**Chapter II: Area and People**

***- Fishing communities of Visakhapatnam and maritime fishing background***

***- Maps of selected villages***

***- Physical details of the selected villages***

***- Ethnographies of Jalari and Vadabalija***

***- Life cycle ceremonies***

***- Religion/Festivals***

***- Fishing Economy- Boats, nets, types of fish, technology-------- Up to bringing Fish to the beach.***

**India- South Coastal Fishing societies-**

**Visakhapatnam and maritime fishing background -brief historical- pre colonial and post colonial.**

Characteristics of Fishing villages in NECAP region

The north-east coastal Andhra Pradesh (NECAP) comprises three revenue administrative districts viz. Srikakulam, Vizianagaram and Visakhapatnam. This region has distinct geographical feature as the landscape is bounded on east by the Bay of Bengal and hill tracts of Eastern Ghats on the west and in between lie the plains. Several ephemeral rivers such as Mahendratanaya, Vamsadhara, Nagavali, Champvati, Gosthani, Gambheeram, Sarada, Varaha, Tandava etc take birth in the Eastern Ghats and traverse through the plains to join the Bay of Bengal. The geological and geomorphic characteristics of the region provide a picturesque topography, wherein bays and backwater bodies of the Bay of Bengal, valleys and flood plains of several rivers in the peneplains and lush green vegetation on the hill tracts present panoramic views. These three divergent landscapes have extended different geo-economic and eco-political adaptations where the tribal communities depend on hill tracts of Eastern Ghats with pre-agricultural technologies; peasant communities (caste groups) developed arts and crafts besides intensive agricultural technologies, while a few communities inhabiting the coastal strips relied on the maritime resources following traditional fishing technologies.

The traditional fishing communities of this region- Vadabalija, Jalari and Palli inhabit the coastal belts predominantly in homogenous villages. Among these Vadabalija is the numerically dominant community followed by the Jalari and Palle. Those who live in the urban locales (Visakhapatnam city and Bhimunipatnam town) are also segregated into wards proximate to the coast. In all together 191 fishing villages/habitations are recorded and are physically verified through Survey of India topo-sheets, land sat imagery, Google-earth. The location of habitations in relation to tidal-margin of the sea is calculated and the data is presented in table 3.1.

Table- 2.1: Distribution of Habitation Distance (in relation to sea coast) in Maritime Environment

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| S. No | Habitation Category | Distance from the sea in Kilometres | | | | | Total | Per cent |
| >0.5 km | 0.5-1 km | 1-1.5 km | 1.5-2 km | 2-2.5 km |
| 1 | VSKP- Urban (8) | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 4.19 |
| 2 | VSKP-Rural (57) | 18 | 13 | 9 | 11 | 6 | 57 | 29.84 |
| 3 | VIZM (20) | 4 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 20 | 10.47 |
| 4 | SKLM (106) | 27 | 34 | 21 | 23 | 1 | 106 | 55.50 |
|  | Total (191) | 57 | 53 | 35 | 37 | 9 | 191 |  |
|  | Per cent | 29.84 | 27.75 | 18.33 | 19.37 | 4.71 |  | 100 |

1. Visakhapatnam Urban (VSKP-Urban), 2. Visakhapatnam Rural (VSKP-Rural), 3. Vizianagaram (VIZM), and 4. Srikakulam (SKLM).

The data indicate that about 30 per cent (29.84%) of the villages are located very close to the sea at less than 500 meters followed by 27.75 per cent between half a kilometre and one kilometre distance. Among the remaining habitations about 20 per cent (19.37%) are located between 1.5 and 2 km, and about 18 per cent (18.33%) between 1 and one and half km. It is interesting to note that only about 4.71 per cent villages are located little away between 2 and 2.5 km from the economic resource base i.e. the sea. It is reported that a majority of these habitations are the rehabilitated colonies of original fishing villages which were not much farther from the later settlements. The elevation of fishing villages in relation to tidal-margin or the Mean Sea Level (MSL) is generally between 5 and 10 meter contours while some villages lie less than 5 meters contour lines and are vulnerable for vagaries of the sea.

**Demographic Profile / Population:**

The habitations or the villages located along the coast are inhabited mostly by traditional fishermen communities***. Out of 65 habitations 45 are exclusively inhabited by fishermen populations and the remaining 25 are heterogeneous villages*** with one or two families of other communities like Raju (land owning community), Komati (trading community) considered as upper castes in Hindu caste system, and Chettibalija (toddy tapping), Golla (shepherds) and other communities, which come under Sudra category of Hindu varna system. The hinterland of the fishermen villages and the coastal lands are mostly owned by the Rajus who were the erstwhile feudal landlords, while the Komati run petty shops in the fishermen habitations. The Chettibalijas tap the toddy from the palm trees found both in private and public coastal lands and sell among the fishing populations, while the Gollas graze their cattle, sheep and goats on the coastal stretches.

Table- 2.3: Distribution of Population in Maritime Habitations

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| S. No | Habitation Category | Fishermen Population | | | Other Communities (Total) | Total | Per cent |
| Male | Female | Children |
| 1 | VSKP- Urban (8) | 2,726 | 2,710 | 4,431 | 0 | 9,867 | 3.88 |
| 2 | VSKP-Rural (57) | 20,539 | 20,708 | 38,655 | 6,009 | 85,911 | 33.79 |
| 3 | VIZM (20) | 5,138 | 5,072 | 8,778 | 33 | 19,021 | 7.49 |
| 4 | SKLM (106) | 56,293 | 56,097 | 24,772 | 2,261 | 1,39,423 | 54.84 |
|  | Total (191) | 84,696 | 84,587 | 76,636 | 8,303 | 2,54,222 |  |
|  | Per cent | 33.32 | 33.27 | 30.14 | 3.27 |  | 100 |

Source: Part of the data is from State Fisheries Development Corporation, Visakhapatnam

It is evident from the table 2.3 that out of total 2.54 lakh population only 3.27 per cent constitute non-fishing communities. At present about 85 thousand families are found along the NECAP region, out of which only about 55,000 people are actively involved in fishing (Source: State Fisheries Development Corporation). The data further shows that 76,636 people below the age group of 14 years are categorised as children. This category is subjected to development and welfare processes through extending health and Medicare, education and training. Other than this category most of the people are illiterates, eking their livelihoods either from traditional fishing, or some wage labour available in the local labour market. A few of the households have taken up occupations like mechanics, drivers, tailors, painters etc .

**Housing and Households:**

The people in the NECAP are living in houses made up of different materials, and they are classified as huts (mud walls with thatched roof on wooden skeleton), tiled (walls of mud or brick with tiles on wooden frame), and slab (cemented walls with steel and cement concrete slab) categories. The huts with conical, the tiled houses with bevelled, while the concrete ceiled houses with flat roofs are common. The conical shaped thatched huts with very low entrances are indigenous adaptation to the high velocity winds often batted on east coast of India. The traditional houses are replaced gradually into the slab houses mostly with the support of the government housing schemes. Cyclone relief centres in the form of two storied buildings, in two designs- round and rectangular forms are built in some of the villages to mitigate the natural calamities. Data related to habitations is presented in table- 2.4.

Table- 2.4: Distribution of house types and households in Maritime Habitations

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| S. No | Habitation Category | Type of House | | | Total | No of Households | Family Density |
| Huts | Tiled | Slab |
| 1 | VSKP- Urban (8) | 9 | 145 | 1,077 | 1,231 | 2,677 | 2.17 |
| 2 | VSKP-Rural (57) | 2,712 | 1,953 | 4,012 | 8,677 | 20,519 | 2.36 |
| 3 | VIZM (20) | 982 | 203 | 410 | 1,595 | 4,349 | 2.72 |
| 4 | SKLM (106) | 34,552 | 799 | 9,271 | 44,622 | 56,293 | 1.26 |
|  | Total (191) | 38,255 | 2,970 | 14,770 | 56,125 | 83,838 |  |

(Figures in the parenthesis indicate per cent)

In all 191 villages 56,125 ‘units’ of dwellings are recorded by State Fisheries Corporation being shared by 83,838 households, out of 2.56 lakh fishing population. A unit refers to a living room (in traditional houses round one with encompassing corridor, rectangular in other types with clear wall separated rooms) with common veranda and kitchen / cooking place. It is noted that in general a house is shared by parents and their married sons. A house is shared but not the hearth as cooking and dining are independently done at different corners of the house depending on the availability of space coupled with wind path. Most of the sub-urban houses are government sponsored planned colonies, and they are shared by the beneficiaries and their off-springs. People from traditional villages are rehabilitated in planned colonies with double storied buildings, specifically designed for resettlement. Since there is a shortage of dwellings, these houses are shared and as such the family density is between 2.27 and 2.72 families per unit. Out of the three districts Srikakulam (1.26 families per house) is better than the remaining Vizianagaram (2.72 families per unit) and Visakhapatnam (2.26 families per unit). This situation is an outcome of horizontal as well as vertical (encroaching sea on east and private landholdings on the west, and acquisition of coastal land for development activities like SEZs, Ports, Petrochemical and Pharmaceutical corridors etc.) pressure on the traditional fishing villages which are sandwiched between natural barriers as well as anthropogenic landscapes. It is pertinent to note that although the fishing populations have been living on the coasts for over centuries, they do not have property rights on the village land and beach as their main stay is common property, the sea and its resources in the form of fish.

**Religions and Religious Structures:**

There is no society without some form of religion or the other. India is the land of many religions and religious sub-sects. Hinduism is the most dominant religion practiced in India and is characterised by polytheism. Both ‘little and great’ traditions, as identified by Robert Redfield, are in practice, the former is practiced either independently or in combination with the later. Therefore, different stages of religious developments are seen among Indian populations. Next to Hinduism Islamism is the most prevailing religion followed by Christianity. In addition to these religious orders several cults are also in practice. Shrines, temples and ashrams are the centres of worship in Hinduism, while mosques and churches are the centres of worship in Islamism and Christianity respectively. Data related to such centres are collected among fishermen villages/habitations of Visakhapatnam coast and the same has been presented in table- 2.10.

Table- 2.10: Distribution of Religious Structure found in Maritime Habitations

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| S. No | Habitation Category | Religious Structures | | | | Total | Per cent |
| Shrines | Temples | Ashrams | Churches |
| 1 | VSKP- Urban (8) | 42 | 9 | 0 | 2 | 53 | 3.58 |
| 2 | VSKP-Rural (57) | 542 | 63 | 5 | 55 | 665 | 44.93 |
| 3 | VIZM (20) | 98 | 17 | 6 | 1 | 122 | 8.24 |
| 4 | SKLM (106) | 482 | 116 | 5 | 37 | 640 | 43.24 |
|  | Total (191) | 1164 | 205 | 16 | 95 | 1480 |  |
|  | Per cent | 78.65 | 13.85 | 1.08 | 6.42 |  | 100 |

In altogether 1480 different structures of sacred nature are found in 191 villages/habitations of the study area. They are shrines (78.65%), temples (13.85%), ashrams (1.08%) and churches (6.42%). With an exception to churches all sacred structures in maritime habitation come under the Hindu religious order. It is interesting to note that though Islam is the second largest religion followed in India, no structure denoting Islam is seen in the study area. The total Hindu sacred centres accounting to 93.58 per cent and the remaining 6.42% are the churches of different denominations.

Among the Hindu structures, shrines (1164) numerically dominate, followed by temples (205) and ashrams (16). Appeswara, Chelleswara and Someswara temples at Appikonda right on beach sands, Vallabhaswami temple at Bangarammapalem and Madhavaswamy temple at Revupolavaram on low-lying hillocks within the village habitations, Gopalaswamy temple at Jalarikoyyam, Appeswaraswamy temple at Karipeta, Panduranga temple at Eddivanpalem, and such allied temples of different kind extend a generic link between fishing-navigation and trade of the region besides spiritual discourse. Shrines are simple structures (mostly single roomed with conical or dome shaped roof, with or without mandapa- a front room) enshrined to place the objects of worship on raised platform. The worshipping objects are deities invariably “Mother Goddesses” in the form of abstract objects or anthropomorphic figurines chiselled on wood or stone and moulded with clay or cement. At most of these shrines a male deity, locally called as ‘*pothuraju*’ (the tradition tells that he is the brother or the protector of the deities) is installed by the side of the Goddess or in front of the shrine. Village or community head known as ‘*bhaktudu*’ or *‘pilligadu’* performs all the rituals and offers sacrifices on behalf of the devotees. Elderly person of a lineage or surname is called as ‘*dasudu*’, who performs the rituals on occasions like birth, puberty, marriage, death etc takes place and advices to organize cults as and when crisis like epidemics, accidents at sea and poor harvest occur.

**2. Ethnographies of Fishermen Communities : Jalari and Vadabalija**

The fisherman community of Coastal Andhra is divided into three main caste groups. They are Jalaris, Vadas and Pallis. Most villages on the coast are inhabited predominantly by these three castes. All these villages are either homogenous single caste villages or heterogeneous multi-caste villages consisting exclusively these three fishing groups.

Vadas are the numerically dominant fishing caste in Visakhapatnam and Srikakulam districts. Thurston (1090) notes that the sea fishermen in this area “are either Vadas or Jalaris”, both of which are telugu castes. The fishing operations are carried by the men, and the fish are sold by the women in markets and villages. He also states that “sometimes they (Vadas) are called Kalasis by Oriya people” (Thurston 1909:298). Of the three, Jalaris seem to be the most specialized marine fishing caste group, while there is evidence that the other two have taken up fishing as their main occupation in course of time. While we do not come across any Jalari doing agriculture either as a main occupation or even as a seasonal occupation, agriculture is a seasonal occupation for both Vadas and Pallis.

Very little is known about the origin and history of these caste groups. Thurston notes that the “Vadas seems to be a section of the Pallis, with whom they will interdine and intermarry” (Thurston 1909:264). Vadas and Pallis are two different and distinct caste groups. However, they agree that they are equal and also that they are descendents of a common ancestor. Though there is inter-dining, inter-marriage between them is strictly prohibited. While Pallis in Godvari districts claim superiority over Vadas, the Vadas in their turn, claim that they are not interior to Pallis. It appears as though that these mutually divergent claims are directly related to relative economic status of these two caste groups. Though the Pallis in Visakhapatnam district did enjoy superior status both economically and socially in the past, the Vadas claim equal status with Pallis due to their superior economic condition in the present times.

Pallis are a relatively Sanskritised caste group who wear the sacred thread. Accordingly they perefer to style themselves agnikula kshatriya and claim that once they were rulers. However, their economic backwardness has hindered their attempts to enhance their social status through sanskritisation.

