

Development, Displacement and Rehabilitation: An Action Anthropological Study on Kovvada Reservoir in West Godavari Agency of Andhra Pradesh, India

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Abstract—This paper discusses the issue of tribal development, displacement, rehabilitation and resettlement policies, and implementation in the agency (scheduled / tribal) areas of the West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh State, India. This study is based on action anthropological approach, conducted among the displaced tribal communities i.e. Konda Reddis and Nayakapods of this region, under the 'Kovvada Reservoir' Project. These groups are traditionally shifting cultivators and popularly known as the *Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs)* in the government records. This paper also focuses on the issues of tribal displacement and land alienation due to construction of the Kovvada reservoir, without proper rehabilitation and resettlement, although there are well defined guidelines, procedures and norms for the rehabilitation of Project Affected Persons (PAPs). It is necessary to begin with, to provide an overview of the issues in tribal development and policies related to displacement and rehabilitation in the Indian context as a background to the Kovvada Reservoir Project, the subject of this study.

Keywords—Tribal development, displacement, rehabilitation & resettlement policies, and practice.

I. INTRODUCTION

INDIA is the third largest in dam building in the World and it now has over 3,600 large dams and over 700 more under construction. India's development policies and strategies have focused attention on indispensability of irrigation as important input for agriculture. Large-Scale Irrigation Projects are important for higher agriculture growth, besides establishment of Industries and Power Projects. India gave tremendous encouragement to the large river valley projects or large multipurpose dams. The dominant ethos was 'big is the best' and the conviction is that large multipurpose projects are the panacea to all the problems of poverty and under development.

It is important to note that most of the projects are located in the most back ward Scheduled Areas of various tribal communities, as the forest and mountainous tracts, which are the traditional habitats of them endowed with rich minerals, resources, and abandoned flora and fauna. Most of the rivers originated and drain through several tribal regions. The resources, which are available in the tribal areas, are being

perceived, by the policy makers, as the property of the Nation, but not as the basis of the people who live in this region. At this juncture, it is extraordinarily significant to make an appraisal on the Indian tribal situation.

II. INDIAN TRIBES - AN OVERVIEW

India has the second largest concentration of tribal population, after that of the African continent. Tribals are generally called as '*Adivasis*' implying '*original Inhabitants*' of the land. There are about 360 tribal groups speaking more than 100 languages and dialects in India. They have been specified as Scheduled Tribes (STs) in accordance with the Presidential orders issued since 1950. The Scheduled tribes population of the country, according to 2001 Census, was 8,43,26,000 and constitutes 8.20% to the total Indian population. The areas inhabited by the Scheduled Tribes (STs) in the Country are termed as 'Scheduled Areas'. These are popularly known as 'Agency Areas' since the Colonial times. These areas are specially defined in Para 6 of the Part 'C' of the Fifth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. Although the genesis of the concept of Scheduled Areas was traced back to the Scheduled Districts Act of 1874, in the Pre- Independence period, the Scheduled Areas were retained to assist the tribals in enjoying their customary rights with out exploitation and to develop and protect the tribals and their environments. Accordingly as per the provisions of the Scheduled Areas, Part - A States order of 1950 and the amended Scheduled Areas, Part - B States order of 1950 certain tribal areas in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Bihar, Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh were declared as Scheduled Areas.

A. Socio-Economic Dimensions of Tribal Communities

The tribals have been living in forest and mountainous regions, with in the close proximity of nature. The economy of the tribals has been primarily hunting-foraging and shifting cultivation. More than 90% of the tribals, to a large extant depend on forests and forests resources for their livelihood. The scheduled tribes have been facing many socio-economic and psychological problems since historical times. The forest laws have curtailed the free movement of tribals in forest regions. The tribal rights on the forest lands have severely affected. Shifting cultivation (*Konda Podu*) has been regulated by restrictions on the use of forests. Use of Minor Forest Products (MFPs) by tribals has been reduced to a large extent. Exploitation by money lenders and contractors, problems of

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credit and market for Minor Forest Produces (MFPs), poverty, hunger, malnutrition and impoverishment are the important evils, which the tribals have been facing since long time [1]. Land alienation and displacement are the major problems, which have been haunting, most of the tribal groups.

