

The Veddas are considered as indigenous people in Sri Lanka. Three major groups of veddas are identified as, east-coast, south-east and north-central. The most recent census on vedda community has been conducted in 1924, which reported 51 villages as inhabited by veddas. Various forces have had their impact on lifestyle and identity of veddas. A study was planned to review the present situation and relate that to situation reported by the previous census. All villages reported by the 1924 study was visited.

The study showed that number of village where vedda communities are living as reduces to forty-five. Factors contributed to this reduction are diverse. Migration and subsequent assimilation due to irrigation schemes were recorded in villages within Poratiuv and Manmunai North divisions. Veddas were not reported in villages within

division due to assimilation with surrounding Tamil villages. In Eravurpattu division veddas are concentrated in Kaluwenkerny which is a near the sea.

Koralaipatt east division reported the highest concentration of veddas. Their main occupations were agricultural laborer or seasonal fishing. This division is isolated from the rest of the area due to poor infrastructure and lack of politics. This physical and social isolation has been major cause for retaining the identity of veddas.