

**NOTES ON THE STATE LEVEL REVIEW MEETING OF THE COMMISSION HELD WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF ORISSA ON 15.07.2008.**

Smt.Urmila Singh, Hon'ble Chairperson, accompanied by Shri Maurice Kujur, Hon'ble Vice Chairman, Shri Aditya Mishra, Joint Secretary and Shri R.C. Durga, Director of the Commission visited Orissa from 12.07.2008 to 16.07.2008. State Level Review Meeting was held with the Chief Secretary, Secretaries of the various Departments and other Senior officers of the Government of Orissa in the Conference Hall of the Secretariat on 15.07.2008.

At the outset, Dr.Taradutt, Commissioner-cum-Secretary of the ST/SC Development Department gave a brief presentation about various developmental programmes undertaken by the Government of Orissa for the welfare and development of STs. He stated that the Government of Orissa is making sincere effort to raise the socio-economic condition of the ST people, who constitute 22.13% of the total population of the State, and to bring them to the mainstream of the society.

In the State Level Review Meeting, detailed discussion was held on Tribal Sub-Plan, Education, Health, Drinking Water, Land Alienation, Housing, Atrocity, Service Safeguards, Development of PTGs and Displacement and Rehabilitation of Tribals, as per the questionnaire sent earlier by the Commission.

**Tribal Sub-Plan:**

The Secretary, ST/SC Development Department apprised the Commission about the various schemes implemented under the Tribal Sub-Plan(TSP) for the benefit of the tribals. He stated that under the Sub-Plan approach Government of Orissa have set up 21 ITDAs covering 118 Blocks in 12 Districts. Maharastra Model of Single Line Demand has not been adopted in Orissa. The monitoring of the flow of funds to the

TSP area relating to the concerned Departments is being monitored periodically by the ST/SC Development Department which is the Nodal Department regarding formulation and monitoring of TSP. Hon'ble Vice Chairman opined that programmes implemented under TSP should be people-oriented and operationally viable. It should cater to the felt needs of the people and area. He further stated that the State Government must ensure flow of funds to TSP according to the population percentage of the tribals in the State and the funds under the TSP should be fully utilized and there should not be any diversion of funds.

**Education:**

While discussing on education, Secretary of the ST/SC Development Department made a mention about the opening of 1003 ST Girl Hostels in 30 Districts with an intake capacity of 100 students each in the State to promote female tribal literacy. He further stated that this is in addition to 400 girl Hostels opened in the recent years in the KBK Districts. There are also 1548 Primary School Hostels, one in each GP, in the TSP area. To reduce drop out rate at the primary stage of education and to bridge the gap between home language and School language, Government of Orissa have taken steps to impart education to tribal students reading in Primary Schools in tribal areas in their mother tongue. Accordingly, Government of Orissa have prepared teaching & learning materials in 10 tribal languages namely Saora, Kui, Kuvi, Juang, Koya, Bonda, Munda, Santali, Oram and Kishan which are available for the use of the students. It was also stated that the ST girls of the Schedule Area Blocks studying in Post-matric classes were given bicycles, but the State Government decided to provide bicycles to all the ST girls studying in Class-VIII and above in the State under a newly introduced State Sector Scheme. All these efforts of the Government of Orissa were appreciated by the Commission. Hon'ble Vice Chairman emphasized the need for educational development of the tribals more specifically the ST females, as education is key to development. He stated that the minimum basic facilities should be provided

in the Hostels and the environment should be made conducive in Schools for education to attract ST children. Hon'ble Vice Chairman further stated that pre-matric and post-matric scholarship should be paid in time, all the vacant teacher posts at the Primary and Secondary stage of education should be filled up immediately and efforts should also be made to check drop out rates in the Schools. When asked about the pass percentage of the ST students in the Annual High School Certificate

Examination, the Secretary of the ST/SC Development Department stated that the pass percentage in the HSC Examination of the Schools run by ST/SC Development Department was good in comparison to the Schools run by the State Education Department, but the pass percentage in first division was very low. In the Annual HSC Examination, 2007 the overall pass percentage was 73.94%. Hon'ble Vice Chairman suggested that the Government should take measures in providing quality education to the students reading in the Schools so that more students can secure first division in the Annual High School Certificate Examinations. Special coaching should also be provided to the students, who are poor in their studies to come out successful in the HSC Examination.

**Health:**

Detailed discussion was also held on the Health Care facilities provided to the tribals. It was pointed out that many Doctor Posts and Para medical posts are lying vacant in tribal areas affecting the health care system, but the Government is making all-out efforts to fill up the vacant posts. Hon'ble Vice Chairman stated that adequate health care facilities should be provided to the tribals and the benefit of the Health Care Programmes must reach the tribals residing in remote areas. He further stated that the Health Camps should be organized in tribal areas in providing Health Care facilities at their door steps. Necessary steps should also be taken to check the Infant Mortality Rate(IMR) among the tribals.

**Drinking Water:**

Commission was told that there are 2532 ST villages/hamlets in the Schedule Areas of the State which lack safe drinking water facilities. These villages/hamlets need to be covered on priority basis under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) and Sanitation. Secretary, Rural Development stated that the population norm is standing as a barrier for providing safe drinking water to all the tribal villages/hamlets and it is necessary to relax the population norm. He requested the Commission to take up the matter with the concerned Department of the Government of India in the greater interest of the tribals. Hon'ble Vice Chairman opined that villages/hamlets having single source of safe drinking water should also be provided with a secondary source.

