

CHAPTER XVII : MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS

17.1 Excess release of grant

The Ministry failed to exercise due diligence while evaluating the proposal of the State Government of Andhra Pradesh under the scheme of setting up of Ekalavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS). Consequently, it released grants without reckoning the actual student strength in two EMRS in the State leading to excess release of ₹ 2.21 crore.

The Government of India issued (June 2010) revised guidelines for setting up Ekalavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) in the States/UTs with grants under Article 275 (1) of the Constitution of India. The objective of EMRS is to provide quality middle and high level education to Scheduled Tribe students in the remote areas to enable them to avail of reservation in high and professional educational courses and jobs in government and public/private sectors. Under these guidelines, the total sanctioned strength of the school was to be 480 students and the recurring cost during the first year for schools was fixed @ ₹ 42000 per child. Accordingly, the Ministry was to provide grants for a maximum of 480 students per EMRS.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh submitted (July 2012), a proposal for 2012-13 which *inter-alia* included continuation of 10 EMRS (₹ 2461.20 lakh), recurring cost of two newly sanctioned EMRS, and also for providing furniture in High schools in the State at a total estimated cost of ₹ 6958.99 lakh.

Audit examination disclosed that while evaluating the proposal, the Ministry failed to reckon the actual student strength of two EMRS and instead sanctioned grants as admissible for a maximum student strength of 480 and released first instalment of 75 *per cent* of grant in September 2012 as per the following details:

Location of the EMRS	Maximum admissible strength	Actual Strength	Amount Released (75 per cent)	Amount admissible (₹ 42000X180X75 per cent)	Excess Released (in ₹)
G V Veedhi Boys, District Vishakapatnam	480	168	15120000	5292000	9828000
Dornala (Girls), District Prakasam	480	90	15120000	2835000	12285000
Total					22113000

It was pointed out in audit (December 2014) that the Ministry failed to follow the prescribed guidelines while evaluating the proposal and incorrectly worked out the admissible grant to the State Government leading to excess release of ₹ 2.21 crore.

The Ministry stated (January 2015) that no further releases were made to the State Government beyond the 75 per cent of the sanctioned amount during 2012-13 and hence the total amount provided to the State Government during the year was within the permissible limit.

The reply is clearly an after-thought and not supported by the records at the point of transaction. Further, the records of the Ministry for the subsequent period indicate that, it had, in fact sought to adjust the excess release pointed out by Audit from the subsequent releases. This action of the Ministry vindicates the audit point.