Most of the tribal groups have virtually reached a state of total collapse and seem to be fighting a grim battle for survival. The occurrence of tribal revolts for land rights in different parts of the country is its testimony. The large scale land transfers to non-tribals culminated in armed tribal uprisings in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. British administration in India introduced several legislations to prevent tribal land alienation. In order to ensure that the customary rights of the tribals on land are protected, the Agency Tracts Interest and Land Transfer Act (ATILTA) were promulgated in 1917 [2].

B. Constitutional and Legal Safeguards for the Welfare of Tribals

In the Post-Independent period, there are various safeguards for the protection and development of Scheduled Tribes (STs) in accordance with the special provisions mentioned in the Indian Constitution such as: Article 15(4), 16(4), 19 (5), 23, 29, 46, 164, 275(1), 330, 332, 334, 335, 338, 339(1), 339(2), 371(A), 371(B), 371(C), Fifth Schedule and Sixth Schedule [3].

In pursuance of the article 46 of the Indian Constitution, the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes (STs) is being looked after by the State Government. In order to protect the interest of the Scheduled Tribes (STs) and to curb exploitation at the hands of others, the Scheduled Fifth of the Indian Constitution, empowers the Governor to modify the State and Central Legislations regarding their applicability to the Scheduled Areas and to frame regulations for good Governance in these areas. Accordingly Government of Andhra Pradesh (GoAP) has framed 'Andhra Pradesh State Agency Land Transfer Regulation' (APSALTR) of 1959 and the regulation 1 of 1959 protects the tribal interest regarding land issues. In 1963 this regulation was amended by regulation 2 of 1963. It was again amended in the year 1970 by regulations 1 of 1970 and 2 of 1970.

In exercise of the powers confirmed by sub section 1 of section 8 of the 'Andhra Pradesh State Agency Land Transfer Regulation' (APSALTR) 1959, the Governor of AP made rules called the 'Andhra Pradesh State Agency Land Transfer Regulation Rules (APSALTRR) in 1969 [4]. In addition to the above safeguards, there also existed, the other protective regulations and Acts such as: 'Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Areas Money Lenders Regulation' (APSAMLR) of 1960, 'Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Areas Debt Relief Regulation' (APSADRR) of 1960, 'National Forest Policy' (NFP) of 1894, 1952 and 1988; 'Panchayatraj Extension Act to Scheduled Areas' (PESA) of 1996, besides several Government Policies and Government Orders (GOs), and Judgments, pronounced by different Courts from time to time.

C. Development in Tribal Areas

The development philosophy for the Scheduled Tribes (STs) is neither one of isolation through protection nor

assimilation through de-culturation. Rather, it is one of the integration which does not pre-suppose assimilation and is not compatible with heterogeneity of cultures. This basic philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, was pursued over 57 years.

Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, says that the '*Greatest problem faced in development of tribals is how best to bring the blessings and advantages of modern science and technology with out destroying the rare and precious values of tribal life, not interfering with their ways of life, but helping them to live it*'.

Planned economic development was adopted as India's policy, soon after Independence. Planning for the development of tribal areas was thus ushered in as part of a wider National strategy. To bridge the socio-economic gaps between tribals and non-tribals and also for the all-round development of the tribal groups, several schemes and programmes are being drawn in the Post-Independent period. Both Central and State Governments have been spending Crores of rupees, on tribal development, but the impact of the programmes is not as envisaged.

The developmental efforts have not succeeded in bringing marked change in the conditions of most of the tribal communities. The benefits of the tribal development are not reaching the poor tribals. In many parts of the country, the non-tribal groups are getting the tribal tag, in the process, depriving tribals, by using benefits of tribal reservations and Constitutional safeguards. No efforts were made in the formulation of schemes in accordance with the needs of the tribal communities, who had their own social and cultural milieu.

