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## Dimensions of Bareness Among Adivasi Migrant Laborers, Wayanad, Kerala

**Dr Bijulal M.V**

Assistant Professor and Principal Investigator, GoI-DST SERB Project, School of International Relations and Politics, Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam

**Amith Binesh**

Post Graduate Student and Research Intern, Centre for Migration Policy and Inclusive Governance, School of International Relations and Politics, Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam.

**Ammini K Wayanad**

Social and Political Activist, President Adivasi Vanitha organization, Wayanad

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### ABSTRACT

This work is a systematic study that intends to bring to light the very nature of bondage, accumulative rightlessness, alienation from land and a greater scale of dispossession experienced by the indigenous ‘Adivasi’ migrant laborers within the state of Kerala, in the district of Wayanad. The labour migration corridor of the Indigenous ‘Adivasi’ population exists between the Tribal Hamlets of Wayanad and the Plantations of Karnataka in a location by the name of Kodagu. The labourers who attempt to generate their livelihood from the above migration channel are deprived of fundamental human dignity and deemed rightless, spaceless, voiceless and powerless. This work attempt to decode the varying degrees of precarity experienced by the Adivasi Migrant Laborers at Kodagu, the various interventions for the protection of rights that have taken shape on behalf of the state, civil society groups and various outlets of mainstream media.

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**Article Methodology**

The research was conducted over two months, from November to December 2023. It was funded by the Science and Engineering Board (SERB) Project titled “Effects of Social Institutional and Technological Interventions to Healthcare Among Interstate Migrant Laborers in Kerala” The primary method of data collection was participant observation. One of the authors, an Adivasi rights activist has immersed herself in the daily life of the migrant laborers, observing their interactions, healthcare situations and the impact of various interventions on their access to healthcare services. This method provides rich, contextual data and insights into the lived experience of the laborers.

In depth interviews were conducted with migrant laborers, healthcare providers, and representatives of social and institutional bodies involved in healthcare provision. These interviews aimed to capture detailed narratives and personal experience related to healthcare access, challenges faced and the perceived effectiveness of interventions. Focus group discussions were organized to facilitate collective discussion among migrant laborers. These discussions helped identify common issues, shared experiences and collective perspective on the impact of social, institutional and technological interventions on healthcare access.

The data collected from observations, interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis were systematically analyzed using qualitative methods. Thematic methods was employed to identify key themes and patterns related to healthcare among migrant laborers.

### **Legal and Policy Frameworks**

Within the International arena, the Palermo Protocol for the Prevention of International Organized Crime (United Nations, 2000) drafted in the year 2000 brings to light three distinct provisions alongside eighteen discretely co-existing articles; all revolving around the significance of the existence of international instruments in the maintenance of International order within the realms of transnational organized crime and offers an array of ‘practical measures’ towards the essential combat against the exploitation of persons, especially women and children. Within its core tenets, the protocol elaborates on the intentions of the United Nations Organization towards the notion of transnational Organized Crime alongside which it provides the commandments that ensure the assistance to, protection and repatriation of the victims of transnational organized crime.

The Indian context within the above issue brings to light The Immoral trafficking prevention act of 1956 (GoI, 1956) which in its essence, analyses the pertaining conundrum of human trafficking prevalent in

India for a multitude of purposes: Ranging from the translocation of migrant laborers to the ‘seduction’ of a person in custody.

Further, The Migrant Workmen Act (GoI,1979) provides a legal framework towards the regulation of employment, which in turn ensures and enables an efficient working condition for interstate migrant laborers; which could be quoted as the three fundamental Human Rights of the Constitution of India (India(1950); Constitution of the Republic of India) Right to Equality (Article 14, The Constitution of India), Right to Freedom (Article 19, The Constitution of India) and the Right against Exploitation(Article 23, Article 24, The Constitution of India). The above three provisions of the Constitution ensure equal treatment of all citizens before the law, safeguard the right to life and personal liberty and the prevention of the citizen from being part of any variant of forced labour, respectively, followed alongside a varying range of constitutional provisions that enable and empower the Interstate migrant worker through the process of their rights being protected and welfare ensured.

