

# The Upliftment of Tribals and Tamil Nadu Government's Welfare Programmes - A Study

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The article is written based on the study conducted to enlist the welfare programmes for the development of tribals in Tamil Nadu. The study is limited to Tamil Nadu Government's welfare schemes for overall developments of tribals up to 2000 A.D. Further the study is not eyed on any particular area. The tribal population is spread throughout Tamil Nadu. They reside in hills and forest regions. The majority of them are landless people. There was not any particular occupation for them. Even if employed no proper wages or remuneration are being given those people. They are living in poverty.

The Government of Tamil Nadu implements several welfare schemes for the socio-economic and educational development of the Tribals in the state. The objective of the program is to facilitate faster socio-economic and educational development of the Tribals to end their social seclusion and economic deprivation in the society.<sup>i</sup>

The Construction of traditional houses, distribution of animals, provisions of drinking water facilities and street lights are the advantages extended to the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups for people who are residing at hilly areas.<sup>ii</sup>

The 60% financial assistance is additionally given to begin any viable income generating activities and 30% for creating infrastructure facilities for income generating schemes under Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub Plan conceive to be implemented in Tribal areas.<sup>iii</sup>

So as to supply infrastructure facilities in Tribal areas and also to implement the Forest Rights, necessary funds are provided under Article 275(1) of Constitution of India.

The economic development programs implemented through Tamil Nadu Adi Dravida Housing Development Corporation (TAHDCO) are primarily of three categories namely i) Micro enterprises development for the poor families ii) Vocational job-oriented skill training programs and iii) individual entrepreneurs schemes which are supported by appropriate training and subsidy programs. To create employment opportunities and to strengthen the skill need specific trades among the youths, suitable skill development training programs are organized through well-known and recognized institutions.<sup>iv</sup>

The Government of Tamil Nadu is attaching greater importance for the implementation of schemes promoting education among Adi-Dravidars and Tribals particularly among the girl children. Several measures which are taken up by the state government are indicated below:

About 1058 Adi-Dravidar schools and 290 Tribal schools are surpassing Adi-Dravidar and Tribal Welfare department. Totally 208200 Children are studying within the Adi-Dravidar schools and 36624 children within the Tribal Residential schools.<sup>v</sup> Most of these schools are functioning predominantly within the Adi-Dravidar and Tribal habitations. Over the years the requirement for opening separate schools for Adi-Dravidar and Tribals were found redundant because the Education Department itself is opening the schools on priority in needy habitations. Further the concept like separate schools were outlived their utility and such schools only widened the social disparity. Therefore, no primary schools are opened by this department for the Adi-Dravidar from the year 1993-1994.

The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes students who have scored good marks in SSLC Public Examination are unable to urge admission in 11<sup>th</sup> standard in reputed private schools for economic causes. Hence their inadequate educational preparation prevents their admission to higher education courses where the entry is on the basis of All India joint Entrance Examinations. With a view to create them enable to compete more effectively for admission to Professional courses, the Government have ordered to upgrade the merit of 300 Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes students studied in Government, Corporation, Municipal, Government Adi-Dravidar Welfare schools through reputed private schools.

In order to improve the English knowledge of Adi-Dravidar, and Tribal students and to induce high marks, this spoken English, Teaching Laboratories are founded in Adi-Dravidar and Residential schools.

Incentives to girls are provided from 1994-1995 to encourage the enrolment of girls and to avoid their dropouts. Under this scheme, the Government is giving Rs. 500/- each year together payment to 60,000 Adi-Dravidar and Tribal girls, who are studying in 3<sup>rd</sup> Standards to 5<sup>th</sup> Standards. This scheme is implemented within the educationally backward districts namely this viz. Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, Tiruvannamalai, Cuddalore, Villupuram, Virudhunagar, Kancheepuram, Tiruvallur, Vellore, Salem, Namakkal, Tiruchirapalli, Perambalur, Karur and Nagapattinam for Adi-Dravidar and whole state (except Chennai) for Tribal people. Similarly, within the entire state, (except Chennai) 30,000 Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes girls entering VI Standard are given a sum of Rs.100/- each p.m. for 10 months. Both schemes cost about Rs. 6.00 crores once a year.<sup>10</sup>The

scheme was implemented by TAHDCO up to 1999-2000. From 2000-2001, onwards, this Scheme is being implemented directly by the Directorate of Adi- Dravidar Welfare, Chennai.<sup>vi</sup>

