

# Executive Summary

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## Introduction

The persistence and perpetuation of socio-economic backwardness in spite of the development efforts had warranted a special and focused strategy and a need for a separate policy instrument for the Scheduled Tribes (STs) to enable them to share the benefits of developmental growth in more equitable manner. A comprehensive policy of protection, welfare and development of the STs was prepared by an Expert Committee set up in 1972 which finally gave birth to Tribal Sub-Plan for Scheduled Tribes in 1976. The Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) was adopted for the first time in the Fifth Five Year Plan. The principal aim of the TSP is to bridge the gap between the STs and the general population with respect to all socio-economic development indicators in a time bound manner.

TSP strategy has twin objective, namely, socio-economic development of scheduled tribes and protection of tribals against exploitation. Guidelines on formulation, implementation and monitoring of TSP have been issued by the Planning Commission from time to time to the States/UTs and Central Ministries for the formulation and effective implementation of the TSP. The last revision was done in 2005, which inter-alia suggested (as per guidelines issued in 2006): (i) earmarking of plan funds in proportion to the Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) population both at the Central and State levels; (ii) Scheduled Caste Sub Plan & Tribal Sub-Plan funds should be non-divertible and non-lapsable; (iii) designing proper and appropriate developmental programmes/schemes/activities; (iv) Creation of separate budget heads/sub-heads for different sectors; and (v) Creation of effective monitoring mechanism. In 2010, a task force identified 28 Central Ministries/departments in terms of their obligation to earmark allocation in proportion to the population of STs. In accordance with these policy guidelines, 28 Central Ministries/Departments allocated ₹ 64399.73 crore as TSP fund during 2011-12 to 2013-14.

## Why did we take up this Audit?

The present performance audit of the TSP was taken up in response to request of various stakeholders including the Public Accounts Committee. Audit was taken up with a view to assess whether the implementation of

TSP as a separate policy instrument in Centre/States was working efficiently and the expected benefits under the respective schemes reached the tribal population. We decided to check a few components of the major selected schemes/organisation under two sectors i.e. Education and Health. Apart from auditing the role of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD), Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (H&FW) and Ministry of AYUSH with regard to overall supervision, the implementation of the TSP was checked in 18 States and 2 UTs having tribal population. The period of coverage of this performance audit is April 2011 to March 2014.

The audit issues have been analysed from nationwide perspective and only summarized findings noticed at the Central level are mentioned in this Report.

### **What did we find?**

The important findings of the performance audit are narrated below:

#### **Earmarking norms and releases of TSP funds**

It was seen that the Department of School Education & Literacy, Department of Higher Education and Department of Health and Family Welfare had not adopted the specified earmarking norms. Release of TSP funds did not synchronise with the allocations made by the departments. There was short release of TSP funds by ₹ 13138.05 crore during 2011-12 to 2013-14.

**{Para 3.2 (a) & (b)}**

As per tribal development strategy and programmes, the TSP concept is not applicable to the tribal majority states such as Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya etc. where tribals represent more than 60 *per cent* of the population. Audit found that there were releases of TSP fund amounting to ₹ 706.87 crore to the tribal majority States.

**{Pare 3.3 (a)}**

Audit found that ₹ 326.21 crore of TSP funds were released to those States/UTs where ST population was absent as per Census 2011 and as such TSP component was not applicable to them.

**{Para 3.3 (b)}**

Funds amounting to ₹ 433.09 crore in 62 cases were released at the fag-end of the year (March) in contravention of GFR provisions-Rule 215(2).

**(Para 3.4)**

### **Maintenance of accounts/utilisation of funds and creation of Non-Lapsable Pool of TSP Fund**

Utilization certificates from the State Governments were received by the Ministries for total funds released and not as per the head-wise releases. As a result the actual utilisation of funds under TSP remained unascertainable.