In recent times because of large scale industrialization and urbanization, relative isolation of the tribal areas is broken down. The tribals, and their lands and other resources are now exposed to the exploitative market forces, mostly due to the State and Multi National Companies (MNCs) sponsored developmental projects such as large scale irrigational projects, dams, reservoirs, mining, sanctuaries, industries and tourism projects and the acquisition of lands by the State in tribal areas is common phenomenon.

III. LAND ACQUISITION AND PUBLIC PURPOSE

The land acquisition Act of 1894, introduced by the then British Government, still continues, with some amendments in 1967 and 1984 and this Act facilitates the Governments to acquire the peoples land, by compulsion for both the public and private purposes [5]. This Act helps the State as a weapon for immediate land acquisition. In most of the cases, the Government officials have been paying the compensation to oustees after prolonged time, where as they acquire the lands with one notification and with in no time, but the Land Acquisition Act did not say any thing on the type or nature of compensation payable to oustees and time period for payment of compensation [6].

Land acquisition in Scheduled Areas is not possible, as there are number of Protective Land Laws, Legislations, Regulations, Forest Laws, Government Policies, Court Orders and Judgments, and Government Orders (GOs) which prohibit the land transfer in Scheduled Areas. Inspite of all these

protective and welfare laws made by the government for the welfare of tribals, the Governmental agencies have been acquiring the tribal lands in the name of National interest in contravention to all the Constitutional Provisions. It indicates that all the Agency Laws are being manipulated where the legal access to tribal lands and resources is denied.

IV. LARGE SCALE DISPLACEMENT AND NATIONAL INTEREST

What is it about own people with which impunity? What is it about our understanding of progress and national interest that allows the people's rights on scale so vast that it takes on the tenure of every day life and is rendered virtually invisible? [7].

'In the march of development which is based on the culture of unbridled greed, the mighty a mass drop all the resources, leaving nothing for the next generations. More increase in economic growth is far too inadequate to measure development and it leaves all financially poor' [8].

It is clear that displacement involves injustice to the tribal people and gross violation of their constitutional rights. The tribal people can't be deprived of their right to life merely by paying some money at the cost of their livelihood. In fact that whole legal frame itself is wrong in which the right to life of the people and their survival as community is being violated. At times the people are being forced to move out of their homes on the strength of payment of compensation. Right to life of some persons cannot be compromised or bartered just for providing more comforts to many people.

Many oustees are still awaiting cash compensation promised by the project authorities. Very few oustees have been fortunate enough to get permanent employment in the projects. Reports of several studies sponsored by the World Bank also admit that poor rehabilitation is not a matter of the past. In fact, in 1993 during the presence of the World Bank executed study team in the Singrauli region, a number of houses were bulldozed and oustees were forced to move without adequate arrangements, and this was documented in its main report [9].

V. EMERGENCE OF REHABILITATION AND RESETTLEMENT (R&R) POLICIES

The rehabilitation and resettlement policies are the result of concerns expressed by the social activists, academicians and NGOs. Most of the Pre-1980 projects in India did not have a clear-cut resettlement plans. Resettlement was taken on a case-to-case basis and only a few of the projects offered resettlement in the form of house sites and infrastructure to the displaced.

As a result of this ad-hoc approach, many of the displaced were left out of the process. The Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) Policies for the Project Affected Families (PAFs) at the National and Andhra Pradesh State levels were formulated according to the notification No. A.C.Q. 13011/4/2004 of the Ministry of Rural development and with the GO.MS.NO.68 of the Irrigation & Canal Aycut Development (CAD) Department, issued on 8th April, 2005 respectively. The Governments (Central and State) did not

frame any rehabilitation and resettlement policies prior to 1988. It shows the lukewarm attitude of the Governments towards the plight of Project Affected Persons (PAPs), even before they were uprooted.