On a fundamental scale, the constitution enables every citizen of the republic the freedom to locomote towards a given array of destinations, the right to reside therein and further earn a livelihood within a domain of their choice. Article 21 of the Indian constitution ensures that no person shall be deprived of their life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law.

Further, Parliamentary Debates that have taken place within the lower house of the Indian Parliament; the Lok Sabha have touched upon the pertaining issue of Interstate Migrant welfare. Specific debates ranging from the years 1979,1986,1993,1998,1999 and the year 2000 (Parliament of India Digital Library,1979, 1986, 1993, 1998, 1999,2000) encompass the uptake of specific issues about the welfare of Interstate Migrant Workers, throw light onto the varying atrocities committed against the Interstate migrant workman and further, enable the parliamentary process of effective law-making towards the prevention of the same in the future.

The notion of Constitutional Morality becomes of great significance within the above context as the former has been identified once as the ‘pillar stone for good governance’ by the Supreme Court of India as the Union Government was observed to have failed in its endeavour towards the protection of rights and to ensure upon the welfare of Interstate Migrant Workers midst the pandemic induced because of the SARS –Cov2 Virus (National Library of Medicine, 2020) Constitutional morality can be therefore comprehended as a concept that adheres to the core principles of constitutional democracy such as liberty, equality, dignity, privacy and a state of no discrimination, in matters about personal affairs.

An acute realisation upon the index of Vulnerability and Precaurity is deemed to be a necessity at the above juncture of the discourse as it uncovers the degree of hazardousness a population is exposed towards in relation and comparison to the various other demographics that are existent upon the planet. The acute utilization of the above Index within the above discussion entails an opportunity to expose the precarious and vulnerable reality that is characterised alongside the Adivasi Migrant Labourer within the plantations of Kodagu.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The plight of the Adivasi Migrant labourer occurring in this region is close to a hundred years old. The devastating conditions that alter the structures of fundamental livelihood of the Adivasi has remained relevant for a larger duration of time. The condition of the Adivasi Migrant Labourer within the Wayand to Kodagu corridor remains the same, vulnerable in its essence and drastically distinct in comparison most other migrant communities in India.

A detailed elaboration of the situation encounter reveals an encounter with a phenomenon within the existential framework of the Adivasi livelihood which could be termed 'Rights Void'; a reality wherein the fundamental human rights of the Adivasi Migrant Labourer is *suspended*, the legal and administrative provisions that enables the individual are suspended and further, the essential notion of having a dignified existence is in constant challenge. The above phenomenon has in fact systematically disenabled the Adivasi Migrant labourer population from leading a dignified existence, leaving them rightless, powerless and voiceless.

This discriminative social mechanism could be comprehended to be continuum of an entrenched and thriving Feudal Technology that has reduced the labourer to the status of 'replaceable entities' and mere physical operational hands. Further, the feudal customs have doomed the labourers to right less mechanical 'serials', in a degenerating fashion. A prevalent mode of payment existing within such Feudal structures could be understood to be dominated alongside by a mode of payment through advancing money and enforced loyalty to estate owners. The above practice of payment exists uninterruptedly throughout the process of Adivasi Labour Migration, up until the 1970's. The payment of the labourer through modes of 'kind' apart from cash within the plantation ecosystem sustained alongside 'Feudal Technology.'

With due respect to the former premise, The Indigenous People's Convention held during the year 1989 engaged close to twenty nations (Indigenous and Tribal Convention, 1989) in upholding solidarity for the rights of the Indigenous People, upholding synonymity with which is the Global Compact on Migration, an inter-governmental agreement that covers international migration in a well-rounded, holistic and comprehensive manner. The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Person, Especially Women and Children; Often referred to as the Palermo Protocol of the year 2006 enables direct punishment towards transnational crime within the realms of human trafficking. The fundamental premise of any discourse that dabbles with the realm of migration must emphasise at its core the Interstate Migration Act of 1979, which in turn signifies the regulations put forth upon the Interstate Migrant Workmen and henceforth delineate their conditions of service.

