

**REHABILITATION, RESETTLEMENT AND ITS AFTERMATH ON
MALAIPANTARAM TRIBES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
KURIOTTUMALA SETTLEMENT, KOLLAM DISTRICT, KERALA**

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Abstract

The core idea of tribal development in Kerala is the speedy integration of tribes with mainstream society. Over the years several development programs have been adopted by state government to bring the speedy integration of these people into mainstream society. Apart from that afforestation policies of government resulted in the alienation of Mala Pantaram tribes from the interior of the forest and they are forced to settle in colonies, out the side the forest. Kuriottumala settlement situates very next to the Pathanapuram town. The settlement was established on 2004 and the Mala Panataram tribes were forced settled here from the interior of the forest. Earlier there were nearly more than 100 families and now the settlement witnesses for the fleeing of tribes back to the forest. Interestingly the government authorities project that this settlement is an epic model for tribal development as a result of their endeavors. The study is an outcome of the extensive ethnographic field work conducted in the area. Local History and Oral History Methods are also utilized for this study. Through this paper author tries to analyze the process of rehabilitation, resettlement and its aftermath of Mala Pantaram tribes with the special reference to Kuryotumala settlement, Kollam district in the light of Indigenous Human Right 2007. UN adopted this declaration as an effective mechanism to undo the injustice done to the tribes and based on the revelation that distribution of justice is not equal in the world.

Key words: Human Rights, Kuryotumala, Malai pantaram tribe , Rehabilitation, , Tribe, Tribal Development

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Introduction

Kuriotumala tribal colony, is around 20 minutes of journey from Punalur. One of the very specialties of this settlement is that, where *Malai Pantaram*, *Mala Vedar* and *Kannikar*ⁱ live together here. Actually Kuriotumala was under the occupation of famous Punalur Paper Mill. Later, the government allotted this place to rehabilitate tribes of Kollam, especially the landless tribes. This tribal colony is established in 2004. For Vijayan, the immediate reason for the allocation of the land was the public demand culminated by the struggle of C.K Jaanuⁱⁱ, ie, Muthanga struggleⁱⁱⁱ. This tribal colony is known as the 'rehabilitated colony' of landless tribes of Kollam district .The area of the land is 114 acres and the government distributed it among 114 tribal families. Each family got one acre of land accordingly. The land was distributed among Malai Pantaram, Mala vedar, kannikar and ullada^{iv} tribal families.

The existing picture of the settlement is entirely different from earlier. Now there are only 85 families. The remaining families went back to their earlier habitation. From the logical analysis only 29 families left from the allotted land and went back to their traditional hamlet. A detailed probing unravels that more than 29 families have left the settlement and still the settlement witnesses for the fleeing of tribes back to the forest. Esski offers a detailed picture of the fleeing, regarding the Malai Pantaram tribes. More than 60 percent of them left this place and coming to the Ullada tribes, they completely left the place and returned to their traditional habitation. It is necessary to keep in mind that Malai Pantaram tribes, who stayed in Kuriotumala, in a lesser or greater extend, have the relation with non tribes through the marriages or they are largely influenced by non tribes. So, here one can persuasively argue that it was the need of non tribes, who married Malai Pantaram tribes, to stay in out of the forest land. Jaya has examined it seriously and she points out that, this land was exclusively allotted for tribes but the non tribes, who married to tribes, applied for land in the name of their wives. Interestingly Eskki, Moopan^v of the settlement told me that there are no genuine Malai Pantaram tribes in the settlement but all of them are impure Malai Pantaram and he further advised me to visit Achenkovil^{vi} to collect data, if I really desire to study about Malai Pantaram tribes. The genuine Malai Pantaram is the minority in the settlement. Further he meticulously observes that more than 90 percent of Malai Pantaram tribes, who came from Achenkovil returned to their traditional hamlet. Later government again distributed the vacant places to other tribes.

