

34



Friday, January 13, 2006

Prime Minister's Office

NAC DISCUSSES RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE PROGRAMME

The twenty-first meeting of the National Advisory Council (NAC) was chaired by Smt. Sonia Gandhi in New Delhi today and was attended by all the Members of the Council.

The discussions commenced with a presentation on the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme which is to be launched shortly in 200 districts in the country. The operational guidelines which are being finalised to bring about the delivery-oriented implementation of this programme and to ensure that the outlays are transformed into outcomes were reviewed. It was agreed that the process of wide discussions with groups of experts and NGOs and with the Ministry of Rural Development would need to continue and financial mechanisms put in place in order that the Programme is efficiently executed in different States and Districts. Note was taken of the specific suggestions offered by the Members of the Council who would remain associated with further consultations.

Discussions were held on matters concerning the Jarawa Tribe in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, including the protection of their cultural identity and natural habitat, health status and regulation of traffic. It was decided that the issues involved should be examined in a multi-disciplinary sub-group and also taken up with the Government of India at an early date.

A detailed presentation was made on the areas of concern relating to regional development and Centre-State Relations and on the issues emerging, over the years, in respect of plan allocations and Central Government assistance to the States and Union Territories. An Analysis of the causes underlying regional disparities and the problems of the less-developed States showed that several policy measures may require to be introduced to promote growth, infrastructure and human development on a more even basis. It was agreed that the results of the analysis may be studied further and shared with experts and specialists before being referred to the Government of India.

YSR/CS

*Discussed with
Jai (TV) use
minutes from
PMD.
18/1/06*