Plastic frame slates are supplied to Adi-Dravidar Welfare and Government Tribal Residential schools freed from cost to students in 1<sup>st</sup> standard. Text books are supplied freed from cost to all the students studying in 1<sup>st</sup> Standard to 12<sup>th</sup> Standard and note books for students from 3<sup>rd</sup> Standard to SSLC in Adi-Dravidar Welfare schools and Government Tribal Residential schools.<sup>11</sup> As far as Adi-Dravidar, Tribal and Adi-Dravidar converted to Christianity students studying in schools run by the School Education Department, free text books are supplied to them in 9<sup>th</sup> Standard to 12<sup>th</sup> Standard and free note books are supplied to students studying in Standard 4<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>. Two sets of uniforms are distributed free of cost to the students studying up to 12<sup>th</sup> standard in schools and hostels maintained by this Department. The uniform pattern for the students has been changed from the year 2006-2007. Churidars for girls studying from 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> standard and full pant to the boys studying from 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> standard are supplied. These uniforms are stitched by the Industrial women welfare Co-Operative Societies under the control of Social Welfare Department. Special guides prepared by the experts of this Department are distributed to the students, who are studying in Standards 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of Government Adi-Dravidar Welfare/ Government Tribal Residential Schools and Government Adi-Dravidar Welfare Hostels. Question Bank Book published by Parent Teachers Association for Public Exam students are purchased and distributed to the students studying in Adi-Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Schools and Hostels.

The scheme for the supply of free bicycles to Adi-Dravidar and Tribal girls studying in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Standards was introduced during 2001-2002 and continued subsequently. Similarly, this scheme was extended to Boys also during 2005-2006.

Students in standards X and XII who are of average and below average in studies are identified and special attention is given for improving their performance. Special coaching is given to the whole 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> standard students so they might perform well in the public examinations. Common examinations are strictly in the lines of Public Examinations are conducted to spot the below average students and to pay special attention. As mentioned above special guides and minimum level materials have been prepared and distributed to all students of 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> standard freed from cost. These measures are improved the performance of the students. Except this, the Question Bank Books published by the Parent Teachers Association was also purchased and distributed to the students free of cost.

The teachers working in the Adi-Dravidar and Tribal welfare schools are covered with orientation training which is imparted through DTERT (Department of Teachers Education Research and Training) by using modern methods of teaching and new techniques.

The scheme of providing library facilities in schools is implemented right from 1981-82 and books to High and Higher Secondary School is provided once a year. Except this, the Government has ordered to purchase Competition Success Review Journals and Manorama Year Book to all High Schools and Higher Secondary Schools and all hostels so on improve the overall knowledge of the students.

The Computer Education as one of the subjects in the Higher Secondary School of this Department was introduced during 1996-1997. These facilities are extended to a greater number of schools each year.

The Hostel facilities are arranged to students who study in schools, colleges and Industrial Training Institutes. Every year new hostels are opened based on the requirements and financial resources available.

There are 1204 hostels for Adi-Dravidar and 37 Hostels for Tribals functioning under this Department in the State. Out of these hostels, one at Dindigul and another at Ambur are exclusively intended for children whose parents are engaged in unclean occupation. The District Collectors are authorized to admit students in hostels 10% over and above the sanctioned strength. The boarders of the hostels are given with boarding and lodging freed from cost

All boarders in school hostels are provided with uniforms free of cost. Use of firewood for cooking food within the hostels creates an unhygienic atmosphere in the hostel kitchen, besides being a time consuming and costly one. The hostel menu provides for serving Idlis and Dosa is to boarders periodically and therefore grinding the rice and black gram dhall is necessary. With a view to restrict expenditure on grinding charges and pilferage, wet grinders have been supplied to all hostels. For the new hostels, wet grinders are supplied at the time of opening and gas connections are also supplied at the time of opening.

The Medical officers of the Government Hospitals and Primary Health Centers should pay visits to hostels every month for general medical checkup of the boarders. The scheme is implemented by the Director of Medical and Rural Health Services and Director of Public Health and Medicine.

