribal chiefs. Tribal spiritual life was rich with creative mythologies and religious stories. Each clan member even today possesses the house deities of the tribe though there is a village priest called the "Devari" and clan priest (Kalotra) and a village seer (Bhaktal). There is no discrimination among the Gonds on the basis of sex. Women traditionally had an important position within the family and society. The Gonds even today have their distinct folk dances and music. However, they celebrate the main "Hindu" festivals of Diwali, Dussehra etc. <sup>1</sup>

Since independence Gond society has been profoundly influenced by the twin process of 'Sanskritization'<sup>2</sup> and modernisation. Due to this the social and economic life of the Gonds has undergone change. For Example, Change has taken place in the position given to women and the rituals associated with marriage. Gond women traditionally were very independent and took part in both cultivation of land, setting of produce etc. Today, due to cultural contact women are secluded. While earlier marriages were simple affairs, today the custom of dowry has penetrated into tribal life forcing many into the hands of local money lenders. Non Tribal intrusion has created an

unequal social fabrication and mentality.<sup>3</sup> Non Tribals in order to sustain their economic exploitation and hegemony over the tribals have attempted to propagate the Hindu religion as superior to the tribal god who are described as 'evil spirits'. The backwardness of described as an outcome of religious beliefs and practices. This has led to breakdown of the social fabric and adoption of Hindu practices such as pilgrimages to Tirupati. Onimist practices such as free worship has been replaced by temple workshop. The establishment of institutionalised religion has made temple surroundings place of commercial activity useful to the non tribal trading classes. Haimendrof records that the 'Khelaspur Jatara' a tribal festival has been replaced by a temple which has been used as a platform by politicians during election campaigns. Temple offerings amounting to Rs. 1911 in 1977 have attracted Hindu priests, and have treated disputes within the tribe.<sup>4</sup> A court order however, returned the control of the temple to the tribal population.

The Gonds still practice traditional method of agriculture. They are dependent upon the rains for irrigation. Jowar is the main crop cultivated, but is available for only three months in the year. Rest of the time they survive on forest produce. The dependence of tribals on nature has led to most of them living close to starvation.

Of the 35 lakh tribals population only 6.8 percent are literate in Adilabad.<sup>5</sup> Table 1 shows that very few tribals have managed to even get a few years of schooling. The first attempt to educate the Gonds was made in the 1940s by th Nizam's government.<sup>6</sup> Books were published in the language of the Gonds, however this did not have any impact. In the post independence period the government of Andhra Pradesh has not taken any keen interest in educating the tribals. The Gonds consider children as a source of income and are reluctant to send them to school.<sup>6</sup> In recent years due to increasing pressure on land and resulting protests the state government has tried to introduce schools and increase literacy and vocational training. In 1989, the Andhra Pradesh government introduced 451 tribal hostels and 12 residential schools.Pt7Pt However, such facilities have been utilized only by the children of a few rich farmers and according to the Gondwana Sanrakshna Samiti, such schemes do not benefit the tribal population. The first attempt to educate Gonds was made in the 1940s by the Nizams government<sup>11</sup>



Table 1

## Educational Levels of the Scheduled Tribes in Adilabad District, 1981

Total Tribals	Matriculation		Higher Secondary/ Intermediate		Non-technical Diploma or certification of equal des.		Technical Certificates		Graduate & above			
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
Gond												
Rajgonds, Naikpod	704	33	422	21	92	3	-	-	19	1	33	1
Sugalis Lambardar	564	26	152	4	42	-	-	-	11	-	13	1
Yerukal	10	5	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kolan Manana Varlu	21	2	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Konda doras	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Konda reddy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bhil	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Koya	84	4	4	16	2	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Yenadis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	1384	70	580	25	134	3	-	-	19	1	46	2

and are merely to fill the quota of educational seats set aside to schedule tribes. Most of the tribal students in the scheme were unable to pass the matriculation examination. Training for provision of skilled or semi skilled jobs would be far more beneficial. For example, after the violent incident in Allampali Taluk where 12 policemen were killed in a land mine explosion the Telugu Desam government

announced that 1000 teachers posts would be reserved for scheduled tribe candidates. However, very few of the tribal population had the required certificates and qualifications.<sup>8</sup> Thus lopsided development policies and schemes introduced by the Government have not been of much use and help only some vested interests.

### **CHANGING LOCAL STRUCTURES OF POWER**

In the pre independence period in Andhra Pradesh there were 37 tribal chiefs some of whom bore the title of Raja 'Mokashi' or 'Deshmukh'. They had political power within their jurisdiction and exercised varying degrees of feudal oppression. They were assisted by village headmen in solving tribal problems. In the 1940s these traditional structures of power were removed by the Nizam's government inspite of resistance by the tribals.<sup>9</sup> The Nizam's government succeeded in abolishing the old system and replacing it by a village headman nominated by the village Panchayat who settled dispute and had judicial authority. Thus before independence itself the old tribal structure had begun to disintegrate.

There was further erosion of local authority after independence with the passage of the Hyderabad Tribal Regulation Act in 1963.<sup>10</sup> Under this the village headman came under the control of the district bureaucracy under the

new Panchayat System members are elected each block, who in turn elect the Sarpanch. In some cases it is reported that no tribals have been able to manipulate the system and become a sarpanch, a position which gives its holder considerable patronage and power. Sarpanch has the power to grant licenses for shops and collect some local taxes.<sup>11</sup> They however have power to settle disputes. Some villages in the blocks have village headman who help the local tribal population to dig wells, plant trees etc.

The erosion of local autonomy has had an impact on the social and economic life of the tribals. Under the traditional tribal structure outsiders had to gain permission from the village headman to reside in the area. Massive demographic increases, after 1951 and the opening up of tribal areas due to the process of modernisation and inclusion of tribal areas in States, propelled non-tribals into tribal territory. In Adilabad this has led to non-tribals from the coastal areas establishing factories cement mills, paper factories shops etc. The labour in these factories also consists of non-tribals, hence modernisation has not provided employment to the local tribals. It has led to establishment of liquor shops or increased prostitution. Commercialisation has led to break-down of the traditional systems of authority within the tribal system.<sup>12</sup>

In 1983 in order to help the tribals & grant them

**Structural of Power at the Gram Taluk and District  
levels established in 1983 by Tribal Leaders**

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**Rai Centres**  
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Gram Sabha	Taluk level	District level
1. Napapal : Village headman	1. Sir Medial : the President	1. Zill mall : President
2. Sar Pathal : Additional village head man	2. Rai Medial : General Secretary	2. Bpa Mandal : Vi. President
3. Raipatlal : Asst. Villay head man	3. Geeta Medial : Joint Sec.	3. Zilla Rai : Gen. Sec. Medial
4. Geeta Daralal : Maintaining the records.	4. Ghat Medial : Accountant	4. Khaajandhar : Accountant
5. Gatilal : Accountant	5. Raipatals : Advisors to sir medials	
6. Devari : In charge of religious Rituals		
7. Hawaldar : Messenger.		

