

Chapter 5.

CENTRAL SCHEME FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF TRIBAL COMMUNITY

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Abstract:

It is the primary responsibility of the state to formulate and implement equitable policies to provide justice to the weaker sections of the society. Tribal community in India is facing many problems in their day-to-day life and struggling for basic necessities of life today. The government has claimed that it has made unremitting efforts to bridge the gap in the path of development and sustainable growth of the entire tribal society. After independence many policies and programs have been designed to solve the problems of tribals. Yet this is not enough for the upliftment of tribals who have been living under the shadow of underdevelopment for decades. This research paper has made a comprehensive attempt to study the schemes, policies and programs undertaken by the Government of India for the overall growth and development of tribal society.

Keywords: Tribal Development, Government Schemes, Scheduled Tribes, Tribal Community

Introduction:

Despite being considered as the first inhabitants of the nation, tribals are deprived of the basic necessities of their daily life. They are socially, economically and educationally backward. In the name of development, they have been exploited in various forms, from land grabbing to forced displacement from their habitations. Tribal life

has always been tied to nature or forest and their culture, customs and traditions and their livelihood is closely related to forest. But often government legislation seems to prevent them from entering the forest. Although the Forest Rights Act 2006 has provided some rights to the tribals in relation to forest and its products, this provision appears to be only on paper. Even after 72 years of independence, the condition of tribal society is not good. The central and state governments have from time to time devised many policies and programs for the overall development of tribals.

Scheduled Tribes in India:

About 8.2 percent of the total population of India belongs to tribals. Majority of the tribal population lives in the states of Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal. These states account for 80 percent of the total tribal population in the country. Madhya Pradesh has the largest tribal population with 14.7 percent of the total tribal population in India. Also, Maharashtra and Odisha are second and third in contribution to total tribal population. Lakshadweep has the highest tribal population at 94.8 per cent of the Union Territory's total population, followed by Mizoram and Nagaland states at 94.4 and 86.5 per cent respectively. Similarly, the number of Scheduled Tribes is less in Uttar Pradesh and accounts for 0.56 per cent of the total population, followed by Tamil Nadu and Bihar at 1.1 and 1.28 per cent respectively. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs says there are 705 tribal groups notified by the Government of India. Odisha is the state that has the highest number of tribal communities at 62 compared to any other state in the country. Out of 705 tribal groups, 75 groups have been categorized as Especially Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) living in different parts of the country.

Vocational Training in Tribal Areas:

This scheme has been launched to empower the tribals who are the most marginalized section of the society. Their mission is to improve the skills of tribal youth in various traditional/modern

occupations according to their educational qualification, current economic trend and market potential, so that they can get adequate employment or self-employment. Financial grants are provided for conducting vocational training in recognized institutes or Vocational Training Centers (VTCs) as per the rules regularly amended from time to time. This scheme is not only for PVTG, but is implemented anywhere in the country as per the needs of Scheduled Tribes. But priority is given to remote tribal areas, especially vulnerable tribes, areas affected by militancy. Further, regular inspection is conducted by Collector/Commissioner/Institute Authority in prescribed pattern. Apart from this, the concerned Ministry of the Central Government also monitors the progress of the scheme

Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub Scheme (SCA To TSS):

Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub Scheme (SCA to TSS) is part of the core Scheme for Development of tribal communities. Under the SCA to TSS scheme, Grants are released to 27 States, based upon proposals received from the State Governments after the approval of State Level Executive Committee headed by Chief Secretary of the State, and considered in the Project Appraisal Committee (PAC), to bridge the gaps in sectors like education, health, agriculture, skill development, employment-cum-income generation, etc. 100% grants are provided to States.

Objectives of the Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub Scheme:

- Human resource development by enhancing their access to education and health services.
- Enhanced quality of life by providing basic amenities in tribal areas / localities including housing (mostly to be covered under PMAY/ State Schemes).
- Substantial reduction in poverty and unemployment, creation of productive assets and income generating opportunities.

- Enhanced capacity to avail opportunities, gain rights and entitlements and improved facilities at par with other areas
- Protection against exploitation and oppression

Grants to NGO:

NGOs play an important role in enhancing the reach of Government Schemes and in filling the critical gaps of service deficient tribal areas. While governmental efforts are supplemented through NGOs to achieve the ultimate objective of delivery of services to remote and unreached tribal areas, the standard of services provided is equally important. Ministry achieves transparency in funding and monitoring of NGO functioning under MoTA through the online Grant system. It also allows the NGOs to fulfill the requisite application procedures, track the status of their applications, submit completion certificates as well as register grievance if any.

The Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006:

The Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006 recognizes the rights of forest-dwelling tribal communities and other traditional forest dwellers over forest resources, on which these communities depend for various needs including livelihood, settlement and other socio-cultural needs. Participatory forest management policies in both colonial and post-colonial India, including Acts, Regulations and Forest Policies, have failed to recognize the symbiotic relationship of STs with forests, until the enactment of this Act. According to their dependence on forests as well as their traditional wisdom regarding forest conservation. The Forest Rights Act (FRA), includes rights to self-cultivation and settlement, often referred to as individual rights; and community rights as access to grazing, fishing and forest watersheds, habitat rights for PVTG, traditional seasonal resource access of nomadic and pastoral communities, access to biodiversity, community right to intellectual property and traditional knowledge, recognition of traditional customary rights and rights to protection of any community forest resource for sustainable use, To regenerate or conserve or manage. It also provides authority to allocate forest land for developmental purposes to meet the basic

infrastructure needs of the community. The FRA protects the tribal population from eviction without resettlement and settlement in conjunction with the right to fair compensation and transparency in the Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Settlement Act, 2013. The Forest Rights Act (FRA) gives forest dwellers the right to access and use traditionally accustomed forest resources, to protect, conserve and manage forests, to protect forest dwellers from illegal evictions and also to provide for basic development facilities. Community of forest dwellers in education, health, nutrition, infrastructure etc..

