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A Study on the Implementation of Scheduled Tribes Schemes in India

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Abstract

Scheduled Tribes (STs) make up about 8.6% of India's population, according to the 2011 Census. The group lives in a variety of places, such as steep, wooded, and isolated regions, which restricts their access to economic, medical, and educational resources. In light of this, the Indian Constitution has a number of unique clauses designed to protect tribal rights and promote inclusive growth. Some of the key institutional structures that guarantee a specific portion of the schemes' finances are set aside solely for the benefit of tribal people are the Scheduled Tribes Component (STC), Development Action Plan for Scheduled Tribes (DAPST), and Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP). In the Union Budget 2024–25, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has raised the budgeted allocation to ₹13,000 crore, a 3.6% increase over the previous year's forecast. The government's ongoing commitment to empowering tribal communities and advancing equity is demonstrated by this financial investment. This study looks at the scope, operation, and effects of these initiatives on chronic issues like poverty, unemployment, and insufficient healthcare and education for Scheduled Tribes. It also looks at how these programs fit in with more general economic objectives like social entrepreneurship, rural-urban integration, inclusive growth, and sustainable livelihood creation. Thus, many federal, state, and local policies and programs have focused on the social, economic, cultural, and educational development of indigenous peoples. By evaluating policy goals and practical effects, this study emphasizes the value of tribal development programs in integrating marginalized communities into India's development process while maintaining their unique cultural identities and traditional knowledge systems.

Keywords: Scheduled Tribes, Tribal Development, Government Schemes, Social Welfare, Economic Empowerment

Introduction:

India became independent in 1947, and the Indian Constitution was enacted in 1950. The Indian Constitution has made many important provisions for the welfare of Scheduled Tribes. Accordingly, the Central and State Governments implement many schemes for the development of tribals. These include educational, economic, health, environmental, cultural, and credit-based initiatives, empowerment of forest dwellers and tribal women, as well as other tribal welfare schemes. Similarly, various schemes are implemented under the Tribal Protection and Development Programme (CCD Scheme) for the overall development of tribals. The Pradhan Mantri Adivasi Vikas Abhiyan (PMJVM) initiative is being used to promote tribal entrepreneurship. This research provides a brief review of these government initiatives to reinforce the tribal community.

Literature Review:

- 1. Departmental Scheme Information Book (2019-20),** This book provides detailed information on the demographics of Maharashtra's tribal population and the organizational structure of the Tribal Development Department. It explains the functioning of the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP), the objectives of different schemes, eligibility criteria, and the financial allocations made for tribal welfare. The book also highlights the implementation strategies and details of educational, housing, and livelihood-oriented programs. It serves as an important source for understanding the structure and scope of state-level initiatives for



tribal development. ⁽¹⁾

2. **Tribal Development Scheme: Pathway to Economic and Social Development of Tribal April (2013)**, This research paper reviews the evolution of tribal development initiatives in India, beginning with the First Five-Year Plan and the establishment of the Tribal Development Department. It analyses various schemes such as income generation programmes, training and skill development initiatives, welfare schemes, and centrally sponsored projects aimed at the upliftment of Scheduled Tribes. The research emphasizes the importance of financial aid, human resource development, and institutional structures in empowering indigenous populations. It concludes that effective tribal governance and suitable program implementation are necessary to address socioeconomic inequities. ⁽²⁾

3. **Meshrm S. (2028)**, in this research paper describes the characteristics of tribal culture and highlights how primitive it is in contrast to other civilizations. The author emphasizes the value of formal and economic education in addressing the persistent problems that indigenous people face. The study continues by outlining the creation of tribal sub-plans, the kind of programs that fall under them, and how central financial allocations support them. It also sheds light on the implementation procedures and the overall framework designed for tribal welfare. ⁽³⁾

Objective of the Research:

1. To study the implementation and effectiveness of schemes for the tribal community.

Hypothesis of the Research:

A. Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS)

S. No.	Name of the Schemes	Implementing Agency	Focus Area
1	Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarship for Scheduled Tribes (STs)	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Education
2	Support to Tribal Research Institutes	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Research & Capacity Building
3	Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Livelihood & Welfare
4	Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-Scheme (SCA to TSS)	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Socio-Economic Development

B. Central Sector Schemes

S. No.	Name of the Scheme	Implementing Agency	Focus Area
1	Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Education
2	Aid to Voluntary Organizations Working for the Welfare of Scheduled Tribes	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Social Welfare
3	Support to National/State Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Financial Assistance
4	Institutional Support to TRIFED	TRIFED	Marketing & Enterprise
5	Tribal Festivals, Research, Information and Mass Education	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Culture & Awareness
6	National Fellowship and Scholarship for Higher Education of ST Students	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Higher Education
7	Scholarship for ST Students for Studies Abroad	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Education Abroad