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greater autonomy to manage their local affairs the Gondwana Sangrashtra Samiti was established by educated tribal leaders.<sup>13</sup> It is a village level council which solves local problems and helps implement developmental schemes. The various tribal groups in the villages nominate a representative to the Council. It consists of 7-14 members. In addition to this tribal leaders have also established developmental or "Rai Centres" patterned on their traditional power structures. These have been set up at the Gram, Taluk, District levels. These help the tribals settle internal problems. Moreover any Government schemes to be taken up at village level must obtain the consent of concerned Gram Sabha/Village council. Contractors are not allowed, nor the Patel or Patwari, in the village council or Rai Centres. The village Council can impose fines between Rs. 50 to Rs.500. (assault, theft, etc.). They are also managing tribal lands and controlling forest produce.

The Samithi also introduced the grain procurement system. Each tribal agricultural family must donate 60 kg's of grains and Rs. 50. Those who are not in a position to donate at one time can give in installments. The Integrated Tribal Development Scheme also contributes an equal quantity of grains and cash as government subsidy. They have set up grain banks which advance loans for religious ceremonies and marriages at very low interest rates.<sup>14</sup>

### Investment By the Government In Tribal Welfare

Table 3 gives the per capita & total expenditure by the Government of Andhra Pradesh over the various Plan periods. It is only from the fifth Plan period that there is a sharp rise in the amount invested. Under the Five Plan the Government has undertaken Schemes to construct pucca houses and cattle sheds. Integrated Tribal Development Schemes have also been formulated under the Tribal Development Agency.<sup>15</sup> A Girijan Cooperative Corporation was set up under it. It was expected to purchase the timber collected by the tribals and thereby eliminate private timber contractors. Primary Societies affiliated to the cooperative were supposed to supply at proper rates the daily requirements of the tribals, provide credit etc. However the cooperative has been giving very low rates to tribals, for example Rs.5 - 8 per kg. of gum while private contractors pay Rs. 12 per kg. This led to tribals setting their produce to contractors rather than the co-operative.<sup>15</sup>

Nationalised Banks have entered the area. A study shows that 61% debtors are landless holders. A quarter of the loans advanced by the official and government agencies 67% is used for consumption purposes. The Andhra Pradesh government introduced a drinking water scheme named "Jeevandhara" to provide drinking water irrigation

facilities.<sup>17</sup> Under it Rs.15000 were given to each selected family in installments to dig wells on their own. According to the government 10,000 wells for agricultural purposes & 11,000 wells for drinking water have been dug. The Integrated Tribal Development agency had also started new loans to tribals for buying bullocks etc. The government paid half the cost of the bullocks. However, many tribals have alleged that old & useless bullocks were supplied and only after a considerable period of delay.<sup>18</sup> Medical facilities under the ITDA are also very poor.

**TABLE 3**

Per Capita expenditure and total expenditure during plan period in A.P. For Schedule Tribes

Plan Period	Percapita expenditure diture in (Rs.)	Total expenditure Rs. In Lakhs.
I Plan	15.05	118.77
II Plan	18.89	250.25
III Plan	13.56	178.77
IV Plan	59.00	977.77
V Plan	266.00	4,879.85
VI Plan	750.47	13,598.00
VII Plan	1,639.16	30,026.00

Source :Statistical Abstracts of A.P. 1960 and 1983, Bureau of economics and Statistics. Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad.

Many plans put forward by the government are not relevant to the needs of the tribal areas. Schemes like medium irrigation, small industry, commercial forestry etc.

which often constitute a sizeable portion of the Tribal sub-plan are often irrelevant or counter productive as far as the local tribal economy is concerned.<sup>19</sup>

### Control over Forests

There is a symbiotic relationship between tribals and the forest. It has been their home for a long time and provided them with many required resources. The forest conservation and regulation act was passed in 1920.<sup>20</sup> This imposed rules on the tribals, mainly restrictions on collection of forest produce. This led to conflicts between the tribals and the government. The tribals required wood to build huts & for their plough share.

In the post-Independence period, forest policy has led to hardship in tribal communities. On the one hand, these communities are not allowed to collect forest produce, but on the other hand large-scale deforestation has occurred because of various developmental projects and extension of cultivation by reclamation of land.<sup>21</sup> Instead of the entire community being consulted about the extraction of forest produce, arrangements are often made between chiefs and contractors bypassing the community, as the forest department was interested mainly in the collection of revenue this alliance was encouraged, leading to destruction of forests. This has also led to increase in wealth of Chiefs and their capacity for graft & duplicity.<sup>22</sup>



In the case of Adilabad, not withstanding various lambadas & regulations to prevent deforestation, a large part of the forests have been, as reported by a fact finding committee continuously "de-reserved" by the Congress Government in 1980 to facilitate private trade. Thus of the 500,000 acres of forest land dereserved in the last years in the state, more than 150,000 acres are from Adilabad. The net result of this policy has been the progressive alienation of the forest from the tribals. Consequently, they have been reduced to the status of daily wage labourers at the mercy of private contractors and forest officials.<sup>23</sup>

Table 4 shows the plantation area in Andhra Pradesh in 1983-84.

Table - 4 Plantation Area upto 1983-84

S.No. Species	Total areas (in hectres)	
	Department	Corporation
Teak	76,114	---
Eucalyptus	26,271	20,522
Bamboo	28,139	10,138
Cashew	18,949	16,511
Coffee	130	2,438
Red Sander's	1,913	---
Sandal wood	2,670	---
Silver oak	8,942	---
Babul	12,415	---
Casurima	13,690	---
Sissoo	1,435	---
Burrara	300	---
Piner	325	---
Other Miscellaneous	55,743	---

Source : A.P. Forests at a blance 1983-84 Chief Conservator of Forest A.P. Hyderabad.

TABLE 5

## Major Wood Based Industries In Andhra Pradesh

Sl. No.	Name of the Company	Present installed capacity in T/Yr.	Variety	Approximate raw material commitment by the forest department in tonnes
1.	A.P. Paper Mills Rajahmundry East Godawari.	Paper 75,000	Bamboo Hardwood	1,10,000 75,000
2.	Sirpur Paper Mills Kagaz Nagar Adilabad.	Do 61,000	Bamboo Hardwood	75,000 45,000
3.	Sree Rayalam Kurnool.	Do 42,000	Bamboo Hardwood	45,000 45,000
4.	Badhrachalam Paper Boarder	Do 50,000	Bamboo Hardwood	60,000 74,000
5.	A.P. Rayons Limited Yetura nagaram Warangal	Rayon grade pulp 27,000	Hardwood Eucalyptus	75,000 10,000
6.	Novopars India Limited patancheru (Ranga Reddy District)	Particle board 20,000	Hardwood	38,000
7.	Hyderabad Ply wood limited	Plywood 0.018 lakhs sq.mts.	Teak teak non-teak	700 cm. mts. 1,700.

