

Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry to launch a Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNTs (SEED)

Under the scheme, good quality coaching, health insurance, livelihoods initiative at community level and financial assistance for construction of houses will be provided to the members of DNT/NT/SNT Communities

Department of Social Justice & Empowerment develops an online portal for the implementation of the SEED

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The Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Dr. Virendra Kumar will launch the Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNTs (SEED) at 11:00 A.M. on Wednesday, the 16th February, 2022 at Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi for the welfare of De-notified, Nomadic and Semi Nomadic Communities.

The De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes are the most neglected, marginalized and economically and socially deprived communities. Most of them have been living a life of destitution for generations and still continue to do so with an uncertain and gloomy future. De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-nomadic Tribes somehow escaped the attention of our developmental framework and thus are deprived of the support unlike Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Historically, these communities never had access to private land or home ownership. These tribes used forests and grazing lands for their livelihood and residential use and had "strong ecological connections. Many of them are dependent upon various types of natural resources and carve out intricate ecological niches for their survival. The changes in ecology and environment seriously affect their livelihood options.

The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment took a decision in February, 2014 to constitute a National Commission for De-Notified, Nomadic and Semi Nomadic Tribes for a period of three years. This National Commission was constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri Bhiku Ramji Idate. This commission has given its report in December, 2017. In its report, the commission prepared draft lists of DNT/NT/SNT Communities. The details of the number of DNT/NT/SNT communities.

Based on the National Commission's recommendations, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has constituted the Development and Welfare Board for De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities (DWBDNCs) in 2019. The Board has been mandated to formulate and implement welfare and development programmes for these communities. A Scheme for empowerment of DNT communities have been formulated for families having income from all sources of Rs.2.50 lakh or less per annum and not availing any such benefits from similar Scheme of Centre Government or the State Government. The Scheme will have following four components with an approximate cost of Rs 200 crore to be spent over a period of 5 years starting Financial Year 2021-22 to 2025-26.

To provide coaching of good quality for DNT/NT/SNT candidates to enable them to appear in competitive examinations.

A component of free Coaching for DNT Students has been envisioned for the educational empowerment of these communities. The objective of this component is to provide good coaching quality for DNT candidates to enable them to appear in competitive examinations/ admission to professional courses like medicine, engineering, MBA, etc for obtaining an appropriate job in Public/Private Sector. The selection of the candidates for each course will be based on system generated merit list through the portal. Approximately, 6250 students will be provided free coaching under this component in five years. The total funds spend in the five years will be Rs.50 crore.

To provide health insurance to DNT/NT/SNT Communities.

Members of DNT/NT/SNT communities are likely to have little or no access to medical facilities and other benefits available under the mainstream health policies. They are so poor that they cannot afford private medical care. The primary objective of the scheme is to provide financial assistance to National Health Authority (NHA) in association with State Health Agencies (SHAs) for undertaking providing a health insurance cover of Rs.5 lakhs per family per year to DNT, NT and SNT families as per norms of "Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana. Approximately, 4,44,500 families will be covered under health insurance in five years. The total funds spend in the five years will be Rs.49 crore.

To facilitate livelihoods initiative at community level to build and strengthen small clusters of DNT/NT/SNT Communities institutions.

The decline of traditional occupations of DNT/NT/SNT communities has exacerbated their poverty. A focus to support livelihood generation for these communities is required. The primary objective of the scheme is to provide financial assistance to National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) for undertaking institution building in association with State Rural Livelihoods Mission (SRLM) of state Governments/UTs at community level as a livelihood initiative to enhance productivity growth in key livelihood sectors for employment generation for DNT/NT/SNT communities through investments in institutional support, technical assistance. Approximately, 2,000 clusters will get benefit under this component in five years. The total funds spend in the five years will be Rs.49 crore.

To provide financial assistance for construction of houses to members of the DNT/NT/SNT Communities.

At present, a very large number of families belonging to the DNT/NT communities are without permanent shelters and dwellings. In view of their changing Socio-economic scenario, a large number of DNT communities are trying to settle themselves at one place or the other and take to alternative professions. It has been seen that DNTs are living in slum conditions all over the country both in urban and rural areas. They live either in the open, small and makeshift tents or in small hutments or improvised pucca or kachha houses.

Considering the shortage of houses for DNTs, it has been proposed to earmark a separate outlay for PMAY to support specific importance in providing houses only for DNTs living in rural areas who have not taken benefits of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana as SC, ST, OBC and are living below poverty line. The admissible support is Rs 1.20 lakhs in plains and 1.30 lakhs in hilly areas (per unit assistance). Approximately, 4,200 houses will be constructed under this component in five years. The total funds spend in the five years will be Rs.50 crore.

PORTAL: The Scheme will be implemented through a portal, developed by the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment. The portal consists of two modules. One module for registration of the applicant with details of his family, income, occupation, aadhar and bank details, caste certificate, etc. Upon completing the registration, the applicant will be assigned a unique ID (UID) number, which will be his permanent registration number. With this UID, the applicant can apply of one or other components of the scheme, subject to his eligibility. The second part consists of the scheme component for which the applicant wants to seek benefit with his UID as Login id and his mobile as his password. The portal will create a permanent database and can be retrieved whenever the applicant desires to enroll for new component.

The funds will be transferred directly to the beneficiaries in their account. The other implementing agencies are Ministry of Rural Development, National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) and National Health Authority (NHA).

MG/RNM/ABH

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