Multiple provisions within the Constitution of India underlies the significance fundamental Human Rights ranging from the Right to Life, Livelihood and Basic Human Dignity; Article 21 of the Indian Constitution implies that 'No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to the procedure established by law'. A serene amalgamation of the propositions former arises the notion of what is to be a 'Time Trouble'; Wherein the Adivasi Labour Migrant Population experience drastic variation within their experience of human rights, civil liberties and Dignified Livelihood in contrast to that which is a characteristic of the new found ages; an array of systematically induced human rights violations encompass their existence at all points, despite multiple doses of Intervention put forth by the State, Organisations that function alongside the state and various other civil society organisations.

Following which arrives the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989: effectively preventing the commission of atrocities against the members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe, which in turn forms the touch stone and moral arc of the above discourse.; As the key stakeholders towards the economical dynamics of the Plantation ecosystem comprises of a vibrant international market, the emphasis upon a legal framework within the realm of the International becomes critical.

The above notion brings to light the principle of Bare Life rendered by the Italian Philosopher Giorgio Agamben (Giorgio Agamben, 1998), upon which the sheer biological nature of human existence is rendered priority over the manner in which the life is lived; The precarious lifestyle and the ensuing vulnerable state of existence of the Adivasi Migrant Labourer within the plantations of Kodagu could possibly be analysed along similar lines, wherein the mere biological facets of the sustenance of human

life are to be provided priority above a ‘full-fledged life’, A life that consists of dignified labour, habitable living conditions, time bound payment and the Fundamental Right To Life.

Within the varying realms of mitigation that are deemed possible within the above conundrum, Specific Interventions outside the various entities that represent the state ranging from the District Administration, The Labour Office and so forth, alongside a multitude of various Civil Society Initiatives and Non-Governmental Organisations that have catalysed the initiative of attempting to project the plight of the former within the mainstream discourse. The following realms of action have been validated by existing data, ranging from regional press articles that have contributed to the elicitation of the above article, and comprehensive media coverage initiated by prominent News Networks within Kerala alongside the long hauled disquisitions of prominent activist groups.

### **The Plight of the ‘Adivasi’**

To bring to light the nature of the labour migration channel extending from the Tribal Hamlets of Wayanad, Kerala to the cash crop plantations of Kodagu, Karnataka; systematic attainment of an understanding underlying the social, economic, cultural and political reality of the ‘Adivasi’ becomes essential and therefore a keystone to the above analysis.

Consistent human rights advocacy and involvement in the official process by the author of this article, Ammini reveals that the ‘Adivasi’ hamlets within Wayanad and the individual members existing inside experience a social, political and economic reality that is drastically distinct from citizens external to the community. Etymologically implied to be the ‘first settler’, the Adivasi hamlets are systematically denied access and excluded from the means of production; stripped of their capacity to garner resources, acquire capital, produce commodities of economic value and further advance their configuration within the hierarchy of societal significance.

From a purely Marxian lens,( Karl Marx, 1894) the Adivasi being denied access to the means of production and the notion of a societal utilisation and ownership of goods and services could be comprehended to have remained absent in the case of the Adivasi.

The notion of a ‘Dignified Survival’ could be observed to have remained absent within the case of the multiple Indian Adivasi settlements, to the varying administrative mechanisms that have transitioned and evolved; Ranging from the British Colonial administration in its attempt to expand and therefore scale it’s production of cash crops, establishes a multitude of estates upon which the Adivasi labourers

have remained but ‘replaceable entities’; whose welfare, primary concerns or health, was not taken care of. Fast forward to the present day, wherein estates, existing as a pathological variant of the neo-capitalist tendency, project a similar state of affairs towards the Adivasi Labourer; whose essential right to a dignified existence is not taken care of.

Disposable People (Kevin Bales, 1999) a work authored by Kevin Bales, Professor of Contemporary Slavery at the University of Nottingham explores varying realms of slavery that are still existent and prevalent within the global economy, analysing the brothels of Thailand and the brick kilns of Pakistan.

