



Eklavya Model Residential Schools

The Central Government has approved the proposal of setting up of Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs) under **Ministry of Tribal Affairs**.

- As per the **budget 2018-19, every block with more than 50% Schedule Tribe (ST) population and at least 20,000 tribal persons**, will have an **Eklavya Model Residential School by the year 2022**.
- These are being set up by **grants provided under Article 275(1)** of the Constitution.
- There will be an **autonomous society** under the ministry of tribal affairs — similar to Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti — to run the EMRSs.
- The objective of EMRS is to provide **quality middle and high level education to Scheduled Tribe (ST)** students in remote areas, not only to enable them to avail of reservation in high and professional educational courses and as jobs in government and public and private sectors but also to have access to the best opportunities in education at par with the non ST population.

Background

- STs, **constitute 8.6%** of the country's total population and **11.3% of the total rural population**.
- Despite the **increase in literacy rates** among STs from **8.53% in 1961 to 58.96% in 2011**, and the fact that the **Right to Education Act, 2009** makes it mandatory that all children between the **ages of 6 and 14** be provided **free and compulsory education**, significant disparities exist in enrolment rates, drop-outs, across states, districts and blocks.
- In the case of tribals, **dropout rates are still very high** - 35.6% in Classes I to V; 55% in Classes I to VIII; and 70.9% in Classes I to X in 2010-11, according to the Statistics Of School Education 2010-2011.
- According to a **2014 UNICEF-sponsored South Asia regional study All Children in School by 2015**, economic and socio-cultural factors are reasons behind the education deprivation for certain groups in India, especially SCs, STs and Muslims.
- The **India Human Development Survey** shows the incidence of poverty is **highest among the STs (49.6%), followed by the SCs (32.3%), and then the Muslims (30.6%)**.

Conclusion

- EMRS can impact quality education to Scheduled Tribes (ST) children. Apart from school building, including hostels and staff quarters, playgrounds, computer labs and teacher resource rooms are also included in the scheme. This initiative will benefit ST students immensely.
- By focusing on specific intervention to cater to the educational needs of STs, their quality of life is expected to improve to the level of the rest of the social groups and a visible impact by the 2021 Census.

