



सत्यमेव जयते

राष्ट्रीय अनुसूचित जनजाति आयोग  
National Commission for Scheduled Tribes  
भारत सरकार  
Government of India

(भारत के संविधान के अनुच्छेद 338क के अंतर्गत दीवानी न्यायालय की शक्तियों का प्रयोग करने वाला एक संवैधानिक निकाय)  
(A Constitutional body exercising powers of a Civil Court under Article 338A of the Constitution of India)

File No. NCST-17013/KL/2/2020-APCR (RU-IV)

Dated: 22.02.2022

To,

**Dr. V.P Joy**  
Chief Secretary  
Government of Kerala  
Secretariat  
Thiruvananthapuram-695001  
E-mail: chiefsecy@kerala.gov.in

**Shri Pranabjyoti Nath,**  
Secretary,  
STs,SCs & BC Devl. Deptt,  
Government of Kerala  
Secretariat,  
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**Ms. Mrunmai Joshi**  
District Collector & District Magistrate  
District- Palakkad,  
Kenathuparambu, Kunathurmedu,  
Palakkad- 678013  
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**Subject: Representation of Shri K Kumaran, General Secretary, Kerala Vanvasi Vikasa Kendram, Kozhikode, Kerala regarding infant death toll rise among STs at Attappady Tribal Block in Palakkad District, Kerala.**

Sir/Madam

I am directed to refer to the subject cited above and to enclose herewith a copy of the Proceedings of the Sitting held on 10.2.2022 under the Chairmanship of Shri Ananta Nayak, Hon'ble Member, National Commission for Scheduled Tribes on the aforesaid matter for necessary action and submission of compliance report to this Commission within 30 days positively for placing the same before the Hon'ble Member, NCST.

(Encl: as above)

Yours faithfully,

*(Y.K. Bansal)*

Research Officer

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Copy to :  
Shri K Kumaran  
General Secretary  
Kerala Vanvasi Vikasa Kendram  
Kottooli P.O, District- Kozhikode-673016 (Kerala)  
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NIC, NCST (for uploading on website)

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCHEDULED TRIBES

Case File No. File No. - NCST-17013 (KL)/2/2020-RU-IV APCR

PROCEEDINGS OF SITTING HELD ON 10.02.2022 CHAIRED BY SHRI ANANTA NAIK, HON'BLE MEMBER, NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCHEDULED TRIBES (NCST) IN THE CASE OF REPRESENTATION OF SHRI K KUMARAN, GENERAL SECRETARY, KERALA VANVASI VIKAS KENDRAM, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, REGARDING INFANT DEATH TOLL RISE AMONG ST CHILDREN AT ATTAPADI TRIBAL BLOCK IN PALAKKAD DISTRICT, KERALA

Date of Sitting: 10.02.2022

List of officers present in sitting is Annexed.

The petitioner Shri K. Kumaran, General Secretary, Kerala Vanavasi Vikasa Kendram, Kozhikode, Kerala has submitted a representation dated 18.06.2020 regarding infant death toll rise at Attapady Tribal Block in Palakkad Dist. Kerala. It has been alleged that in Kerala State, the infant death toll among Scheduled Tribe children particularly in Attapadi Tribal Block in Palakkad District, has significantly arisen for last 06 years due to health related issues. In this regard, the Kerala Vanavasi Vikasa Kendram, Kozhikode has raised the issue before the higher authority in the Health Department as well as District Administration. But, there is no action. He requested the Commission for necessary action in the matter.

The Commission vide its Notice dated 18.11.2020 had sought a report in the matter. However, no report was received from the authorities concerned of Government of Kerala.

A sitting was held on 10.2.2022. Accordingly, the Secretary, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes Development Department, Govt. of Kerala and District Collector, Palakkad appeared. The representatives of the petitioner were also present.

