

OTELP Assistance for Landless Tribals

Express News Service

Bhubaneswar: The State Government has identified 18,000 landless tribal families to be provided assistance under the Odisha Tribal Empowerment and Livelihood Project (OTELP) for giving a boost to agriculture.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Tuesday reviewed the livelihood projects implemented by the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Development Department at Naveen Niwas. The Government has appointed 540 community resource persons in 1,042 villages under the OTELP implemented in seven tribal-majority districts.

Official sources said a programme for cultivation of vegetables in off season through drip irrigation has been taken up under the OTELP.

The programme has benefited 2,408 tribal families in the State. Besides, a ₹ 19-crore project has been taken up for giving a boost to the

income of ST women through poultry. This has helped 2,400 tribal families.

The poultry scheme is being implemented through 45 self-help groups (SHGs) and the government has provid-

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ed ₹ 2 crore for its implementation. Income generating schemes including development of kitchen gardens, horticulture and cultivation for forest produces are also being encouraged under the OTELP.

Official sources said though a target has been set to take up cultivation on 6,500 acres to promote these schemes, so far 1,600 acres have been utilised for these. Besides, the State Government has launched schemes at 27 places in different Integrated Tribal Development Agencies (ITDAs) for vege-

table farming and marketing of products. The scheme has been successful in Jashipur in Mayurbhanj district, Panposh in Sundargarh district, Kunduli in Koraput, Baliguda in Kandhamal, Banspal in Keonjhar, Komna in Nua-pada and Thumamul-Rampur in Kalahandi district.

Cold chains and marketing facilities have been created to encourage tribal farmers to opt for cultivation in a more profitable manner.

At all the 27 places, arrangements of a packing house, cooling chamber and refrigerated van have been made.

Odisha has become eligible for an incentive award of ₹ 22 crore from the Centre for successful implementation of livelihood schemes for the tribals. Development Commissioner RN Senapati, Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister AP Padhi, Secretary in the SC/ST Development Department Santosh Sarangi and senior officials were present.