Source : A.P. Forests at a Glance 1983-84  
Chief conservator of forests A.P. Hyderabad.

It shows that the government of Andhra Pradesh has been concentrated on growing mostly teak, eucalyptus and Bamboo which are needed by the Paper industry and the big timber markets in urban area. This shows growing commercialisation of forest area in the state. Table 5 gives the major wood industries in the state and the raw material supplied to them by the forest Department. Hence, it is not the tribals at the industrial class which is benefiting from the forests. The wood from the forests is largely deployed in urban areas and it is the contractors who are profiting from the same. Left activists have claimed that highly placed politician and bureaucrats are also involved in illicit timber trade.<sup>24</sup>

The process of industrialization in tribal areas has also resulted in the pauperization of tribals. Many tribals have become propertyless workers after industries were set up as land was acquired from them with minimal compensation. The construction of roads into the tribal areas has hastened this process. The forest guards also exploit the tribals in Adilabad demanding illegal taxes. Data collected during field work shows that in Adilabad they demand Rs. 17/ to 40 per plough in addition contribution in grain from each house hold. Atrocities against the tribal population in general have also increased in recent years. Table 6 below gives the atrocities reported against

scheduled Tribes between 1979 and 1983. Many more go unreported.

**TABLE 6**  
**ATROCITIES REPORTED ON SCHEDULE TRIBES IN 1979-1983.**

State	No of Cases Reported During Years				
	1979	1980	1981	1983	1983
Andhra Pradesh	13	14	29	31	33

Atrocities in 1983.

	Murder	Violence	Rape	Arson	Others	Total
Andhra Pradesh	1	8	9	1	14	33

Source : Report of the Commission for Schedule Castes and Tribes, Sixth Report April 1983 March 1984, Chap V: Government of India, New Delhi, 1984.

Thus we find that inspite of several protective measures, the economic conditions of the tribals has deteriorated and they are also experiencing social alienation, both of which constitute important causal factors in recent tribal movements. This has been due to extensive exploitation of the rich natural resources of their habitat decline of traditional activities without any viable alternative, and consequent marginalisation and exploitation of cheap labour. This has been accompanied by alienation of agricultural land, which is the subject of the next chapter.

## Notes

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2. M.N. Srinivas, *Social change in Modern India*.
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4. Ibid. p.117, 178
5. B.D, Sharma : Tribal Development concept and frame, p. rachi prakashan New Delh, 1978.
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8. The President of the bond wave. Savrakshan Samiti (GSS) -- a local organisation -- supplied this information in an interview in Adilabad.
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12. Ibid.
13. Field work in the area was done and member of the GSS were interceived . See chapter IV part II.
14. K. Balagopal, "Adilabad Girijan Portaloo" (Telugu) Srujana, 1981, p.7.
15. Report of the Commission for Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes sixth Report. April 1983-March 1984. Government of India, New Delhi, 1984.
16. President of G.S.S.
17. E.P.W. Sept. 24, 1983 p. VII, A report.
18. President of G.S.S.
19. Balagopal, Agrarian Classes and Coughlicts P. 71 and 74.
20. "A.P. Forest at A. Glance" Adilabad Birijan Porataloo" (Telegu) Srujana , 1981, p.7

21. This has been reported by, among other  
(i) J. Breman, of Peasants, Migrants and Pampers : Rural Labour Circulation In West Asia, Delhi, O.U.P. 1985.  
(ii)G.Shah, "Ethnicity and Politics : A study of Scheduled Tribes In Gujarat" (Mins) Surat : Centre for Social Studies, 1978.
22. Ashok Mitra, " Tribal Habitat", Frontier 9, 1977 p. 24-26.
23. Frontier, Vol. 13, No. 42, 1981 P. 8-11.
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## CHAPTER III

### ALIENATION OF TRIBAL AND ITS IMPACT

Together with forests, land constitutes a major source of livelihood to tribals in Adilabad and other districts of Andhra Pradesh. However, alienation of land from the hands of tribals to non-tribals is a major problem and factor underlying the poor economic conditions of the tribal population. Many studies on the tribal population of Andhra Pradesh have pointed this out.<sup>1</sup> In this chapter an attempt has been made to understand land alienation from a historical perspective. This is because it has been an ongoing process since the colonial period when for the first time large-scale disruption of tribal habitats due to the force of modernisation took place. The study shows that this process has continued even after Independence, inspite of various efforts by the state government.

#### **Colonial Period**

(Prior to 1920 the tribals living in Adilabad district had little contact and faced no interference from non-tribals or outsiders. Their main occupation was "podu" or shifting cultivation, which they practised even on the hills and dry lands and were dependent on the rains for irrigation. The black soil of the area is very fertile and

suitable for cotton cultivation. However traditionally the tribals grew mainly bajra (willetts). Land was communally owned but individually cultivated. In the 1920's large-scale changes took place due to the construction of major road from Madras to Delhi and opening the segrardi walinon in the eastern part of the district was also constructed from Lakshelpet to Nirmal which passed through the tribal belt<sup>2</sup>. These changes resulted in migration by non-tribals from the southern region into the noneastern part of adilabad district mainly into Asifabad, Lakshelpet and Chennru area.

This intrusion led to gradual change in the structure of landowning resulting in take-over of tribal lands. The migrates were mainly Brahmin Jagirdars (Landlords) and Komiti (non-Brahmin) moneylenders or "Shaukars with a view to enhancing revenue the Nizam's government began to re-distribute the land under the patta system to the new comers. "Podu" cultivation was also discouraged. The Nizam also introduced the "watan" system under which same land was granted to non-tribals in the service of the Nizam, a new system of revenue collection was also introduced.

A local administrative structure consisting patels and partner was established in this area. Under this the patwaris collected the taxes, while the patel was



responsible for maintaining law and order. These lower revenue officials were from upper caste communities and these became feudal landlords in the Adilabad area. Many came from the Marathi speaking area and were literate Brahmins who could keep land records. Land alienation also took place due to usury practised by Velammas who had migrated to the Adilabad area. They managed to get the cleared lands of the in-debted tribals registered in their name. This process gradually forced the tribals to retreat into the interior forest-covered areas of the district.<sup>4</sup>

The Nizam government attempted to arrest the process of alienation of tribal lands by giving 15 acres of land to each tribal household.<sup>5</sup> The Bellampalli and Binnodhari areas of the district were granted to tribals exclusively under this policy. However, this land also passed into the hands of non-tribals courtesy the Pativaris and Patels who belonged to the same community. They registered these lands in the name of upper caste landlords under the Patta system. In this way well known landlords such as M. Madhava Rao, Muthyam Rao, and Purshottam Rao of chennur who were often described as the kings of the area got control of hundered of acres of tribal land. While Madhava Rao gained control of 10,000 acres, Muthyam Rao controlled the entire area from Nerrocha in present day Maharashtra to Lakshetpet in Adilabad. In this way large areas which were once tribal hamlets from Madhamarri to

Kazipet and Hajipet came under domination of outsiders who were mainly from the Brahmin and locally dominant Velama caste. Much of the Godavari valley originally cleared by tribals also came under them.