8	Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM JANMAN)	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Social Justice & Welfare
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C. Other Transfers to States

S. No.	Name of the Scheme	Implementing Agency	Focus Area
1	Grants to States under Article 275(1) of the Constitution	Government of India	State Development Grants

D. Other Initiatives for Digitization (MIS/Dashboards/e-Services)

S. No.	Name of the Initiative	Implementing Agency	Focus Area
1	Performance Dashboard	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Monitoring & Evaluation
2	Scheduled Tribe Component (STC) Monitoring System	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Budget & Scheme Monitoring
3	NFS and NOS on UMANG Mobile App	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Digital Access
4	Tribal Repository	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Knowledge Resource
5	News Portal (ADI-PRASARAN)	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Media & Awareness
6	Document Management System	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	E-Governance
7	Adikalakar Portal	Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Tribal Art & Culture Promotion

Source: <https://tribal.nic.in/downloads/Statistics/AnnualReport/AREnglish2324.pdf>⁽⁴⁾

Scheme Outlay and Its Utilisation:

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs was given ₹12,461.88 crore in total for the fiscal year 2023–2024, which included both non-scheme and program expenses. Of this, ₹12,386 crore was specifically set aside for initiatives. The Ministry released ₹7,545.23 crore via a number of projects and programs by March 31, 2024. This release shows a high level of budget use efficiency, representing 99.21% of the year's Revised Estimates (RE).

Highlights of Activities

National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSTFDC):

Through the provision of concessional financial aid, NSTFDC significantly contributes to the promotion of economic development activities among Scheduled Tribes. 93,609 people benefited from ₹383.18 crore in financial aid approved by the Corporation in 2023–2024. The Corporation's dedication to promoting tribal enterprise and livelihoods is demonstrated by the ₹351.65 crore that was distributed for the implementation of different authorized projects till March 31, 2024.

Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd. (TRIFED):

Through the identification and promotion of tribal products throughout India, TRIFED promotes tribal livelihoods. It has 118 Tribes India retail locations, including 8 franchise showrooms, 11 consignment stores, and 99 owned sales locations, in addition to 14 regional offices. TRIFED strengthened tribal market ties and ensured fair value for tribal produce by facilitating the transfer of ₹43.53 crore to State/UT Governments by March 31, 2024, out of a budget projection of ₹118.64 crore.⁽⁵⁾

Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Vikas Mission (PMJVM):

The PMJVM incorporates previous efforts for improving tribal livelihoods, including the Minimum assist Price (MSP), Value Chain Development for Minor Forest Produce (MFP), and Institutional Support for Development and Marketing of Tribal Products/Produce. This integration has resulted in the simplification of resources and the development of a more reliable framework for maintaining forest-based livelihoods.

Van Dhan Yojana:

Van Dhan Self-Help Groups (VDSHGs) are village-level self-help organizations established under the Van Dhan Yojana to gather, process, and value forest products, agricultural products, and medicinal plants. About 11.82 lakh beneficiaries were served by the 3,958 Van Dhan Vikas Kendras that were approved in 25 states and 3 union territories by 2023–2024. In addition to increasing income options, this program promotes skill development and entrepreneurship in native communities.⁽⁶⁾

Dharti Aaba Janjati Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan:

This program, which was started on October 2, 2024, aims to close important gaps in livelihood development, social infrastructure, health, and education in around 63,000 tribal settlements. The Abhiyan is one of the most targeted initiatives for tribal development in recent years, with a budgeted investment of around ₹79,150 crore.⁽⁷⁾