VI. REHABILITATION AND RESETTLEMENT (R&R) BENEFITS AS PER NATIONAL AND STATE POLICIES

1. Preference in allotment of land to land or cash compensation.
2. Additional financial assistance equivalent to 500 days of minimum agricultural wages (MAWs) for the loss of customary or grazing rights/usages, to other Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) benefits to the tribal Project Affected Families (PAFs).
3. Resettlement is closely located to their habitat in a compact block, so that they retain their ethnic, linguistic and cultural identity.
4. The families settled out of the district to get higher Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) benefits to the extent of 25% in monetary terms.
5. The tribal land alienation in violation of the laws and regulations in force on the subject to be treated available only to the original tribal land owner.
6. The tribal families residing in the Project Affected Areas (PAAs) with fishing rights in the reservoir area.
7. Additional land on free of cost for community and religious gatherings.
8. Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) committees should include representatives of Project Affected People (PAPs), women, elected representatives, and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) member and Government machinery.

VII. THE REHABILITATION AND RESETTLEMENT (R&R) POLICY OF ANDHRA PRADESH AND THE WELFARE OF DISPLACED TRIBALS

The Andhra Pradesh Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) Policy of 2005, echoes the policy of National Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy of 2004, expecting a few modifications in the provisions. Both the policies suffer from several deficiencies, as they don't reflect any potential insights or basic principles to assess the losses of the oustees' property and there are no special welfare measures or arrangements against displacement problem. It is interesting to note that the Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) Policy makers of the Andhra Pradesh, in its order, para-1 of the abstract reveals the effects of compulsory acquisition of land and displacement on Project Affected Families (PAFs) and the need for rehabilitation with utmost care and concern.

But in practice it is quite opposite in implementation of the Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) package, and there is no proper concern, humanitarian approach and foresight as it was proved in the earlier studies on the issue of displacement. The policy is one-sided and does not show any consideration to the needs and aspirations of the displaced people.

According to the existing rehabilitation policy in AP, there

is no safeguard against double or triple displacement, which has happened in the past due to poor planning of resettlement process, and project assessment, especially in the dam related submergence areas.

This is one of its major lacunae. As a result the displaced tribals and other weaker sections are getting marginalized. Ultimately, this is causing large scale migration to urban centers. As all these people are not skilled they don't find any employment in urban set-up, and they are forced to occupations like rag picking, rickshaw pulling and even bonded labour. This can be illustrated by the experience of the 'Yandai' tribals, who were displaced due to setting up of tiger sanctuaries at Srisailam and Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) at Shriharikota. Most of the displaced 'Yanadi' tribals lost their livelihood which is primarily fishing-hunting-and-foraging in the lowland forested river basins. Most of them ended up as bonded labour in the fish and aqua forms of the coastal districts.. A few of them are also engaged in the rag picking business in the urban areas of Vijayawada, Guntur and Eluru.

World Commission on Dams (WCD) suggests that "*an approach based on 'recognition of rights' and 'assessment of risks'...be developed as a tool for future planning and decision making. Secondly, in line with the point emphasized in the guiding principles that the Primary duty and responsibility for providing humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons lies with project authorities*" in order to over come the inadequacies of the Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) policy and its current form of dealing the impoverishment risks, and socio-cultural and politico-economic needs of the Displaced Persons (DPs)'. The Commission also opines that 'there is a need to link development with displacement policy, which assumes greater importance in view of the onslaught of national and international capital in the age of so-called liberalisation, globalisation and privatisation to protect the rights of vulnerable communities to be an equal partner in developmental process'.