The process of land alienation was hastened by the coming in of traders contractors locally called "Shaukars". Many of them were helped by function-areas of the Nizam government. These traders sold essentials such as chillis, salt, Kerosenes and cloth etc to tribals. By charging very high rates which the tribals could not afford and selling on credit they managed to takeover lands from in-debted tribals. The Shaukars also paid low rates for forest products such as gum, tamarind etc. collected by tribals, which fetched much higher rates elsewhere.<sup>7</sup> The lands were initially taken over under a rule by which non-tribals could pay the rent for tribal lands and Migration into tribal areas also in leased in the 1940's and 1950's. Most of these outsiders settled in outer lying taluks and villages where the population increased suddenly. Table 1 below shows the enhancement in population in Utnoor Taluk of Adilabad between 1921 and 1981.

TABLE I

UTMOOR-TALUK-POPULATION CHANGES 1921 TO 1981.

Sensus year	Total No of persons	Variation in Decadal Percentage.
1921	24,989	+ 5.66
1931	29,048	+ 16.24
1941	31,396	+ 8.08
1951	34,404	+ 9.58
1961	55,099	+ 60.13
1971	93,823	+ 70.28
1981	91,924	+ 112.45

Source: 1981 Census of Adilabad District, Hyderabad.

The new wave of migrants were mainly forest traders, tribal development agency employees, contractors etc. The state government passed legislation prohibiting migration into tribal areas-However, the same government issued licenses for establishment of industries like paper and cement. It is also due to migration of tribals from rural to urban areas.

**Post-Independence Period**

In the post Independence period tribal areas have also been affected by various Land reform and regulated acts passed by the government of the newly formed state of Andhra Pradesh. While some of this legislation was to end

Landlordism some of it was directed to protect lands under tribal population. Due to the Telengana armed Struggle the government decided in 1959/a tribal Land Regulation Act. According to it all the area under tribal population was identified and notified as a tribal area for the first time and protected--after the formation of Andhra Pradesh Regulation II was passed in 1963 in order to extend the 1959 legislation to all tribal areas now included within the state.<sup>8</sup> The Act of 1959 was amended in 1971 in order to remove many loopholes in it.<sup>9</sup> Under the amendment no innumerable property-in particular land--could be transferred within the Agency are without the permission of the government, even when such transfers were between persons belonging to a schedule tribe. The property had to be surrendered to the government which was obliged to acquire it by paying a reasonable compensation defined in section 10 of the Andhra Pradesh ceiling on Agricultural Holdings Act-1961.<sup>10</sup> The 1971 act also made the provision that tribals could mortgage their lands to a co-operative Society, Land Mortgage Bank or any other commercial/financial institution in the tribal area in order to get a loan. However, in case of default the mortgaged property could only be sold to person belonging to a schedule tribe or a tribal co-operative society. Thus the state government tried to both demarcate and protect tribal areas and prevent alienation of tribal loans.

However studies show that due to many loopholes in the Act and corrupt government official alienation of land has been taking place. Land records are often not well maintained and often manipulated by Patwaris. Comities even forcible occupation by non-tribals taken place.<sup>13</sup> The problem of land alienation in fact is endemic in tribal regions. Various reasons have been given by the various commissions appreciated by the Central government such as manipulation of records, 'benami' transfers, developmental projects like construction of dams, power plants etc. and loss of land through mortgage and encroachment. For example, National commission On Backward areas observed that, "the significant consequence of the unsatisfactory state of land records was that the tribals were never legally recognised as owners of the land which they cultivated as they could simply occupy it till such time as the superior claim got enforced."<sup>13</sup> Similarly the Report of the study Team of the Union Home Ministry admitted that, inspite of protective measures to restore alienated land to tribals it is still reported to be taking place, the main reason being benami transactions.<sup>14</sup> Andhra Pradesh was one of the few states where as we have seen a ban on the transfer of immovable property in Schedule areas to non-tribals was introduced. However studies shows this was not successful.<sup>15</sup> In fact in 1983, 4,174 cases of land alienation were recorded which involved a total area of

33,499 acres. has come under the control of the Kolams.<sup>17</sup>  
 all this constitutes a violation of Act of 1949 and 1971.

Table 2. Shows the Contrasting density of population in village in Outer laying villages near roads, and villages in the interior over a period of time.

**TABLE 2**

Population Density in Roadside and Interior Villages in Adilabad.

Census	Average Density Per 89 mile		
	Roadside	Interior	Total
1951	128	32	47
1961	203	51	76
1971	310	94	129

Source: District Bazetteer, Adilabad.

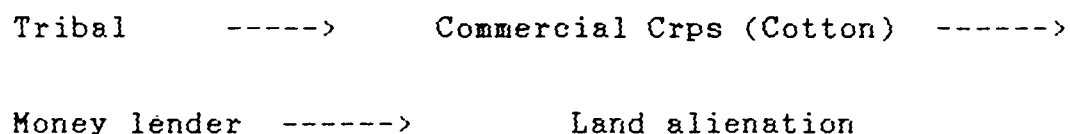
Census of Andhra Pradesh 1971

Many of those who have migrated have taken over agricultural land reducing the local tribals to agricultural labourers.

#### Commercialisation of Agriculture

Commercialisation of agriculture, which has increased land values has also quickened the pace of land alienation. In order to pay ruts and buy essentials Tribals

need to grow commercial crops which can be sold in the market. However this require higher investment than traditional food crops which forces him to borrow at high rates from moneylenders. Very few are able to get credit from government agencies. This puts the tribal into the clutches of professional money lenders and eventually leads to loss of land.<sup>18</sup> The diagram below shows the relationship between introduction of Cotton, a Commercial crop and land alienation in Adilabad.



Commercialisation of agriculture has also led to less cultivation of food crops as the table below shows in the case of Uttanoor Taluk.

TABLE 3

Crops down In Uttanoor Taluk, 1989.

Crops.	Kharif area sown	Damaged area (hec)	Crop loss Rs. Lakhs.
Cash Crops			
Cotton	3,04,633	1,27,989	538.45
Paddy	15,530	2,650	--
Jowar	84,764	43,000	744.00
Rulers	70,506	25,672	646,90
Crops	Rabiare sown (hecs)		Total Area sown in Rabi 1989
Jowar	1,32,468	N A	80,842
Maize	2,841	N A	2,133
Pulres	25,350	N A	14,740

Source : I TDA Project Office, Uttanoor.