Added alongside this is the alarming state of ignorance and that of minimum intervention from the likes of corporate entities, the law enforcing mechanisms such as the police forces, and the entities that formulate essential policies towards the welfare, political and social development of the Adivasi. Such a variant of selective negligence towards the Adivasi population has manifested directly, into their marginalisation from the larger policy decisions on behalf of the state and has further amalgamated towards a state of alienation concerning the enforced inability of the Adivasi towards participation within the governance, enforcement of law and the formulation of policy decisions that are rooted in the genuine social, economic and political welfare of the former

A case upon the members of the Maori Tribe, the indigenous Polynesian people of mainland New Zealand ( Rigby et al, 2011) could be comprehended as an antithesis towards the scenario; the popular cultural and societal narratives existing within New Zealand have effectively integrated the Maori identity within their respective mainstream discourse. The members of the Maori tribe have been effectively represented towards the Crown within mainstream New Zealand politics ever since the Declaration Of The Independence of New Zealand and have been offered reserved seats within the New Zealand Parliament ever since the year 1868. In contrast to the indigenous identities existing within the Republic of India, the larger state of affairs of the Maori and their effective integration into the process of governance proves to form a ‘working model’ to abide by.

The Chotta Nagpur Tenancy Act of (1908) (British India, Chotta Nagpur Tenancy Act, 1908) has become a significant act within the Tribal population of India, specifically within that of Jharkhand. The Act prohibits the transfer of land within the ownership of the tribal population towards that of the non-tribal population to retain community ownership of land amidst the Tribal Population. Being listed in the Ninth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, the act is effectively beyond the scope of judicial review and can only be repealed by the Parliament. The act was introduced by the British Colonial Administration

in the year 1908 after a Tribal movement initiated by a tribal freedom fighter by the name of Birsa Munda, belonging to the Munda Tribe of the Chotta Nagpur Plateau region.

A similar act that prevented alienation of the Adivasi land is available here. However, reformation in the act, shifting period of reference of land alienation has reduced the scope of the act.

Section 71 of The Chotta Nagpur Tenancy Act(1908)( British India, Chotta Nagpur Tenancy Act, 1908) provides an effective relief against deceitful purchases committed against the Tribal Population. The victims can therefore, apply for a restoration of their land under the above provision, whereas an amendment of the act initiated on the year 2016, permits the commercial utilisation of the Tribal land, making it transferrable from entity to entity in an unsophisticated manner.

### **Kerala Scenario**

The following section of paper discusses in detail the horrendous state of affairs existing within the ‘Adivasi’ Tribal Migrant labourers making the commute from the district of Wayanad in the state of Kerala towards plantations within the cash crop producing plantations in a specific location within the state of Karnataka by the name of Kodagu, whose major crops under cultivation comprise of Ginger, Pineapple and Plantain.

Our fieldwork revealed that a major share of individuals in possession of monetary capital from the districts of Kasargod, Kannur, Kozhikode and Malappuram within Kerala, lease out a proportionate share of real estate at Kodagu, for the establishment of plantations that generate cash crops. To ensure a steady supply of human labour, individuals residing within tribal hamlets within the district of Wayanad are recruited, through an intermediate entity known to be the ‘Agent’. The process of recruitment of the Adivasi labourer, conducted in a rather shady fashion, involves the families of the recruited individuals not being informed of the whereabouts of the process, the nature of the occupation or the destination route.

A major share of the recruited workforce experience a social and cultural reality distinct from their home turf for the first time during the process of being recruited; A major share of the same acutely unaware of the newfound geographical location they inhabit, the emerging language they ‘are to’ conduct their discourse in, the nature of the occupation they are to remain part of and within a state of permanently disconnected ness from their familial relatives.