Discussion

For Sundaran, he got the home during the government's third allocation of land and he further told me that earlier this place was under the possession of other tribes but they left his place. The reason for leaving the allotted land needs to be carefully investigated. For the Malai Pantaram tribes the newly allotted or rehabilitated place is a town or they felt that they are dumped to the town from their traditional habitation, of course forest. It is worth mentioning that Malai Pantaram tribes from Achenkovil, Aryankavu, and Mambazhathara were rehabilitated at Kuriotumala and all of them were forest dependent community. Contrary to these, Ullada tribes, felt that they are dumped into forest from their traditional habitation; of course their traditional land is plain land. It is necessary to kept in mind that the allotted land is a cliffy and not very fertile area near the town. Here what I am trying to argue is that 'tarring everyone with same brush always adversely affects the tribes'. Obviously speaking, the basic problem with tribal development is that the department considers tribes as homogenous category and creates projects and policies in state level for the entire tribes. Of course the effects of homogeneous style of tribal projects vary from tribes to tribes. Different tribes live in different regions of the state which would experience the result differently. For some, it would be favorable but contrary to this, for some tribes the project would create negative impact. Here the argument is that tribes are really heterogeneous category and everyone has their own distinct way of life.

Further I try to redefine the popular argument that forest is the traditional habitation of tribes but actually it is not. The work of Pati immediately comes to mind. Biswamoy Pati (2013) observes that the very assumption about tribes is that they are ancient people, original inhabitants, residing in forest or mountain. This assumption reasoned to stereotype a large section of people, tribes. They not only lost their land but at a different point of time pushed into the forested mountainous interior. Morris (1982) assumes that Malai Pantaram community was probably a refugee population, people who retreated to the hill during the Poligar wars at the end of the eighteenth century or during the stress of some famine. Further Malai Pantaram tribes themselves told that they were the descendants of Izhava community, who had taken refuge in the hill.

Tribal development still tries to fill the vacant homes. One of the crucial problems, which certainly need immediate intervention, is that there are homes without electricity and other basic

amenities and they don't bear any document for property. The basic reason for this is that, in the initial stage government allotted or registered this property in a particular persons' name. Later that family left the property but again government allotted this property to another tribes but government didn't give legal recognition for this allotted land that is why the tribes faces so many difficulties to get new electricity connection and to avail other entitlements.

Morris (1982) convincingly argues that as a result of afforestation policies Malai Pantaram tribes were alienated from the interior of the forest. KIRTADS, committed to pursue researches in tribal areas, argues that the habitats of Mala Pandaram tribes can be traced along the Achenkoil and Pamba river basins in the Achenkoil, Konni and Ranni reserved forest of Kollam and Pathanamthitta district. It feeds to the argument that traditionally Malai Pantaram tribes are not landless rather they became landless only because of the colonial hug of government. It is necessary to recognize that all of this displacement took place under the surface of government rule. It seems to me worth reiterate that the Kuriotumala settlement situates far away from their traditional habitation. Let us shift our gaze to the Indigenous Human Rights by UN (2007) that would help for a comprehensive analysis of this rehabilitation and the human right violation of it.

Indigenous people shall not be forcibly removed from their lands or territories. No relocation shall take place without the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous people concerned and after agreement on just and fair compensation and where possible with option of return (article 10)

Article 26 of the Indigenous Human Rights comprehensively deals the indigenous peoples' land right

- 1. Indigenous people have the right to land, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired*
- 2. Indigenous people have the right to own, use, develop and control lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired,*
- 3. State shall give legal recognition and protection to these lands, territories and resources. Such recognition shall be tenure system of the indigenous people concerned.*

Along with the Indigenous Human Rights, I am very desire to add the words of present Kerala State Scheduled Tribe Development Director^{vii}; he identifies three fundamental principles which should be followed during the rehabilitation of tribes. It is worth to bear well in mind that he is the master mind of tribal policies in Kerala. So this can be considered as the policy of Kerala

- Selection of Site: site should be appropriate for livelihood, applicable to build home, cultivation and other livelihood activities. Access to drinking water etc. should be there. More over the new site should be appropriate to practice their traditional culture.
- Basic infra structure should be there: basic amenities, accessibility to various things, different institutions etc.
- Lively hood opportunity should be created: Since they vacated from their traditional habitation, government should give a hand holding and government should create new lively hood opportunity for their betterment

A comparative analysis of the Indigenous human right and the Kerala government's policies regarding the displacement shows that there is significant mismatch between the policies further it also helps to understand the intensity of the violation of indigenous entitlements of Kerala in general and Malai Pantaram in particular.

