

Summary Report on the visit of the Secretary, Ministry of Tribal Affairs to Odhisha on 21-26 February 2014

1. On 22.2.2014, I visited Tribal Research Institute and Tribal Museum. We had discussion about strengthening of TRI, Scheduling issues and the manpower problem. Both in the Department and the TRI.

On 23-24 February 2014, I visited Keonjhar District.

3. On 25.2.2014, I went to Puri.

4. On 26.2.2014, I attended a Video Conference of Collectors relating to FRA. I was also briefed about the IFAD sponsored program, where the State Government now has the biggest financial contribution.

5. Education :

(i) The ERMS at Ranki is one of the older institutions. The infrastructure needs major repairs. There is no shortage of funds. Besides, the building, things like storm water drainage and upkeep of kitchens and toilets are issues.

(ii) The teachers have to be taught about making teaching relevant to the context which will be appreciated by the students so that the basics of subjects are ingrained and internalized from school days. For this purpose, the TRI should be able to raise the manpower including providing training to the teachers.

I visited the residential girls school at Gonasika. The drop out rate is rather high despite the good quality of accommodation. The existing students should be engaged on holidays to meet the drop out students. There are vacancies in higher classes because of continuous drop out. Students from outside the area of the micro project should be encouraged to come here so that they have the safety of a residential school and also the resources are utilized

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properly. The computers should be put to use immediately. Kitchen garden should be taken up and this will also help the students to learn backyard kitchens.

6. **Area of Micro Project** : The micro project at Gonasika for Juanga which is a PVTG covers 35 villages out of 136. It was not clear why all the 136 villages cannot be covered under the micro project. This may be examined by the State Government and if necessary a proposal may be submitted to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs for inclusion of all the villages.

### Strengthening of TRI

6.1 The charge of Director is held by the Director (Tribal Affairs) Dr. A.B.Ota. While there is no question of his capability, the TRI Director has to be a full time officer. The Ministry is considering to make TRI, Bhubaneswar a National Institute. The budget for research for 2014-15 has also been enhanced.

6.2 In terms of capacity building, there are areas in which the TRI should be strengthened in terms of manpower. Training of tribal people relating to livelihood is one issue. It is also observed that Odisha Welfare Service officials are not provided basic training after recruitment. The TRIs have to be strengthened for this purpose. The third aspect of capacity building relates to in-service training on laws relating to tribals both for officials and elected tribal leaders. Such Acts would include Forest Rights Act (FRA), PESA Act and Regulations in Scheduled Areas. The issue of full time Director for TRI was also discussed with the Chief Secretary.

7. In Ghatagaon Block, I visited a Coconut Processing Unit. This Unit will process the enormous number of coconuts which come to the temple of Ghatagaon. The main marketable output will be coconut oil. Coconut oil cake also has a market primarily as cattle feed. Plan should be made to manage the garbage and waste products. Future value addition should be in the form of

coconut powder and coconut milk. A separate enterprise for tribal people for using the coir should be attempted and funds for this can be accessed from the Coir Board besides other Centrally Sponsored Schemes.

8. In Deulia village of Badasahi PS in Mayurbhanj district, some people have been arrested on the charge of taking advance from a brick kiln owner and not attending to work. Such action by the police will aggravate bondage and its fall out like violence. Since, there was bandh in Mayurbhanj, I spoke to the Collector, Mayurbhanj over telephone and these persons were released on bail on the same day. I was informed that the SP of the district will supervise the case and see that there is no injustice in the matter.

9. **Forest Right Act (FRA) :**

- (i) I visited Balabhadrapur. The Record of Rights (RoRs) show the name of the Tribe.
- (ii) In Bayakumutia village of Bansapal Tehsil, RoR have been issued to individuals. The land which is being given was revenue land namely Parbata category and therefore some correction in the map has been made. This work should be completed. The village registers and maps should be modified to show the change of classification of land. However, no community rights have been settled. No community land has been recorded. The holders of Record of Rights also have not been shown the exact area for which they have been settled. In case of settlement of an encroached land relating to Plot No. 68/1293, the map has not been corrected nor possession has been delivered. It was agreed that on 28.2.2014, the Tehsildar will come to identify the land and also record in a Gram Sabha meeting. With reference to the above case, I also visited Bayakumtia GP. While some cases of settlement of FRA are recorded in the Gram Sabha / Palli Sabha

register of the GP, the particular cases of Bayakumutia GP had not been recorded in the bound register. This creates the potential of manipulation in future. On 28.2.2014, while delivering possession, the special Palli Sabha meeting should be convened and the decisions recorded in the regular bound register for Palli Sabha meetings.