An enquiry conducted upon various tribal enclosures within the aforesaid region based on the above issue, one derives a clear picture of the plight of the Adivasi Migrant Labourer employed in the cash crop plantations. Atrocities ranging from the torture of the most heinous order, Labourers falling dead in the most suspicious fashion, excessive amounts of work prescribed to be beyond the average human capacity, the hazardous utilisation of pesticides and other chemicals and the aftermath related to which, the absence of consistent employment, the lack of proper monetary wages and a host of others are committed upon the migrant labourer. Alongside this, the absence of nutrition-dense food, proper healthcare facilities and facilities for accommodation add to the conundrum. Further, Alcohol is utilised as a mode of payment over cash and the exploitation of the sexual kind is part and parcel of the arena. ( Ammini K, The Critic, 2023). The above sequence of events have taken shape since the year 2005.

A statistical survey put forth by a recognised institution (Neethi Vedhi, 2023) has gone on to observe a total of 99 people to have remained dead within a plantation of such nature, accompanied by the aforementioned range of atrocities, out of which 34 are categorised to be ‘uncommon’, 36 to have occurred as a consequence of disease, 15 to have been natural and 14 death whose core reason has remain indecipherable till date. Out of the larger share of labourers, 16 individuals have returned to their respective hamlets citing sexual exploitation, out of which three distinct female labourers have had to bare the terrible misfortune of giving birth to offspring, whose biological fathers are allegedly the plantation owners themselves, out of which one the female labourer was aged below 18 at the point of the incident, which does not make the above person a consenting adult.

A culmination of two Civil Police cases have been filed(C.M Shareef, Shelf, MediaOne, 2023) at the Bathery, Wayanad district; Yet, owing to an intervention from higher political-economic entities has in turn resulted in the eradication of the cases, erasing their existence from the mainstream; The women were further allegedly forced to speak for the benefit of the plantation owners.

The members of the group within the Tribal community termed the ‘Paniyar’, who comprise of the economically and socially deprived sections of the tribal population, form the bulk of the migrant workforce. (Web Desk, Madhyamam, 2023) The historical alienation from the means of production; the absence of arable land to cultivate crops and maintain a livelihood under, prompts the members of the Paniyar class to venture into the aforementioned migration.

Deprived of any real employment in a rather devastating fashion, a major share of the tribal population resides within the dense interior localities within the forest, facing endless bouts of hunger and economic

deprivation; the only ray of hope being the subsidised rice offered on behalf of the governmental machinery.

Out of the total population of the district of Wayanad, 55% of the above comprise Adivasi individuals (Population Census of India, 2011). The tribal communities by the names of ‘Paniya’, ‘Adiya’, ‘Katunayka’ and ‘Vetapuruma’ amalgamate to form the largest share of tribal individuals engaged in agriculture. The Tribal classes by the referred to as the ‘Kaaturayka’ is dependend upon the forest for their survival and sustenance, often engaged in collecting commodities from within the forest, with commercial wood as an exception.( Population Census of India, 2011)

It was in the year 2005 that the Adivasi migrant labourers were observed to be falling dead from within the plantations in Kodagu;( Ammini K, The Critic, 2023) Individual cases ranging from a man by the name of Kolu, in an attempt to earn an efficient livelihood, migrates to the Plantations of Kodagu within the district by the name of Kutta, on the 21<sup>st</sup> of April on the same year; The formalities of which were initiated by two individuals. Further, post an unforeseen set of events, Kolu was reported to have been dead, whose corpse was brought upon a kin of the plantation owner, who had further gone on to intimidate the family of the deceased into remaining silent upon the pertaining issue, who had been convinced that the calamity had taken shape at the plantation at Kodagu wherein Kolu had been employed also observed the presence of excessively deeper wounds within the chest and the rear back alongside a protruding left eyeball. The corpse of the deceased had been wrapped up by the Plantation owners themselves, claiming that the post-mortem had been conducted. The plantation owners had further urged the family of the deceased to conduct the ceremony that involves the last rites; The Batheri Civil police station, upon putting forth a complaint on the matter, responded with a statement that went on to imply that the deceased had fallen to death post a spell of alcohol consumption.