Similarly, Vadas prefer to call themselves Vada Balijas, The suffix, balija means business (Vanija = a person belonging to a mercantile class or a business man); Vada in Telugu means a ship or any similar vehicle for transportation by water and the specific name Vada Balija denotes a section of People wording with boats or ships. Significantly, many of the Vada settlements are found near the former, traditional ports like Kalingapatnam, Bheemunipatnam, Pentakota and Kakinada. Since the Bay of Bengal in the northern part of Coastal Andhra is not very deep, the cargo ships plying between Indian and other countries used to stop in the midstream and country boats were engaged for transshipment purposes. Even at present, in ports like Kakinada, transshipment of cargo is entirely carried on mainly by Vadas in olden Days. After these ports lost their significance due to the emergence of modern ports Vadas were forced to take up fishing as their full-time occupation. Their mythologies and many popular sayings also show that they were not a fishing community in the past. One popular legend tells us that they are the people who came on boats (Vada), while Pallis are those they were non fishing castes.

Pallis of coastal Andhra as known as Vanniyars in Tamilnadu. Etymologically the word Vanni is derived from the Sanskrit word Vahini (Agni) which means fire. Pallis claim that they are descendents of agn and once, belonged to the ruling caste. Agni is believed to be the original ancestor of all kings. They also wear the sacred thread and as Hesingway states the Pallis “declare …… they are superior to Brahmans, since, while the latter must be invested with sacred thread after birth, they (Pallis) bring their sacred thread with them at birth itself.

H.A. Stuart states that “the name Vanniyan seems to have been introduced by the Brahmans, possibly to gratify the desire of the Pallis for genealogical distinction. That the Pallis were once influentic and independent community may be admitted, and in the present desire to be classed as Kshatriyas they are merely giving expression to this belief. W Francis also writes that “this caste has been referred to as being one of those which are claiming for themselves a position higher than that which Hindi society is inclined to accord them.

Published information on the origin and history of Jalaris is very scanty. The only available source is Thurston (1909). He states: “The Jalaris are Telugu fisherman, palanquin bearers and cultivators in Ganjam and Vizagpatnam. The name is derived from Jala, a net. Some are fresh-water fishermen, while others fish with cast-nets (Visuru Vala) on the sea-shore, or on the open sea. They bear the name Ganga Vamsam or people of Ganga” (1909-: 442-443)

The social status of the fishermen community in the Hindu caste system is very low. Pallis, Vadas and Jalaris are all perceived by the high caste Hindus as fishermen (Chepalavallu) and a low hierarchical status is given to them. Fishing as an occupation is rated very low and they place fishermen practically at the bottom of the social hierarchy. Fishermen, however, are treated as Hindus and their superiority over service castes like barbers and washer men is conceded. The untouchable castes such Mala and Madiga, in turn are treated by fishermen as inferior. On their part, the fishermen castes acknowledge the superiority of all the other castes.

The Varna model is not very useful for understanding the hierarchical order of the various caste groups. The relative position of any group, particularly that of the Sudras, in the hierarchical order of caste system is determined in relation to the Brahman, Kshatriya and Vaisya on one hand, and the untouchable on the other. However, the relative rank of the Sudra caste groups is determined by the socio-functional relations that exist among these castes as well as by the relative economic and political statuses. Therefore, to ascertain the rank of any Sudra Caste, its relative economic and political status has to be taken into consideration. The varna model makes little sense in the real world and is not used by the fishermen themselves, although they classify themselves as Sudras.

Social status of several Sudra caste groups is indeterminate. Some of them particularly land owning peasant castes, claim superiority over all others. The position of a caste can also be judged by the duties and services that are exchanged. The lower castes perform inferior tasks for the castes above and superior tasks for the castes below. This can be observed say with regard to the services of the Mangali (Barbar) and Chakali (Washer man) who serve only their superiors, but not their inferiors such as the untouchables.

Each caste maintains strict social and physical segregation. This is clearly seen in any multi-caste village in this region where such caste lives separately from others. Social and physical segregation is clearly demonstrated in homogenous caste villages where the village itself is usually identified by the name of that caste, as in the case of Jalaripalem. Birth determines membership of an individual in a caste group with shared values and beliefs of common ancestry and common heritage. This common ritual status of exclusiveness and separation of a caste also determine the commensal (eating together) and marital relations. For example, we do not see a Vada and a Jalari eat together publicly or marry each other’s women. Thus endogamy serves to maintain the ritual status of a caste and separates it from other caste groups. Members of a caste also can be distinguished by their outward appearance, dress, ornaments and hair styles etc, as well as the names of the most of the castes.

Fishermen take into consideration of these characteristics in identifying as caste as an exclusive and separate entity, along with other attributes such is economic, political, purity and pollution statuses to determine its rank in relation to other such groups. The higher castes are invariably superior in economic, political and ritual status. They use all these standards as reference for social ordering and interaction.

Jalaris classify the three twice-born castes in a hierarchical order with the Brahmin at the top following by Kshatriyas and Vaisyas. They have, however, difficulty in placing the Sudra castes in a hierarchical order. For example, they cannot easily decide as to whether the Kapu or the Velamas or the Reddi is superior. They say all these agricultural castes are equal. It is difficult to ascertain a traditional rank difference between these peasant castes in this region because all of them claim either superior or equal rank among themselves. However, for a fisherman this does not matter much because for him they all belong to higher castes, including the Brahman, Komati and Kshatriya. It does not matter who is higher among these castes and his only interest in his functional relations with them. For the fishermen, therefore, there are those who are higher and superior and those who are lower higher and superior and those who are lower and inferior than themselves. All these castes fall into either of the two categories.

Fishermen castes accept food from all the higher castes, but do not take food from the lower castes, that is, from both the service castes and the untouchables. The latter, however, take food from the fisherman castes and accept their superiority. Thus existence of communal relations between two castes is considered as a sign of equality. This is observed among Vadas and Pallis. When exchange of food takes place unilaterally between two castes, the caste at the receiving end is considered inferior.

**Life Cycle Ceremonies:**

**Pre birth taboos:**

Conception as such does not bring any food taboos on the women. They eat any preferred food items such as *Senaga vundalu* (Basin sweet), *Tivva dumpalu* (Sweet potato), *Pendalam dumpalu* (Topiaca), *Tegalu* (Tender palm shoots), *Pappu javalu* (Gruels) made out of pulses, *Arisalu* (rice flour sweet), *Bellapu jaavalu* (Sweet gruel made out of jagari, rice, and red gram) along with several preparations out of fish. The regular breakfast consist of *Gantelu* boiled along with rice - *Gantannam* ; lunch usually consist of *Chodi Ambali* a preparation of boiled chodi millets mixed with the fermented porridge of the previous day. This preparation is eaten along with fish as munch. Another popular dish made out of ragi millet flour is *Thopa* it is made out of boiled ragi flour into a thick semi solid base eaten along with jiggery, fish curry, and oil. The regular suffer consist of rice and curry of vegetables or fish.

Food taboos start with mid pregnancy - *Tegalu* (Tender palm shoots) and maize are avoided for the reason that they believe that these foods cause *anaasalu* (loose motions); some fish varieties like *pedda mottalu* in the belief that it causes scaling of skin. Pregnant women attend to normal work till the delivery time even after they are taken to their natal family during seventh or eighth month. Delivery is attended by *mantrasaan*i, the local midwife, an elderly and experienced woman in the neighborhood. Mother has to go on fast on the day of delivery. *Mantrasaani* attends to the purificatory bath on the third day of the delivery with water soaked overnight with voil leaves or empala leaves or eucalyptus leaves ( used as pain reliever and for fragrance). All members of the family also take purificatory bath. On the second day the mother is fed with plain boiled rice, black jaggery and inguva. Black jaggary and inguva is made into a lump and is swallowed till ninth day which they believe to purify the body. After the purificatory bath on the third day , lunch and dinner consists of *kaayam -* apreparation made out of *miriyalu* (pepper), *jeelakarra* ( ), *indigu pikkalu*( ),*karakkaya* ( ), *modugumodu* ( ), *pippalla gaddi* ( )and endi mirapakaya(dry chillis) . All these ingredients are pounded and filtered into fine powder and fried in oil, then mixed with jaggery. This preparation is taken till nine days as food. From the tenth day till 29th day mother is given rice with *vaamu*, garlic, *jeelakarra*. After one month mother can take regular food.

**Naming ceremony**

The paternal grandmother of the newborn baby initiates the preparations for the naming ceremony. She arrives at the natal house of the mother and brings oil, jaggary, turmaric rhizomes and golden ornaments in some cases to her son's house. In the olden days, naming ceremony used to be performed on the direction of *Dasudu*. He will fix the auspicious day and time after conducting *Chupurayi*. He reads out the names of gods and goddess and shall finalize the name when the *Chupurayi* moves. The Dasudu will call that name thrice and that the child shall be named as such. Nowadays the Jalaris are consulting the *Kaniki* and *Pati* for fixing the name. The *bakturalamma* goes in to trance and utters the name as granted by the goddess. The day of and time of naming ceremony is fixed by the *bakturalamma*. Sometimes the paternal grandmother consults the chupurayi or pati for the name before coming to her daughter-in-law's house. Then the parents perform the naming ceremony by making a cradle with a new sari tied to the roof of the house. Sannigodda(small grinding stone) is washed it with water and decorated by smearing turmeric, vermilion dot and eyeliner and placed in the cradle. The grandmother of the baby whispers the name by swinging the cradle with sannigodda. Then the sannigooa is removed from the cradle and the baby is placed in the cradle. Respondents explained that sannigodda is placed to avoid the attention of evil spirits. They distribute jaggery, parched rice and gram which is replaced by arranging lunch with meat or fruits these days. Generally the mother returns to her husband's house either in the third month or fifth month. Nowadays the auspicious day is fixed after consulting the brahmin priest. Three or five relatives accompany the mother and baby along with salividi, ariselu, bananas gela.

**Tonsure ceremony/ *puttu ventrukalu teeyutam***:

Tonsure ceremony takes place at the baby's maternal granmother's house. At the peddillu, they call the brahmin priest and barber. Parched rice about 2-3 kilograms, jaggary and turmaric smeared rice as akshintalu are arranged. While the brahmin priest chants mantras, the barber tonsures the baby in the varandah of peddillu. They throw the hair in the ganga(sea). If the child is named after the ancestors, the hair is thrown in the koneru(tank) at Simhachalam temple. They believe that this act helps in the well being of the progeny. The brahmin is offered a white dhoti and money and the barber receives an amount of 116 or 216 rupees.

**Puberty / *pushpavati:***

Fishing communities considered puberty as an important life cycle. If a girls attains puberty on Tuesday they considered as in auspicious. The maternal grandmother of the girl is informed immediately at puberty and *menamama* (mother's brother) brings palm leaves or coconut leaves to prepars a mat for the girl to sit. Nowadays they are buying readymade mats. Maternal grandmother brings parcghed rice, jagarry, sesame oil, betel leaves and nuts, bananas, coconuts along with drummers. They call the girls father's sister and close relatives and prepare pan cakes with *chodi pindi* (raagi millet flour) without adding jaggery and keep those pancakes on the head, both hands and feet of the girl. Then they smear turmeric and keep vermilion drops. The girl is made to sit in a corner of house on the palm leaf mat. They observe 13 days as pollution (9 days these days)and food prepared with chilli Powder and oils are a taboo. Usually *chappani pappu* (redgram dal made without adding chilli powder). *Pappujaava*, a preparation made out of adding salt, jaggery and green gram with overnight rice will be the regular diet. Her friends can play with her sitting at a distance during those days. After the 9th or 11th day, a function is arranged and purificatory bath is given to the girl with hot water after smearing her body with freshness items ………. Close relatives also take bath at the same house and leave their wet clothes to be washed by washer men. So the girl receives new clothes of a skirt, Blouse and half sari *(langa voni)* and is taken to the temple accompanied by her friends and neighboring women. In the evening a feast is arranged with rice, green gram and *chikkani pulusu.*

**The Jalari Community:**

Jalaris claim that they are the traditional fishermen. According to another version of mythology, their ancestor was one Jalari Karnudu whom they claim was the first fisherman of the world. He was the only one who know how to make a net which he used to weave during the night. He used to complete his fishing activity before dawn and burn the net till it turned to ashes. However, on one rainy night, it so happened that the net was net was not burnt completely and a small part of his net was unburnt. . It was from that un-burnt part of the net the *Vadas* and the *Pallis* learnt the art of making a net and consequently the art of fishing. They say that other castes arc prohibited to use cast nets *(visuru vala)* and only Jalaris are allowed to use them for fishing in the offshore and backwaters. The Vada Nada Balijas also support this view and say that the cast net is unique to Jalari community only.

Etymologically, the term ‘Jalari’ is derived from the term jala, a net. The Jalari claim that they were descendants of Gangavamsam. The Jalari are Telugu fishermen, palanquin bearers and cultivators in Ganjam and Vizagapatam (Thurston 1909). Their major concentration is in northern coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh. The Jalaris of NECAP region claim that they are the traditional fisherman and depend on maritime resources of the Bay of Bengal. Most of the Jalaris do not have any immovable property. Most of them depend on marine fishing for subsistence. They claim that they do not possess any immovable property. Their world view is that the entire Gangammathalli (sea), which is their main source of economic activity.

It is also reported that the Jalaris are traditionally pullers of temple cart *(radham)* of Shri Simhachala Narasimha Swamy who is also known as Simhadri Appanna. They are also reported to be traditional pullers of the temple cart *(radham)* of Puri Jagannadha Swamy. Reportedly the *dwarapalakas* (temple guards) of Shri Simhachala Narasimha Swamy are Bavireedu and Barikamma belong to their community. Some informants of Jalari community claim their ancestry from Dronacharya / Dronudu of the epic Mahabharatha. They further reported that they are Kshatriya and belong to the Suryavamsam. The Jalari live in villages located on the coastal landscape.

A Subsection of Jalaris engages themselves in freshwater fishing and they are Besthas. In the Madras Census Report (1891), Besthas was noted as “a Telugu Caste, the hereditary occupation of which is hunting and fishing, but they have largely taken to agriculture, and the professions of bearers and cooks”. The term “Bestha” is applied, in general, to any community which practices fishing as its occupation. Thurston 1909: 218-222 also felt the same way and includes Boayis a fresh water fisherman of Rayalaseema and many other Kannarese speaking and Tamil speaking groups in this category.

Besthas are a sub-caste of Jalaris who use cast-nets and fish in rivers, pools and creeks. They acknowledge their affinity with Jalaris and are also known among the Jalaris as *edu-ratla vallu*. They cite the Bestha practice of constructing the marriage pandal with seven poles (edu-ratalu) as an evidence of their inferior status. Jalaris, on the other hand, construct a marriage pandal with twelve poles (Pannendu – Ratalu), as any other high caste. Thurston(1909) note this difference between the Jalaris and Besthas, Besthas are further divided into different clan groups, with sub names as pitta, goraka, bunga, sudumu and so on. Besthas use traps, snares, cast-nets and other types of inferior nets. There are some among them in the villages near Bheemunipatnam and Visakhapatnam who also engage themselves in se fishing along with jalaris. However, they do not have any net groups of their own, but work as share-croppers to Jalaris. There is no inter-dining and inter-marriage between jalaris and Besthas though the latter claim themselves to be a branch of Jalari caste grup. There is such inter-action in religious and political activities between these two groups.