VIII. ACTION ANTHROPOLOGICAL INTERVENTIONS AND REHABILITATION OF KOVVADA KALVA (HILL STREAM) RESERVOIR PROJECT AFFECTED TRIBALS (PATs)

A. Location

West Godavari is one of the districts of Andhra Pradesh, having considerable scheduled areas and scheduled tribes. The district is a part of the Godavari delta and It lies between 16°-15° to 17°- 30° Northern latitudes and 80°- 55° to 81°- 55° Eastern longitudes. It is bounded by Khammam district on the North, Bay of Bengal on the South, Godavari river on the East, and Krishna district on the West. The district was situated between the mighty rivers of Godavari and Krishna having a total area of 7,79,538 sq .km (19,26,277 acres).

The scheduled area of the district lays in the Agency tract, which extends into the Papikondalu, a hill range of the Eastern Ghats. The major tribal groups inhabiting the West Godavari agency area are Koyas and Konda Reddis. They are distributed over a large part of the Eastern Ghats. Their habitat extends all long the Godavari river, starting from Karimnagar

district to Khammam, East Godavari, West Godavari and Vishakapatnam district agency areas [10]

The Agency area in west Godavari district was declared as Scheduled area under the Scheduled Areas (part-A States) order of 1950. Out of total number of 136 Villages comprising the erstwhile Polavaram Taluk, 101 villages of both the Government and Estate villages are formed into Agency area (Scheduled Area). Presently, these 101 villages are located in the three agency mandals: Jeelugumilli, Buttagudem and Polavaram, due to establishment of the Mandal (a revenue division) system. The area under discussion here is the Kovvada reservoir, which is built on the Kovvada Kalva, a hill stream having its origin in the Papikondalu (a hill range) at an altitude of over 600 m. in the Chintapali reserved forests in the Scheduled Area of West Godavari district.

B. People and Livelihoods

Due to the Kovvada Reservoir, two tribal settlements are submerged. These settlements are Reddigudem (inhabited by Konda Reddis) and Lakshmpuram (Nayakapods). These two Project Affected Villages (PAVs) are located in the Buttagudem Mandal. The total population of the both Reddigudem and Lakshmpuram is over 600, comprising of 140 households of which the non-tribal households are twenty.

Both the tribal communities were traditionally shifting cultivators and this is locally called *Konda Podu*. Now they have also adopted plains agriculture, as a result of interaction with non-tribal immigrants. They mainly cultivate pulses and vegetables as well as maize, jowar, cotton, chilly and tobacco. The tribal communities collect several Minor Forest Produces (MFPs) from the forests in which their settlements are situated. These forests are dry deciduous woodlands of *Tectona - Terminalia* series. The important Minor Forest Produces (MFPs) and available flora in the region are *tene* (Honey), *addaku*, *addanara*, *addaginjalu*, *usiri* (*Emblica officinalis*) *ippa* (*Bassia latifolia*), *chintha* (*Tamarindus Indica*), *vepa* (*Azadirachta indica*) *gumkharia* otherwise known as *tapsi jiguru* (*Sterculia urens*), *musti* (*Strychnos nux-vomica*), *tangedu chettu* bark (*Cassia auriculata*), *rela chettu* bark (*Cassia fistula*) etc. which are available in different seasons.

Most of the Minor Forest Produces (MFPs) like nuts and fruits are used for their consumption and the rest of them are used for marketing. They generally sell these Minor Forest Produces (MFPs) at the weekly markets and as well as at the ration shops, established by Girijan Cooperative Corporation (GCC). Collection of Minor Forest Produces (MFPs) is contributing a portion of income to their economy. Most of the tribals work as Labourers in the fields of non-tribal farmers as they don't have sufficient lands for cultivation. The fertile lands, they had earlier, have been already alienated by the non-tribal settlers with doubtful methods. Apart from agriculture and Minor Forest Produces (MFPs) collection, they also rear cattle, sheep, pigs, goats and fowls for agriculture and commercial purposes. As the tribals are illiterate and innocent, they are exploited by the traders and non-tribals in most cases. Most often they take loans from traders and non-tribals and remain indebted.