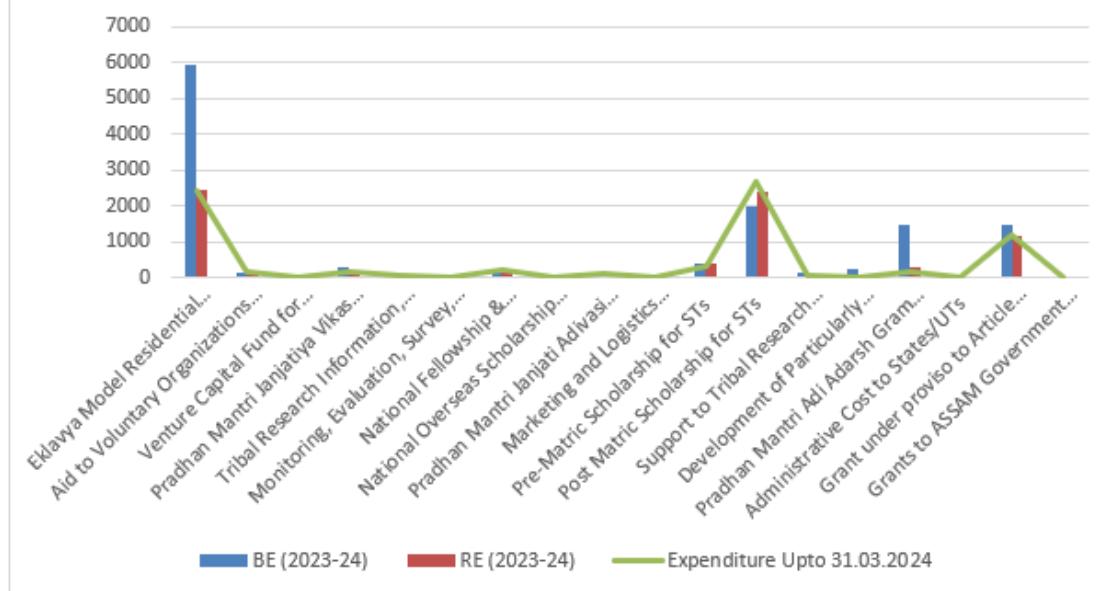
These initiatives collectively highlight the government's comprehensive approach toward enhancing the socio-economic conditions of Scheduled Tribes, with a strong emphasis on financial inclusion, market support, skill development, and livelihood promotion.

Scheme-wise Budget Allocation, and Expenditure for the Year 2023-24 (up to 31.03.2024) (₹ in Crore)

S. No.	Name of the Scheme	BE (2023-24)	RE (2023-24)	Expenditure up to 31.03.2024
1	Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)	5943.00	2471.81	2447.06
2	Aid to Voluntary Organizations working for the welfare of STs	140.00	150.00	149.95
3	Venture Capital Fund for Scheduled Tribes	30.00	0.00	0.00
4	Pradhan Mantri Janjatiy Vikas Mission (PMJVM)	288.49	143.00	137.10
5	Tribal Research Information, Education, Communication and Events (TRI-ECE)	25.00	45.00	32.04
6	Monitoring, Evaluation, Survey, Social Audit (MESSA)	23.00	15.00	8.80
7	National Fellowship & Scholarship for Higher Education of ST Students	145.00	230.00	230.00
8	National Overseas Scholarship Scheme	4.00	7.00	7.00
9	Pradhan Mantri Janjatiy Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN)	0.00	110.00	109.96
10	Marketing and Logistics Development for Promoting Tribal Products from North Eastern Region	20.00	0.00	0.00
11	Pre-Matric Scholarship for STs	411.63	411.63	308.59
12	Post Matric Scholarship for STs	1970.77	2371.01	2668.83
13	Support to Tribal Research Institutes	118.64	50.00	43.54
14	Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)	256.14	0.00	0.00
15	Pradhan Mantri Adi Adarsh Gram Yojna (PMAAGY)	1485.00	300.00	149.93
16	Administrative Cost to States/UTs	53.22	53.22	8.41
17	Grant under proviso to Article 275(1) of the Constitution (Charged)	1472.10	1172.10	1172.10
18	Grants to ASSAM Government under clause (A) of the second Proviso to Article 275 (1) of the Constitution	0.01	0.00	0.00
GRAND TOTAL		12386.00	7529.77	7473.31

Source: <https://tribal.nic.in/downloads/Statistics/AnnualReport/AREnglish2324.pdf> ⁽⁸⁾

