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Ministry of Tribal Affairs

OVER 94 THOUSAND TRIBALS AND FOREST DWELLERS GETS LAND RIGHTS

100% CENTRAL ASSISTANCE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HOSTELS FOR TRIBAL GIRLS

NEW SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME FOR ST STUDENTS FOR HIGHER STUDIES

900 CRORE RUPEES PROVIDED FOR TRIBAL WELFARE SCHEMS

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Year-end-Review

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs took a number of initiatives during 2008 for the development and welfare of tribal people so that they could be brought in the mainstream of development. These initiatives include implementation of Forest Rights Act, new schemes to promote education among tribals and more funds for the tribal welfare.

The year 2008 started with the enactment of Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (recognition of Forest rights) Act. Implementation of the Act fulfilled the long cherished dreams of tribals and traditional forest dwellers to have the patta of the land on which they had been residing for years. By November land claims of 94,264 tribals/forest dwellers were settled and 86,455 claims are ready to be settled. The landmark initiative created a new awareness among the tribals about their rights and new opportunities for development by providing them ownership of the land, access to collect, use and dispose of minor forest produce and to regenerate and conserve the community forest resources.

100% Central assistance for ST students hostels

The Ministry this year revised financial assistance scheme for hostel of ST students. Under the revised scheme, State Governments are provided 100% central assistance for construction of all ST Girls' hostels and also for construction of ST Boys' hostels in naxal-affected areas (identified by Ministry of Home Affairs from time to time). The funding pattern for the Boys' Hostels in the areas other than the naxal-affected pockets will be on 50:50 bases between the Centre and States. This assistance will now be provided for hostels at all levels - primary, middle, secondary, college or university.

Free schooling for tribal girls

The year the Ministry of Tribal Affairs revised the scheme of Educational Complex in Low Literacy Pockets for Development of women literacy in tribal areas. It is a gender specific 100% Central Sector Scheme. Coverage of the scheme includes 54 identified Districts where the ST population is 25% or more, and ST female literacy rate is below 35% as per 2001 census.

This scheme also covers tribal blocks in districts other than 54 identified districts inhabited by notified Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) and is implemented through Non-Governmental Organizations/autonomous society/Institute of State/UT. Under the scheme financial assistance is given for educational complexes at primary and middle/secondary levels. Beside, free schooling, boarding/lodging, uniforms, books, food, stipend and incentive to

schooling, boarding/roading, uniforms, books, food, stipend and incentive to girls students are also provided. In addition, the Vocational/Skill Development Training is also imparted to ST girls at the education complexes.

New scholarship scheme for tribal students

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has introduced a new Central Sector Scholarship Scheme of 'Top Class Education' for ST Students to enable meritorious ST students to pursue degree and post degree level courses in the field of management, medicine, engineering, law and commercial courses in any of the identified 125 institutes. The total family income of the ST student from all the sources should not exceed Rs. 2.00 lakh per annum.

A meritorious ST student who has gained admission in any of these 125 identified institutes shall be eligible for scholarship covering full tuition fee and other non-refundable dues in respect of Government/Government-funded institutions. However, there is a ceiling of Rs.2.00 lakh per annum per student for private sector institutions and Rs.3.72 lakh per annum per student for the private sector flying clubs for Commercial Pilot Training. In addition, the scholarship also provides for (i) living expenses @ Rs. 2200/- per month per student subject to actuals, (ii) books and stationery @ Rs. 3000/- per annum per student and (iii) cost of a latest computer system along with its accessories limited to Rs. 45000/- as one time assistance during the course. Grant is being released to identified institutes and not State-wise. Up to 635 scholarships per year are provided under the scheme.

Development Of Primitive Tribes

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has been implementing a 100% Central Sector Scheme viz. "Development of Primitive Tribal Groups" for over all development of Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs). The long term conservation-cum-development plan which aim at saturating the needs of PTGs in key areas i.e. health, sanitation, housing, livelihood etc. are funded under the initiative. The scheme also provides for insurance coverage to the tribes. Any activity/work, which is connected with the survival, protection and development of PTGs, can be taken up under the scheme. The activities/works may include provisions for housing, land distribution, land development, agricultural development, cattle development, income generation programmes, health-care, infrastructure development, social security, etc. at hamlet/habitat development of PTGs. Rs.97.99 crore have been released to States during 2008-09 (as on 22.10.2008) under the scheme.

Assistance for tribal welfare

The Ministry also initiated various developmental projects through State Government for development of infrastructure and job generation opportunities in tribal areas. Under the tribal sub-plan the States were provided around Rs. 680 crore for these activities. It includes assistance of Rs. 518.82 crore during the year and Rs. 160.71 crore to the tribal majority States (by November, 08) to meet the cost of infrastructural development which generally aims at raising the level of administration of Scheduled tribal areas to the level of the rest of the State.

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