The above incident threw light upon a larger plethora of incidents that culminated in the deaths of Adivasi Migrant Labourers, migrating towards the Ginger plantations to be more specific. An organisation by the name of ‘Neethi Vedhi’(Madhyamam, 2023)had been set up in the year 2008 alongside a people’s tribunal under which, to accumulate complaints from the labourers themselves; of which a total of 122 complaints had been received. Despite the conglomeration of the above complaints, no real action of the political or legal front took shape as an aftermath. The Adivasis are taken towards migration channels extending the locations namely Mysore Sahola, Kodagu, Hunsur, Virag Pta, Somar Peta, Chikkamaguluru, K R Nagar, Kushal Nagar, Gonikuppa, Shrinagar, Shrimangalam extending to

locations such as Goa, during the months of April and May. The labourers are either forced towards participation or are promised a hefty amount as wage.

There are negligible, or close to zero officially registered complaints on the instances of the death of the Adivasi Migrant Labourer within both the state police forces of Kerala and Karnataka as a consequence of which, the families, relatives and kin of the deceased find it increasingly difficult towards the obtainment of certificates that indicate the death of the subject or the completion of post-mortem; As a direct calamity of which, the widows of the deceased are unable to obtain their pensions or the compensations vested upon them.

Despite a Circular Order sanctioned by the District Collector of Wayanad in the year 2007 towards the authorisation of the Migrant Labourers towards the nearest Police Station, the Tribal Chief and the Scheduled Caste promoter, no such practice seemed to have taken shape in the past nor does it take shape in the current times. Urging the migrants to display their fundamental details, consisting mainly of details of the plantation owner, the location of work and an accurate depiction of the wage received.

As per the order, a security deposit of rupees 1000 is to be submitted by the plantation owner towards the District labour office; Despite such elaborate directives, all of the above regulations remain unearned for. The innumerable repetition of such atrocities towards the Adivasi community does nothing but showcase and indicate the failure of the governmental mechanisms towards enabling a necessary degree of Justice and a dignified living condition towards the tribal population. The cases are to be thoroughly investigated upon, through the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act( GoI, 1989)and the Labour Act, respectively. The order sanctioned by the District Collector of Wayand is to be implemented with immediate effect.

The existential anxiety around the survival of the Paniyar Category amongst the Adivasi population remains over the longer duration of years a proposition of doubt, considering the pace at which the former are being annihilated within the process of unsafe interstate labour migration.

## **Discussion**

The Primary category that initiates the ‘Discussion’ about the above academic paper involves an elaborate understanding of the multiple perspectives that entail all advents of resistance put forth from alongside various fronts, starting with a multitude of Civil Society Initiatives, Governmental

intervention directed towards the eradication of the pathological phenomenon alongside an account of very recent incidents of death, accusations of murder and a distinctly noticeable pattern between them.

The nature of the civil society uprising aimed against the heinous crimes committed against the Adivasi Migrant labour has advanced in their intensity and rigour over time; The Association for the Protection of Civil Rights, an organisation centred around the protection of human rights have remained instrumental in the process of accumulation of data, visiting Tribal hamlets and deriving potential solutions towards the tribal plight. Ms. Ammini K, the state president of the organisation by the name of 'Adivasi Vanita' have supplemented their fair share of initiatives towards the rehabilitation of the deceased population.

Further, an organisation by the name of the Association for the Protection of Civil Rights (A.P.C.R) has been relevant for raising the pertaining issues about the atrocities committed against the Adivasi towards the governmental administrative mechanisms, to an extent wherein the Kerala based chapter of the aforesaid organisation submitted a written complaint towards the then Chief Minister of Karnataka, Mr. K.Sidharamayya. Civil society organisations such as the 'Neethi Vedi conducted events by the name of the 'Peoples Tribunal' for the purpose of taking count of the number of people falling dead as a consequence of the labour migration, accounting for a total of 122 when examined upon in the year 2008.

The major governmental interventions that have taken shape for curbing the issues include a circular initiated by the District Collector of Wayanad, which includes a necessary submission of essential data ranging from the name of the plantation owner, the details upon the prescribed wage and a letter of consent from the Tribal Chief; Alongside which a total of 1000 rupees are to be paid as security deposit from the side the plantation owner as security deposit, alongside the submission of an elaborate description of all essential information of the labourer towards the District labour officer.

