



livelihoods

today and tomorrow

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**Special
Supplement**

**Manifesto
(2019-2024)**

Before each election, political parties in our country release manifestos. In the Manifestos, parties tend to give tall promises to satisfy people's needs. But mostly, they fail to implement their promises after coming to power. The election manifesto of political parties, which can be accepted as the most significant and effective communication tool of the parties, contains the plans, strategies and tactics for their political thoughts and beliefs on governing the country. Making political parties and political leaders accountable to what they promise in election manifesto is still a long shot in a democracy. But for a young democracy like India, having an election manifesto is a beginning to fulfill the dream of "of the people, by the people and for the people."



India is the largest country in South Asia and the second most populous country and democracy in the world. There are 29 states, 7 Union territories, 640 districts and 6 lakh villages in our country. As per 2017 census, India's population is 132 crore of which 52% are male and 48% are female. Our country has to ensure basic needs like food, clothes, shelter, education, health, etc for its people.

However, even after 70+ of Independence, poverty continues to be the most daunting challenge the nation is facing. In India, around 70.6 million people are living in extreme poverty and far away from development. People still do not get three meals a day. Starvation is an everyday reality in the country. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World Report, 2018 states that 195.8 million people are undernourished in India. About 51.4% of women are anemic, 38.4% of the children aged under five in are stunted. The Global Hunger Index, 2017 ranks India at 100 out of 119 countries. Even now, people do not get access to health benefits, education benefits, drinking water, housing facility, proper clothes, and most importantly do not get proper food. Poverty and its painful companions – hunger, infant and maternal mortality, chronic disease, illiteracy, etc., are still holding our country hostage. So far, fifteen governments have tried to tackle this issue and remove abject poverty from the country. But poverty manages to exist and even flourish, aided by new developments across the globe. Poverty reduction, therefore, remains the crux of the Indian policy.

Before each election, political parties in our country release manifestos. In the Manifestos, parties tend to give tall promises to satisfy people's needs. But mostly, they fail to implement their promises after coming to power. The election manifesto of political parties, which can be accepted as the most significant and effective communication tool of the parties, contains the plans, strategies and tactics for their political thoughts and beliefs on governing the country. Making political parties and political leaders accountable to what they promise in election manifesto is still a long shot in a democracy. But for a young democracy like India, having an election manifesto is a beginning to fulfill the dream of "of the people, by the people and for the people."

Political parties have to focus on major issues like agriculture, health, education, water and sanitation, infrastructure, women and children's development, vulnerable people's development, rural and urban development etc.

Agriculture:

Agriculture is the main sector for India's economic growth and is also the provider of the largest employment in our country. People have time and again said that India is an agriculture country. One famous quote proclaims that 'Raithe Raaju', or Farmer is a king, but it is not the truth because he is the most disappointed and neglected person in the country. Presently, the situation of agriculture is very pathetic in the country. Around 70% of the population lives in rural areas and 61.5% of that population depends on agriculture for their livelihood. Most farmers know that agriculture is not a profitable venture even though they are doing it. Most of the marginal and small farmers are migrating to cities for livelihoods purposes.

Agriculture is no longer remunerative, making farmers feel that their children would be better off in any profession other than agriculture. A survey states that 76% of the farmers want to give up farming in India. The agricultural crisis persists and has also worsened in some ways. Farmer's suicides have accelerated at an alarming rate and their deep distress continues. Decreasing incomes to farmers, high external input based agriculture and skewed support systems are some of the major problems that farmers are facing today. Though government has initiated a few relief programs; the dire situation of crisis has not improved as the underlying problems have not been addressed. Government continues to provide an impetus to agricultural growth, productivity and incomes and all possible support for our farmers; particularly women and small and marginal farmers in the country. Still, there are some measures which are needed to be taken by government to work on agriculture development in the country which are as follows -

- Farmers Input Support Scheme amount would be extended to Rs. 10000 per acre to all the small, marginal cultivators across the country.
- Climate Resilient Zero Budget Natural Farming will be promoted as a special mission in the country.
- Focus on increasing farmers' income. Farmers are not getting regular income from agriculture, and facing loss most of the time. Strong measures to improve forward and backward linkages would be assured.

Provisioning of Quality inputs, subsidies and market linkages by directing it through existing Farmers Institution & SHGs, beginning from backward regions.

- Provisioning loans at 3% (p.a.) for cultivation purposes like buying seed, fertilizers, etc., especially to small, marginal farmers, women farmers & tenant farmers.
- Irrigation is a major problem for farmers in India as it has 224 million hectares of dry land out of total 329 million hectares of agriculture land, which shows that dry land is more than irrigated land in India. We will extend the coverage of irrigation facilities to further 1 Crore Hectares.
- Every farmer above 55 years to be provided pension.
- Ensure universal crop insurance for all agriculture farmers in the country.
- Life Insurance to Farmers will be the most defining feature of our agenda.
- Farmers do not get quality and quantity of inputs like seeds, fertilizers etc., which has become a major problem in the country. Hence, providing quality agriculture inputs on time for farmers at subsidized prices will be another core agenda.
- Soil Health Card scheme is not reaching the ground level. Farmers apply fertilizers without knowing the soil status of their land as they are not aware about soil nutrition status. The implementation of Soil Health Card schemes would be directed by first increasing the man power & raising the capacities in the centres and recommending states for establishment of Mobile Soil Nutrition Status Vans to reach out to farmers.
- Increase the Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for agriculture crops.
- Promote the usage of modern technologies for water supply to fields by provisioning subsidies and incentives to farmers keen on adapting. 24-hour electricity is another area of prime focus.
- Increasing the capacities and establishment of newer godowns and cold storages at mandal/block levels for storing agriculture produce.
- Ensure strengthening of Water Users Associations at village level for management of cascades and farmers' development.
- Support more efficient water use technologies including reuse and recycling of water.
- Ensure sustainable groundwater management programme to secure the livelihoods of lakhs of farmers.
- Focus on agriculture education for farmers through trainings and field schools at village/block level on development models.
- Identify progressive farmers at village level and train them on modern and sustainable agriculture and use them as trainers.
- Special funds' allocation for agriculture research to develop new technologies for disease management of crops and livestock, high-yield varieties of crops etc.
- Cover 300 lakh hectares agriculture land under Integrated Water Management Programme for development.
- Provide concessional loans to groups/collectives of small and marginal farmers and women farmers up to Rs.5 lakhs.
- Encourage Solar Power generation as a substitute to the grid supply. Farmers, especially small, marginal and tenant farmers, require subsidy for solar installation.
- Linking MGNREGS to agriculture: The employment guarantee scheme should include all agricultural operations from sowing to harvesting.