In the sitting the Secretary, STs & BCs Development Department, Government of Kerala has submitted a written report. He also briefed about the case. He stated that the Attapadi Taluk is tribal dominated area with the majority of Irula, Muduga & Kurumba Scheduled Tribes. The State Government and District Administration have been taking specific steps to ensure inter departmental coordination and concerted action to avert infant death in the region. Nutrition and health are social issues which comprehensive interventions from all the departments. It is also pointed out that liquor problem among the STs is big issue in the tribal areas. The Govt's programmes are not effective till the address of this problem. It is also a fact that during the year 2012-2013, higher numbers of infant deaths among ST children were reported. Thereafter on the efforts of District Administration, the death toll has been decreased over the years. In 2021, only 9 infant death came to the notice of the Administration. The Govt. has enhanced the medical facilities, provided nutritious/theuraupatic food to the ST pregnant women and children, created awareness programmes, developed Community kitchen etc. The Tribal Development Department is also implementing various programmes for all-round Development of STs in the field of livelihood, mobile medical clinics, Agroecology, millet village programme, Indigenous planning, sustainable agriculture programmes etc. Further with the help of Gram Panchayats, Dairy and Poultry farms in the area are planned to be introduced so as to increase the



श्री अन्तानायाक

सदस्य/Member

राष्ट्रीय अनुसूचित जनजाति आयोग

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job prospects in the area. Thus, by converging schemes of all the departments and with a lifecycle approach, the issue to infant deaths in Attapadi is being addressed.

The District Collector, Palakkad has also submitted that the District Administration has implemented various schemes and programmes for the welfare of STs and also took serious steps to prevent the infant death toll in that areas. In addition, a Special Officer in the rank of SDM has been appointed to monitor the programmes for the development of STs in Attapadi area. Regular follow-up actions are being taken on monthly basis. For health related issues among STs, a Health monitor programme is being held through ST promoter, Anganwadi Teacher, Animator, Junior Public Health Nurse and Asha workers.

In the sitting, the petitioner has submitted that in the year 2012-13, the Attapadi region witnessed the highest number, 63 tribal infant deaths which shocked the country. In the last one decade the death toll is more than 121 numbers in the official records. In last year, such death tolls were highest, which increasing at alarming pace. The Malnutrition had been identified as the major reason for the deaths. However, there are other multiple reasons for rising of infant death toll among ST Children, which need to be investigated in detail. Further the non-scientific rehabilitation of STs and the Government's food delivery system are not line with their regular food habitats. In last decade, since then, the Centre and the State had spent over Rs.400 Crores for enhancing the living standards of the STs in the region, especially women. But, the funds spent by the State Government were used to create infrastructures and facilities, not for the development of STs.

The case was discussed in detail. The Commission observed that it is a serious issue and the State Government took corrective steps to prevent the infant death toll among the ST children. But, despite Government's efforts, the problem is still prevalent. There is need to focus towards delivery of food items as per their traditional food habits. However, the Commission recommends that: -

1. The State Government as well as the District Administration will consider to involve local NGOs and local ST promoters for enhancing healthy food habits among the STs as per their customs and culture.
2. A list of schemes and programmes being implemented for the STs in Palakkad District along with a comprehensive report about action taken by the District Administration for the development of STs be made available to the Commission.
3. The Commission will visit the tribal areas to assess the health and other issues of the STs in Palakkad District.

An action taken report may be sent to the Commission within 30 days.



(ANANTA NAYAK)  
MEMBER

**National Commission for Scheduled Tribes**

अन्तर्गत आयोग/ANANTA NAYAK

सदस्य/Member

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List of participants

Officers from Government of Kerala .

1. Shri Pranabjyoti Nath, Secretary ST,SC& BC Dev.Deptt,  
Government of Kerala
2. Ms. Mrunmai Joshi, DC & DM, Palakkad District

Petitioner

Shri P Sasidhar, Representative of Kerala Vanvasi Kendram

Shri Greesh Kumar, Representative of Kerala Vanvasi Kendram