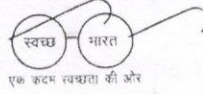




सत्यमेव जयते



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मंत्री
जनजातीय कार्य मंत्रालय
भारत सरकार
शास्त्री भवन, नई दिल्ली-110001
MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SHASTRI BHAWAN, NEW DELHI-110001

D.O.No.19/10/2019-Livelihood

Dated: 10/07/2019

Dear Shri Sarbananda Sonowal Ji,

India is a Welfare State and the framers of our Constitution conceived of a Government, which would work for the well-being of its citizens. Part IV of the Constitution, the Directive Principles of State Policy is a testament to such vision and philosophy. **Art. 46** says: "The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular, of the SCs and STs, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation." Though not enforceable by any Court, the principles laid down in Part IV are fundamental in the governance of the country and it shall be the duty of the State to apply these principles in making laws."

Taking the vision enshrined in the Constitution forward, Govt. of India established the Ministry of Tribal Affairs in 1999 so that a more focused and integrated approach could be adopted for the implementation of various schemes for the welfare of STs. However, despite such lofty ideals and clear vision, we find that the indicators for Human Development Index (HDI) in Schedule V and Schedule VI areas are abysmally low. The big question is WHY?

The MoTA has been working tirelessly to transform the lives of tribal people and boost HDI indicators upward – in sectors like education, health, infrastructure, employment, income etc but they have continued to lag behind. The mandate of MoTA is to bridge the wide chasm and plug the gaps – social, economic and others – between the STs and others with regard to HDIs. The States as partners MUST join hands with the MoTA in this process of transformation and provide data on existing gaps so that targeted intervention could be planned and executed with efficacy ensuring robust impact and positive outcomes. Past governments might have either been negligent or indifferent that has resulted in such huge gaps and dismal indicators of HDI in Schedule V and Schedule VI areas of India.

In the above backdrop, the MoTA wants to draw your attention to a Scheme that is integrally linked to well-being of the tribal people. A large population of Scheduled Tribes is dependent on Minor Forest Produce (MFP). MoTA has been implementing, "Mechanism for Marketing of MFP through Minimum Support Price (MSP) & Development of Value Chain for MFP" since 2013-14 to facilitate support for sustainable livelihood and income generation for the tribal people engaged in gathering and selling MFP. The Scheme seeks to provide fair returns to forest gatherers for their effort in collection and value addition of MFPs.

2. The scheme, broadly, consists of the following components:

- a. Setting up a revolving fund; procurement, using the revolving fund, of notified MFPs at the declared price in case the market price falls below the notified MSP and recuperation of losses, if any, sustained by the revolving fund;
- b. Support for establishment of infrastructure including modernization of Haat Bazars, setting up primary aggregation/ storage facilities;
- c. Supporting improvement in income generation through training on gathering, storing and value addition to MFP (Van Dhan Vikas Karyakram).

Setting up the revolving fund and offsetting losses [component (a) above] and Infrastructure development [component (b) above] are funded in the ratio of 75:25 by the Central and State Governments. The training component [component (c), Van Dhan Vikas Karyakram] is done by the MoTA through TRIFED, a multi-state cooperative society under this Ministry.

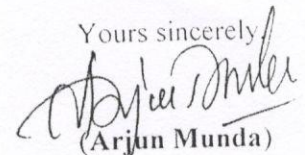
3. Since the funding mechanism is demand-centric, proposals originate in States as per the MoTA guidelines for the Scheme where funding is needed. Also since the States nominate its agencies for implementation of scheme – their soundness and dynamism becomes very significant. Dysfunctional agencies are poor at implementation; the States must exercise due diligence before nominating them. For undertaking training programmes and value addition activities, States' nodal departments for Tribal are expected to work closely with TRIFED.

4. The MSP to MFP Scheme has been crafted to empower our tribal citizenry and unleash the spirit of entrepreneurship. It has the potential to transform the lives of tribal people by enabling them to rightfully claim and receive fair prices in the trade. A transparent and user-friendly digital platform has been put in place by TRIFED for the purpose.

I urge your State to actively participate in the Scheme and extend ready support to TRIFED, the implementing agency of the Scheme since only with your able leadership, keen interest and special attention we shall be able to reach the last mile, the intended beneficiaries.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,


(Arjun Munda)

Shri Sarbananda Sonowal,
Hon'ble Chief Minister,
Government of Assam,
Secretariat,
Secretariat, Janta Bhawan,
Dispur, Guwahati.