Due to the deteriorating conditions of tribals and rapid alienation of land, the state government has taken two kinds of steps since the fifth plan. (1) In states such as Andhra Pradesh which have a substantial tribal population a tribal sub-plan has been prepared. (2) Land has been distributed to schedule tribes.

The concept of the tribal sub-plan aims at tribal area development with particular focus and emphasis on the development of tribal population. The tribal sub plan in the 1980's had four main programmes (1) Integrated tribal development project for tribal areas with 50 or more schedule tribes population (2) Modified Area development Approach for pockets with high Schedule tribe population (3) Projects for primitive tribal groups (4) The birifan cooperative corporation. Table 4 below gives the statewise plan outlays and funds earmarked for Tribal sub-plan by states/union territories.

**TABEL 4**

State Union Plan Outlays Earmarked for Tribal sub plan

Year	Plan Outlays of state with TSP	Amount to TSP out of state Plan	Percentage of col. 3 to 2
1980-81	6500.00	497.32	7.65
1981-82	7402.19	589.46	7.96
1982-83	8495.54	680.53	8.01
1983-84	9764.05	786.48	8.05
	32161.78	2353.79	7.94



In the case of Andhra Pradesh, the central government has financed special programmes for the extremely primitive tribal groups live in Adilabad. The table below shows the amount given by the Central Government.

TABLE 5

Special programmes for primitive tribes by Central Govt.

(Rs. In Lakhs)

1	2	3	4
State	No. of primitive Tribes	Amount Released	Expenditure
Andhra Pradesh	12	52.52	48.60

Source : Report of Commission for Schedule Caste and Scheduled Tribes Sixth Report. April 1983 - March 1984. Chap. IV. Government of India New Delhi. 1984.

The state has also distributed land to many schedule tribe households. Table 6 below shows the total area distributed as well as the amount distributed among the Schedule tribe population.

**TABLE 6**

Land Distributed by State Government

State	Total Area estimated as surplus and declared surplus	Area taken possession	Total Area distributed to all sections of population
A.P	10,14,050	4,56,021	3,31,976

Area distributed to Schedule Cast & Tribes

	S.Cs	S.Ts.	Others	Total
A.P.	1,51,599	61,589	1,18,788	3,31,976

Source : Report of the Commission for Schedule Casts and Tribes sixth Report 1983-84:

According to the same report - 42,902 schedule tribe persons actually received the land which was to be distributed. The allotted surplus land in Andhra Pradesh for tribals ranged from 0.2 to 0.5 % of the total allotted surplus lands for all categories.<sup>20</sup> However, due to corruption and poor implementation, very few of the tribals have actually benefitted from such programmes.

The conditions of the tribal population today continues to deteriorate inspite of many attempts by the government to improve their economic conditions and prevent alienation of land. Many recent studies show that indebtedness has enhanced, land, , cattle and jewelry are

mortgaged and lost leading to even greater poverty.<sup>21</sup> The 1981 census shows that 21% of the enable land has now passed under cotton cultivation leaving less place for foodgrains. Tribals have to buy foodgrains at high cost from Shaukars as the table below shows.

Table 7  
Cost of Items in Pembi Area.

Item	Roles per Kg/litre.
Rice	Rs. 8.
Chillies	Rs. 80.
Kerosene	Rs. 7.
Jowar	Rs. 3.7

Source : B.D. Sharma Tribal Development Concept and Frame, Panchi Prakashan, New Delhi, 1978.

Moneylenders today advance lands on occasions such as deaths, Births, Marriages etc. at high rates. If the tribals are unable to pay back, their land is leased to the Shaukar for an agreed period of time. As there are no written documents, the land is never returned.

## Part-II

### A Sample Study

As there are only a few studies which present the socio-economic conditions of the tribal population of

Adilabad, a small sample study covering eight villages in the district was conducted. Data was difficult in this area and tribals were generally reluctant to provide information. Hence a general survey was possible. Above 42 households from amongst the village were visited and interviewed. The basis of Selection of the villages was the nature of its population. All of them were predominantly tribal village with very few non-tribals, though in the case of some, rapid intention of non-tribals is leading to change. In the sample study attention was directed namely towards land alienation, debts, irrigation and other facilities such as medical, communication and educational facilities. The study also shows harassment by the Police and local forest guards. Social condition, Table 2 shows that guards constitute a majority among the tribal and other groups within the 8 hamlets. The villages in the interior also have a higher proportion of tribals as against non-tribals. Similarly villages close to a road have a higher proportion of non-tribal who take part in trade commerce and provide services. Table 2 also shows the poor educational facilities available to the eight villages. Literacy levels are lower in villages in the interior and where the population consists mainly of tribals. The quality of educational facilities is also very bad in these villages which had led to many tribals withdrawing their children. Agriculture and animal husbandry are the major occupation

among the tribals.

Table 10 presents the poor medical and transportation facilities available. Some medical facilities such as a midwife or Nurse who visits every 15 days- is available in villages close to roads. In the present Five Year Plan more funds have been allotted for construction of roads and many major roads have been constructed linking villages to major towns. However, this has helped contractors who transport timber, cotton etc. by road rather than the tribal population. The Government has also in recent years helped to dig bore wells in order to provide drinking water facilities, however many of them have not been repaired by the Mandal Office, Hence in the summer water has to be carried over long distances.

#### **Land Alienation and Debts**

Most of the cultivable land which was under the control of the tribals has passed into the hands of non-tribals landlords-cum-Moneylenders. There is in fact a close relationship between indebtedness and land alienation. The tribals borrow from the richer non-tribal farmers for consumption in order to invest in agriculture. However, very few have been able to return the loans and have lost land. Banks which have appeared in nearby towns refused to give land to the tribals as they could deposit nothing as

security for the loan. Very few tribal families have been able to get loans from local Banks. Table 11 shows that only 4-5 families in the sample have been able to get Bank loans which carry an interest rate of 5%. Others borrow from Moneylenders or Shaukars at exorbitant rates ranging from 25% to 100%. Most tribal families have lost land by mortgaging it to a private moneylender. A class of feudal rich landlord whose main source of income is usury, rather than agriculture has come up. The tribals have become agricultural labourers on the lands they once owned. Shifting cultivation also is no longer allowed in this area. Irrigation in the area is from tanks which are controlled by the feudal landlords. Many villages reported that they were not supplied water even though their fields were close to the tanks. While richer farmers have been able to set up tube-wells, the local district administration has not helped the tribals. Lack of assured water at the right time is one of the main causes of poor crops and crop failure among the tribals. Many projects are under construction in the area such as the Satnala, Chilimala projects but they are now here near completion.

The government has set up credit agencies and cooperatives in the area but the benefits of this have gone largely to the non-tribal section of the population.