The Konda Reddis and Nayakapods of these settlements have an emotional bondage with their environments. They worship the Kovvada stream as their mother Goddess called Kovvadamma. They celebrate a propitiation ritual, popularly known as '*Kovvada Jatara*', in March every year for good rains, crops, fertility, wellbeing and prosperity of the settlement. Because of displacement and inadequate measures of rehabilitation, the tribal communities in these villages are divided into different factional groups due to their affiliations with different political parties. This factor has further weakened their unity exposing them to political exploitation at the hands of outsiders. Such an erosion of solidarity has also made them loose their voice in ascertaining their rights for justice in the implementation of rehabilitation. However, due to the intervention of social and academic activist and support groups the displaced tribals are becoming aware of their rights.

C. Kovvada Kalva (Hill Stream) Reservoir Project

The purpose of constructing the Kovvada reservoir was to provide assured supply of water to the agricultural fields of non-tribals, and to meet the requirements of drinking waters and industries in the uplands. This reservoir will be a boon for most of the non-tribals of the uplands, to the exclusion of the Reddigudem and Lakshmpuram, the two tribal settlements being displaced. The earth dam was formed with the maximum length of 1599m and height of 22.04m, respectively. The catchment area of the Kovvada Kalva reservoir is 11137 sq.km. The reservoir will have a live storage of 11.581 m.cum. in between the full reservoir level (FRL) of + 90.50 m. and minimum draw down level of + 81.0 m.

According to the report (2001) of the Canal Ayacut Development (CAD) wing of the irrigation department of the Government of Andhra Pradesh, the Kovvada Kalva reservoir will improve the agricultural productivity and thereby farmers of tribal and weaker sections can get more income from cultivation due to assured supply of water [11]. The reservoir irrigates the agricultural land to the extent of 7179 hacts. or 17,739 acres in Kharif season. The ayacut of the reservoir lies in 15 villages of both Polavaram and Gopalapuram Mandals, and out of which three villages are of tribals and 12 villages are of non-tribals. Two main canals on left and right sides of the dam covers 5.02 km and 9.86 km, respectively.

D. Tribal Displacement and Land Alienation

The total submergence area under this project is 285.27 ha. (707 acres). This comprises 208 hacts (514 acres) of cultivable land, 39.7 ha. (96 acres) of forest land and 39 hacts (96 acres) of wasteland. Most of the submerged lands originally belong to tribals in past, which were alienated by immigrant non-tribal settlers with dubious methods. Government officials distributed the land compensation @ Rs. 80,000 and @ 60,000 per one acre for both cashew orchids and plain lands respectively. The oustees struggled for about 4 -5 years to collect their land compensation and spent most of the compensation amount towards bribes to Government officials and the extensive travels they made to the Government offices. Rest of the compensation amount was paid to the

money lenders to clear off their debts.

According to officials, the Reddigudem village will be submerged and the Lakshmpuram will not affect, due to the back waters of reservoir. In fact the Lakshmpuram situated adjacently to the Reddigudem on the other side of the two streams of both 'Kovvada Kalva' and 'Poleti Vagu' will face the danger of displacement. The identity, culture and ethos and the source of livelihood of these forest dwelling communities have come under a serious threat as their two villages are to be submerged due to the foreshore of the Kovvada Kalva reservoir.

E. Mandatory Public Hearing

The Government announced a mandatory public hearing on Kovvada Reservoir on 27th of August 2001 at the project submerged villages of Reddigudem and Lakshmpuram, but this was not held in the project affected villages. According to the circular dated 11th of November, 1998 of Rural Development, and Order of the Hon'ble High Court of Andhra Pradesh, on the writ petition No. 8476 of 2001, the Village Council (Grama Sabha) should be held in the project affected villages, and the probable Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) package and full reservoir level (FRL) be decided. The decision of the Village Council (Grama Sabha) is ultimate in this regard and this must be ratified by the Mandal Parishad Territorial Council (MPTC). The State Government finally should specify the Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) package, based on the Socio-economic Assessment Study Report on the extent of losses likely to be incurred by the Project Affected Villagers (PAVs), prepared by a reputed Social Science Research Organization. None of these norms have been followed. No Village Council (Grama Sabha) meeting was organized for the displaced persons of the Kovvada Reservoir. They were not informed about any kind of Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) package; instead the Project Affected Families (PAFs) were herded into half built houses.