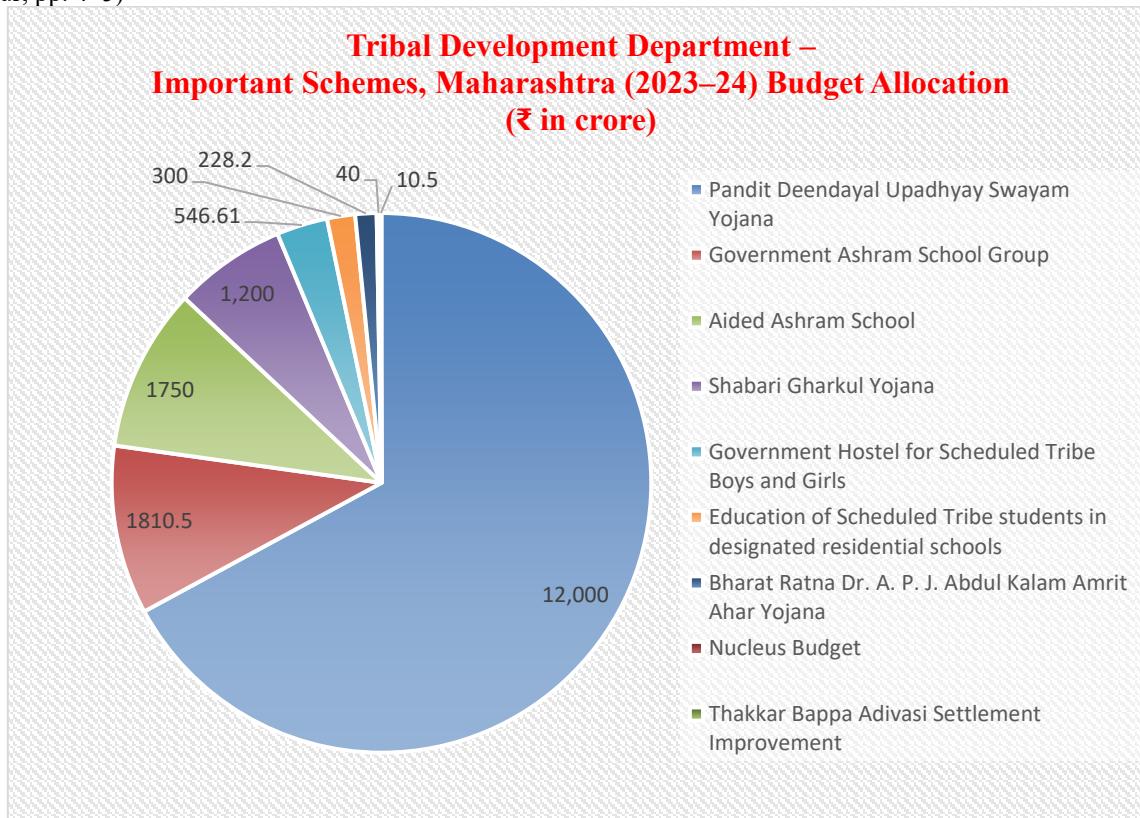
Scheme-wise Budget Allocation, Revised Allocation, and Expenditure for the Year 2023-24 (up to 31.03.2014) (₹ in crore)



Tribal Development Department – Important Schemes, Maharashtra (2023–24)

S. No.	Name of the Scheme	Budget Allocation (₹ in crore)
1	Government Ashram School Group	1810.50
2	Aided Ashram School	1750.00
3	Government Hostel for Scheduled Tribe Boys and Girls	546.61
4	Education of Scheduled Tribe students in designated residential schools	300.00
5	Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Swayam Yojana	120.00
6	Shabari Gharkul Yojana	1200.00
7	Thakkar Bappa Adivasi Settlement Improvement	10.50
8	Nucleus Budget	40.00
9	Bharat Ratna Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam Amrit Ahar Yojana	228.20
Grand Total	—	6005.81

(Source: Maharashtra Government Programme, Budget 2023–24, Tribal Development Department, Central Jail Press, Nagpur, pp. 4–5) ⁽⁹⁾



Conclusion

This analysis reviewed the implementation of government programs that are intended to advance the socioeconomic growth of India's Scheduled Tribes. Through programs such as EMRS, Van Dhan Yojana, and PM-JANMAN, tribal communities have increasingly gained access to financial inclusion, livelihoods, and education. Overall impact is still limited, however, by poor implementation, inadequate funding, and low awareness. Improvement in transparency, region-specific programs, and community participation is necessary. Tribal empowerment and national development with an inclusive approach are based on these projects being executed successfully.

Recommendations:

1. Reviews of tribal development schemes should be submitted to the concerned ministries and departments from time to time.
2. Schemes must be deliberated upon periodically with people's representatives as well as local administrators to identify relevance as well as accountability.
3. More emphasis must be laid on the doctrine of Sarvodaya, focusing on the welfare of the most downtrodden families in society.
4. Action plan should be well prepared to showcase how government welfare programs will reach the last mile effectively.
5. Tribal development policies must be framed and implemented with professional advice to maximize efficiency.

6. Tribal communities must be actively involved in policy-making, decision-making, and welfare programs.
7. More emphasis should be placed on economic development of tribal communities with a view to social justice and national development.
8. All departments must ensure smooth implementation of schemes so that they benefit all the eligible beneficiaries.
9. Campaigns can be made more effective to enhance the awareness among the tribal communities regarding the schemes.
10. Community leaders and elected representatives have an active role to play in the development and empowerment of tribal communities.

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Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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