Table 12 shows that the tribals in these villages also face harassment from the local police and forest guards. They do not allow them into the forest, take away their crops and animals destroy their houses and impose fines upon them on various protects. In one of the villages two persons died in police firing. The tribals alleged that the police and forest guards were suppressing their rights. Due to the existence of tribal movements in various district of Andhra Pradesh, the Police can arrest villages under the TADA. Thus the tribal population is facing exploitation from both the feudal landlords as well as the police.

They have not been able to gain much help from the local district and tribal authorities either. The various governmental programs have not helped them. It is their economic exploitation, less of land and social alienation described in chapter III and IV which underline the violent movements analysed in the next chapter.

Table No. VIII. Irrigation facilities in the haulets

Irrigation facilities							
Sl. No.	Haulets	Total Houses	Total population interviewed	Drinking Water facilities	Wells	Tanks	Cultivation
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	A	30	5	No water in Summer	-	Small stream	Dependent on rain Traditional polars
2	B	10	3	Tank's Bore wells	No water in wells	-	"
3	C	100	10	Wells so difficult	Under progress	-	"
4	D	25	5	Wells	-	-	"
5	E	50	6	"	-	-	-
6	F	38	3	Distance above 1/2 km	-	Water supplying to neighbour of velow	Tradi- tion new technique
7	G	70	10	bore wells	wells	-	new techniques
8	H	30	3	-	-	-	Tradi- tion depended on raine



Table IX. Tribel groups and Educational facilities

Sl. No.	Total hamlets	Total houses	Total Population interviewed	Tribal & other groups	Educational facilities available
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	A	30	5	Gonds	-
2	B	10	3	Kolam's Gond's	-
3	C	100	10	Naik pods lambadas Banjaras & velamas	up to 5 th class
4	D	25	5	Gonds, Kolams	up to 3 rd class
5	E	50	6	Gonds, kolams lambadas	only one teacher
6	F	38	3	Gonds	mid day meal
7	G	70	10	Gonds/Sc velamas	up to 3 rd class
8	H	30	30	Gonds	-
8		353	45		

Table X. Details of Medical Transportaion facilities

Sl. No.	Hamlets	Total houses	Total Persons interviewed	Medical facilities	Roads
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	A	30	5	No	Yes
2	B	10	3	-	1/2 km away
3	C	100	10	-	Yes
4	D	25	5	-	-
5	E	50	6	-	-
6	F	38	3	-	progress
7	G	70	10	Doctors stay in towards	Yes
8	H	30	3	-	-

Table No. XI Details of Debt and interest rates

Sl. No.	Hamlets	Total Houses	Total persons interviewed	Debt	Interest rates
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	A	30	5	Rs 200 to 300	Rs 50% to 100%
2	B	10	3	"	425% to 50%
3	C	100	10	500 to 1000	50% to 100%
4	D	25	5	-	-
5	E	50	6	Loan's from the banks	-
6	F	38	3	Bank Loan's to 4 to 5 farmer's above 100 to 2000	Rs 5%
7	G	70	10	Private Shaukas	50%
8	H	30	3	-	-

able No. XII Police Activities

Sl. No.	Hamlets	Total houses	Total Persons interviewed	Forest guards and police
1	A	30	5	corrupt forest guards who took bribes
2	B	10	3	harassed
3	C	100	10	two peoples died in police firing
4	D	25	5	Chicken, burried houses
5	E	50	6	-
6	F	38	3	polici harassmnet
7	G	70	10	Cases

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## CHAPTER IV

### TRIBAL MOVEMENT IN ADILABAD : TRANSFORMATION OF THE MOVEMENT IN THE PRESENT SITUATION : 1980-1990

There is a long history of tribal movements in Adilabad and other districts of Andhra Pradesh. However, the character of the recent movement in the 1980's is somewhat different from earlier movements which took place during the colonial period. These movements were sporadic, shortlived and the work of a few tribal leaders. The movement in the 1980s was a violent movement in which for the first time the large mass of the tribal population took part. The movement is hence not merely a Naxalite movement but arises out of the process of social and economic alienation outlined in the previous chapters which has heated intense dissatisfaction with existing conditions while factors such as charismatic leadership, mobilisation by left intellectuals, memories of a golden past, i.e. the importance of political factors is not denied, it is against that is the very pattern of economic development which underlies this movement. It is these factors that transformed the movement in the recent period into an armed with colonial period ; a Background

The tribal movement in Andhra is as old as other types of movements in the area. The tribes were always

looked upon as rebellions and local rulers often had to use their superior military strength to question them. During the colonial period the tribes rebelled against both local Hindu rulers the British colonial administration, wherever they felt their rights in the territories were being encroached upon. There were four tribal armed revolts originated in the Eastern ghats, the fourth one occurred among the gonds of Adilabad district which formed part of the district formed part of the Nizam's territory.<sup>1</sup> The first two revolts took place in the Rampa area of East Godawari district in 1802-3 and 1829. The first one is led by Ramboopathi is well known as the Rampa revolt.<sup>2</sup> The third one led by Alluri Seetharama Raju in 1922-24 was also in the East Godawari district. The fourth in which we are interested was in 1940 by the gonds of Adilabad under the leadership of a tribal leader named Komaran Bheemu.

The movement under Bheemu represents an attempt by the Gonds to protect their cultivable land from outsiders and corrupt forest official of the Nizam government in the Dhonora reserve forest area.<sup>3</sup> By the 1940s as we have seen in chapters II and III landlords, moneylenders and traders had begun to migrate into the tribal area causing severe social dislocation of the tribal landholding structure. Bheemu a literate Gond leader, attempted to settle the fouds kolams of the area in a hilly allege named Babjere. However, as they had no "Pattas" or written rights over he



land from the Nizam's documents, the forest officials were given the task of evacuating them from the area leading to armed conflict. Bheem even went to Hyderabad and returned with a document of permission to settle in a nearby village. However this did not give the tribal possessions of the cultivable land. The struggle against land alienation continued upto the mid 1940s Bheem continued to petition the government. During the movement the local (feudal landlord) used the police and finally suppressed the movement with brutal force. Large number of the Gonds died in police firing.<sup>4</sup>

From 1946 and to the 1970s Adilabad did not witness any large scale tribal movement though resistance against exploitation continued. Large scale tribal movements led by communist groups took place in the warangal, Khanmam Karimnagar districts of Andhra pradesh.<sup>5</sup> In these movements also land was taken away from the tribals was the focus of the movement. The communists in some areas were successful in distributing some land to the tribals while this movement did not spread to Adilabad, it provided the Gonds an example to emulate.