It is fine to recognize that the state policy is completely mute about the compensation for the rehabilitation of tribes. I want to emphasis that the Indigenous Human rights (2007) use the term *fair compensation* for the rehabilitation or in the words tribes are entitled to get fair compensation for rehabilitation. The great irony is that, usually government shall offer fair compensation for the rehabilitation for development projects. Further rehabilitation would churn up heated and extensive discussion about the compensation and its aftermath. Contrary to this, the policy for the rehabilitation of tribes is mute about the compensation and there shall not be any heated or public discussion in the media regarding the rehabilitation of tribes and the compensation for it. In addition to that, Indigenous Human Rights clearly states that it is the duty of government to give legal recognition for their land. Interestingly the most important part of Forest Rights Act is that it provides a legal framework for recording and vesting forest rights and occupation in forestland to tribes. In sum, the forest right act perfectly evokes the core concept of Indigenous Human Rights, or it ensures legal recognition for their land. Here, the author attempt to explore the process of subversion of this right.

Over the years different government usually introduces different projects to allocate land to tribes. One of existing project is *Aashikuna Bhoomi Adivasik*^{viii}. One of the usual phenomenon is that government shall highlights or fanfare the projects and tries to implement the projects instead of the Act. To get a big reach for the project, government shall give more awareness classes to tribes. The government report (RTI file Pathanamthitta District Tribal Development Office^{ix}) shows that government has been allotted the 10 cent of land as per the *Aashikuna Bhoomi Adivasik* among 25 Malai Pantaram tribes. In sum government hoodwinks tribes into believing that projects are the only and best way to get the land and the Acts are very futile. A close analysis of the projects reveals that the underline intention behind introducing new projects is to subvert the acts or to not implement the act. The data is sufficient enough to argue that the hidden agenda of projects are to subvert the land rights of tribes. More clearly tribes sit uncomfortably with justice and entitlements. My impression from the field is that tribes are less aware about the Forest Right Act and the entitlements, which is ensured by Forest Right Act because the Forest Department presents a distorted version of Forest Right Act. A shift of our gaze to the story of Chandran shall help us to understand the intensity of the hoodwink of government and it clearly illustrates the violation of Forest Right Act. Actually Chandran belongs to Nillakal tribal settlement, Ranni- Perunad village.

"Nobody should come here to enquire about our well being, and nobody should come here to take our address" Chandran expressed his frustration and anger towards me, when I went there for my field work. He repeatedly showed his disagreement with the system and slowly he started telling. It was in 2015, we got *Patta*^x and the government has been argued that we are land holders, but the *Patta* doesn't mention about survey number. 'Hitherto they have not shown us the place where our land situates', he told. 'We are Adivasis that is why the government easily hoodwinks us. This is what happening here', he asserted. 'So many officials like you came here to help us but actually everyone of them have been cheating us, that is why we are not entertaining anybody to come here to enquire about our well being and take our address', he asserted again. Uthaman adds that it is a result of political gimmick. More clearly, in 2015, Kerala government fanfare and celebrated land allocation for tribes and distributed this *Patta* among landless tribes. The only intention of that campaign was to demonstrate that government is with landless families. Pathanathitta ATDO^{xi} (Assistant Tribal Development Officer) assumes

that it may be distributed as the part of *Janasamparka Paripadi*^{xiii} of government. Too sadly that program didn't get proper follow up that may be the reason for this, Atdo^{xiii} told. Here I want to put the remark that, it was not *Patta* rather title for individual claim as per the Forest Right Act is really needed. The title neither mentions about the allocated area, survey number nor the location of the place but the title is signed by District Collector and DFO (Divisional Forest Officer). Indeed it is clear violation of Forest Right Act. It seems to emphasis that hitherto Chandran is ignorant about Forest Right Act and the entitlement of individual claim. He believes that he got *Patta* from the government.