**Land Alienation:**

It was brought to the notice of the Commission that the Land Alienation is the biggest problems of the tribals in Orissa and day by day it is becoming complicated and critical. There is a lot of discontentment among the tribals on the issue of land alienation. Many tribal lands have been grabbed by the non-tribals and other vested interests by fraudulent means and '*benami*' transactions. Even the land encroached by the tribals are being alienated in favour of the non-tribals. The Secretary of the Revenue Department stated that Government is making all-out efforts to enforce the Regulation 2 of the 1956 in the Schedule Areas to prevent land alienation and to restore the land in favour of the tribals where it has been alienated illegally in violation of the law. Hon'ble Vice Chairman stressed the need for physical restoration of the land and to enforce the Land Law meticulously in the greater interest of the tribals.

**Housing:**

Commission wanted to know about the allotment of house sites to the tribals and the number of ST beneficiaries covered under the Indira Awas Yojana. Up-to-date information in this regard was not available. However, the Secretary of the Revenue Department stated that during the year 2006-07, 98774 house sites were allotted to the people of Orissa out of which 46196 house sites (46.77%) were allotted to STs. Similarly, 23092 ST beneficiaries were allotted houses under Indira Awas Yojana during the said year.

**Atrocity:**

The Principal Secretary of the Home Department, while speaking on the Atrocity, stated that the Government is making sincere effort to prevent atrocity on STs. He further stated that the Government is organizing training programmes/workshops for the Police officials and officials engaged in the welfare activities to make them well conversant about the various provisions contained in the POA Act, 1989 and POA Rules, 1995. Apart from this, hoardings in the regional language containing important provisions of the Act and Rules have been displayed at important public places to make the people aware of the same. Hon'ble Vice Chairman wanted to know about the number of atrocity cases that are lying pending in the Special Courts for trial and the rate of conviction. He was told that, at the end of December, 2007, 8380 atrocity cases were lying pending in the Special Courts for trial out of which 1995 related to STs and the conviction rate was very low. Hon'ble Vice Chairman expressed his concern over the low rate of conviction and suggested that necessary measures should be taken to improve the conviction rate. He further suggested that the pending cases should be disposed of expeditiously, as justice delayed is justice denied, and monetary relief must be paid to the victims of atrocity in time, as per the scale provided in the POA Rules, 1995.

**Service Safeguards:**

Service Safeguards provided to STs was discussed in detailed. Commission wanted to know the shortfall in the prescribed percentage of reservation in Group A, B, C and D posts. Commission also wanted to know the ST backlog vacancies in various categories of posts and the efforts made by the Government to fill up those posts. The latest figures in this regard could not be made available to the Commission. Hon'ble Vice Chairman suggested that the State Government should fill up the backlog vacancies, if any, through Special Recruitment Drive. He opined that the Reservation Policy should be implemented both in letter and spirit so that the STs are not deprived of their due share in employment. During the discussion the issue regarding employment on the basis of False Caste Certificate was also raised. Commission was told that allegation against 400 employees were received who got appointment on the basis of false ST Caste Certificate and Government initiated action on all those cases. Hon'ble Vice Chairman opined that false caste certificate cases should be dealt promptly and strongly.

**Development of PTGs:**

A detailed discussion was held on PTGs. Commission was told that there are 13 PTGs in the State for whom 17 Micro Projects have been set up. Out of 17 Micro Projects 13 are located in the Schedule Areas and 4 in non-schedule areas. The population of PTGs, according to a survey conducted in 2007, is 78,519. The Government of Orissa have formulated the Conservation-cum-Development Plan (CCD Plan) for PTGs with a total estimated cost of Rs.84.25 crores out of which Rs.64.46 crores have been posed to Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India for financial assistance over a period of five years(2007-2012). The remaining Rs.19.80 crores will be spent by various other line Departments. Commission was further informed that the Government of India in the Ministry of Tribal Affairs have already released Rs.10.00 crores for the CCD Plan during 2007-08. The Government

of Orissa have carefully balanced the socio-economic development of PTGs and conservation of their culture in this development approach. The effort of the State Government was appreciated by the Commission.

**Displacement and Rehabilitation:**

The issue of displacement of the tribals due to setting up of various industrial/irrigation projects and their rehabilitation was discussed in the review meeting. Commission was told that more than 40% of the displaced families in development projects in Orissa are tribals and Government is taking adequate measures for their proper rehabilitation. In this connection, Government of Orissa have framed and adopted Orissa Rehabilitation and the Resettlement Policy, 2006 to protect the interest of displaced ST families. Hon'ble Vice Chairman stated that there is a lot of discontentment among the tribals on the issue of displacement and rehabilitation. He cited the example of Rourkela Steel Plant where the displaced families are still suffering and fighting for their genuine demands. Many of them have not yet got the employment. Most of the land provided to them lack irrigation facilities and not fit for cultivation. The allotted land is also situated at far of place from the place of their rehabilitation. Hon'ble Vice Chairman also pointed out that the tribal displaced families, by and large, have failed to restore their pre-displaced living standards in the post-displacement stage and they have become further impoverished and many of them are living in the web of poverty. Their community life has been affected to a great extent. They are facing social, cultural and psychological problems. Hon'ble Vice Chairman further pointed out that there is a feeling among the tribals that they are the victims in the development process and this feeling need to be removed. He advised the State Government to deal this problem with adequate care and human touch.