Apart from this, one could observe noticeable patterns within Individual Adivasi Labourers accused of being murdered, a major share of them found dead under suspicious circumstances; Ranging from a man by the name of Kolu brought dead under suspicious circumstances( Ammini K,The Critic, 2023) alongside the likes of his plantation owner. Shreedharan, an Adivasi Migrant Labourer who never returned to his hamlet post tenure to a plantation owner named Mr.Mani, who happened to have revealed the dietary course of the labourers to be a meagre meal of Tomatoes, Onion and Rice, experienced the

same fate at the two other gentlemen. The noticeable pattern within all three of the many circumstances lies in the fact that all of the above were murdered in a rather suspicious fashion.

The plantations mentioned in the above article, situated within Kodagu, a location in Karnataka comprise a varying multitude of Plantation facilities, owned by mostly men emerging out of the districts of Kozhikode, Kannur, Malappuram and Wayanad. Established to cultivate cash crops, the above plantations maintain a varying range of crops from Ginger to Pineapple to that of Plantain. Activists testify that these plantations are formulated for the mere purpose of amassing profit, the Plantations within Kodagu operate in a rather hazardous manner, leaving the labour force in a state of pre-cautionousness alongside an alarming degree of vulnerability.

The ecosystem within the above Plantations does not ensure any degree of labour welfare towards the voluntary participant, suspending their rights at all points, stripping them out of their fundamental human choice and further, deeming them second-class citizens. Further, the diet for the labourers remains a meagre portion of Rice, Tomatoes and Onion; insufficient for the purpose of fostering an active labour participation, as mentioned earlier.

The notion of spatiality does actively coincide with the nature and the fundamental framework of the Plantation ecosystem; the above space is rather defined by and generated because of the exploitative tendencies of the Plantation Owners, implying the social creation of the notion of space. The reconfiguration of the experiential dimension of space could be well understood as the Adivasi Migrant Labourer movement from a familiar hamlet towards an unknown plantation.

Post a larger period of over close to three decades of wilful avoidance since its arrival, the mainstream multi-media narratives existing within Kerala have wilfully taken up the challenge of reporting the atrocities being committed to the Adivasi population ranging from mainstream media outlets such as Media One (Media One, 2023) and 24 (The24News, 2023), that have created extensive documentary episodes upon the plight of the Adivasi people. Further, traditional news portals such as the New Indian express and new age Kerala-based media outlets such as 'TrueCopyThink' (TrueCopyThink, 2023) and 'Keraleeyam.web' (Keraleeyam.web, 2023) have indeed provided their fair share of representation towards the issues concerning the Adivasi.

A couple of specific Documentary series on the issue have been put forth by the media outlets 24 and Media One; both enticing a systematic study of the deaths that have occurred as a consequence of the

labour migration; tracing every single step from the onset of the migratory pursuit. The nature of the migrations, the framework of the plantation the Labourers are set to arrive upon, the participants who are deceased the corresponding legal framework of the above case were investigated in these mainstream media interventions has upgraded the perceived gravity of the issues and projected the unparalleled degrees of atrocities being committed against the Adivasi migrant labourer. The inclusion of the above issue into the interwoven narrative of mainstream media has remained crucial towards the comprehension of the above issue to the larger population of Kerala, who up until then have remained oblivious to an atrocity of such nature.

Marginalised through a mode of systematic oppression, the labourers experience a reality of right deprivation, unable to function by personal will, are voiceless in every dimension of the word, they are deprived of fundamental necessities that are essential human sustenance, living treacherous lives within whatever that the plantations have to offer. The systematic denial of the fundamental human conditions that are necessary towards the sustenance of human life and the historical denial of the Adivasi population from participation within the means of production are oftentimes complementary, working hand in hand towards the manifestation of such a fatal condition. A major share of all such atrocities takes shape within the Ginger Plantations within Kodagu, beyond the other two cash crops, namely Pineapple and Plantain Banana.