### **Mobilizing the Tribals : the 1970s**

As we have seen in the previous chapters the process of development since Independence has brought about

extensive exploitation of natural resources of tribal areas, decline of traditional activities without any viable alternative with consequent marginalisation exploitation of cheap labour, continuing land alienation. This created a fertile ground for mobilizing the tribal population against-both non-tribals and the Indian State. After the Telengana movement a number of left activists- including some well known leaders such as Venkateswara Rao took refuge in the forests of Adilabad district where they began to live with the tribals, learning their language and educating them.<sup>6</sup> In 1978, by their efforts the Girijan Ryothu Coolee Sangham was established and by 1980 was very popular in the area.<sup>7</sup> The formation of this organization led to a sudden violent spurge of attacks in 1978 on moneylenders in Asigabad Taluk leading to the government declaring it a disturbed area. The movement spread individually, to Pippaldhari, Binera, and adjoining areas. Here the tribals attacked forest guards, merchants and landlords and destroyed standing crops. Large number of bonded labourers, beedi workers, and agricultural workers took part.

The Sangham adopted a method of political mobilization which appealed to the imagination of the tribal population. Plays and cultural performances, in the tribal language were used to depict the fantail and feudal oppression of landlords and money lenders who were shown as responsible for the poor conditions of the tribals. The

"Jana Natya Mandali" a troupe toured the various villages and spread their message.<sup>8</sup> Songs which pointed out that the forests and lands belonged to the tribes were used to bring people into the movement.<sup>9</sup> Due to the police presence in the area meetings were often held at night. The activists often received food from villages.

Increasing police brutality, land alienation, and lack of justice from the government increasing number of tribals turned to the Sangham as an alternative which would give them protection and improve their lives.

It is this perception of the organization that underlay its successful appeal.<sup>11</sup> The turning point particularly came at Indiravelly in 1980 when the police opened fire on a large gathering of tribals who were demanding prevention of land alienation in future and establishment of status on tribal lands. 13 tribals were killed.<sup>12</sup> The movement gained momentum and turned violent after this. Initially, the tribal leaders attempted to use the established administrative channels and submitted petitions to officials, asked police for help, appealed to the courts etc. but these proved to be of no avail.

The Second phase: Establishment of Praja Courts". After the Indiravelly incident the tribals, under the guidance of the

Sangham set up praja or people's courts which administered justice to the tribals.<sup>13</sup> These consisted of a committee consisting of tribals and non-tribals which heard cases regarding land disputes. Often land was confiscated from rich land owners and given to tribals. The Praja courts often gave severe punishments such as chopping of hands and feet. Many land disputes pending before the courts for many years were hence solved expeditiously. It was this that made the state government passing an Act under which land cannot be transferred from tribals to non-tribals.

The Praja courts also made representations to the government and were in some cases successful in getting written documents in the name of tribals and poor non-tribals. They also successfully moved the courts regarding 'dowry' and harassment of women.<sup>14</sup> In a few cases the police also attended the people's courts. In 1983 nearly 4,714 cases of land alienation were registered covering 33,499 acres.<sup>15</sup> However, the people's courts did not succeed in breaking the power of the local landlords who dominated all the local institutes--the courts administration, police stations etc. The landlords also still retained the power to exploit tribals through the local traditional panchayats which they continued to control.

### The Third Phase : Movement Turns Violent

By the end of the 1970's the movement became far

more organised and as we shall see violent however, students workers also organised against the feudal landlords and local police. They collectively refused to pay land revenue in various places in Asigabad Taluk. Cover troubled labourers went on strike demanding better wages. On 18th April 1981, the first conference of the Girijan Ryothu Coolee Sangham was held at Indiravelly. The police attempted to stop the gathering and 13 people were killed.<sup>16</sup> The Government of Andhra Pradesh declared the district a disturbed area. The tribals began to occupy and clean forests in Bodh Taluk which they pointed out earlier was cultivated by tribals.<sup>17</sup> They also raided the houses of rich landlords and confiscated their valuables which were handed over to the people's courts. A conference was organised against government policies and attempted to gain control over land for which they held "Pattas" but which were under control of the landlord. Nearly 3000 people attended the conference.<sup>18</sup> Violence against forest guards and occupation of forest area continued throughout this period often leading to armed conflicts. In March 1984 tribals occupied 300 acres of land demanding proper compensation for land lost to the irrigation project on the Sathanla river. They were awarded a very low rate compensation.

In 1985 a second tribal conference was organised

at Indiravelly on Martyr's Day. Initially the Telegu Desam Government had granted permission but later imposed curfew to prevent the conference.<sup>19</sup> Important Sangham leaders were arrested and all bus routes and roads were closed. However, the conference managed to take place though on a smaller scale than planned.

Famine leading to heavy loss Shops in 1988 in Adilabad aggravated the situation. This led to migration of several families to Karimnagar and Nizamabad seeking employment. However they could not earn in urban areas.<sup>20</sup> There were reports of deaths due to hunger and large-scale migration as the famine worsened in Uttnoor and Wankadi Taluks. The famine reduced many to live on wild roots and flowers. During the famine there were raids by tribals on the houses, shops, and granaries of the Sankars in many areas confiscating grain. In 1988 in Pemi town in AKhanapur Taluk more than 250 girijans participated in an armed rain.<sup>21</sup>

### The Government Response

The state government responded in various ways to the ongoing movement. It tried on the one hand to pacify the tribal and on the other tried to suppress it by use of force. The government attempted tenancy reforms i.e. trail to bring lands granted to the tribal under actual control. However, non-tribal managed to gain a stay order from the

high court. Hence, the governments attempt was unsuccessful. The congress government also announced many social welfare facilities under the tribal subplan integrated Tribal Development agencies as well as re-distribution of surplus land to schedule tribes (see Chapter III) but very few of these measures actually reached them.<sup>22</sup>

The police and forest guards tried to suppress the movement in a brutal fashion. The passage of the TADA (Terrorist and Act) helped them. They burnt many hamlet in Bodh Taluk and killed tribals.<sup>23</sup> Payment of wages to tribals working in local industries such as the surplus industries was suspended when the workers went on strike demanding higher wages.

This violent phase of the movement was led by Pedhi Rajn, President of the Girijan Sangham under whose leadership a meeting was held at Chenumr Taluk in 1984. Hence it was decided to organise against contractors supplying tender leaves and forest official who prevented entry into the forests.<sup>24</sup> After this meeting Rajn and other left activists were arrested under the NSA (National security act). A police camp was set up in August 1983 in Adilabad district.<sup>25</sup> When the tribal took over land r and demanded higher wage from all taluks of the district the police opened fire in many places. In many places they coincide with the contractors and landlords in harassing

the tribals destroying their houses or belongings. A landlord-police-contractors Combine came into being. The government also deployed five companies of CRPF or special police forces who conducted massive raids in the district arresting hundreds of activists.<sup>26</sup> In a raid on Dandepally the village over 160 tribals were arrested.<sup>27</sup> Many were killed on the spot in what the police records described as "encounters".<sup>28</sup> During its period in office the Telegu Desam government suppressed the movement in a brutal fashion. The areas encounter by tribals were planted with fake and Bamboo trees.

