

Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCSP) and Tribal Sub Plan (TSP)

Why in news?

Department of Science and Technology (DST) has started a process of preparing a blueprint for maximum outreach among Scheduled Caste and Tribe communities.

What is the objective of the process?

- This exercise aims to ensure that the budget allocated for the welfare of Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) benefits them the maximum.
- The DST recently held consultations with those associated with SC/ST communities.
- The industry body Dalit Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DICCI), tribal universities and institutions besides activists and thinkers from the communities were consulted.
- These brainstorming sessions are required to understand the ground realities from those who are part of these communities.

What is SCSP and TSP?

- Every year, the Union Budget makes allocations exclusively for the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe.
- This fund is spent through the Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCSP) and the Tribal Sub Plan (TSP).
- Narendra Jadhav Committee was constituted by the Planning Commission in 2010 in this regard.
- As per the recommendations of committee the earmarking of funds for all Central Ministries/Departments taken together should be at least 16.2% and 8.2% of the total Plan outlay, respectively, under the SCSP and the TSP.
- One of the aims of such dedicated allocation is to promote entrepreneurship among these communities.
- Currently, 29 Central Ministries and 37 departments are obligated to set aside funds under the SCSP and the TSP.
- For example, the DST has allocated Rs.104.85 crore each for the SCSP and the TCP in the current year's budget.

What are the concerns?

- The present system has too many flaws.
- First, NGOs and activists are not taking the schemes to the really needy.
- This is clear from the limited number of applications received for assistance.
- Second, there is more revenue expenditure than capital spending.

What can be done?

- The focus should be more on aspirational districts.
- There should be more incubators, especially in districts where the proportion of SC/ST population is high.
- The newly designed outreach program can help in preparing a strategy for systematic science and technology intervention.

How entrepreneurship among the community can be facilitated?

- Any entrepreneur needs three Ms for success — **Money, Market and Mentoring**.
- In terms of the first **M (Money)**, Mudra scheme (loans up to Rs.10 lakh) and Stand-up Scheme (loans up to Rs.1 crore) are given for start-ups.
- Credit guarantees (for loans between Rs.20 lakh and Rs.5 crore) and SC Venture Capital Fund (loans between Rs.50 lakh and Rs.50 crore) are given to existing businesses.
- In case of **marketing**, it has now been made mandatory for PSUs to procure at least 4 per cent off their requirements from SC/ST entrepreneurs,
- Similarly, for mentoring there is a hand-holding program for connecting them to the market as well as in capacity building.

Source: Business Line