Further, the focal aspect of any academic doctrine existing within the given domain requires the essential integration of the aspect often referred to as the 'Time Trouble'; A phenomenon that deals with the nature of the event that is under study concerning the civilizational and cultural values of the time that the reader or the author composes the academic writing are in. On a temporal as well as special scale, the Adivasi migrant labourers are transposed to a reality that is distinctly alien to the larger interstate migrant population existing within various other parts of the state.

Further, the ideological progression of the cultural narratives that form the fundamental presuppositions of the social orders changes with time, which is, unfortunately, not the case concerning the Adivasi population. As the global order experienced a subtle transition after the induction of the French Revolution ideals of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity; one observes a shift in momentum within the larger progression of the cultural narrative. In comparison to the social, economic and political reality of other interstate migrant labour communities within the state, the Adivasis do not experience a similar set of attributes defining their respective realities despite the evolving times; much akin to a 'Painted ship



upon a painted ocean' a statement compiled by the English poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge in his monumental work 'The Rime of The Ancient Mariner'( Samuel Taylor Coleridge,1797)

Devoid of any real faculty essential for the sustenance of life, the fundamental right to the possession of one's existence; one notices the absence of a necessary free will that is essential in the dictation of the direction of one's own life, the absence of which points out the deprived nature of the labourers within all points of the spectrum, ranging from the absence of the critical nutritional nourishment, the absence of a proper fixed wage to the hostile working conditions. A culmination of the above-mentioned factors collaborates forms conditions that dis enable the labourer to occupy a position wherein the survival of the individual could become a direct function of their choices, not a complete consequence of the external environment.

Upon analysis of the issue beyond a level that one would define to be peripheral, one comes across the notion of a historical alienation from the Means of Production towards the Adivasi, which in turn urges the labourers to make the interstate traversal towards Kodagu to earn a living. A denial towards access to arable land effectively prevents the labourers from having any other option towards survival apart, therefore attempting the desperate measure of a 'desperate' migration; The employment of the Marxian concept of the Means of Production ( Karl Marx, 1885) permits one to comprehend the helpless nature of the labourers, often always left devoid of choice and their desperate attempt towards earning a living, manifesting as the interstate migration.

This paper further ventures into the notions of Liberal Humanism and Stateism (Locke, year to be clarified); pitched against the welfare of the Adivasi migrant labourer, the notion of liberal humanism entrusts upon the Adivasi Migrant labourer the terrible responsibility of crafting their respective realities, while the fundamental tenets that are in requirement for the same are never within their direct control. A philosophy whose central theme lies in the significance and utility of human freedom, implying that all members of the human species possess in them a certain degree of free will, which could be utilised for re-arranging one's reality; which is not the case for the Adivasi Migrant Labourer as the every existent odd is stacked against the former, ranging from the conditions of accommodation, payment of wages to the degrees of nutritional supplementation.

## **Conclusion**

'The cost of Liberty is less than the price of repression' – The soul of the Black Folks, W.E.B Du Bois

In an age and time characterised by the zenith within the evolution of ideological discourses that cater to the effective sustenance of the human civilisation, the fast-paced rapid progression of the species within all realms of activity, there appear to be a select some, that follow through their meagre existence devoid of being able to taste the much ripen fruits of human progress; marginalized in peripheries, enclosed in encrypted voids, encapsulated in unbreakable cascades, immutable shackles. The Adivasi Migrant Labourer stationed at Kodagu proves to be one such example; A time tested representative of the varying realms of oppression; economic, cultural and civilisation and the marginalisation of the worst variety. This paper brings to light the underexposed dimensions of the above conundrum, the varying dimensions pertaining to which and the mechanisms of mitigation that could be put across towards deriving a possible solution to the issues at hand.

For Migration and therefore migrants, would continue to pertain for as long as the planet is segregated towards ‘cores’ and ‘peripheries’ and not a singular cooperative, interdependent specie that delves, strive and thrives ‘together’.

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