The new congress government under Chenna Reddy announced that it would encourage tribals to participate in the democratic process and end police suppression. However, according to reports more than 70,00 were arrested under the TADA, and over 15,000 police forces were used consisting of 7,000 police forces were used consisting of 7,000 constables and so sub inspectors from the central and state police forces.<sup>29</sup>

While the movement glowed down in the early 1990s it is far from over. The Girijan Sangham is still in existence and unless steps are taken to meet the grievances which are real and perceived of the tribals such movements will occur in Adilabad again. In the conclusion an attempt has been made to comment on the nature of the movement and its achievements.



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## CONCLUSION

In this study an attempt has been made to understand the socio-economic conditions of the tribal population of Adilabad which led them to revolt against all outside forces i.e. non-tribals and the Indian state. A study of the actual movement in the 1980's has also been attempted. The study is based upon the major hypothesis that it is the poor socio economic conditions of the tribal and resulting dissatisfaction which underline recent revolts. Thus social and economic force, are given importance though the importance of political factors such as ideology and mobilization are not denied.

Tribal problems need to be understood in their proper perspective. While there are large number of social groups in India which are deprived and very poor the problems faced by tribals is somewhat different. Prior to the colonial period the tribes in Andhra faced very little interference in their cultural and economic life. The economy of the tribal habitat created a specific pattern of life. Shifting cultivation hunting and gathering of forest produce was their main source of livelihood. Culturally, their religion or social customs were also different from the rest of the Hindu population. Beginning from the 1920s the tribals of Adilabad felt the impact of the forces of Modernisation which colonialism brought in as Chapter II has

shown roads were built, mines opened in tribal areas and traders brought in products from the outside economy. Modernisation both in the colonial and even more sharply in the post colonial period had a two fold impact. Firstly, the tribal population could not be a part of the processes of modernisation being illiterate and unskilled and hence were left behind. Secondly, they faced exploitation by outsiders who wish to appropriate their natural resources. This two fold process as we have seen in Chapter II and III began during the period of the government of Nizam of Hyderabad and continues even today. Hence, what is being argued is, that the causal factors of tribal movements lie in the very pattern of development as it has unfolded in the present century.

In the Post-independence period both the central and state governments have undoubtedly attempted to improve the conditions of the tribal population. Nehru under the influence of Verrier wished to devise a strategy whereby the tribal population could experience economic progress and yet not face pay-scale cultural disruption and dislocation. This proved to be a very difficult line to follow and was abandoned in the 1960s. Since then the main policy towards the tribal population in Andhra Pradesh is Special Area schemes under special Agencies such as the ITDA and the provisions of a sub plan. The government has also attempted to both distribute cultivable land to the tribals and

prevent land alienation in tribal areas as this study has shown the government has not succeeded on all these courts. Both the policies devised as well as their poor implementation have reduced their usefulness, social alienation and alienation of arable land and forests. Disruption of the tribal pattern of life specially the agricultural economy and exploitation by outsiders has caused social alienation. Which renders them open to mobilisation by sympathetic left forces as chapter III has shown alienation of land and forests is a historical process beginning from the colonial period when the area was part of the Nizam's dominions. The introduction of private property disrupted the earlier system. Very early a feudal landlords money lender trader/shankar nexus arose which was instrumental in massive expropriation of the natural resources upon which the tribal population was dependent. Indebtedness to the moneylender and the existence of corrupt partners were the main factors underlying transfer of land from tribal to non-tribal hands inspite of an attempt by the Nizam to halt the process. This factor was the immediate cause of the movement in the 1940s in Adilabad and Rampa. In the post Independence period the setting up of wood based industries. Such as paper, timber and furniture manufacture has allowed this process to continue. The many hand regulation acts passed by the state government could not arrest the process. Moreover, while on the one

hand the state government has banned filling of forests yet on the other hand it has granted licenses to a large member of wood based industries in and around Adilabad. Large portions of the tribal population have been reduced to agricultural and industrial labourers on land they once owned. The link between loss of land and the tribal movement is clearly seen by the fact that the main target of the 1980s movement was re acquisition of lands which the believed were earlier under their control. The coming in of commercial cash crops since the 1960s, such as cotton has increased paid values and made it attractive to landlords. Indebted tribals are often forced to cultivate cash crops in order to pay rents or repay loans. Less space is hence devoted to food grains which are often bought in the market at very high rates.

The chapter IV the tribal movement in the 1980s has been described apart from documents of the CPI (ML) very little is known about the movement which the government has projected as a 'law and order' or a 'Naxalite' movement to be suppressed. The movement arises from the real and 'perceived' grievances of the tribal population. Since Independence the forces of modernisation have created political consciousness among the tribal population which feels it has not received its due share. Such movements are characteristic of societies which have faced destruction of

their traditional order, but have not been able to establish a new order.

It is necessary to briefly analyse here whether the movement has succeeded in its aims and what impact it has on the lives of the tribal population of Adilabad. The Tribals have managed to get back some lands which they believed belonged to them earlier. They occupied land in Lashetpet Taluk, in the reserve Forest area of Gadampally Hirapuram Allampalli, Dengigudem etc. Much of this has remained with them.<sup>1</sup> Earlier the government had granted surplus land which the tribals had not been able to take over due to court stay order and use of force by local landlords. The tribals under the Sangham also occupied lands belonging to big jendal landlords such as Yadav Rao in Adilabad.<sup>2</sup> In some cases however, the police intervened and the lands were returned to non tribal owners. The CPI (ML) has noted the amount of land the tribal population has been able to acquire.<sup>3</sup>

The Sangham also organised strikes against Tender leaf contractors, landlords and contractors for wage increase. In many cases they were successful. In Lashetpet tender leaf contractors had to pay higher wages.<sup>4</sup> Tribal labourers who were employed to plant trees also were paid Rs. 1 per day more wages agricultural labourers who refused to work for landowners are now paid Rs. 1300/- and 3

bags of Johar per annum instead of Rs. 600 and 2 bags of Johar as in the past.<sup>5</sup> Many bonded labourers were freed by the Sangham and the wages of casual agricultural labourers went up from Rs. 200 to 400 in the Lakshetpet area.

Contractors have begun to pay better rates to the tribals for tender leaf, cotton wood and other forest produce than in the past due to the presence of the Sangham.<sup>6</sup> The rates are decided by the government in advance. However, the sangham has not been able to get the rates they wanted and so were only partially successful.

Exploitation by landlords moneylenders contractors and the police has also decreased due to the movement. The movement has created awareness of their rights among the tribal population. Political consciousness has increased and the movement has created self confidence among the tribals in this area.

However, the socio-economic conditions of the large mass of the tribal population remain the same. The movement has only marginally helped in improving their living conditions. The feeling of neglect and 'alienation' from the state remain.

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