PM Van Dhan Yojana

Part of: GS-I- Social issue (PT-MAINS-PERSONALITY TEST)

Coverage of PM Van Dhan Yojana proposed to be expanded from the current 18,000 SHGS to 50,000 Van Dhan SHGS, coverage of tribal gathers to be increased three fold to 10 lakh

Tackling an unprecedented crisis of the nature and combating the challenges thrown by the Covid-19 Pandemic require different and innovative approaches. One segment that has been severely impacted during the on-going crisis has been the tribal population. In such a scenario, the Van Dhan Start-ups, established under the scheme initiated by TRIFED, Ministry of Tribal Affairs has emerged as a source of employment generation for tribal gatherers and forest dwellers and also the home-bound labour and artisans.

1205 Tribal Enterprises have been established to provide employment opportunities to 3.6 lakh tribal gatherers and 18000 Self-help groups in 22 States.

Imp Points

- The slogan “Go Vocal for Local”, a Mantra in these troubled times, has been adapted to include ‘Go Vocal for Local Go Tribal – Mera Van Mera Dhan Mera Udyam’.
- The aim of the Start-ups scheme is to treble the coverage to 10 lakh tribal gatherers through the Covid-19 relief plan of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs under article 275(I).
- Started in 2019, the Start-ups spread rather quickly to all the 22 states, almost became a competition once the states realised the value added by this initiative.
- The critical significance of this programme for tribal livelihoods, which ensures that the proceeds from the sales of these value-added products go to the tribals directly.
- The value-added products benefit largely from the packaging and marketing that these tribal enterprises provide.
- The Van Dhan Vikas Kendras provide products such as wild honey, broomsticks, donna pattal, Samidha sticks, coffee, bay leaf, bel pulp were displayed.
- The tribal affairs offer a ray of hope for home-bound tribal labour and artisans through van dhan start-ups.
- The uniqueness of the whole exercise is that it has managed to create market linkages and to transform tribal gatherers into entrepreneurs.

Manipur model

Many of these tribal enterprises are connected to markets and have received many orders already. As an example, the efforts of the start-ups in Manipur which have turned out to be a model enterprise for the rest of the country, in terms of the packaging, innovations, and training.

In Manipur, 77 Van Dhan Kendras have been established in the State for value addition and processing of forest produces. The Van Dhan Kendras have reported sales of MFP products worth Rs. 49.1 lakhs since September 2019 What stood out in the case of Manipur is the exemplary food safety and hygiene standards adopted by these 77 centres that have been
established, the superb attractive packaging of the processed products such as Amla juice, tamarind amla candy and plum jams, and the innovative branding and marketing of these products. A mobile van service has also been started in one of the districts to ensure the selling of these products.


What is Van Dhan Scheme?

The scheme aims at the economic development of **tribals involved in the collection of Minor Food Produces (MFPs)** by helping them in optimum utilization of natural resources and providing them with a sustainable livelihood.

Under this scheme, the Van Dhan Vikas Kendras constituted, provide skill up-gradation and capacity building training and setting up of primary processing and value addition facilities.

Implementation of the Van Dhan Scheme

The implementation of the Van Dhan Yojana is administrated through the Ministry of Tribal Affairs at different levels:

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<th>Level</th>
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<tr>
<td>National Level</td>
<td>Nodal Department is the Ministry of Tribal Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central Level</td>
<td>The Nodal Agency is TRIFED India <em>(Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India)</em></td>
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<td>State Level</td>
<td>State Nodal Agencies for <strong>Minor Forest Produce (MFP)</strong> and District Collectors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Level</td>
<td>An SHG consisting of approx 30 members to form a <strong>Van Dhan Vikas Samuh</strong></td>
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- The local **Van Dhan Vikas Kendras** are managed by a Managing Committee *(a Self-Help Group)* that consists of Van Dhan SHG representatives.
- At the unit level, the members of **Van Dhan Vikas Samuh** are then trained and provided with working capital to add value to the products, which they collect from the jungle.

The tribals will be trained on sustainable harvesting, collection, primary processing and value addition. They will be formed into clusters to aggregate their stock in tradable quantity and link them with the facility of primary processing in Van Dhan Vikas Kendra.

These Kendras play a significant role in the economic progress and development of tribes. They also help the tribals utilize their natural resources in the best possible way providing them with a sustainable livelihood based on Minor Forest Produce from the MFP-rich areas.

The central and state governments will provide necessary support by creating infrastructure and providing enabling environment for undertaking value addition on systematic scientific lines.

TRIFED

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs launched the **Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED)** as the nodal agency for implementing the Van Dhan Yojana.
Federation of India (TRIFED) in 1987.

**TRIFED has two significant functions:**

- Retail Marketing of Tribal Products
- Development of MFP *(Minor Forest Produce)*

**Objectives**

- Promoting and encouraging Socio-Economic development of the tribal community by improving and developing the market of the tribal commodities.
- TRIFED acts as a medium and a facilitator that helps the tribes sell their products.
- Some of the tribal products include tribal art, textiles, metal craft, tribal painting pottery, etc.
- These products and their sale contribute to a major part of their income.