Jalaris maintain close and intense relations with their immediate neighbours, Vadas and Pallis, in the sphere of economic, political and religious activities. Their common traditional economic pursuit brings them together with an identity of common occupation. Contractors engaged in wholesale fish business and petty traders engaged in retail business, mostly women from neighbouring vada and Jalari villages, regularly visit the Jalari villages to buy fish. On the other, none of the Jalari women engaged in fish trending visit the neighbouring Vada and Palli villages. These contractors and traders maintain economic contacts with fishermen and their net-groups to obtain fish for their business. Contractors maintain their economic relations by lending money, in advance, to net-groups. Not only Vadas and Jalaris have economic transactions, but such informal interaction taken place between them and friendships and mutual visiting also being established in the process.

In cases of inter-village and inter-caste disputes involving Vadas and Pallis or other castes in the neighbourhood, Jalari village leaders are invited to attend meetings held in Palli and Vada villages to give their opinion. Jalaris also invite Vada and Palli leaders when there is an inter-caste dispute or any other dispute of significance to ascertain their opinion. Their interdependence is much more clearly pronounced in the ritual sphere. Traditionally Jalaris engage Vada priests to conduct worship to their lienage deities. For example, the Kambala lineage in Jalaripalem village always invites its traditional Vada priest whenever it performs ceremonies to the lineage deity, *masenu devara*. When Jalaris celebrate festivals for the village deities, they not only invite their kinsmen from the neighbouring Jalari villages, but also invite their Palli and Vada friends.

On the other hand, Jalaris have limited interaction with the other higher castes of this region, especially with the twice-born castes, as there are no enduring functional relations with them. They do not enlist the help of a Brahmin for marriage ceremony and other life-cycle ceremonies. The local astrologer whom they consult frequently to fix up auspicious timing for marriage or for construction of a new house belongs to either to Jangama caste or to Vaishnava caste of Sudra category. There is a total absence of interaction with Kshatriyas, the land owing caste of this caste of this region. However, there is much interaction with Vaisyas of the neighbouring villages. Vaisya traders visit Jalaripalem village frequently to sell rice, clothes and other necessities, but their transactions is limited.

Before the advent of marketing facilities for fish and cash economy Jalaris used to have close relations with the neighbouring agricultural castes such as Reddi, Kapu, Velama etc. They used to supply fish to these castes in exchange for cereals and other agricultural produce at the end of the agricultural season. This pattern has now broken down because of the growth of “market places”. The fishermen go now to these market places and sell their fish for cash with which they buy household necessities at the same market place.

Fishermen in a village or locality also depend in potters who live in distant villages. The earthenware pots needed for domestic purposes are bought in the weekly shandies. For pots used in ceremonies and rituals of lineage and village deities, the Jalari go to the potter’s village and order for such specially decorated pots. The fisherman pays cash for such pots.

The existence of relations between Jalari and the other low castes such as Barbers (Mangali) and Washerman (Chaakali) are significant because it provides the fishermen castes a basic for claiming a superior place in the Hindi social order. Barber households from other villages serve the needs of the Jalari Villages. For instance, there is a barber household in the nearby villages which attends on fishermen of Jalaripalem twice a week. Two other barber families from the nearby Nellimukku village also serve them. In all these cases, there barbers collect fish from their masters periodically and are paid annually a sum of rupees five at the end of the big-net season.

Washermen are the most important of low castes. Their services are essential. Not only do they wash their clothes, but also perform an important function in their social life, that is, to turn pollution into purity. For this reason, the washerman is needed in all rituals and plays an important role in the life of the Jalaris. His services are required at birth, puberty, marriage and funeral rituals and during all other occasions which, Jalaris believe, entail pollution i.e., when the woman is said to be in a condition of Maila (pollution). The washerman’s function is to clean the house and clean it off ritual impurity from clothes. Cash paying form one to two rupees is paid to the washerman for his services at these rituals. Like the barbers, the washerman also collect fish from the families they serve. There are fifteen washerman households living in a nearby village called Chakalipeta and serve all the households in Jalaripalem and the other agricultural castes of the neighbourhood.

Jalaris do not have any functional relations with other low caste groups such as Mala and Madiga. They live in secluded hamlets and work as agricultural laborers to Reddis, Kapus and other agricultural castes of this region.

The above discussion may be summarized with regard to the Jalari caste identity and its social organization as follows: Jalari caste identity and its membership is determined by birth , in association with values of ritual status of common descent and heritage. Jalari caste, therefore, is an exclusive and discrete social group.

A Jalari identifies himself with other Jalaris and is recognized by others as a member of a separate caste group. This exclusiveness and separation is maintained by a strict adherence to endogamy which maintains the values of ritual status and common descent and heritage. Jalaris also share together a set of signs such as outward appearance, dress , caste name etc., However, overt trait of culture cannot be taken as a primary and definitional characteristic of Jalari caste and its culture. Rather it is an implication or a result of the processes of its caste identity and its social organization in which overt cultural trains are used as symbols of identity to differentiate them from others.

Therefore, Jalari caste identity can be seen as “a form of social organization of self-ascription and ascription by others for purposes of interaction”. (Berth, 1969:8) It is the ritual status of common ancestry and heritage that determine the caste identity and its exclusiveness and separation. Whereas, the combination of other attributes of caste such as, specialized occupation, purity and pollution, economic and political statuses determine the relative rank of a caste in the caste system which canalizes a complex organization of behavior and social relations.

Members of Jalari caste, further share and maintain a body of values and common understandings through time and its membership influences most of an individual’s roles and activities with a high degree of “role summation”. Such a caste identity also implies a series of constraints on the kind of roles an individual Jalari is allowed to play and the partners be may choose for different kinds of transactions. In other word,s regarded as a status, Jalari caste identity is subordinate to other statuses and defines the permissible constellation of statuses or personalities which an individual with that identity may assume. Jalari caste identity therefore, functions to perpetuate social and cultural diversities as well as to enforce and articulate these cultural differences.

The legitimacy of caste hierarchy may directly be questioned where there are changes in traditional patterns of living. On the other hand, the principle of endogamy which permits clear separation of one community from another and allows them to be precisely identified appears to have great resistance and persists at the level of family in all castes. It is the kinship that makes a caste endure as a social group over time which maintains it as an on-going process.

In traditional villages the picture is clear and the larger low castes tend to live in separate parts of the village and in caste associated hamlets. No kinship can be established across caste boundaries and the few individuals who set up houses with persons of other castes are excommunicated by their families. All the castes in a rural situation willingly perform their traditional duties as there is no alternative to do otherwise. Caste identity and its boundary maintenance essentially belong to the sphere of kinship and, therefore, is the fundamental aspect of caste organization.

**Life-Cycle Ceremonies:**

**Pregnancy and Child Birth:**

Ceremonies related with pregnancy are performed both during pregnancy and after child birth. The Jalaris believe that the birth of a child is auspicious. Pregnancy is associated with the stopping of the monthly menstrual course. It is informed that the first and second delivery of a woman generally takes place at her parent’s house. Generally the parents bring their daughter home at her seventh month or the ninth month of pregnancy. Earlier they depended on the services of midwife. Now-a-days they go to the hospital situated in the nearby helath care centers. After the birth of a child, the umbilical cord is cut with a knife brought by the mid-wife. Later, the child is given bath with hot water. All kinsmen are invited. Pollution lasts for nine days. During this period, a *‘kumpati’* (an earthen pot containing cinders of dung cakes) is kept in mother’s room for warmth. On the first day, the mother is given esifodeta *(inguva*) and black jaggery *(patha bellam)* for stomach cleaning. On the third day, *‘kayam’* (a type of herb) is given in the early morning. On the same day, only rice is given with gingili oil *(nuvvula nune*). This diet is given only for a day. During this period, they worship family deities. On the ninth day a feast is arranged for kinsmen to celebrate the childbirth.

**Naming and Tonsuring:**

Naming ceremony takes place on the ninth or eleventh day of child birth. The new born are named after their family deities. In the grand father’s generation common names found among the Jalaris are Yellaji, Narasimha, Sattaiah, Nookaraju etc. In the present generation the old generation names are modified by adding suffixes like ‘Rao’ etc. for instance names such as Satya Rao, Narasimha Rao etc. The names for women are Gangamma, Lachamma, Polamma, Achchamma etc. In the present generation, new names like Devi, Lakshmi etc. are added to the list of typical female names among. The tonsure ceremony is performed in the third or fifth month of the child. The tonsure ceremony is conducted at nearby shrine of respective family deities. Relatives are invited on this occasion.

**Puberty and Marriage:**

The puberty rites of a girl child are performed elaborately. The girl is secluded during this period. The pollution lasts for seven days. She is made to sit on a palmyra mat. The parents of the girl consult a Brahman to fix the auspicious time to perform puberty ceremony. A coconut, betel leaves, areca nuts and turmeric paste are placed by her side. The women in the area visit the girl and present fruits, dry coconuts and sweets such as *ariselu,* a pudding prepared out of rice floor and jaggery. Marriage ceremony is fixed after both the parties agree to the marriage. The boy’s father consults a local Brahman to fix an auspicious day for performing the marriage rituals. The marriage rituals start with the worship of lineage deities on the marriage day. A part of food prepared for the marriage feast is first offered to the family ancestors and deities. Later, the boy is decorated as a *pelli koduku* (bridegroom). A local barber is called to remove his nails of his toes. This is known as ‘*kali gollu teeyuta’*. Afterwards, he is given a ceremonial bath. The bride is also ceremonially decorated at her residence. Generally marriage ceremony is conducted at the bridegroom’s residence. All the relatives and friends are invited for the marriage. A Brahman is invited to conduct the ceremony. The turmeric smeared rice *‘akshintalu’* are given to all the elderly kins and relatives who will sprinkle them on the couple with their blessings. The bridegroom ties the thali (marriage badge) around the neck of the bride, as the Brahman recites ‘mantras’. After the marriage ritual, one end of the bridegroom’s *dothee* and the bride’s yellow saree are knotted as to signify the wedlock of the new couple. Later, the couple is taken in procession. Consummation *(garbadhanam or karyam*) is generally performed in the household of the bridegroom.

**Death Rites:**

The Jalari bury their dead. Death pollution lasts for eleven days. The ‘*dasudu’* perform death rites. After hearing the news of death, his kinsmen assemble at the departed house. The corpse is given ceremonial bath and dressed with new clothes. It is carried on a bamboo pyre *(anancham)* covered with long cloth. The funeral procession starts from the house accompanied by musical instruments. On the third day, *chinnadinam* (initial obsequies) is observed. A *Satani* or *Dasudu*, a non Brahman priest, is called to conduct the ceremony. The chief mourner, the ‘*dasudu’* and those who carried the corpse to the burial ground proceed to the grave. Death pollution ends on the eleventh day. All the relatives are invited on the *pedda dinam*. Cooked rice, curries or sweets are offered. In the night a non-vegetarian feast is prepared. The wife of the deceased is taken to the seashore where her bangles *(gazulu)* and *thali* (marriage locket) are removed. Afterwards, they offer the ancestors with new cloths and a vegetarian meal and worship on the day of ‘Makara Sankranti’ in the month of January.

Death:

When death occurs in a house, the members of the family inform the elders of the village and five elders bring the *katika* (corpse) from the bed and bend it in sitting position( a shavaite tradition being followed under the influence of viswa brahmin tradition). The Jalari report that in the past, they used to take the dead body to the burial ground in lying down position but for many years they have been following the practice of taking the dead body to the burial ground in a sitting position. Earlier, they used to prepare a ladder-like structure and a mat or cloth is tied on it to carry the corpse. At present, they are making *nancham,* a palanquin- like structure with three or four wooden poles and a top hood is made with three or four saris of different colours. The dead body is placed in the structure and a support is arranged with a small stool and tied with clothes so that the corpse is in the sitting position. They take the corpse to the burial ground near the beach and cremation takes place in an elevated place. After *katika perchatam* (preparing the funeral pyre), the eldest son of the deceased person will light the pyre. While the corpse is still burning, the family members go to a brahmin priest and consult for an auspicious day for *kaadu mallinchadam* (making the ashes into a heap). If the brahmin priest says that it can be done on the same day, they make preparation for the immersion of ashes in the sea. They pour water on the burnt *katika* with *bindelu* (vessels) and then immerse the ashes in the sea and clean themselves and the vessels. If the brahmin priest says that the auspicious day for *kaadu mallinchadam* will be on the third day or ninth day, they leave thecorpse and return on the specified date. They perform *china dinam* (initial memorial feast for those who attended the funeral) on the same day of *kaadu mallinchadam.* Offering liquor to those attended the cremation is mandatory. On the death of an old person they arrange food on both occasions- *chinna dinam* and *pedda dinam* (memorial feast)*.*  After *pedda dinam,* they again consult  *pati* or brahmin for *moolaku techhukovatam* (bringing the ancestral spirit to the corner of the house of the departed person). The dasudu, pujari, pujaramma and two more *dasudus* go to the burial ground while the *pujaramma* carries the *jangidi*(small plate made out of palm leaves) in which cow dung, *muggupindi* ( white powder) incense, burning coal and water. At the place of the cremation, the *pujaramma* makes a clearing, applies cow dung and makes patterns with white powder. Dasudu burns the incense and performs *dandaalu* invoking the deceased spirit. Dasudu continues the rituals till the spirit comes on to the pujari making him shiver vigorously. The other dasudus hold the pujari while pujaramma gathers the cleared patch in to the jangigi. They all return to the house of the deceased and place the jangidi at the sacred corner. A heap of sand is put exactly at the place of death in the house on that night. They place all the favorite food of the deceased, cigars and liquor around the sand heap and men of the house sleep around it. They believe that the dead person comes back in the wee of the night and consumes some items that they offered. They look for the pug marks on the sand which generally appear like leaf, flower or tortoise and make out the mode of travel by the dead. This ritual of *moolaku techhukovatam* is done for all the deceased members in the family*.*

If the death takes place on the festival day of goddesses, they will not cremate the corpse but bury it (*paanupu petteyadam*). All children are buried and if the deceased happens to be of marriageable age, the cremation is done close to the water so that no one stamps on the burnt ashes. They believe that if anyone steps on the ash shall be possessed by the soul of the deceased person. Women are forbidden to attend the activities at the burial ground and remain at home. The Jalari verify whether the timing of death is proper and if not, they believe that *nakshatralu tirugitayi* (literally means wandering of stars which actually refer to the soul of the dead wanders around the village). Death involves specific services rendered by different specialists such as:

Brahmin Priest: He is consulted at all deaths to examine the timing of death so that the day and time of *kaadu mallinchadam* (making the ashes into a heap) is to be performed.