ATDO explained the performance of Forest Right Act in Pathanamthitta district. For her, tribal department drafted a new project named 'Model Colony Project'^{xiv} to distribute individual land right as per the Forest Right Act. Further the project also includes abode, school, godowns etc. . It was during the tenure of Hari Kishore as the Tribal Development Director. The government allotted nearly ten acres at Manjathodu and decided to distribute the land among landless tribes of Nillakal (Ranni, Perunadu village) especially among the nomadic Mala Pantaram Tribes. As per this project, each family shall get 10 cents. But forest department stuck with its implementation and argued that the area comes under Periyar Tiger Reserves. That is why it requires the sanction from Central Government for its implementation. However in reality it couldn't be implemented. Now the demand for the implementation of Forest Right has been rejuvenated and Government hopes that the Department shall implement it as soon as possible. Here I want to add that, the Model Colony project itself is a violation of Forest Right Act. It seems to emphasis that, here government carefully tries to restrict or reduce individual claim as per the forest right act into mere 10 cents.

Esski and Jaya knew infinitely much about the Malai Pantaram tribes of Kuriotu mala. Jaya disseminated the pain and suffer of the rehabilitation. She strongly reiterates that the government should provide basic amenities and should create livelihood opportunities before the rehabilitation. When they were rehabilitated to this colony, the place was a cliffy and rocky area, simply not a suitable place for habitation. The water supply started only by the end of 2010. Before that, they were needed to cover at least two kilometers to fetch water by foot. Still, the water supply project is not a perfect one. The survey shows that 58.3 % of total population of

Malai Pantaram tribes, including two districts, faces the problem of drinking water. They want to cover big distances to fetch water. Regarding the electricity in Kuriotumala settlement, hitherto the settlement is not completely electrified. The electricity connection was availed only by the end of 2008. In sum they waited at least five years to get drinking water and electricity. Esski offered some impassionate observations, Malai Pantaram tribes were exclusively forest dependent community and they know nothing more than related to their traditional livelihood jobs. After the rehabilitation, the scope to pursue their traditional job diminished or in the other words rehabilitation was a perfect assault on their livelihood opportunities. For a long period they were forced to work with less payment. 'Malai Pantarams don't know to work properly, it was the usual explanation for the pity salary', He added. Further he brilliantly said that, for a Malai Pantaram tribe, he wouldn't ready to do slave job under a person because they were neither enslaver nor enslaved. Further they have no experience in bondage labor. Rather they were leading an autonomous life in the forest. For them, forest offers sustainable livelihood opportunities. Interestingly Jaya made a funny yet very provocative observation that "Malai Pantaram were blessed with the forest with all of it is richness, where they got water as pure as honey collected by bees, air, and tasty and healthy food rather here we have only scheduled ration and subsidy foods, no pure water and air. We met with all of the diseases, earlier which were unknown to us. The only strong reason to stay here is that our concern for our children's education" she said. The words of Jaya need to be very scrupulously scrutinized and I would argue that government have succeeded in duping the tribe into believing that if the child wants to get education he shall live in the plain land or in the other words they believes that they have no more rights in the forest and development would reach only when they live in the main land. By changing their idea of development, Government could justify the rehabilitation. Further, government could make them believe that this rehabilitation is for the sake of tribal development. I want to provocatively reiterate that through this the government is subverting the Indigenous Human Rights. A gaze into the Indigenous Human Right is indispensable.

