

## **Jharkhand Cabinet approves 2 percent reservation for primitive tribe groups in education and jobs**

The Raghubar Das Cabinet has given the go-ahead for two per cent reservation to the Primitive Tribal Groups (also referred to as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups or PTGs) in education and government jobs. This has been done for the first time in a bid to help the PTGs become part of the mainstream. The PTGs have been facing the problem of stagnating or dwindling numbers over the last several years.

The proposal for giving them two per cent horizontal reservation was approved the Cabinet in a meeting held on Tuesday.

Officials said that, under the provisions, the two per cent reservation would be accorded to the members of the PTG at all levels of education. So far as jobs are concerned, the two per cent reserved jobs would be filled up from among the members of the PTG, who score the minimum qualifying marks, through a process to be decided upon in due course. Those making it to the merit list need not go through the same process, the officials said.

The reservation has been provided under Articles 16 (4) and 15 (4) of the Constitution of India, which pertain to allowing the government to provide for reservation for the backward classes and socially, educationally backward classes or for the Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribes.

There are eight scheduled PTGs in the state, with a combined population of over 2 lakhs in the state. These are: Asur, Birhor, Birjiya, Mal Pahari, Parahiya, Korwa, Savar (including Hil Kharia) and Sauria Paharia.

Secretary (Personnel and Administrative Reforms) Nidhi Khare said: "The move is aimed at institutionalising affirmative action required for these groups, which was, so far not available. With reservation being given in education and jobs, it is hoped that it would help them come up through the ranks."

Earlier, the state governments made a few attempts to give representation to the members from the PTGs. However, officials said, they proved to be inadequate. From all available accounts, the representation of the PTGs in the state government services has not improved.

In 2008, the then Madhu Koda government had approved recruitment of members from the PTGs directly into government jobs at the Class 3 and 4 levels, if they had completed graduation. “The provision had two major problems. Nothing was done to institutionalise the same. Also, with no reservation in education and the groups suffering from low literacy rates, the system proved inadequate,” said a source.

Usually residing in interiors, the PTGs have been facing several problems such as malnutrition and very low levels of literacy. Besides, they are also afflicted by many diseases, reluctant to rely on modern medicines.