Chukketugadu: If brahmin priest ascertains that the timing of death of person is inauspicious, they seek the services of *Chukketugadu* from another village. He performs black magic and controls *deyyam gaali* (souls of deceased that haunts the villagers). He collects thorns of lemon and citrus trees and chanting spells he plugs the thorns on the ground at different places of the village like nails( *vooru kattadam*). The Jalari believe that this repels that souls.

*Ustapodu* : He is a shaivaite (follower of shiva cult belonging to Jangam caste) and is inevitable after every death. He is called on the third day after the death of a person where upon he oversees the preparation of the *goodu* (an elevated structure with a top hood made out of colorful saris) and places the photos of gods and goddess. While blowing the conch, he offers *modapalu* (offerings) to the super naturals. He praises the departed soul and requests to take care of the descendents as an ancestor. Then he takes the spouse of the dead to the beach to perform the rituals of widowhood. In the case of a woman who lost her husband, she is accompanied by three or five *mundalu* (widows) to the beach where *ustapodu* oversees that process of making her into a widow by snapping off the *nallapoosala danda* (necklace of black beads symbolizing the marital status) the breaking the bangles on both hands, washing away the vermillion dot on her face and veiling her face. The widow is received by another three women who wait for her at the house, removes the veil and after the widow looks at her. For a man who lost his wife, he is taken to the beach by the *ustapodu* where he removes the *molatradu* ( thread tied around the naval).

*Dasudu*: All the members of the surname group (lineage) are considered as a family. The eldest of all the members of a family is called Dasudu.

There are two types of *Dasudu* among the Jalari- *Ammavari dasudu* and other *dasudu. Ammavari* *dasudu* is the one who is the carrier of goddesses (*ghatalu*). He makes all the offerings to the goddeses during festivals, officiates rituals at the first use of the net, performs rituals at the sacrifice of *sesha potelu* (ram earmarked as offering to the goddess). There will be other *dasudus* who attend to activities such as- *naadi chudatam*( reading the pulse at the time of sickness), *chupurayi* (to ascertain the causative goddess for the illness), making offerings to goddesses (*dandaalu pettatam*) as compensation at times of illness, attending to resolve family disputes and divorces, assisting the brahmin, chukketagadu and ustagadu at the death ceremonies.

Pillagadu:

The eldest son of a family of called *pillagadu* and all *pillagadus* of the village assemble at the *peddillu* for planning all the activities. *Pillagadus* play important role in the marriage alliances, performing marriages, settling familial disputes, levying penalties to the errants and other religious and political decisions. They follow the advice of *Dasudu* in the smooth functioning of the affairs of the village.

Bhakturalamma/*Batralamma*:

*Peddillu* is the social, economic, political and religious hub of the surname group (lineage) among the Jalari. They keep their goddess in *peddillu* which build and maintain collectively. Any occasion in a family should start by offering prayers at the *peddillu*. In order to take care of the *peddillu* and offer prayers to the goddesses, a woman is selected and is called *Batralamma* or *Pujaramma*. When a woman is considered for the selection of *Batralamma*, they call *dasudu* on a specific day to the beach and go on fishing after the *dasudu* spells out the name of the person under consideration. If they get good catch on that day, it is an indication that the woman is favorable to serve the goddesses. Then she is taken to Simhachalam temple accompanied by thirty members and *dasudu* from Mutylampalem. They carry the *taalalu* (cymbols), three *kolas*(lamp stands) and offer prayers to the Pydemma goddess at Adivivaram. Then the *dasudu, pujari* and *Batralamma* take bath at the temple pond of Simhachalam. Accompanying members may sprinkle water from the pond on their heads. The group break a coconut at the first doorway and climb up the hill. They cook *madapala panti* (a preparation made out of rice, pulses and vegetables) and offer it to the ancestors. Wicks are arranged on the lamp stands and lighted. One kola is given to *Batralamma* and she holds the light stand with her wet clothes on. Then the *dasudu* and other elders offer prayers to their goddess with an expectation that the goddess possess the *Batralamma*. If the goddess comes on the *Batralamma,* she will fall down to a side. She is lifted up by the group and they cook their lunch there, eat and return. They have to wait till the goddess possess the *Batralamma* which may take till evening. After returning to the village ,  *Batralamma* is taken to *Dibba* (a place on the beach) and offer prayers. *Batralamma* then is taken to *peddillu* and again they wait for the goddess to possess her. Thereafter *Batralamma* takes up the responsibility of offering prayers to the goddess at *peddillu*. The Jalaris informed that this process costs around Rs.30,000. A woman who became *Batralamma* cannotdiscontinue her duties for the goddess will not allow her and pester her in case she derelicts her duties. A *Batralamma* has to be a married woman. In case the goddess chooses a women who eloped with a man and begot children, she has to be given the status of married woman. A Brahmin priest is summoned and marriage ceremony is performed to her in order to be eligible to take up the responsibilities of *Batralamma.*

The Jalari believe that failure catch has something to do with the normative behaviour of the surname group. If members belonging to a *peddillu* experience low catches while other could get good returns, they feel that something went wrong either with the behaviour of men or their women that caused the ire of their goddess. This leads to verification in the *chupurayi* by *dasudu* as to which member of the family transgressed the normative behaviour of the Jalari culture that resulted in the wrath of the super natural. After ascertaining the wrong doer in the family, *Dasudu* asks the goddess about an appropriate penalty. The punishments vary from *medalo taadu kattatam* (tying a rope around the neck),*vala karaabu cheyatam* (damaging the net or tying a piece of a net around the neck) and *maddili* (tying a long stick on the shoulders) and making the offender go around the village. The offender has to confess his/her folly before the goddess at *peddillu*. They believe that it is the spell of the goddess that makes the fish to get caught in the net (*valalo guchchukovatam*).The goddess blurs eyes of the fish and they fall in to the net. In case the goddess is furious at them, she makes the net to flash as bulb so that the fish can escape. Then in spite of abundant fish in the sea, their children go hungry.

The villagers - members of all the *peddillus* celebrate festivals to goddesses annually. The specific month and day of the festivals are decided by collective opinion. The goddess will indicate the day on which the whole catch should be earmarked for the annual festival. It costs around 5 to 6 lakhs for celebrating a festival and the family contribution ranges from 10-20 thousands. On the festive day they take out the two *vodalu* (figurines of boats) form the *peddillu* and keep them on the heads of *Batralamma* and *Baktudu. Dasudu* offers prayers to the goddess while the *Batralamma* goes in to trace as being possessed by the goddess. They go round the village and reach the shrine of the goddess for whom the festival is being celebrated. They offer two rams which are called *sesha potulu* to the goddess. Before making sacrifice, the rams are given bath with water mixed with neem leaves. Then they pour water mixed with turmeric and vermillion on the heads of the rams three times. If the rams do not shrug away the water they believe that there is something wrong in the process of worshipping the goddess. They ask for the forgiveness through *dasudu*.

**Social Organization:**

Social organization includes the institutions of marriage, family, kinship relations and usage. These institutions are denoted by invisible bonds, and they bind and maintain the cohesiveness of the society. They are crucial in sustaining not only the culture but also the security of the members of the society.

**Marriage:**

Two types of marriages are noticed among the Jalari, they are marriage by negotiation and marriage by elopement. It is learnt that monogamy is the common form of marriage. However, polygamy is also occasionally seen among the Jalaris. The marriageable age for males is about 21 years while 18 years for females. The marriage alliance system is divided into two descent groups, marriageable and non-marriageable descent groups. Though marriage is conceptualized as an alliance between descent groups, the effective units of marriage alliances are households. The preferential marriages among the Jalaris are cross-cousin marriages. Among these preferences, marriage with one’s own MBD (mother’s brother’s daughter), FSD (father sister’s daughter) and ESD (elder sister’s daughter) are common.

Marriage alliances are commonly among cross cousins, both MBD and FSD. Dowry (marriage payment made by the girl's family to the boy's family) is prevalent among the Jalari. The expenses incurred on the marriage are borne by the groom's parents. The Dowry these days ranges from Rs.50,000- 1,00,000 and gold ornaments, stainless steel household utensils, cot, almarah, chairs and others. When an alliance is agreed upon, the family elders of the bride groom assemble at the peddillu. All marriages of the lineage are performed at the *peddillu.* After fixing the auspicious day for performing marriage, they purchase a trunk box and keep 300 betel leaves, 1/2 kg betel nut, 1/2 kg turmeric rhizomes, a vermillion box, a pack of cigars, 1/2 or 1/4 *tulas* (1tula=12 grams) of gold and they purchase of 1/2 kg of oil on the way. They cut down palm trees and erect a *pandiri (..)* before *peddillu*. On the previous day of the marriage, this box is sent to the bride's house along with *pette perantalu* (eligible cross cousin of the bride groom), wives of five peddalu and a person from the bride groom's house - total seven members go to the bride's house and bring her to the *vididi illu* (rest house for the bride's party). On the day of marriage, in the morning, Dasudu takes the bride and groom to the shrine of the village goddess in the village and offer prayers by placing betel leaves, nuts and breaking coconuts. Then the bride and groom are brought to the *peddillu* for the preparation to the marriage ceremony. The bridegroom is prepared for the marriage- he wears a towel to the naval and another towel is worn on the shoulders. His sisters smear sandalwood paste all over his body and a vermillion dot on his face. The groom offers *tambulam* (betel leaves, betel nuts and banana) to five *perantalu* (married women with children). Then the elders, pujari and pujaramma prepare *neralla chetti* ( small new white-coated pots) by tying a thread with turmeric rhizome and pour water mixed with turmeric powder into the pots. They cover the pots with *pramida* (an oil lamp saucer with a wick) and light the wick. At *devudu moola* (the sacred corner where the dieties are kept at peddillu) they sing *nivvali* song while the pujari and pujaramma tie each other *kankanaalu* (two sets of threads one tied with betel leaf and another with turmeric rhizome). Later the *pujari* ties *kankanalu* to the bridegroom and the *peddalu* tie *kankanalu* to the bride. All offer prayers to the deity and sprinkle the *akshintalu* (turmeric mixed rice) on the couple while singing marriage songs. The bride and groom are seated on the *peenu* ( an elevated place prepared at the peddillu to seat the couple). Two brass vessels filled with rice and betel leaves, turmeric rhizome and coins are kept over the rice, are placed before the couple. The barber removes the nails on their toes which is called *kalla golla sambaram.* The *dasullu* keep the pestle in the winnow filled with rice, dip it in water and place on the heads of the couple while some women pretend to protect the heads of the couple. They fetch water in four vessels (*togaru kundalu*)- two brass and two earthen pots and place them on the base made with rice. The *Dasudu, pujari* and *pujaramma* pour water from the *togaru neellu*( water from the *togaru kundalu*) on the couple. Then the *perantallu* give bath to the couple. This process takes the whole afternoon and by 4 p.m the couple are taken to the shrine again and prayers are offered to household goddesses. A white cloth is spread on the ground and three sets banana, betel leaf and nuts are offered to three goddess. The couple make three rounds around the cloth. They bring the ceremonial horse and the parents of the bride and groom wash the legs of the hose and decorate them with turmeric dots. They garland the horse while the bride and groom garland each other. The bridegroom then rides the horse while the bride walks along with her head covered.(The bride, if not attained puberty can ride the horse along with the groom). The procession moves to all the *peddillus* in the village with music troop. At each *peddillu*, the *pujari* holds two brass vessels in each hand in which three lumps of turmeric mixed boiled rice and a small wick lamp are kept. The *dasudu, pujari* and *pujaramma* sing *mangaali nivali paata*( a special song) at each *peddillu*. The procession proceeds to the venue of the marriage *peddillu*. A brahmin priest arrives and officiates the marriage by making the groom place *jeelakarra* and *bellam* ( ....., jaggary ). Then the groom ties the sacred thread around the neck of the bride. The married couple pour *talambralu* (turmeric mixed rice) on each other's head. The *aadapaduchu* ( sister of the groom) places the toe rings on the bride. This follows by a friendly sport of finding the ring in the pot filled with water where the bride and groom compete for the ring. Friends and relatives of bride and groom take sides and encourage the couple in getting acquainted with each other. *Perantaallu* sing songs at the time the couple enter into the *peddillu.*

Earlier, marriages are celebrated for 3 days and the bride groom's family has to serve three meals on each day. The groom's family has to present new clothes to all houses- *panchi* (dhoti) to men and sari to women. As it requires substantial amount of money, they arrange marriage for five couples at a time in order to be able to meet the expenses. Marriage for one couple takes place only in cases of urgency. Nowadays, the Jalari have limited the marriage to one day and the *pandiri* is replaced by tying *neredu* branches to the pillars of the verandah.

**Family:**

The Jalari family is characterized by patrilineal descent, patrilocal and neolocal residence and patriarchal authority. Most of the families are monogamous type, and they are nuclear families consisting of a husband, his wife and their children. Joint families are also noticed but they are few. Partitioning the same house for married sons has become a compulsion in view of owning a separate house. In the realm of family relations significant changes have also been noticed. The agnatic emphasis, though still dominant, has accommodated the affinal relationships in matters of household composition. The relations between affines have become stronger. The male person goes for fishing while the female involves in domestic work and in selling the fish. Both of them contribute to family income. Boys go for fishing at the age of 10 years.

**Kinship Organization:**

It is informed that all related households constitute a lineage. These lineages are local descent groups which play vital role in common economic, political and religious activities. The members of each lineage worship a main deity *(Peddammoru)* and a secondary deity *(Chinnammoru)* for the welfare of their families.

Each local descent group is identified with its surnames *(intiperulu)* which are exogamous. Affinal kinship is generated through exchange of marriages between different groups. One’s affines are locally called ‘*bavamaradi’.* Affinal households among the Jalaris are connected to each other as wife-takers *(bavalu)* and wife-givers *(bavamarudulu)* with mutual rights and obligations. Affinity between the families and descent groups is expressed through ritual presentations and counter-presentations (Kodanda Rao, 1975).

The Jalaris have patrilineal descent groups called *intiperulu* or surnames which are exogamous in nature. The kinship terminology of the Jalaris is similar to the neighbouring Telugu speaking communities, who use Dravidian Kinship terminology in which consanguineous marriages are permitted except with the parallel cousins. Hence a person can marry his father’s sister’s daughter, or his mother’s brother’s daughter.

**Economic Organization:**

The Jalaris do not own cultivable lands and show no interest in agricultural activities. Traditionally their main occupation is fishing and related activities. Every young Jalari thinks of becoming a *rythwari* fisherman or a worker fisherman (share-cropper or tenant) or and in due course of time aspires to become the owner of a boat or a catamaran, and nets to organize a net-group of his own.