F. Violations against the Constitutional Provisions and Government Policies

1. The Government authorities started construction of the dam with out consulting the Project Affected Persons (PAPs).
2. Village Council meeting was not conducted according to Panchayatraj Extension Act to Scheduled Areas (PESA) of 1998 in the affected villages
3. The Project Affected People (PAPs) were not informed about the submergence details of the dam and the Comprehensive Economic Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) package.
4. Houses were constructed at Reddigudem rehabilitation colony with out proper ventilation, foundations and any other developmental works.
5. Violation against the various safeguards for the protection and development of Scheduled Tribes (STs) in accordance with the special provisions mentioned in the Indian Constitution of India.

6. Violations in land acquisition under Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Areas Land Transfer Regulation (APSALTR) 1/70.
7. Violations in implementation of Court orders i.e. SAMATA vs. GoAP and Sarapu China Poturaju Vs. Collector of East Godavari district.
8. Violations against Forest, Environment, and Panchayatraj Extension Act to Scheduled Areas (PESA).

G. Peoples Movement (2004-2005)

The author, with his fieldwork experience in these tribal areas made an intervention to create awareness. As a result, the Kovvada Reservoir Badhitula (Victims) Committee (KRBC) was formed, with the author as the convener, bringing together the Project Affected Families (PAFs) of both the submerged villages i.e. Lakshmipuram and Reddigudem. Several representations were sent to concerned government departments. The Project Affected Families (PAFs) were motivated for six months and organized exposure visits to the Surampalem village of East Godavari District, where the Project Affected People (PAPs) of Surampalem reservoir fought with the Government and won in the Andhra Pradesh High Court for proper rehabilitation and resettlement package.

Kovvada Reservoir Badhitula (Victims) Committee (KRBC) of Project Affected People (PAPs) of Lakshmipuram and Reddigudem organised indefinite hunger strikes and peaceful protests (*deekshalu*) almost for six months at the bund site of the Kovvada reservoir for proper rehabilitation and resettlement (R&R) package, under the leadership of the author.

The displacement issue was also widely published and highlighted in daily news papers such as *New Indian Express*, *Hindu*, *Eenadu* and *Vaartha* to bring it to the notice of the public and Government officials. With the efforts of the author, Panchayat (Local Self-Government) organisers conducted meetings of the Village Councils (Grama Sabhas) of these two displaced villages. The author worked out the norms of the rehabilitation package and negotiated with the Government authorities for proper implementation of the Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) package on behalf of the affected tribals committee. It took about two years for the author to accomplish the goal of rehabilitating the displaced people.

H. Demands Put-Forth by the Kovvada Reservoir Badhitula (Victims) Committee

1. A copy of the Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) package should be given to Kovvada Reservoir Badhitula Committee.
2. Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) package must be implemented to Kovvada Project Affected People (PAPs) on par with the package implemented to the Project Affected People (PAPs) of Surampalem reservoir of East Godavari district.
3. Left canal of the Kovvada reservoir must be extended from Reddinagampalem village to Tanalakunta

- cheruv (pond) so as to supply water to 10,000 acres of tribal lands in Polavaram Mandal rather than developing the non-tribal areas
4. Fishing rights should be given only to the two affected tribal villagers.
5. As the Lakshmipuram is also affected by the project, it should also be included and covered under Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) package.
6. Joint Survey must be conducted to locate the exact submerge area of the reservoir in collaboration with Kovvada Reservoir Badhitula (Victims) Committee (KRBC), Irrigation department and Revenue department.
7. Task of execution of Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) package works must be given to the 'Village Development Committee' formed by the displaced tribal villagers.