Article 14

1. Indigenous people have the right to establish and control their education system and institution providing education in their own language in a manner appropriate to their cultural method of teaching and learning

2. Indigenous individual particularly children have the right to all level and form of education of the state without discrimination

3. State shall in conjunction with indigenous individual, particularly children including those living outside the community to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language

An analysis of the rights and arguments of government indisputably proved that tribal rights are being violated. Later of this chapter I shall extensively discuss the achievement in education. Further the intended or fashionable interpretation about their food habit is that the traditional food pattern of tribes has undergone several changes but I want to add more and more. Mala Pantaram tribes were eating less and less. More explicitly the settled Mala Pantaram tribe is eating less than it did when they were in the forest. An attentive and careful analysis of indigenous rights, policies of government and the real experience of rehabilitation reveals that Malai Pantaram tribes of Kuriotumala are unlucky to enjoy the Indigenous Human Rights and the Rights which ensured by government, and as discussed earlier, the right of tribes entitled by government is very limited one.

Land as Development and Development as Freedom

At present, predominantly Malai Pantaram tribes of Kuriotumala rely on coolie works. In a lesser extent, the income from rubber plantation contributes to their livelihood but it doesn't offer them a permanent income for them. Esski, further pointed out the serious injustice, which now they face. Even though we are outside the forest areas, earlier we were allowed to enter in the forest land to collect the forest produces during the seasons. Definitely that was one of the major source of income for us but now the situation is not favorable to us because Forest Department argues that Forest Right Act has implemented and tribes of Kuriotumala are not entitled to enter into the forest,' he added. It is a serious violation of human rights and also the very extreme violation of Forest Right Act. Murugan expresses that well; he says that, "earlier, we have enjoyed ultimate freedom and we are the sons of forest but now the forest department doesn't allow us to enter the forest. Here we have no freedom to enjoy". It is urgently necessary to shift our gaze to the observation of C.R Bijoy^{xv}, he argues that, tribe is the only community in the world, who know the absolute meaning of freedom because they never were enslaved not

were enslavers. He elaborates that, by and large slave system was a part of feudal era and the tribal community were not a part of feudal era. Throughout the world they missed it because either they resisted or they moved out. In the feudal era, a section control the means of production (land) and the other sections, who somehow relates with this land, should be under the control of the section, who possesses the control over land. In the primitive society, there is no concept of ownership and there is no question of anything except you belonging to a particular land or region. Here, those who protect the land should make others under his control. To put it another way, the people live in a region should pay a share from his production to those, who protect the land. Naturally it increases the production. He clarifies that tribes had not been a part of that section. In sum, the rule of the kingdom had not been extended to tribal area. Interestingly he defines that 'tribe is a section of society, who missed the feudal era and currently are engaging or interacting with modern capital world'. He further goes on to argue that this is the sole criteria that is significant to understand tribes. He also convincingly argues that, tribes don't consider land as a means of production. For plainsmen, tribes are isolate community because they have not been assimilated with plainsmen, rather for the tribe, he is free from the plainsmen, he added. Here I want to put the remark that following the afforestation policies tribes have been rehabilitated from the forest and they settled in revenue land. Here what I am attempting to argue is that now a days they face isolation and discrimination from within the society. More clearly, geographical isolation of tribes became isolation within the society. The Malai Pantaram tribes of Kruriotumala settlement have to tell large number of stories of the discrimination which they faced from the plains people.

Come back to settlement, the rehabilitation of Malai Pantaram tribes' holds promise of considerable improvement in the living standard of Malai Pantaram tribes. An immediate turn into the definition of human development shall leave a scope for comprehensive analysis.

Human development was defined as the process of enlarging the range of people's choices, increasing their opportunity for education, health care, income and employment and covering full range of human choices from a sound physical environment to economic and political freedom (UNDP 1990)

It is in this context that the development of Malai Pantaram tribes of Kuriotumala is to be analysed. Here the only simple and absolute analytical result is that Malai Pantaram tribes are rolling down at terrific speed into the most deprived zones and yet they are trying hard to lead a peaceful life.