Fishing crews were composed mainly of kinsmen, it is characteristic that the boat owner is granted enough freedom in recruiting them. The owner has no obligation to accept or reject kinsmen in certain categories. The kinsmen join crews by consciously activating kith ties. Thus, kinship does little more than define a social field within which crews are recruited (cited by Acheson: 1981). However, Stiles (1979) argues that crews in Newfoundland are recruited through both kin ties and contractual ties which are evident from our present study from North Coastal Andhra Pradesh. There are two categories of economic arrangements and contracts in the form of membership in various net groups, big net groups and small net groups organized for fish harvest. The crew arrangements and fishing expeditions are crucial in sustaining not only the peasant fishing but also the village economic life.

Kodanda Rao (1975) delineated that every Jalari household and its adult male members find themselves as members of a big net group of their local descent group (surname group). Big net fishing activity was a common economic enterprise of a local descent group among the Jalaris. Big net operations were carried out from October to February when commercially important fish like seer fish *vanjaram, konam*, pomfret (*chanduva),* sardines *(kavvallu)* and white bait *(nettallu)* are available in plenty. Big net operation requires adequate working hands/labour force up to 20 active adult fishermen. Due to big net operation the local descent groups were found to be the choice of Jalaris as they provide necessary labour force as well as social security for the future. All the adult male members of a local descent group thus become the crew of the big net group where by every adult male member of a household was involved in its economic activity. It is a fact that the crew of a big net group comprises only kinsmen of a local descent group, who were agnatically related to each other, gives continuity both to economic and social relations. Every Jalari had a right to engage in big net fishing of his local descent group by virtue of his birth and patrilineal descent rights. As such, everyone in a Jalari fishing village is invariably belong to one of the big net groups and thereby one’s livelihood was assured in this pattern. This also facilitates the participating individuals and their households with an assured security. The pattern of big net operation provided greater stability to the net group composition and eliminated uncertainties involved in securing the necessary labour force for big net fishing activity. Reportedly, when a local descent group was not having adequate labour force of its own, it made certain economic adjustments/understanding with a similar/like descent group either by allocating some rights of ownership to it or by joining such a local descent group with rights of ownership in its big net.

Fishing operations with big net were carried seasonally for about five months and the institutional arrangement for big net operations provided only partial security to one's economic pursuits and to the sustenance of his household. The institutional arrangement of fishing with big net by descent groups is no more being practised in many villages as:

1. Big net requires large boats and more number of working hands (manpower).
2. Large boats are not sea worthy and as such new big boats are not being manufactured in a big way due to security and needs frequent maintenance.
3. In recent years, the marine fishing sources are becoming scarce in the off shore.

Due to these reasons, the Jalaris are preferring either independent or by joining a smaller net group using small boats, catamarans and nets of different types for fishing. When a household owns the necessary fishing equipment to organize a net group of its own, one or more of its members constitute a crew of the net group of its own, the head of the household make alternate arrangements.

The arrangements for net group are made by engaging tenants or share cropper *(raithu)* to one’s net group. The relationship between the owner of a net of a net group and his tenant *(raithu)* is based on a general understanding where in, the owner of the net gets one third of total catch of the day as rent for utilization of his fishing equipment and the crew of the net group retains the rest which is divided equally among all the working fishermen. Owner’s share of the total net catch may seem to be excessive. But the rationale behind allotting one third of the total net catch to the owner as rent for the use of his fishing equipment is his willingness to take the risks involved in sea fishing in this area. The rough nature of the sea, rocky paths and shallow water are the probable potential sources of damaging or loosing the nets while fishing on the sea. Hence, the owners of the nets and boats can only take such a chance to organize a net group.

The understanding or the contractual agreement between the owner of the net group and the tenant / share cropper / worker *(raithu)* is valid for only one season. Each understanding / contractual agreement *(oppandum)* is renewable at the end of every season. The owner fixes the crew of his net group before commencement of the fishing season by paying some amount of cash to each tenant / share cropper / worker as an advance keeping in view the needs of the individual. However, the tenant / share cropper / worker is at liberty to leave the owner of the net group whenever he is not satisfied with his economic relationships. The working partners / workers in such contracts are rarely close kins, except in the case of a net group comprising personnel of a household. However, in a few cases affinal relations are established between members working in a net group. The relationships are therefore based on explicit economic considerations and are therefore contractual in their nature. Considerations of nearness of kinship are no more preferred to the composition of small net groups that go for deep sea fishing. It is observed that married sons with separate households or their own initially tend to remain with the net work groups of their fathers. However, these bonds/ties are truly broken at any time after acquiring new fishing equipment or go as tenant / share cropper *(raithu)* on contractual basis as mentioned above. It is informed that there are no apparent regularities in the kinship composition for such small net groups are primarily determined on economic considerations rather than on kinship relations. It is clear from the observations that kinship played an important role in the deployment of crew for big fishing nets and not always for small fishing net groups. However, persons deployed on contractual basis kinship relations are not taken into consideration.

On return from harvest the fishermen reserve some portion of catch for domestic consumption. The remaining main portion of fish is sold on the landing place or shores itself to contractors and retailers. The contractors/traders come to the village during fishing season (October to February) to purchase fish. Generally they promote a few net groups giving loans to owners of these net groups who in return regularly sell their major catch of fish to the contractors/traders.

Most of the retail traders are fisherwomen come from fishing villages along the coast. These petty traders are all women known to the fishermen of the village. By and large fish is sold on payment of cash and sometimes on credit. In some cases, however, half of the price is paid and the remaining is paid the next day. If they want to preserve the fish by drying, women members of the households clean the fish by removing scales and viscera portion and preserved in an earthen vessel with salt. On the next day, the soaked or fermented fish is removed and dried in sun by covering with an old unused piece of fishing net. In case of large fish, it is kept in salt water for three days and dried in sun for about three to four days.

It is reported that from 15th April up to 15th June every year is declared as the breeding season for fishes. Hence, fishing in large scale in the sea is strictly prohibited as per Government orders. The fishermen who violate this order are liable to be prosecuted.

**Political Organization:**

Fishermen villages are generally administered through village headman *(kula* *pedda)* and caste council members (3-5 members depending on the size of the population)*.* The *kula pedda* holds office through hereditary rights and they are vested with powers. They control the law and order among Jalari community. The caste council has jurisdiction over the inter-family relations, elopement, disputes due to marriage alliance, dowry, divorce, adultery, festivals etc. Any matter is circulated, through the village assistant *(sammiti).* Besides traditional leadership the Jalaris elect village presidents and ward members in the democratic process, who generally looks after the development and welfare programmes of the government. The power of democratic process is such that the present Mayor of the Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) belongs to Jalari community. One Jalari person is elected as municipal councillor for Bhimunipatnam Municipality. In spite of these political processes the traditional leadership pattern in the area has not changed much. The Jalaris of the study area are still administered by the headman and the council of elders.

**Religion:**

The Jalaris of NECAP region by and large profess Hinduism but for a few households who embraced Christianity of late. The community believes in polytheism where in each family or a household has its own affiliation to a number of deities belonging to the little tradition in large. In other words it may be mentioned that each family or a household may have two or more family deities. Basing on the empirical data on family deities among the Jalaris in the area of the study, it is observed that there are as many as seventy two family deities (Annexure- )

In addition to the worship of ‘Mother Goddesses’ the Greater Gods of the Hindu pantheon are Rama, Shiva, Krishna, Venkateswara, Hanuman, Ganesh and other Gods. It is reported that if a person dies before marriage, she/he is also worshipped as family deity of the household. A male member who dies before marriage is called *veerababu* or *eeribabu* while a female member who dies before marriage is called *perantallu*. It is informed that each family is associated with their own lineage deities. Some particulars are mentioned below. Though the Jalaris worship Goddesses of the great tradition, their religious life is dominated by the local and lineage deities. Occasionally the Jalaris go to pilgrim centres like Simhachalam and Tirupathi.

The Jalaris believe in female deities whom they call as *ammoru* (the mother goddess). At community level, village deities are locally called *peddammorlu.* The Jalaris believe that village deities protect them from evils, epidemics and from natural disasters and calamities such as storms and tidal waves. The other female deities who are called *intammoru* represent each lineage.

Two kinds of religious functionaries are observed. They are locally called *‘dasudu’*, the chief worshipper of a village deity and the other is called ‘*bhakthudu*, the chief worshipper of a lineage deity. *Dasudu* plays an important role in the village’s magico-religious spheres, while *bhaktudu* looks after the lineage related functions. Besides annual and occasional cults performed with religious fervour around village shrines the Jalaris observe and celebrate a number of festivals such as Ugadi, Sri Rama Navami, Dasara, Deepavali, Makara Sankranthi, and festivals of lineage, local, and regional deities which are of socio-religious significance. With regard to Christianity, in quite number of villages’ churches of different denominations like Catholic, Baptist, CSI, Protestant and different Fellowships are established. The churches are involved in rendering different human services besides preaching Gospel.

**Occupations:**

The traditional occupation of the Jalaris is fishing at sea (Bay of Bengal) and estuaries (several ephemeral river mouths). Those Jalaris who do not have boats and nets go for fishing labour on share cropping basis which has been discussed earlier. Women in their community by and large attend to the domestic chore. Yet, a good number of them go for selling fish (that have been caught by their men folk) in the village and also in the neighbouring places/village. A few men and women are engaged in petty business such as sweet shop, grocery etc. Very few educated (mostly high school dropouts) joined as fishing workers in large fishing vessels/trawlers. A few of them are engaged in carpentry, painting, electrical works, drivers, mechanics, masonry work etc. Due to economic constraints some women are working as maid servants in the houses of Kshatriya, Vysya, Kapu etc households who are living adjacent to their present habitat. In urban areas (Visakhapatnam and Bhimunipatnam) most of the fisherwomen work as maidservants in adjoining residential colonies.

**The Vadabalija Community:**

As mentioned earlier, there is no clear distinction between the Jalari and Vadabalija communities except the caste. However, they are given some importance here to denote their importance in maritime activity. The Vadabalija are also referred to as Vada, Vadde and Odabalija. The Vada Balija are mainly found in Srikakulam, Vizianagaram and Visakhapatnam districts of Andhra Pradesh. The community name ‘Vada Balija’ (vada=oda/ship, balija (traders) is derived from their traditional occupation i.e., working on ships in olden days. The oral tradition reveal that the people of this community used to load food grains and food items such as coconuts, rice, green gram etc., into the ships and big boats in the port cities and towns like Kalingapatnam, Machilipatnam, Chennapatnam, Bhimilipatnam, Kasipatnam, Krishnapatnam, Devipatnam and move on ships in different routes. With the passage of time when the off shore ports were converted to *pucca* ports with adequate landing facilities of cargo ships and boats, their demand for occupation of loading and unloading of food grains and food items has diminished, and they were compelled to learn the art of fishing from the Jalaris who are the traditional marine fishing community since time immemorial. They call themselves as vadabalijas though they have no claim to be regarded as balijas (Thurston 1909). It is informed that they do not have any affinity with Pallis. It is assumed that the term Vada Balija denotes a section of people working with boat (Madras District Gazetteer, Vizagapatam, Vol. 1907). There is little evidence about the history of the Vada Balija. The Vada Balija were sailors, engaged in sea trade between the east coast of India and the islands of the Indian Ocean until this was cut short by Portuguese pirates and later by the East India Company. Then only the Vada Balija were forced to adapt fishing as a means of subsistence (Sen 1938).

It is recalled from the oral tradition that during Krithayuga, Swethyuga and Kaliyuga the traditional occupation of the Vadabalijas was to cultivate pearls *(muthyalu)* and to trade them by boats through sea routes. This is attested by the deposits of shell deposits on the sea shores. Reportedly, they used to sell pearls on Tuesdays in weekly shandies in the sea port towns such as Kalingapatnam, Bhimilipatnam, Machilipatnam, Chennapatnam, Pathapatnam etc. The stature of the Vadabalija in those days was reported to be about eight feet. The Vada Balija used to go to places as far as Kasi, the place of Lord Visweswara by the sea and river routes.

The Vadabalijas are divided into two clans *(gotramulu)*, like Kasigotram and Nagari gotram (Rajendra Prasad, 2003). However, Ravi (2005) reports that the entire Vadabalija community has only one gotram i.e., Nagala gotram. They have a number of surnames *(inteperulu)* which are exogamous in nature. The members belonging to the same surname group are prohibited to marry and consider themselves as brothers and sisters *(annathammula varasa).* The main function of the surname is to regulate marriage alliances. They are aware of the ‘varna’ system, and recognise their place under the Sudra of the four-fold varna order. They perceive themselves superior to the neighbouring fishing communities such as Palli and Jalari.

By and large the Vada Balija villages are characterized by a homogenous caste composition. The men spend most of their time at sea and women involve in domestic spheres and in selling fish that was harvested by men folk. They speak a corruptive form of Telugu like neighbouring castes. They have exogamous surnames like Mylipilli, Sodipilli, Vasipilli etc,. the vada balija follow the concept of ritual purity and pollution. In this connection they depend on Chakali- washer men and Mangali- barber to remove their ritual impurity.

**Family:**

The Vadabalijas live in both nuclear and joint families. Reportedly on an average five to six members will be in a family. Families belonging to the same surname may live in clusters and in some cases they may stay along with other surname groups. Avoidance relationship is observed between mother-in-law and son-in-law and between father-in-law and daughter-in-law. The Vada Balija follow patrilineal rule of inheritance and all the male members get an equal share of their ancestral property (male equigeniture). The women of this community enjoy comparatively a low status, having no right over the ancestral property. However, they participate in all rituals along with their men folk and also contribute to family income by selling fish brought by their men folk in nearby markets. Some of them work as daily wage labourers, either in salt fields or as agricultural labourers in nearby villages.

**Marriage:**

Consanguineous marriages with one’s own father’s sister’s daughter, mother’s brother’s daughter, elder sister’s daughter are allowed among the Vadabalijas. Junior sororate (marrying younger sister after the death of wife) form of marriage is also allowed in this community. The marriage age for a girl is between fifteen to eighteen years and for a boy it is between eighteen and twenty three years. Turmeric, vermillion, *thali / mangalasutram* and toe-rings *(mattelu)* are the symbols of marriage for a woman. The practice of dowry is prevalent in this community which is paid in both cash and kind. They follow patrilocal and neolocal rule of residence after marriage. Divorce *(vidaakulu)* on account of incompatibility is permissible. Remarriage is permitted with the approval of their *kula panchayat*. Widow marriage locally called *marumanuvu* is a simple ceremony, and is in practice. Elopement *(lechipovuta)* is tolerated by imposing fine on the couple on their return to their village.