All the hostels maintain by this department are provided with library facilities. From the year 1996-1997, library facilities are provided to any or all new hostels at the time of opening. The Colour Television sets were supplied to all college and ITI hostels.<sup>vii</sup>

The students in standards VI to X are exempted from the payment of special fees levied by the schools and also the examination fees payable for the 10<sup>th</sup> standard and 12<sup>th</sup> standard public examinations to the Directorate of Government Examinations. There is no income limit for this. The special fees on their behalf are reimbursed to the educational institutions concerned by the District Adi-Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Officers and the examination fees to the Directorate of Government.

The award of pre matric scholarship to the children of those engaged in unclean occupation (scavenging of tanning, flaying and sweepers) irrespective of income, community and religion are being covered under this programme. The Government of India bears 50% of the total expenditure over and above the committed level.

Both residential and Non - residential scholarships are awarded to the students belonging to Ad-Dravidar and Tribal communities (excluding Adi-Dravidar Converts to Christianity) who continue their studies beyond 10<sup>th</sup> Standard.

Book banks are established to assist Adi-Dravidar and Tribal students pursuing Medical, Engineering, Agriculture, Veterinary and Polytechnic, Law, Master in Business Administration, Chartered Accountancy, Bio-Science and other similar technical courses. The scheme has been extended to Indian Medicine and Homeopathy from the year 1993-1994.

The Government have converted the loan scholarship scheme for Higher Education to a principally grant based scheme called Higher Educational Special Scholarship (HESS) for the Adi-Dravidar and Tribal students to pursue higher education from the year 2002-2003. Under this scheme, Adi-Dravidar, Tribal, and Adi-Dravidar converted to Christianity students residing in institutional hostels and pursuing graduate, post graduate and professional courses are eligible for Scholarship of Rs.6500/- once a year for degree course and Rs.7000/- p.a. for P.G. and Professional Courses provided their parental/ Guardian annual income does not exceed Rs.50,000/-. Out of the above amount of Rs.7000/-. 25% Scholarship is given as loan and 75% as grant to medical students.

From 1999-2000, the Adi-Dravidar / Tribal students who get admission application to join degree, post graduate courses and professional courses like Medical, Engineering, Agriculture, Veterinary and Law are exempted from payment of admission fees and registration fees. For people who are eligible for Government of India and State Post matric Scholarship the admission fees and registration fee will be sanctioned to the students along with scholarship. For people who are not eligible for the above scholarships, the amount will be reimbursed by the Directorate of Adi-Dravidar Welfare, Chennai.

The Department of Adi-Dravidar and Tribal Welfare has been distributing free house site pattas to the poor houseless Adi-Dravidar and Tribal families whose annual income is less than Rs.16000/- in the rural areas and Rs.24000/- in the urban areas. In the case of Municipal Corporations, one cent of land is distributed, while in Municipalities one and a half cent and in other places 3 cents of land is distributed as free house site patta. Every year specific target is being fixed for this purpose and the Special Tahsildars (Adi-Dravidar Welfare) who are Land Acquisition Officers are acquiring land for implementing the scheme as per the provisions made in the Tamil Nadu Act, 31 of 1978. The land is also acquired through private negotiations by a committee headed by the District Collectors and the land so acquired by private negotiation is distributed to eligible persons.

Under Indira Awas Yojana Scheme, 60% of houses are distributed to Adi-Dravidar and Tribal from Rural Development Department. Supply of protected drinking water to Adi-Dravidar and Tribal habitations is one amongst the scheme given priority under infrastructure development. The utmost financial limit for digging a well is Rs. 75,000/-. Bore wells are being provided rather than ordinary open wells. Pipe lines are extended if overhead tanks are available nearby.<sup>viii</sup>

Burial grounds to Adi-Dravidar habitations and pathways to burial grounds are undertaken under this scheme. Funds are provided for acquiring and purchasing land for this purpose. The Panchayat Unions are also providing basic amenities to Adi-Dravidar habitations from their funds. For this purpose, 15% for drinking water facilities and 10% for link roads are given as share of this Department. The Government has sanctioned a scheme for grant for financial assistance to Adi-Dravidar/ Tribal and Adi-Dravidar converted to Christianity to satisfy the expenditure connected with funeral rites on the death of a member of their family. These benefits are distributed through the respective local bodies.

Community Halls are constructed in a vary phased manner from 1971- 1972 onwards in Adi-Dravidar colonies to cater to the needs of Adi-Dravidar for the purpose of conducting marriages, social functions, meetings etc.

The Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 (PCR) was enacted so on to give legal authority to ensure justice and equality among all sections of the Community. In Tamil Nadu, 34 mobile police squads each headed by an Inspector of Police are functioning. The Inspector General, Social Justice and Human Rights, Chennai monitors enforcement of the P.C.R. Act 1955 and therefore the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of atrocities) Act 1989. Seven Supervisory squads each headed by a Deputy Superintendent of Police are functioning at Chennai, Trichy, Thanjavur, Villupuram, Ramanathapuram, Tirunelveli and Madurai. Four Special Courts of Judicial First-Class Magistrates are functioning at Thanjavur, Tiruchirappalli, Madurai and Tirunelveli. A sum of Rs. 2.00 lakhs are awarded as compensation for the family who lost life within the riots. Additionally, employment to at least one member of the family of the deceased or one house is to be given, if necessary.

To educate the public about the evils of untouchability, a mobile publicity unit with staff and audio-visual equipment was established in 1983. This unit has its headquarter at Chennai and covers all the Districts. To educate the public, a feature film, "Puthiya Sarithiram" Valu Valavidu and Kalam Maripochu was screened in villages and in television. Every year, this Department participates in the Republic Day pageantry float depicting the new schemes introduced by this Department. Besides the above, the subsequent measures have also been undertaken for the removal of untouchability.<sup>ix</sup>

"Manithaneya VaraVizha" is celebrated in all the districts in the states from 24<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> January of every year by conducting meeting to focus the attention of the public. The Government is sanctioning a sum of Rs. 5.15 lakhs every year for this programme.

Artists like Villupattu Kuzhu are engaged to awaken the opinion of the public through the medium of songs. Rs.350 has been enhanced to Rs.700 towards the honorarium for every Villupattu program. During 2007-08 a sum of Rs.1.42 lakhs has been sanctioned for this program.

Community feasts are arranged every year on 26<sup>th</sup> January, 15<sup>th</sup> August, 2<sup>nd</sup> October and on any local important day of that District. Voluntary Organizations are involved in arranging the Samabandhi Virundhu or Community feasts.<sup>x</sup>

The Adi-Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department allocates required funds to the Director of Social Welfare for maintaining the Cottage Industries Training Centers. One training center in Tailoring and Weaving is maintained at Pechiparai in Kanniyakumari district by the Social Welfare department.

The All-India Civil Services Training Centre for Adi- Dravidar and therefore Tribals and the Special Training Institute for Backward Class and Most Backward Classes are merged and brought under the control of Anna Institute of Management.<sup>xi</sup>

The Director of Employment and Training is giving special coaching / short term coaching to Adi- Dravidar for various competitive examinations conducted by Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission, Union Public Service Commission, Banking Service Recruitment Board, Life Insurance Corporation, General Insurance Corporation etc. through Special Coaching Centers for the Adi-Dravidar / Tribal in the State.

Under this scheme the poor tribal those who are below poverty line are distributed sewing machines, Iron boxes, carpentry tools and instruments at free of cost.<sup>xii</sup>

The tribal welfare programmes launched by the Tamil Nadu Government for the upliftment and improvement of the condition of living and bring into main stream has brought a positive change. The tribals gradually adopted those schemes and try to move away from their old tradition. The census of 2011 showed a positive development in day to day life of tribals.

<sup>i</sup>Details of the Scheme for the information of General Public, Adi-Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department, Tamil Nadu Government, 2018-2019, p.1

<sup>ii</sup>Ibid, p. 2.

<sup>iii</sup>F. No.18015/03/2019-TSP, Government of India, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, New Delhi, dated 17.09.2019.

<sup>iv</sup>G.O. No.438, Social Welfare Department, Government of Tamil Nadu, 1971, p.78

<sup>v</sup>Ibid, p.20

<sup>vi</sup>Annual Report, Library, Adi-Dravidar High School, 2001-02.

<sup>vii</sup>Information from Adi-Dravidar Hostel, Vellore District

<sup>viii</sup>Indebtedness of Scheduled Tribes in Tamil Nadu, A Research Study, and Institute of Techno Economics studies, Madras, 1978, p.6.

<sup>ix</sup>Adi-Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department, Policy Note, 2018-2019, pp.50-51.

<sup>x</sup>Ibid.

<sup>xi</sup>Adi-Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department, Policy Note, 2018-2019, pp.80-81.

<sup>xii</sup>Ibid.