I. Response of the Administration

1. A copy of Rehabilitation & Resettlement (R&R) package abstract and Full Reservoir Level (FRL) map of reservoir were received from the irrigation authorities.
2. Fishing rights over Kovvada Reservoir were given to the Project Affected People (PAPs) of two submerged villages
3. Community Hall (Rs.5 Lakhs) was constructed in Reddigudem rehabilitation colony.
4. Internal Roads were laid (Rs.5 Lakhs) in Reddigudem rehabilitation colony.
5. Water Tank (Rs.5 Lakhs) was constructed and each house was provided with a tap and water is being supplied daily.
6. One hundred-and-sixty-two (162) acres of land was purchased and distributed to Project Affected People (PAPs) @ 2 acres each towards land to land compensation.
7. Necessary repairs were made to the houses constructed by the housing department of the government.
8. Sixty-six latrines and bath rooms were constructed to all the 66 households in Reddigudem costing Rs.4,700 each (Rs.2,700 for the latrine + Rs.2000 for the bathroom).
9. Joint Survey was conducted by Irrigation Department, and Revenue Department along with Kovvada Reservoir Badhitula (Victims) Committee, and the survey committee agreed that the Lakshmipuram Project Affected People (PAPs) should be shifted and rehabilitated at a safest place.
10. All the 66 Project Affected People (PAPs) of Lakshmipuram were given @ 5 cents of housing site each and allotted 66 houses under Indira Avas Yojana (IAY) Scheme @ Rs.25,000 each.
11. Money towards economic rehabilitation and asset building expenses to all the Project Affected People (PAPs) was given @ Rs.25,000 each.
12. All the houses were electrified and provided street

lights in the rehabilitation colony.

J. Role of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribal (SC & ST) Commissions

There was no effective initiative or efforts for proper rehabilitation of PAPs from the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribal SC & ST Commissions, functioning at national and state level, inspite of repeated requests for rehabilitation sent by the Kovvada Reservoir Badhitula (Victims) Committee. There should be rule that the Governments should take the clearance prior to establishing projects in tribal areas, so that the SC&ST interests will be safe guarded with appropriate rehabilitation package.

K. Project Vs. People: Who Benefited and Who Lost

The dam built across the Kovvada and Poletivagu streams at a cost of over Rs 61.11 Crores is billed as a boon for the upland parts in the district at the exclusion of Konda Reddis and Nayakapods who were displaced, and other tribal communities in the agency area. Only Reddigudem was covered under the Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) package and ignored the Lakshmipuram, the other project affected tribal village. The officials say that Lakshmipuram does not fall under the purview of submerged area, even though it is affected village due to project. Lakshmipuram tribals are quite afraid of the safety of their village due to the threats of Kovvada project and they are not totally rehabilitated. The Konda Reddis of the adjacent Reddigudem are rather lucky, unlike those of Lakshmipuram. All the Konda Reddi families are being shifted from Reddigudem to the newly rehabilitated colony.

IX. CONCLUSION

Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) policies at the National and State Levels, though are expected to safeguard the interests of the displaced persons, they are not practiced in the right spirit. Absence of rehabilitation Act at National level and violation of protective laws, regulations, legislations, and court orders causing deprivation of tribal and weaker sections. All the same, the work of the author by sensitising the tribals and others about their human rights and providing the appropriate initiative through the anthropological intervention helps the affected groups in deriving benefits for which they are entitled for the development with in their socio-cultural and environmental frame work. The Resettlement and Rehabilitation endeavours of the author at the settlements of Reddigudem and Lakshmipuram stand as examples to show that advocacy, motivation and peoples participation and negotiations with Government officials can make successful implementation of such programmes for the displaced with honours and human dignity. When well conceived rehabilitation measures are running in to rough weather, successful rehabilitation of people who were uprooted and dispersed decades back is doubtful proposition [12].

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