Marriage among the Vadabalija is initiated with betrothal *(pradhanam)* where in the parents of both parties exchange betel leaves and areca nuts as a token of settlement of marriage alliance. The marriage is held at the bride groom’s place. Rituals of making the bride and the bride groom take place a few days before marriage on an auspicious day. The main marriage rituals include *mangalasnanam* to the bridal couple, tying of marriage badges *(basikalu)* on their foreheads, tying a sacred knot with upper cloth of the bride groom to one end of the bride’s sari *(brahmamudi)* to signify that lord Brahma had predetermined to unite them as husband and wife. The marriage symbolizes by putting of *jeera* and jaggery *(jeelakarra bellam pettuta)* on each another’s head and tying of marriage locket *(mangalasutram / sathamanam)* around the bride’s neck by the groom. The couple are later blessed by the elders by throwing turmeric rice on them. A Brahman officiates as priest to conduct the marriage

**Lifecycle Ceremonies:**

Pre-delivery ritual *(seemantham)*, is observed by the Vadabalija during the sixth or seventh month of pregnancy. It is customary that the first delivery to take place at her parent’s dwelling. The mid wife *(mantrasani)* helps at the time of delivery. Birth pollution is observed for nine or eleven days. On the ninth or the eleventh day, the mother and the new born are given a purificatory bath, and the new born is given a name. It is the usual practice to name the new born after the family deity or their grand parents, with a belief that the deceased person of their older generation is reborn. When a girl attains puberty, she is segregated from the rest of the family, made to sit in a corner of a living room and pollution is observed for five days by the girl. The women folk and the kinsmen present her with rice, clothes and fruits. On the fifth day, cow dung is smeared to purify the place where the girl is make to sit and a feast is arranged to all relatives and friends on that day.

The dead are buried while the unmarried are cremated. Death pollution is observed for nine or eleven days. On the third and ninth/eleventh day after death, rituals known as *chinnadinam* and *peddadinam* respectively are performed. Observance of ancestor worship annually is reported.

**Economic Activity:**

Presently, the major economic resource for the Vadabalija is the Bay of Bengal. Some of them also do inland fishing in rivers such as Mahendratanaya, Vamsadhara, Nagavali, Champavati, Gosthani, Sarada, Varaha, Thandava of the study area. Every young man starts as a worker under a fisherman as found among the Jalaris. Big net fishing activity is common among them; hence adult male members find themselves in a big net group. Economic relations among the members of a net group are always regarded as equal partners. These big net groups are formed by the members belonging to a particular lineage/surname for social security. Reportedly, two portions of the fish catch go to the owners of the boat, two portions to the owner of the big net and the rest is equally shared among the workers/rythulu. The fishermen reserve some portion of the fish for domestic consumption and major portion of the catch is sold on the shore itself to contractors and middlemen. Of late, the big net groups are on the wane resulting in formation of small net groups comprising two to four fishermen belonging to the same lineage/surname group or from other lineage group. The members of the small net groups take fish for selling them in the nearby local markets.

It is reported that the Vadabalija abstain from fishing activities on Tuesdays i.e., for about 52 days in a year as weekly holidays. They also avoid going for fishing for about 60 days during breeding season i.e., from 15th April to 15th June, and for about twenty days for celebrating local and regional festivals. On the whole for about 132 days they do not go for fishing activities of an year (365 days). When they return from harvest all the crew members of a boat the catch is divided into four shares. Of the four shares, one share goes to the owner of the net, one share to the owner of the boat/catamaran and the remaining two shares are equally distributed among all the crew members.

**Political Facet:**

Matters of social control, the Vadabalijas have their traditional council called *kula panchayat* comprising a headman *(pilla)* and a council of elders. The headman *(pillagadu)* is influential and plays an important role in the village administration. The Vadablija *panchayat* members adjudicate disputes relating to marriage, community festivals and other social and religious functions at the village level. The *kula panchayat* and headman settle disputes pertaining to divorce, theft, quarrel and adultery etc. Of late, the modern village panchayat system had come into force where the village functionaries are elected as per the administrative manual. Quite good number of members belong to Vadabalija are elected in several fishermen villages of the study area. It is interesting to note that a few of the elected are fisherwomen

**Religious Facet:**

The Vadabalija by and large profess Hinduism. They mostly believe in *gangammathalli* (female deity) and she is worshipped in different forms and names. Each deity is considered to be special for protection of their community and their habitation. They believe that Somalamma protects fishermen from fever, Nookalamma protects the fishing community from small pox and Peddammavaru prevents the boats being capsized or damaged (Rajendra Prasad, 2003). The Vadabalijas celebrate a few local festivals to appease local and community deities in addition to the festivals such as Kotthamavasya/Ugadi, Sri Rama Navami, Dasara, Deepavali and Makara Sankranthi. Several churches are seen in the fishermen villages and they are involved in preaching and some welfare activities.

**Other Features:**

The Vadabalija women to some extent can be identified by their dress pattern. Female of older generation generally do not wear upper garments. However, present generation girls are wear blouse and sari. The women tie their hair into knot at the back of their heads towards right side. The womenfolk adore ornaments such as necklaces, ear studs, pendants (*mukkpudaka*), anklets *(kadiyalu)*. Both men and women bear tattoo marks *(pachhabottulu)* generally on their fore arms and on the forehead, with a belief that they would be relieved from rheumatic pains.

The Vadabalija take non-vegetarian food such as fish, chicken and mutton. Rice is their staple food. However, gruel *(ambali)* made of jowar is not uncommon. They consume all varieties of pulses, vegetables and fruits that are locally available. They take beverages such as tea and coffee. Consumption of alcoholic drinks like *sarai* (local made alcohol), toddy (*kallu-*sap of palm tree), and other fermented liquor is common among the men folk. Smoking is also quite common among males as well as the females. Women are in the habit of putting the burning end of the cigar *(chutta)* inside the mouth which is locally called *addapoga* (rivers smoking)*.*

**The Palli Community:**

According to Thurston (1909) Pallis were the descendants of the fire race (Agnikulas) of the Kshatriyas. These are one of the fishing communities of Andhra Pradesh. Their population is more in East Godavari district, but they are sporadically distributed in north coastal Andhra Pradesh. The villages of the Pallis are homogenous type. They speak Telugu language. Their staple food is rice and fish curry. The Pallis of the study area had given up fishing.

Monogamy is the common form of marriage among Pallis. Marriage by negotiation is common type. Polygamous marriage is rare. Divorce is allowed. Preferential marriages, ones own mother’s brother’s daughter (MBD) and father’s sister’s daughter (FSD) are more common among Pallis. It is informed that sister’s daughter’s marriage is also preferential marriage. In marriage by negotiation, the parents of the boy start the negotiation with the parents of the girl. The parents of the bridegroom consult a Brahman for an auspicious day and to perform marriage. Marriage is celebrated at the bridegroom’s residence. At present, their marriages are conducted at the temples such as Annavaram (Satyanarayana Swamy Temple), Simhachalam (Narasimha Swamy Temple) and Tirupati (Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple). The Palli families are characterized by patrilineal, patriarchal and patrilocal residence. Nuclear families are more common. Traditionally, the Palli depended on fishing. At present most of them shifted to agriculture. There is no literature on how and why they shifted from fishing to agriculture.

They have a village council headed by a *pedda kapu*. He is assisted by a *china kapu*, *grama kapu, peram kapu* and *tendal kapu* in maintaining law and order. The statutory panchayat has not replaced the traditional panchayat. By and large, the Pallis are Hindus. They worship Gangamma as their important deity.

**Traditional Knowledge on Sea Currents:**

The Jalaris and the Vadabalijas of the North Coastal Andhra Pradesh (Srikakulam, Viziayanagaram and Visakhapatnam Districts) have the knowledge on sea currents, which they have imbibed over the ages and transcended from generation to generation. The sea currents are locally called *varusulu* or *vodusulu*, which means waves. The sea currents often change their course of direction from time to time. Their belief is that the sea currents not only change their direction but also bring in new water and send back old waters in the Bay of Bengal. They have informed that the waters in the Bay of Bengal keep on rolling in every three months. Their observation is that the change of water in terms of current and colour takes place at four time intervals in a year. The unit of change time-scales are January-March, April-July, August-October, and November-December.

The fishermen are careful during the changing seasons from one form to the other as the sea would be rough and not routine. During such on setting times fishermen avoid venturous voyages into the sea. These sea currents are responsible for the change of tides from high to low and vice versa. Rolling of water in the sea is also called *varusu* or *vodusu*. It is believed that the change in sea currents are due to changes in the directions of the wind currents from north to south and vice versa. The fishermen of the region have developed a local classification for the sea currents, and they are used in their daily voyages. They are:

1. The sea currents which move from north towards south are called *thunnuru vodusulu*.
2. The sea currents which move from coast into the sea are called *narava vodusulu*.
3. The sea currents which move from sea to the coastal region *(dariki)* are called *karakattu vodusulu*.
4. The sea currents which move from south, towards northern side are called *thendu vodusulu*.
5. The Sea currents which come from sea to the coast are also called *sakkamdherakattu vodusulu.*

This classification and its related seafaring are crucial in fish harvest. Experience of the fishermen of the region had generated some knowledge on the significance of these sea currents (Fig- IX). Some of these currents are suitable for fishing while some are not for fishing. For example, *karakatta vodusu,* which moves from sea to coast, favours fishing where as *narava vodusu,* which moves from the coast to the sea do not favour fishing as the schools of fish move away from coast into the sea. It is reported that during new moon day *(amavasya*) and on the full moon day (*poornima or pournami*) the sea will be rough with high waves.

The fishermen are of the opinion that the waves so formed at sea are always go toward the hore *(dariki).* The fishermen set out for fishing expedition on a boat or a catamaran either during the day or night far away into the sea they reach the shore on the mobility and the direction of the waves of the sea. It is further informed that if the wind currents are suitable and favourable for their navigation, the fishermen come back to the original place of landing by observing the hills, the trees, the temples and the mouths of the rivers on the land and the celestial bodies in the sky. During bad weather conditions they depend on the information through radio signals given by the Cyclone Warning Centres. The flag raised at ports on the information of Cyclone Warning Centre is translated into traditional knowledge (numbered basket- *butta)* and is considered as warnings thereby abstain from venturing into the sea for fishing. During such conditions the fishermen at sea communicate by other fishermen by raising *butta* to convey the weather conditions.

It is mandatory that the period from 15th of April to 15th of June every year, is declared as lean period (breeding season for fishes) thereby fishing in large scale is strictly prohibited as per Government’s orders and any violation leads to prosecution. During the lean period the government comes with some welfare package both in cash and kind, which varies from time to time. At the event of accident while on fishing expedition, compensation to the aggrieved family is given by the government and it varies on the gravity from death to impaired/challenged.

**Superstitions and Practices:**

The Jalaris and the Vadabalijas strictly adhere to superstitious beliefs and practices associated with fishing. Whenever a new catamaran or a boat is launched into the sea, three to five coconuts are broken and are offered with flattened rice *(atukulu)* to the sea goddess, the Gangamma. Initially the catamaran or a boat is decorated and turmeric paste is smeared on it and three to five women of married status *(parentallu)* considered auspicious, are asked to lay their hands on the boat/catamaran at the time of launching at an auspicious time. A fowl is sacrificed on such occasion. Whenever a new net is being used, they sacrifice a fowl to the sea goddess (*Gangamma Thalli*) and sprinkle its blood on the new net, with a belief that they would get good catches of fish. When the sea is rough with big waves, they prey to lord Shiva for help.

The Jalaris and the Vada Balijas observe some taboos. A woman during her menstrual period is prohibited to touch the sea or any fishing equipment, with a belief they would also get polluted as the woman is under pollution. The fisher folk abstain from fishing expedition on the day when a cat or a goat or when a woman carrying fuel *(kattelu)* with any empty pot against their path are considered to be bad omen for fishing. If a person sneezes once when a fisherman is about to leave for fishing activities, it is considered to be a bad omen and it is considered good if a person sneezes twice. If a person is bitten by a shark in his dream, the next day he would abstain from going for fishing expedition with a belief that he may be attacked by a shark on that day. If a person slips or falls down before proceeding for fishing, he would avoid going for fishing on that day, with a belief that he may experience an accident or a mishap.

**OBSERVATIONS**

1. All fishermen villages of the study are located within a distance of less than 2 km inland form the coast and within 20 meter contour lines. The settlements are often found on sand ridges or on coastal sands contiguous to saltpans, coconut, cashew or casuarinas plantations. Most of the habitations are in the form of dispersed villages, leaving a space between village and village of about 2 to 3 km along the coast. However, at a few places there are clusters of villages contiguous to one another leaving no distinctive marks in between, only a road divides. Most of the villages are parallel to the coast but a few are perpendicular. Conical roofed thatched houses, with mud walls on wooden frame and the space between houses and rows of houses are without a pattern an indigenous method of adaptation against regular winds and gales of the sea.

2. Habitations located contiguous to headlands (projected land in the form of hillock into the sea), at the mouth of the river, at the mouth of the backwater inlet or on elevated sand dunes/ridges have depended on marine fishing, harvesting prawn, squids, crabs, fish and shellfish. Villages at the mouth of the rivers or backwater inlets are larger in size, not as a single village but a cluster of villages (3-5 villages) contiguous to one another. Such villages are facing a sever problem of land erosion leaving no space for anchoring/lodging the boats and net keeping and net repair. Fishermen villages do not have any common property in the form of land except the beach and the coastal sandy landscape.

3. The maritime communities at the moment are frustrated for four major reasons: i. Fishermen settlements are sandwiched between the roaring and advancing sea from the east and private ownership of land from the west, ii. The north-south compression due to acquisition of land for development activities under ‘public utility’ SEZs, Petro-Chemical and Pharmaceutical Corridors, Ports, Power Plants etc. iii. Uncertainty or low fish harvest due to release of industrial, chemical and petro-chemical effluents into the sea, the main resource for fishing, and iv. Poor or lack of infrastructure facilities on one hand, invasion of science and technology loaded corporate fishing on the other forcing people to feel inferior to others.

4. The changes mentioned above have cumulatively acted on traditional fishermen. Such a context could not be utilized by traditional fishermen as they are low-technology people coupled with various inherent reasons like illiteracy, poverty, low aspirations, timidity etc. However, there is occupational mobility. Mobility is seen in three different directions: i. The elite of the fishermen have contextually utilized the opportunity in the wake of industrial development and get themselves trained in skill enhancement and joined the fishing and navigation related organizations such as Merchant Navy, Ports and Harbours, shipping etc. Such are very few, but their continued interaction with their parents, kith and kin is worth noticing in terms of affluence among the fishers. ii. Those who are continuing the same economy have upgraded their fishing gear. Traditional cotton nets are replaced by the nylon and synthetic nets, boats are fixed with diesel motors or replaced by the fibre boats. Only a few country boats are in operation. iii. People who could not cope with the changing scenario are rather forced to take up wage labour, tailoring, mechanic, driver, watch and ward of farms (cashew and coconut plantations) etc., and iv. Seasonal migration is common. They migrate for few months in a year to freshwater bodies like Nagarjunasagar, Srsailam, etc reservoirs within the state and to the coast of neighbouring state of Orissa.