**(Para 3.5 & 3.6)**

The Planning Commission's guidelines (2010) to transfer TSP funds remaining unutilized at the end of a financial year into a non-lapsable pool of TSP funds to be allocated to Ministry of Tribal Affairs for implementing schemes for development of STs was not implemented even after four years of issue of the guidelines.

**(Para 3.7)**

Audit noticed several deficiencies in the financial management of TSP funds in the selected schemes in the states such as non-maintenance of separate account of TSP fund, short/delay in release by Central Government/State Government, non/under utilisation of TSP fund etc.

**(Para 3.8)**

### **Implementation of TSP in the States**

Ministry of Tribal Affairs had not been involved in the process of finalisation of Annual Plan of the Central Ministries/departments as required under the guidelines.

**(Para 4.2)**

Substantial deficiencies were noticed in the implementation of a few basic components of five selected Schemes under Education and Health sectors such as non-distribution of school uniforms, non-establishment and non-functioning of Model Cluster School for Girls, lack of basic amenities and facilities, absence of kitchen cum store, mismanagement of food grains, improper infrastructure, non-establishment of District Institutes of

Education and Training (DIET)/Block Institutes of Teachers Education (BITE). Deficiencies in health facilities, inadequate health care infrastructure and non-conducting of Information, Education & Communication (IEC) activities etc. were also observed.

**(Para 4.5)**

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

Monitoring at the Central level was unsatisfactory. Despite PMO's direction, dedicated TSP unit which was set up earlier in November 2005 was not functioning in the Planning Commission. Out of the 28 identified Ministries/Departments, only two departments furnished quarterly progress reports.

**(Para 5.2)**

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

Our audit disclosed that the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has not been invited to contribute to the process of formulation and finalization of Annual Plan which was the groundwork required for successful implementation of TSP. Planning for implementation of schemes was deficient as the plan were formulated without specific consideration of tribal beneficiaries as required under TSP. The nodal Ministries for Education and Health sectors failed to monitor the utilisation of funds released under TSP. In many cases, where nodal departments were constituted, they did not have any role/control over formulation, implementation and monitoring programme of TSP. Financial management under the Scheme was deficient as many instances of underutilisation and diversion of TSP funds were noticed. Delays in release of funds at various levels viz. from state governments to nodal agencies/implementing agencies were also observed. Even though the funds from the central level were released in trifurcated head i.e. Gen./SC/ST (TSP) to the states and from states to district implementing agencies, the account of expenditure was not maintained separately at any level. The states/districts furnished consolidated utilization certificates without indicating component wise details of expenditure incurred. As a result, the exact expenditure under TSP remained unascertainable. Monitoring and evaluation of the scheme both at the central and state levels was deficient.

**We recommend the following:**

- ❖ *Ministry should review the TSP strategy to ensure that the expenditure reported under it is linked with flow of benefits to STs.*
- ❖ *The Ministry should operationalise the accounting arrangements to ensure that TSP funds do not get diverted.*
- ❖ *The Ministry should ensure timely release of funds for all components at the central and state levels to facilitate uninterrupted implementation of the schemes covered under TSP.*
- ❖ *The Ministry should issue appropriate instructions for maintenance of separate account and preparation/submission of separate UCs of TSP fund by States.*
- ❖ *Planning process needs to be strengthened with community involvement especially in the tribal dominant blocks to ensure the benefit for tribal communities under the respective schemes.*
- ❖ *State Government should be asked to form a structure at the State level/District level to monitor and review the implementation and monitoring of the TSP fund.*
- ❖ *There is a need to strengthen the nodal unit at the State/District level to assess the infrastructural gap and development needs in the tribal inhabited areas and converge the funding available under schemes such as PMGSY, RKVY etc.*
- ❖ *Dedicated nodal units for formulation, implementation and monitoring of TSP components under each ministry/department should be made functional and oversight role of Ministry of Tribal Affairs should be strengthened in the overall monitoring framework of TSP.*
- ❖ *Evaluation studies to assess the impact of TSP on socio economic development of STs should be conducted and findings of such studies should be used as input for planning process.*