One-Day National Seminar on
Status of SC and ST Sub-Plans in the Post-Planning Commission Period
To be held at MIDS, 28th March 2018
Organized by MIDS, Chennai
Sponsored by ICSSR, New Delhi

Concept Note

Before the NITI Aayog replaced the Planning Commission, there was an interface between the Government and the Planning Commission (PC) in determining budget allocations, at least at the policy level. Further, the PC also had a role in the planning process for socio-economic development of Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and other marginalized social groups. This intervention process got a concrete shape in the late 1970s in terms of establishing a clear mechanism of the Special Component Plan (SCP), besides general planning.

The logic behind these interventions through Sub-Plan outlay was: fair distribution of resources, participation in economic development, protection from violations of rights and empowerment of SCs and STs to relieve them from the deprivations they faced. The Sub-Plan allocations both at the Centre and State level was in proportion to the population size of the target groups. The monitoring and review of the Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan (SCSP) and the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) was done periodically by the nodal Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment and Tribal Affairs at the Central level and by the Department of SC/ST/Social Welfare at the State level. The PC used to periodically issue guidelines and strategies for the implementation of SCSP and TSP. It had also insisted that Central Ministries/ Departments follow its guidelines. For many decades, many Governments treated the SCSP and TSP callously. Only in early 2000 a group of bureaucrats, politicians and activists, committed to SC/ST empowerment, through their concerted effort and consistent struggles brought these Sub-Plans to the public attention.

In this context, it is to be noted that in 2008-09 the Comptroller and Auditor General of India made the significant observation that a sum of around rupees 3.75 lakh crores, which were supposed to be utilized for the development of underprivileged – SCs and STs – were unscrupulously diverted for other purposes. Following this, Dalit movements and NGOs spearheaded campaigns for proper implementation and monitoring of the SCP across the country. This also brought into the wider public's attention that in the past, specified fund allocation for the SC/ST Sub-Plans were being diverted by the Central and State Governments for some other purposes, such as for the Commonwealth Games, providing freebies etc.

As a result of consistent demands of the Dalits across the country, both the Central Government and some State Governments began to implement the SC and ST Sub-Plans based on the envisaged objectives. This is evident from the fact that a few States even passed legislations concerning this. For instance, the Andhra Pradesh Sub Plan Act 2013 and the Karnataka SC/ST Sub Plan 2014 are the testimony to this fact.

In this context, a one-day national seminar on **"Status of SC and ST Sub-Plans in the Post-Planning Commission Period"** is being organised to deliberate upon the pertinent issues related to the SC and ST Sub-Plans. The key questions in the absence of PC and plan expenditure are:

- What is the status of these Sub-Plans?
- How have recent budgets addressed special provisions for welfare of the marginalised?
- What are the alternative mechanisms regarding the allocation of funds, formulation, implementation and monitoring the SCSP and TSP?
- How have certain States enacted legislative mechanisms for the SCSP and TSP?
- Is a central legislation for SCSP and TSP feasible in the coming future?

These and some other questions need to deliberated and understood, including whether the Centre and State governments took cognizance of the significance and importance of the SC/ST Sub-Plans for the economic well-being as well as for providing social security to the underprivileged.

For Further Details:

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