5. Catamarans and country boats (*nava / theppa / padava*) are still used by a large majority of the fishers. A few of them are modernized by fixing 9 hp diesel engines. Fibre boats fixed with diesel machines are also in use. Such are seen mostly in villages showing some type of development due to their location proximate to urban centres. Trawlers (mechanized boats with 100 hp diesel engines) are also in use by the fishermen but they are limited to the jetties and harbours. These are mostly operated by the rich class on their own on *benami* names of the fishermen. In all these cases the boats are unbranded built locally by using the traditional knowledge. Local timber and grass blended with traditional units/measures are used and further tightened by steel bolts and nuts to give birth to at other means for navigation. Only in case of fibre boats the chemicals find a coating on locally fabricated boats.

6. Three types of water sources such as open wells, tube wells and overhead water tanks are seen in the study area. Open wells are traditional wells mostly dugout by the local people and they are the common property assets of the village. Most of such wells are provided with stone/brick walls and cemented platforms. In some cases pulleys are hanged to draw water through bucket and rope. These are the centres of women activity attending to various activities such as fetching water, cleaning cloths and utensils, bathing, gossiping etc. Tube wells are drilled by the government to provide freshwater to the inhabitants for domestic consumption. Hand pumps are attached to the bored tubes which facilitate to draw individual at a time. Cemented platform around the tube well extends hygienic surroundings. These are the centres of women activity in limited numbers for a few domestic necessities. Larger settlements are provided with overhead tanks to store and supply freshwater. Water is drawn from the ground through power drawn motor pumps, stored and supplied on gravitation flow through regulated taps. Water is supplied at specified time in stipulated timings. Individual connections and community taps are also provided, which speak of social ranking and affluence.

7. Most of the fishermen villages are approachable by blacktopped road, but a very few have only a metal road. Public transport (APSRTC) services are available to the villages which are considerable in size, but those villages which are small are commuted by auto services. All villages are electrified but not all the houses. In several villages about 5 to 20 per cent of the houses are still to be electrified. Public utility buildings like community halls, fish drying platforms, net storage rooms are seen only in a few villages. Maritime villages are accessible by Radio, BSNL, AirTel, Tata, Reliance, Vodafone etc signals for communication. Among these wireless signals at least three types are accessible in all villages. To mitigate the coastal disasters cyclone relief centres are built in a few of the villages in two different spells, round ones in first and the rectangular in later spell. The round ones are in total dilapidated conditions, while the rectangular are in use for some development activities like library, school, *anganvadi* centre etc in a few of the villages.

8. Boatbuilding, net-keeping, net-repair yards, fish drying platforms, storage /market yards, boat-landing and fish-landing yards are integral in fishing economy. Most of the villages do not have these basic facilities. Net-keeping and net-repair yards are seen only in 93, fish drying platforms in 105, boatbuilding yards in 61 out of 191 villages. The fishermen had indigenous methods of managing these things under the shade of trees or in temple / shrine premises. Most of the boats are dragged on to the sands, while a few are anchored in shallow waters. Nets are kept right on the shore or sheltered under small thatched hut, or unused damaged boats in reverse position.

9. Among maritime communities the nature worships particularly the water body or the sea (*Ganga*- after the holy river the Ganges in colloquial form the *Ganga*) in the form of goddess is worshipped. The concept of mother goddess is prevalent throughout the maritime land and she had been provided shelters in several forms, square or rectangular rooms often with conical ceiling either within the settlements or outskirts close to sea. She is considered both as benevolence and malevolence, presides over the issues of safety, security, success, health and disease. Thereby Ganagammathalli (Water Mother Goddesss) is considered as the embodiment of innumerable powers and boons represented in various forms at community, lineage and family levels. In the study area the Mother Goddess is worshipped in several names. About 76 names are recorded in the study area. Among these the most worshipped are Peddamma, Gonagalamma, Poleramma. About 1164 shrines are recorded in 191 villages of the study area.

10. Open-air defecation has been the major unhealthy practice noticed in most of the villages, particularly in densely populated villages. Men defecate right on the beach close to their settlement within the boatyard. Women go to inland bushy area where the soils are sandy petrifaction is at slower rate. These defecation practices and poor drainage systems made the village a stinking hole. In the study area 212 anganwadi centres and 151 ANM stations at 191 villages are linked to 31 sub-centres and 18 Primary Health Centres (PHCs) located at their respective headquarters are catering to the health and medicare of the fishing populations.

11. Socio-economic development of a community depends on involvement of voluntary and involuntary individuals and institutions. Their target is to bring in development by extending awareness among beneficiaries. Forming into cooperative societies and self-help groups has been the recent trend in smaller economies. In the study area 34 cooperative societies and 122 self-help groups are in operation across the villages. In spite of the government initiatives the people are not geared up for development.

12. Though a large number of people are educated among maritime communities of the region under study only a few could succeed in getting employment (1996) against their qualifications. Those who could not get employment either in public sector or private sectors have preferred to take up financial and technical support from the public and private agencies and started their carrier. Diesel motors, motorized and fibre boats, autos (three wheelers), cars, sewing machines etc are procured and put them in operation to lead a livelihood. A few of the fishermen are working in the ports located in Mumbai, Chennai, Pardeep and several smaller ports and jetties. Those who are working elsewhere are maintaining affinal and consanguineous relations with their maritime communities.

13. For obvious socioeconomic and geopolitical reasons illiteracy is high among fishermen in the study area. Playing arena in the form of beach sands, surfing tides of the coast in the vicinity of fishermen habitations perhaps obstructed the young minds to attend schools. Low levels of literacy are recorded in spite of establishment of a number of elementary schools at village level during the last three-four decades. A few villages have high schools, but no Junior college or Degree College in any of the fishermen villages. However, a very limited number of fishermen community people could be educated overcoming several hardships of poverty, inaccessibility of institutions and proper guidance. The following are the few observations encountered among the fishermen community people in our study:

i) Gender level differentials levels of education are noticed.

ii) Girls outnumber boys below 5th standard of education. Female child education is preferred if there is a school in the village. If there is no high school in the village girls are discouraged to go to high school in another village. Moreover, boys are more attracted to playing and surfing than education.

iii) Boys outnumber girls below 10th standard. Reason seems to be that boys are permitted to go to nearby village for high school or to be stayed in hostels.

iv) Among those boys and girls who reached Intermediate education the success is towards girls than boys, leaving an opportunity of further studies by girls than boys.

v) Successful girl students are enhancing their abilities by getting further training in health (health worker, Nurse, ANM etc.) and education (Vidya volunteer, Teacher training etc.) sectors to occupy village level employment opportunities.

14. It is painful to note that the more number of educated girls are employed at village level are facing difficulty in getting compatible matrimonial alliance. The dropout boys at various stages of education are neither successful in their traditional economy nor getting any employment suitable to their education, and they are a liability not only to their parents but also to the community or society. Such boys who are found in the village do not opts for the employed girls to marry nor are the girls extending any preference to such boys, leading to more number of unmarried youth and adolescents in maritime communities.

**The Study Area**

For better results and for better understanding, four fishermen community villages are selected in Visakhapatnam District. Out of the four villages two are Jalari dominant villages and two are Vada Balija dominant villages. And again Out of the two Jalari villages, one is in urban location and other one is in rural Location. Similarly out of the two Vada Balija dominant villages, one is located in urban area and other one is located in rural area. The two rural villages of both castes and urban villages are adjacent to each other.

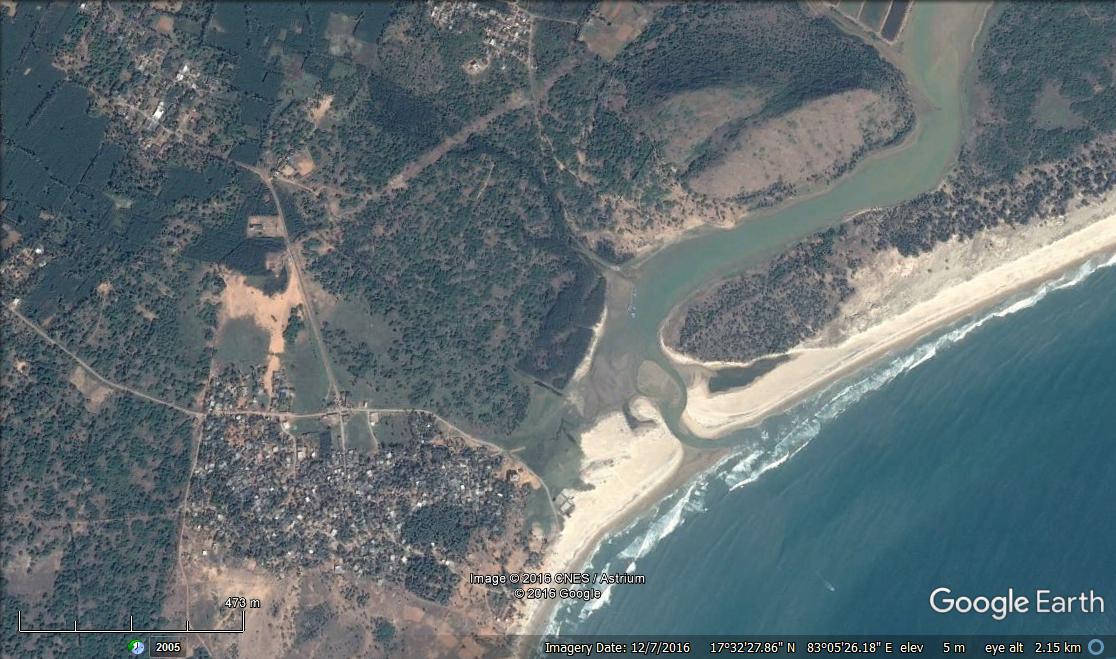
The two Jalari fishermen community villages selected are Jalaripalem in Parawada mandal which is nearly 50 km from visakhapatam and Jalaripeta near Peda Waltair, which lies in the heart of the city.

The two Vadabalija fishermen community villages selected are Mutyalammapalem in Parawada mandal and at only 1 km distance from the selected Jalari rural village Jalaripalem. The second vadabalija fishermen community village is Vasuvanipalem, a nearby village to Jalaripeta in Visakhapatnam.

A detailed study and survey has been conducted by taking samples of around 100 households of each village. The physical observations and details are noted below.

**MUTYALAMMAPALEM \_ Vadabalija Rural Village**

Village Map



Mutyalammapalem is a rural fishermen village located in Parawada mandal with a population of nearly 2000. This village is dominated by Vadabalija fishermen community. It is a well developed village with all basic amenities. Well connected with all weather roads to all corners of the village. The north-facing village welcomed by the Mutyalammathalli, the village goddess.

**Population**

Total : 1992

Male : 1058

Female: 934

**Houses:**

Number of Houses: 694

Tatched: 38

Tiled: 17

Concrete: 639

Fish Drying Platform: 3

Fish drying Land: Yes

Net Keeping Yard: 5

**Boats:**

Number of Boats: 115

Motors: 14o (Each Boat have two engines)

Traditional Boats: 10

Motirised Boats: 105

Mechanized Boats: 0

**Net Types**:

Total Nets: 1823

Traditional : 20

Modern : 1603

**Others:**

Community Hall -1

Kalyana Mandapam -1

Cyclone Shelter -2

Anganwadi Center -2

Primary School -1

High School-1

Private School -1

Banks – 1 (State Bank of Hyderabad)

Village Secretariat Office -1

Panchayat Office – 1

Hand Pumps -4

Over Head Tanks -1

Small Tanks -2

Public Taps -150

Individual Taps – 35

Kirana Shops – 12

Market Place – Yes

Auto Rickshaws – 69

Bus Facility – Evening – 1 Time

Burial Ground – Left side of Beach -1

Panupu – Near Hill

Village Heads – 6

Village Priest – 1

**Surnames in the village**:

1. Arjilli
2. Bondi
3. Chintakayala
4. Chodipilli
5. Koviri
6. Mosa
7. Vasupalli
8. Titti
9. Chepala
10. Surada
11. Merugu
12. Gangiri
13. Gangalla
14. Doda

**Economy:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Female:   1. Wet fish vending big business 2. Wet fish vending small business 3. Dry fish venders 4. Wet & Dry fish venders 5. Brandix Company 6. Salt Panes (Gally Work) 7. NTPC (Constructions and cement works) 8. Pudimadaka NTPC Construction works 9. Labour Works 10. Hinduja Plant 11. Pelty shops | Male:   1. Fishing 2. NTPC Daily Labour 3. Hindula Plant 4. Pudimadaka Plant 5. Phama city company 6. Country Liquor making and selling 7. Educated villagers are doing private jobs |

**Politics:**

Surpunch: Bondi Dhanalaxmi

Vice-Surpunch: Chepala Somulamma

Ward Members:

**Ward Number and Name of the Member**

1. Olisetti Oikanna
2. Koviri Durga Rao
3. Chintakayala Kotathalli
4. Chintakayala Somulamma
5. Chintakayala Ramulamma
6. Chintakayala Rajeswari
7. Ganagalla Krishnamma
8. Vasupalli Somulu
9. Surada Chinna Rao
10. Koviri Masenamma
11. Chepala Somulamma
12. Duda Appanna
13. Surada Errayya
14. Chepala Tataji

After women reservation, the elected women only make her formal appearance in the office. All the works and business are disposed by her husbands’ on her behalf. The phenomenon is also applicable to the fishermen community.

There were societies in the fishermen communities but due to conflicts among them they were closed. Dwakra agencies of ladies are running without any deviances.