Issues in connection with the Rehabilitation

Rajan Vettikal^{xvi} is an elected representative of Perinadu Grama panchayath. He argues that there should be another and more important consideration while rehabilitation of tribes taking place from the forest to plains area. He emphasizes that, to rehabilitate the tribes properly, government should ensure a good job in the new area unless they might return to the forest and they would leave that place. He elucidates that Malai Pantaram tribes have been completely relied on forest for their livelihood that is why while rehabilitate them from the forest to plains area government should ensure a good job or livelihood opportunity, unless verily that rehabilitation should be a failure. He further emphasis that giving land in the revenue area might not be the sole criterion for the rehabilitation of Malai Pantaram tribes. To supplement his argument, he cites an instance, 'earlier government appointed nearly fifteen forest guards from Attathodu rehabilitated settlement and interestingly they send their children to school and they pursue a competitive life with plainsmen, rather those who have not ensured government job, they express temptation to return to the forest because they have been completely relied on forest for their livelihood, so the rehabilitation of Malai Pantaram is not possible by allotting them land in plains area rather they might be ensured a permanent job before rehabilitation', he reiterated.

Uthaman^{xvii}, from Attathodu settlement, is an elected representative of Perunad Grama Panchayath. He unravels the complications and perplexities regarding the tribal culture and rehabilitation. More clearly he says that "Now I don't look like a traditional Malai Pantaram or I have no features of Malai Pantaram but I have been elected twice as panchayath member in Perunad Grama Panchayth. It became possible only after I settled outside the forest. I strongly argue that the Malai Pantaram, who lives in the interior of the forest, should be rehabilitated to outside the forest or into the forest fringes, from where easy access to the outside world should be possible. Contrary to this, the outsiders, especially intellectuals argues that Malai Pantaram tribes should let to live in the interior of the forest but I can't agree with them. Actually what they really desire is that Malai Pantaram should live in pathetic condition and they don't want to

absorb development, or they shouldn't live like Uthaman or they shouldn't live like plains people. I can't agree with these kinds of intellectuals', Uthaman asserted. The testimony of Uthaman should be discussed properly and I argue that the core argument of Uthaman is that, in a larger extend, the popular idea or discourse that 'tribal culture should be protected', embedded them in backwardness. To put in another way, tribal culture inextricably fused them with backwardness. More explicitly speaking, while the tribal people absorb modernity, the plains people find discomfort in it and they want the tribe to live in their distinctive culture. At the same time the words of Uthaman reveal that they don't find anything discomfort with absorbing modernity and breaking their traditional culture. Here, I want to put the remark that Uthaman is a Malai Pantaram tribe and those who argues that tribal culture should be protected, is not belongs to tribal category. It is worth bear well in mind that, there are two types of Malai Pantaram tribes; accordingly, those who lead nomadic life in the forest and those who are lead a settled or a sedentary life in different tribal settlements. C.R Bijoy elaborates that the question is very simple whether tribes have the right to choose what they want; if they want to remain nomadic let them to be and if they want to absorb modernity let them to do so. More obviously tribes should have the right to choose, he emphasized. An immediate turn to the words of Amartya Sen (1999) shall offer some deeper insight to this issue; he writes that geographical isolation of poor directly contributes to social exclusion. Not surprise then, that tribal people are excluded from Kerala model development. More clearly, Kerala development model enables high social development co existed with law income growth. The excluded section are tribal people, fishing people, female domestic servants, female agricultural labor, lowest caste and migrant labors from other states (Srivandan 1976, Kurien 1995).

An attentive reading of the above arguments reveals that the development can be achieved only from the plains land. Here I want to put the remark that the Forest Right Act (2006) enable or entitle development from the forest land. More clearly, Kundan Kumar (2017) writes that FRA recognizes 14 types of pre-existing rights of forest dwellers on all categories of forestland, including protected areas. The most significant rights include, (i) Individual rights over cultivation and homesteads in forestlands, that is individual forest rights (IFRs);(ii) Community forest rights for use and access to forestland and resources. These include rights to firewood, grazing and other products for subsistence; rights over minor forest products; water bodies and

fishes; rights to access to biodiversity; intellectual property and traditional knowledge, etc;(iii)Community forest resource (CFR)rights to use, manage and govern forests within the traditional boundaries of villages; and(iv) The empowerment of right-holders and/or gram sabhas for conservation and protection of forests, wildlife, biodiversity ,and their natural and cultural heritage. Here I want to put the remark that proper implementation of Forest Right Act (2006) enables them proper development and also it offer a space to protect their culture.