- (iii) On the basis of a complaint received relating to improper implementation of FRA in Jalahari, Bholbeda, Jajanga, Jurudi, Banaspani and Khuntpani coming under Joda-Badbil Tehasil for taking Gram Sabha's approval for diversion of 342.602 hect. of forest land of the total 456.100 hect. of land in favour of M/s. Essel Mining and Industries Ltd. In Keonjhar Distt., I had requested the District Collector to call for the records which were shown to me at Keonjhar Circuit House. The notice which had been issued showed that a meeting had been convened to obtain the approval of Gram Sabha for transfer of Forest land to one M/s. Essel Mining and Industries Ltd. In the same meeting, the Forest Rights were to be ascertained. The minutes of the meetings show that in the same meeting it was decided that the villagers have no Forest Rights. It was also decided that they had no objection to transfer forest land to the above firm. The same meeting also records the kind of periphery development expected from the above firm. This is in complete violation of Forest Rights Act. The process of envisaged under FRA has to be completed before the question of transfer of forest land for non-forest use is considered under the Forest Conservation Act. Therefore, the transfer of forest land to the above firm is invalid, as it is in violation of Forest Rights Act. I advise that the recommendation should be withdrawn by the Collector. This point has been clarified during the video conference on 26.2.2014.

- (iv) During the Video Conference, another District Collector also raised the issue that the FRA does not allow for any revision or review of a wrong decision. I have clarified that the proceeding under FRA is not a judicial order and is an administrative order. Therefore, in case the administrative authority finds that a mistake has been committed, they will be competent to review the order after following the principles of natural justice.

10. **Village Gonasika :**

- (i) While forest land has been delivered, community land and community rights have not been settled. This should be done.
- (ii) The land which has been settled is in the hilly slopes. Land development and small irrigation works like farm ponds should be taken up for augmenting irrigation and encouraging cropping intensity.
- (iii) The level of anaemia is quite high. Children IFA tablets are not available and the PA, ITDA should coordinate this.
- (iv) There is large scale potato cultivation. The nitrogenous fertilizer like urea which is used is in quantities lower than what is required. The soil itself is low in nitrogen content. There should be a proper cropping pattern to alternate this with Legumes as otherwise the soil will become unsuitable for agriculture in a couple of years. A watershed development should be taken up. Crop diversion, particularly, vegetable, orange, mangoes should be attempted.
- (v) One NGO has entered into the Anganwadi Program. This particular NGO has been guilty of financial misappropriation and also has no role in the Anganwadi Program. In a couple of vigilance cases in Brahampur court, this NGO is an accused. It will be advisable for the district administration to maintain distance from this NGO.

11. I was informed that Tileibani Block of Deogarh district has more than 50% ST population as per 2011 census. This should be brought under TSP. DDG, MoTA has prepared an analysis of areas where administration support is required. This proposal may be processed. Consultants may be engaged by MoTA from own funds or WB project. Expenditure under TSP is better where administrative structures are strong as in case of **Andhra Pradesh**. The TSP should focus on strengthening administrative structures for implementation of various CSS, for which funds are adequate.

*Hrusikesh Panda*  
(Hrusikesh Panda)  
Secretary  
3.3.2014

Copy to :-

1. ✓ The Principal Secretary, ST and SC Development Department, Government of Odisha
2. Dr. A.B.Ota, Director, Tribal Welfare, Odisha
3. The Collector and District Magistrate, Keonjhar, Odisha
4. Education / FRA Division, MoTA, New Delhi. FRA Division to forward the relevant position in Para 9(iii) to MoEF
5. DDG, MoTA regarding Para 11 to put up a proposal for administrative support in areas where ITDAs do not exist.