**RELIGION**

**Temples:**

1. Mutyalamma Thalli
2. Maadavaswami Temple

**Shrines:**

1. Bangaaramma Thalli
2. Durgalamma Thalli
3. Nookalamma thalli
4. Paradesamma Thalli
5. Boolokamma Thalli
6. Sattamma Thalli

All the above except the 2nd Temple (Maadavaswami ) are called 7 Village Goddess. (Kaligedu Gangalu)

***Inti Ammavaarlu (Community Goddess)***

1. Mutyallama
2. Bangaramma
3. Durgalamma
4. Boolokamma
5. Sattamma
6. Korlamma
7. Kunchamma
8. Nallomaremma
9. Nookalamma
10. Paradesamma
11. Ploeramma
12. Jogupolamma
13. Masenu Devara
14. Dhana Sakthi
15. Kota Sakthi
16. Eripoti
17. Korla Sakthi
18. Vanka Sakthi

***MAALALU***

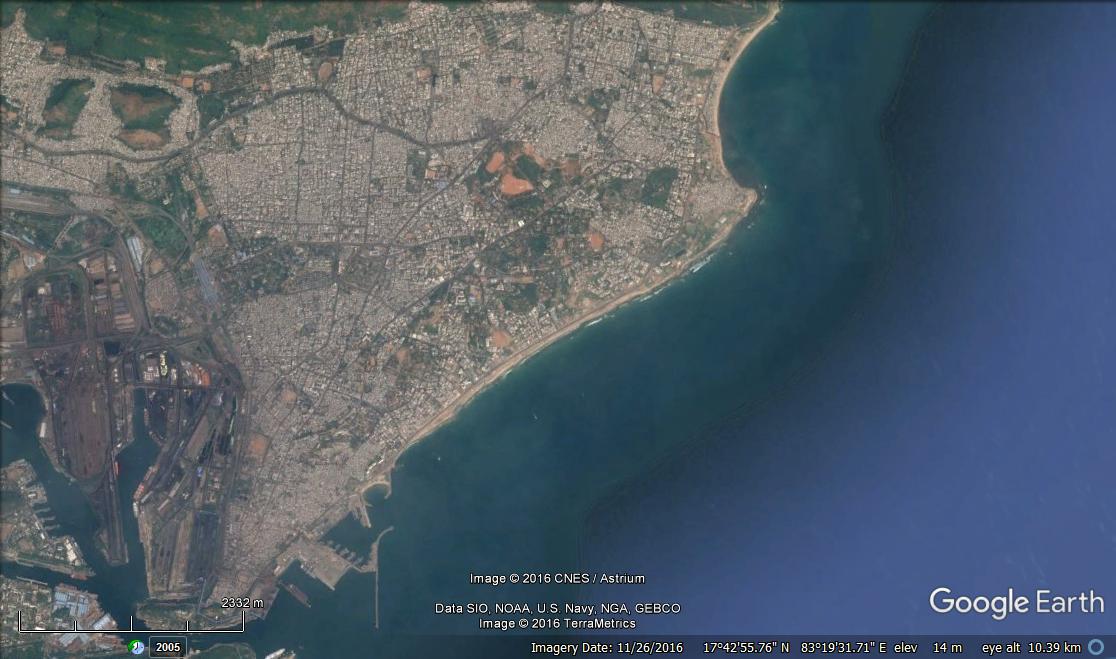
1. Ayyappa Swamy Maala….Black
2. Muthyalathalli Maala…Red
3. Bangaramma Thalli maala….Pink
4. Nookalathalli maala….pink
5. Bhaavani Maala (Durga devi)…Red
6. Anjaneya Swamy Maala …Oranga
7. Vijayaka Maala…White.

All these are worn one week before the festival by both male and female.

* They won’t go for fishing on every Tuesday
* They won’t go for fishing till the celebration of the festival of their mother goddess after the new moon.

|  |
| --- |
| **Nets used in Mutyalammapalem**   1. Kavvala Net (Small Net) 2. Disco Net ( for catching Prawns) 3. Oka Net 4. Chanduva/ Sanduva Net 5. Baama Reyyi Net 6. Ardanarama Net 7. Pesu Net 8. Poosala Net 9. Kattala Net 10. Big Net 11. Big Alivi Net |
| **Hooks used in Mutyalammapalem**   1. Konaamula Rope 2. Soorala Rope 3. Bamboola Net 4. Appaadula Net 5. Konte Net   All the Boats in mutyallamapalem are using the above nets. Each boat has five or six nets. |

**VASAVANIPALEM – Vada Bajila Urban Village**



**Population:**

Total: 1610 Male: 795 Female: 815

**Houses:**

Number of Houses: 386

Tatched: 48

Tiled: 21

Concrete RCC: 195

Others: 122

Number of Fishermen houses: 376

Number of Boats: 85

Traditional: 3

Motorized Boats: 83

Mechanized Boats: No

Net Types: 512

Traditional: 9

Modern: 503

Fish Drying Platform: 0

Fish Drying Land: 0

Net keeping yard: 2

Fish landing space: Nil

Religious structures: 5

Burial ground: Beach used as Burial ground

Government fisheries elementary school: 1

Community Hall: 3

Women community hall: 1

Youth community hall: 1

Peddillu : 8 (For 8 PEDDILLU there is Polamma thalli mother goddess)

Schemes: House schemes – 150 (Each 60 Sq Yards, In Each House three families are residing, one in ground floor, 1st floor and Side)

**Surnames in Vasavanipalem Village**

1. Vasupalli
2. Perla
3. Bommidi
4. Bogipalli
5. Bade
6. Chenna
7. Marupalli
8. Pukkala
9. Vanka
10. Cheepilli
11. Garikina
12. Surada
13. Eripilli

**Religion**

Shrines:

1. Ramalayam
2. Raja Rajeswari
3. Sivalayam
4. Erniamma
5. Mugadaramma
6. Durgalamma

**Village level Goddess**:

1. Polamma thalli
2. Durgalamma Thalli
3. Mogadaramma thalli
4. Nookalamma Thalli
5. Gangamama Thalli
6. Erni amma Thalli

**Household Level Goddess**:

1. Polamma thalli
2. Erniamma thalli
3. Korla devara
4. Nookalamma thalli
5. Rajarajeswari
6. Masenu devara
7. Dhana Shakti
8. Boolokamma
9. Hari Shakti
10. Ellamma
11. Mogadaramma
12. Pydithalli
13. Vanka Shakti
14. Gurappa Devudu
15. Simhadri Appanna Swami

**Maalalu: For both men and women**

1. Ayyappa Maala
2. Durgamma Mala
3. Polamma Mala
4. Govinda Mala
5. Coandanapu Mala
6. Kanaka Mahalakshmi Mala

**Vrathaalu:** **By women**

1. Varalakshmi devi vratam
2. Karteeka somavaraalu
3. Sivarathri Jaagaraalu

**Pathilu:**

1. Polamma Baktrulamma (Devotee) – Polamma (Hijra)
2. Durgalamma Baktrulamma – Durgamma
3. Polamma Baktrulamma - Polamma

**Seeing Stone (Chupu Raai):**

One Person.. who see through the seeing stone..

Three Persons : 1. Erniamma, 2. Mutyaalu, 3. Polayya

They tell all about the Health and other conditions and future of a person just by seeing their hand as like in Palmistry.

**Politics:**

1. Janmabhoomi Committee President – Perla Raja Rao
2. Janmabhoomi Committee Member Vanka Pydi Raju
3. Cooperator: Perla Vijay Chandra, and Vasupall Laxmana Rao
4. Women Representatives: Vanavada Dhasamma, Vasupalli china Ellamma (Fishermen)

**Economy:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Men** | **Women** |
| 1. Fishing 2. Auto 3. Centering Works 4. Painting Works 5. Constructions Works | 1. Fish Vending 2. Maid Servants 3. Shopping Malls 4. Tailoring |

**JALARIPALEM –Rural**

****

**Population:**

Total: Male : Female:

**Number of Houses:**

Tatched: 1

Tiled : 36

Concrete (RCC) : 51

**Boats:**

Number of Boats: 15

Traditional Boats: 2

Motorised Boats: 13

Mechanized Boats : 0

**Net Types**:

Total Nets: 156

Traditional: 15

Modern: 141

Fish Drying Land: NO

Net Keeping Yard: 1

Religious Structures: 2

Community Hall: 2

Public Tap: 12

Tank: 1

Anganwadi Center: 1

Primary School: 1

Hand Pump: 1

Auto: 2

Bus: No

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sl No** | **Surnames in Village** | **House Hold Goddesses** |
| 1 | Kambala | Mutyalamma Thalli, Masenu Devara, Simhadriappanna |
| 2 | Olisetti | Korladevara, Jogupolamma, Simhadri Appanna |
| 3 | Nolli | Korla Sakthi, Sattipolamma, Korludevara, Simhadri Appanna |
| 4 | Gondu | Bangarammathalli (Pedda Ammoru) |
| 5 | Gudla Polayya | Jogupolamma |
| 6 | Potti | Korla Devara |
| 7 | Vadamodalu | Jogupolamma |
| 8 | Kethipalli | Durgalamma thalli |

Temple – 1 – Jogupolamma thalli

Shrine -1 – Jogupolamma thalli

Peddillu – 8

* Once in 5 years, a grand festival offering prayers to Jogupolamma thalli along with Mutyalathalli is celebrated. They celebrate all festivals along with mutyalammapalem villagers including seven mother goddess

**NETS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Alivi  Big Net  Oka Net  Kaanakadatala Net  Kavvala Net  Tangoji Net | Disco Net  Bamboola Net  Gaalam Ropes  Rings Rope  Beeds Rope |

**ECONOMY:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Female** | **Male** |
| 1. Fish Vending 2. Fish Cutting and Processing 3. Shrimp Pond 4. NTPC House Works 5. Hotel Works 6. Shops like Kirana and Fancy 7. Construction Works 8. Kalyanamandapam works | 1. Fishing 2. Construction Works 3. Pharma City Company 4. NTPC |

* Due to politics, there are conflicts in the village.
* The villagers have taken side of two political parties. Due to the disagreements all the development works are almost dried.

**Lady Members in the Village Panchayat**

Ward Member: Olisetti Polamma

President : Mylapalli Masenamma

MPTC: Chintakayala Sujatha

Surpunch: Bondhi Dhana Lakshmi

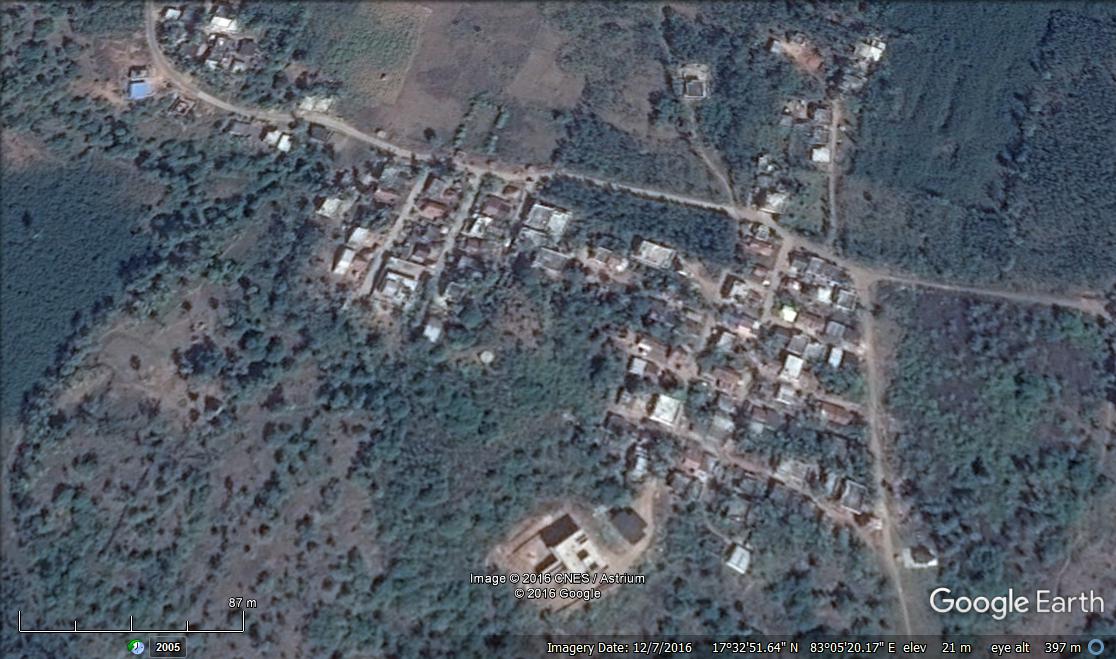
**Religious Activities**:

As per my observations, the village people are very much accustomed to their traditional festivals. Even though they don’t have money, they celebrate the festivals by borrowing money.

**Maalalu:**

1. Ayyappa Maala
2. Durgamma Maala
3. Mutyaala thalli maala
4. Jogupolamma Maala

**Vasavanipalem - JALARIPETA (URBAN)**

****

**Population:**

Total: 5496 Male: 2829, Female: 2667

**Number of Houses: 1374**

Tactched: 28

Tiled: 42

Concrete: 1304

Number of Boats: 782

Traditional Boats: 13

Motorised Boats: 769

Net Types: 4692

Traditional : 48

Modern: 4644

Fish drying Platform:

Fish drying land:

Net keeping yard:

Fish landing space:

Anganwadi Centers: 8

GVMC School – 1 (1st to 7th Classes)

Cyclone Relief Cener: 1

Community Hall : 3

Fisheries Society Building: 3 (Meeting Hall)

**Surnames:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Nolli  Potti  Chintapalli  Kasarapu  Ramolu  Teddu | Kadiri  Vadamodulu  Moddu  Olisetti  Arisilli  Kokkuri | Karaku  Kantumuchu  Pilla  Srurakala  Baada |

**Religion Activities:**

1. Pedda Ammoru – Polamathalli
2. Dugamma
3. Gatilamma
4. Ramanamma
5. Mahankaalamma
6. Ganga Devi
7. Kottammoru
8. Jogupolamma 6 Shrines (Olisetti Counnicllor, Achanna, Gurappalu, Jogulu, guruvulu, Chottodu)
9. Nallamaremma
10. Ellamma
11. Pydithallamma
12. Oddupolamma
13. Sattamma Thalli
14. Eripoti
15. Harishakthi
16. Ralla Shakthi
17. Nookalamma thalli
18. Mutyalamma thalli
19. Paradesamma thalli
20. Maramma shrine
21. Lalitha Devi
22. Ganesh, Saibaba Sivayya, Venkata Ramana Murthy

**Pathulu – Kaanikalu**

Six Devotees (Bhakturaallammalu)

1. Cheeka Kanthamma (OC) :: Pedda Ammoru (Polamma Thalli) – Pathi + Kanika
2. Sattibabu Vadamodulu – Durgamma thalli – Pathi + Kanika
3. Vadamodulu Mathamma – Polamma thalli – Pathi + Kanika
4. Teddu Gangamma – Ramanamma Bakthrulamma – Pathi + Kanika
5. Olisetti Pedapolappa – Nookalamma thalli - only Pathi
6. Olisetti Ellamma – Durgamma thalli – Only Pathi.

**Seeing Stone Doctors**

1. Teddi Satyya
2. Romolu BBuggala babu
3. Vadamodulu Dandakoru
4. Vadamodulu Ganganna
5. Ramolu Sorapababu

**Economy:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Men** | **Women** |
| 1. Fishing 2. Carpentor 3. Painters 4. Centering Works 5. Auto Drivers | 1. Fish vending 2. Maid servants 3. Shopping Malls 4. Beauty Parlors 5. Petty Shops |