Issue of Unemployment

Again pay heed to words of Jaya. She also emphasizes that government should ensure proper livelihood opportunity before rehabilitation. She further told that unemployment is an important threat of the settlement. More importantly Jaya says that her family is plunged in debt. 'We have the debt of nearly one lakhs', she disclosed. The words of Jaya are self explanatory. The survey shows that 87.9 % Malai Pantaram tribes reported that income is not adequate to meet the necessities. She further goes on to say that 'the usual phenomena is that, people shall blame that alcohol consumption and its fuss is the main problem of the settlement, but I want to add that that issue is common in every society but alcohol consumption of settlement (among tribes) will be highlighted more than everything else,' she told. Additionally she also blamed that; 'it shall be the main enquiry of many'. Finally Jaya adds that majority of them still bear strong desire to go back to their traditional habitation.

Conclusion

C.R Bijoy, tribal activist, throws light into new dimension to the tribe and non tribe dichotomy. He argues that the classification as tribe and non tribe is to express the 'social distancing'. The perceptive of non tribes about the tribes is that tribes are basically subhuman. Further, non tribes are not ready to reduce or diminish to tribal culture. Logic behind this social distancing is to express that tribal culture and their knowledge is inferior to non tribe. He further goes on to add that this social distancing also exists within the tribes. However, here what I am attempting to argue is that, in a larger extend, the popular argument that the 'tribal culture should be protected' is with the underline intention to maintain this 'social distance' between tribe and non tribe. Here I want put the remark that tribal culture is regarded as primitive culture, distinctive culture etc.

- ⁱ Kanikar is a Scheduled tribe community in Kerala
- ⁱⁱ C.K Janu is a tribal activist and one of the notable icons of Muthanga land struggle
- ⁱⁱⁱ Muthanga struggle was took place in Wayanadu district, Kerala in 2003. The struggle demanded for legal recognition over the land
- ^{iv} Ullada is scheduled tribe community in Kerala
- ^v Moopan refers to the headmen of the settlement. In each and every tribal settlement there shall be Moopan
- ^{vi} Achenkovil is a largest settlement of Malai Pantaram tribes. The nervous of Malai Pantaram tribe spread out from Achenkovil. Anchenkovil is the traditional habitation of Malai Pantaram tribes
- ^{vii} The interview of state schedule tribe development officer was recorded on Thursday May 18 2017
- ^{viii} This project aims to allot land to landless tribes. Entitled landless tribes shall get up to 10 lacks to buy the land not exceed than one acre and not less than 25 cent. This project covers all of the landless tribes in Kerala
- ^{ix} File number D 2375/14(1) date 03/11/2017 Pathanamthitta district tribal development department.
- ^x Patta is legal document which shows the ownership of land. this document is issued by government in the name of owner of a particular plot of land
- ^{xi} This interview was recorded on 31 January 2018
- ^{xii} This program was an initiative of Kerala CM, Oomen Chandy to settle and to ensure speedy justice for the complaints of people
- ^{xiii} Researcher also collected data by interviewing key government officials. the interview of ATDO (Assistant Tribal Development Officer) was recorded on 18 January 2018
- ^{xiv} This project was indented to allocate individual claim as per the forest right act. this project was exclusively drafted for Malai Pantaram tribes
- ^{xv} The interview of C.R Bijoy was recorded on 9 May 2017
- ^{xvi} Rajan Vettikal does not belong to Malai Pantaram tribe
- ^{xvii} Uthaman belongs to Malai Pantaram tribes and he is an elected representative of Grama Panchayath

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