Objective of the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006:

- To undo the historical injustice occurred to the forest dwelling communities.
- To ensure land tenure, livelihood and food security of the forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers.
- To strengthen the conservation regime of the forests by including the responsibilities and authority on Forest Rights holders for sustainable use, conservation of biodiversity and maintenance of ecological balance.

Top Class Education for ST Students:

Top Class Education for ST Students is a Central Sector Scholarship Scheme for Schedule Tribe students introduced from the academic year 2007-08 with the objective of encouraging meritorious Schedule Tribe students for pursuing studies at Degree and Post Graduate level in any of the Institutes identified by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

It supports meritorious ST students seeking admission in 213 identified quality educational institutions. Scholarship once awarded will continue till completion of course subject to satisfactory performance. The scholarship amount covers tuition fees, boarding and lodging expenses, book grant and one-time grant for purchase of computer and its accessories. 100% funding is provided by Ministry of Tribal Affairs as per norms. Each

recognized institution is allotted 5 awards; however, it can be increased subject to a total cap of 625 scholarships per year. Funding is provided directly to the concerned organization by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

National Overseas Scholarships for Scheduled Tribe Students:

It is a central scheme to provide financial assistance to meritorious students in specified fields of postgraduate level courses, PhD and post-doctoral research programs in the fields of engineering, technology and science to pursue higher studies in foreign universities. The scheme was launched in the year 1954-55 and has since been revised from time to time. It was a non-plan scheme, which became a plan scheme from 2007-08.

Selected candidates are provided with other grants including tuition fees and other educational fees charged by the foreign university, maintenance and travel expenses. Passage grant is available annually to up to four ST candidates receiving qualifying scholarship for postgraduate study, research or training abroad (excluding attendance at seminars, workshops, conferences) from a government/organization abroad or for passing expenses under any other scheme. Awardees are permitted to meet their prescribed allowances by undertaking research/teaching assistantships up to the prescribed limits. Where the earned income is beyond the ceiling, the maintenance allowance under the scheme will be reduced accordingly by the Indian Mission abroad.

Centrally Sponsored Schemes:

Centrally sponsored schemes are implemented by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs for the overall development of tribal society as follows.

- Pre matric and Post Matric Scholarship for Scheduled Tribes/Book Bank
- Upgradation of Merit of Scheduled Tribe Students
- Boys Hostels and Girls Hostels for Scheduled Tribes

- Establishment of Ashram Schools
- Research and Training, Information and Mass Media
- National Tribal Affairs Awards, Organization of Tribal Festival
- Centre of Excellence
- Exchange of visits by Tribals
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Information Technology
- Lump-sum Provision for N.E.

Central Sector Schemes under which 100% Grant is given to States and UTs:

Central Sector Schemes for the overall development of tribal society are currently being run by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs as follows:

- Grants-in-Aid to Voluntary Organizations, Coaching & Allied Schemes
- Vocational Training in Tribal Areas
- Strengthening of Education among ST Girls in Low Literacy Districts
- Market Development of Tribal Products/ Produce (Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd. (TRIFED))
- State Tribal Development Cooperative Corporation for Minor Forest Produce
- Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)
- National Scheduled Tribes Finance & Development Corporation
- Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for Scheduled Tribe Students
- National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for Scheduled Tribe Students

Conclusion:

There is a need to increase the literacy rate among tribals as there is no awareness about government policies and government programs designed for the development of tribal society. According to the 2011 census, the literacy rate among tribals is 59 percent, according to government data. Due to lack of education, they have little knowledge about the policies and programs designed for them and are unaware of their rights. Government policy should focus not only on tribal development but also on sustainable development of tribals with their rich culture, customs, traditions and language, as the identity of tribals is rooted in their distinct culture and traditions inherited from their forefathers. In this era of globalization tribal society is in dire need of some specific strategies to preserve their culture and identity. There is no sense in development by jeopardizing the true identity of Scheduled Tribes

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Chapter 6

WOMENS EMPOWERMENT: SELF HELP GROUPS SPECIAL REFERENCE IN MAHARASHTRA

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Abstract

In contemporary Indian society, the terms 'women empowerment' and 'self-help group' have been used synonymously. Undoubtedly, self-help groups (SHGs) have played a significant role to provide women their rightful place in the society and have propelled their inclusion in to the larger economic and political systems in India. Over the last decades numerous research papers have already been published to showcase the benefits of SHGs and their limitations as well. However, there is hardly any evidence to claim that SHGs have been successful in bringing 'self-reliance' among its women members beyond their identity as 'beneficiaries' of those groups. It is evident from the available literature that SHGs as a phenomenon has instilled hope and confidence among the women members by creating positive synergies. There is insufficient evidence on the extent of transformation on their mental and economic independence outside their activity groups. Without such transformation SHGs will not be able to make the women realize their full potential. The present paper though limited in its scope attempts to draw insights on the various factors influencing women empowerment.

Key Words: Self Help Group, Women empowerment, economic empowerment, educational empowerment, self-reliance, interdependence, micro-finance.