

Government takes up immediate measures for livelihood and security of tribal gatherers and artisans in the backdrop of situation arising out of COVID-19

TRIFED to procure existing stock of tribal products worth Rs 23 cr from tribal artisans across the country

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In light of the unprecedented hardship faced by the tribal artisans, Government is taking several immediate initiatives to provide support to the tribal gatherers and tribal artisans. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has already hiked the MSP of items of Minor Forest Produce under the scheme 'Institutional Support for Development and Marketing of Tribal Products'. Under this scheme, TRIFED of M/o Tribal Affairs is associated with approximately 10 Lakh Tribal Artisan families. Since the past 30 days, owing to the nationwide lockdown, all commercial activities of the tribal artisans have come to a halt and the artisans are staring at uncertainty as their livelihoods have been impacted. They are stuck with large existing stocks and little or no sales. The items available with artisans range across several categories – Textiles, Gift & Assortments, Van Dhan Naturals, Metal, Jewellery, Tribal Paintings, Pottery, Cane & Bamboo among others.

In light of the above, following have been taken up to provide urgent support to the tribal community:

a) Purchase of Unsold Stocks:

Most tribal artisans rely on the sales of their tribal products for their livelihood generation and are hence in need of immediate relief. To ensure relief to the tribal families, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has approved purchase of existing available stock up from tribal artisans who are most affected in the current lockdown. Accordingly, TRIFED plans to procure tribal products worth approx. Rs. 23 Cr from tribal artisans across the country.

Additionally, TRIFED is reaching out to industry federations, major corporates and business organizations via video-conference webinars and discussions encouraging them to purchase stock of tribal artisans which may be utilised for:

- Outright purchase and sale
- Gifting Requirements
- Conference/Seminar items like folders, stationery, etc.
- Supplies for offices including decorative items such as paintings, dokra, etc.
- Franchisee model may be explored
- Bulk supplies of essential items (VanDhan Naturals) may be purchased, such as Honey, Soups,

Spices, Rice, Millets, Tea and Coffee varieties, among others and tie up for regular supplies

- In current situation Masks and hand sanitizers being made by some of the tribal artisans in adherence to guidelines issued by WHO, UNICEF, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.



(Inauguration of Mobile Vending Shop of Van Dhan Products of Chura Chandpur, Manipur based Van Dhan Kendras)





b) Provision of Monthly Ration to Tribes India Artisans

In order to provide some relief to Tribal artisans, TRIFED has also tied up with the Art of Living Foundation to associate with their #StandWithHumanity campaign by including a Stand with Tribal Families component. It involves procuring and distributing ration kits (while maintaining social distancing guidelines) worth Rs 1000/- to tribal families across India. Each ration kit includes items such as: 5 kgs Wheat Flour, 2 kgs Dal, 3 kgs Rice, 500 ml Oil, 100 gms Turmeric Powder, 100 gms Red Chilly Powder, 100 gms Cumin Seeds, 100 gms Black Mustard Seeds, 100 gms Curry Masala, 2 soaps.

c) Provision of Working Capital to small artisans

TRIFED is engaged in discussions with Financial Institutions to provide favourable funding terms for soft loan to tribal artisans, as revolving funds which may be availed by mortgaging their stock. Such provision of working capital and liquidity for the tribal artisans will enable them to survive this unprecedented hardship.

d) Provision of Masks, Soaps, Gloves & PPEs in Tribal Areas

The current situation due to Covid-19 has dealt a serious blow to the livelihoods of the poor and marginalized communities including the tribal artisans and gatherers, being the most vulnerable people in the country. This being the peak season for harvesting and gathering of forest produces in many regions which will lead to engagement of tribal gatherers into business and endanger their safety. To ensure the safety of the tribal artisans and gatherers, TRIFED intends to provide the 1 million Face Masks, Soaps & Gloves respectively and 20,000 PPE kits to the tribal beneficiaries.

Webinars & Covid 19 Advisories

TRIFED in collaboration with UNICEF has conducted a national level webinar on 09 April 2020 with all the State Nodal & Implementing Agencies, Mentoring Organizations, Van Dhan Kendras and other Stakeholders for creating awareness among the tribal gatherers for following social distancing measures and maintaining necessary hygiene required for carrying out their operations.

Further, TRIFED in coordination with all the State Nodal Departments & Implementing Agencies have individually conducted State level webinars from 14 April to 17 April 2020 with regional units of UNICEF and participation from District Agencies, Van Dhan Kendras, Mentoring Organizations. The information material was made available in regional languages by UNICEF in the form of flyers, digital pocket book, audio messages, presentations, etc.

TRIFED has also issued advisories related to Covid19 to the State Agencies, Nodal Department, Implementing agencies, VDVK members for taking precautions and safety measures during the MFP procurement and operations work.

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