- A special policy on usage of pesticides and fertilizers' in the country will be promoted.
- Enhance Farmers' Groups, cooperatives, networks and collectives of small scale farmers so that farmers develop and benefit from them.
- Establish seed culture labs, agriculture innovation labs and soil testing labs in block and district level.
- Focus on Horticulture, floriculture, bee-keeping, poultry, aquaculture development.
- Encourage cropping of millets as its crops are less in the country
- Ensure equal wages for women and men in agriculture sector. Under MGNREGS, women and men get equal wages for their work.
- Focus on welfare measures for farmers above 60 years in age, small and marginal farmers and farm labours.
- Ensure increase in formation of FPOs and develop them.
- Increase expenditure on livestock as small and marginal farmers own more than half of the country's total cattle and buffalos. However, only 12% of the total expenditure on agriculture is on livestock development. Government should put emphasis on livestock, fisheries, opening of veterinary schools and centres, fodder development through animal husbandry programmes and schemes like MGNREGS.

Labourers:

Labour development is the key to the revival of the economy. We believe in promoting a harmonious relationship between labour and the industry, with both playing an important contributory role in economic growth and development.

- Ensure Health Insurance & pension cover to this class.
- Special focus on labour working in hazardous industries to be assured.
- Provide Identity cards to unorganized sector labourers for providing concessions on travelling, medicine etc through institutions
- Establishing a commission to fast track justice to labour on violation of Contract Labour acts and ensuring a mandate for setting up a grievance cell to address labour issues will be a foci agenda.

Weavers:

Weaving is the second most important sector after agriculture in providing more employment. Indian weaving industry has conventionally been one of the most promising sectors of huge employment. As per the studies, weaving industry provides employment to 12.5 million people in the country.

Handloom weavers are facing severe livelihood crisis because of adverse government policies, globalisation and changing socio-economic conditions. The national and state governments do have several schemes, pertaining to production inputs, market support and development, meant for the protection and welfare of the weaving community. Fruitless operation of the schemes and changed context of textile industry, increasing competition from the power loom and mill sectors have been largely responsible for the crisis in the handlooms. Government should focus on implementation of some aspiration of weavers which are as follows:

- Government should provide quality inputs, namely yarn (raw material) & colours for subsidy.
- Direct more percentage of textile fund flows into promotion of Handlooms & social security to weavers. Bunker Yojana would be revived subjected to changes in age criterion.
- Develop more cooperatives of weavers.
- Set-up spinning mill for every 5000 looms and put up a centre to provide raw materials.

- Implementation of Minimum wages act and provision of all basic necessities to the weavers.
- 40% discount on weaving materials like thread and colours to weavers.
- Geographical Indication to all indigenous handlooms to be promoted
- Thrift Scheme to all weavers to be provided.
- Provide market linkage facilities to weavers, trainings on available e-platforms for better reachability to customers would be ensured
- Free Exports/imports trade-opportunity.
- Provide health insurance scheme for all weaving community.
- To increase weavers pension to at least Rs.2000/- per month.
- Women Weavers efforts would be backed by ensuring special subsidy on the purchase of handloom & pension
- GST on Handlooms would be exempted

Health:

Indian constitution says that healthcare in India is the responsibility of the state governments. WHO has placed India in 112th position among 191 countries of the world when it comes to health care.

Public healthcare is free for those who are below the poverty line. The public health sector encompasses 18% of total outpatients care and 44% of total inpatients care. But most of the people prefer to go to private hospitals because services are not good in public health hospitals in the country. In rural areas, public healthcare cater health services but quality is very poor.

In India, a mere 1 million allopathy doctors treat its 1.3 billion people. Around 74% of doctors are in urban areas for serving 28% of the urban population. Rural areas in India have shortage of medical professionals. Only 1.1 lakh of the doctors treat 72% of the rural population. This is a major issue for rural access to healthcare. Doctors are not interested to work in rural areas due to insufficient infrastructure. Only one in five doctors in rural India are qualified to practice medicine as per WHO report-2016.

The central and state governments do offer universal healthcare services and free treatment but it does need to take some measure to improve efficiency and accessibility. India needs a holistic care system that is universally accessible, affordable and effective. Around 85.6% people put their own money on health and nearly 60 million people are pushed into poverty and into the poverty trap.

- Spend 3% of GDP on healthcare.
- Extensive penetration of National Health Mission across the nation.
- Enact Right to health act
- Health Insurance to all would be ingrained as a policy
- Provide mobile healthcare vans in every district to do check-ups, blood and urine tests and other health tests etc
- Improve the ecosystem for promotion of institutional deliveries
- Swachh Bharat Mission will be promoted extensively
- Provide comprehensive healthcare and support to all persons living with HIV/AIDS. Work on reduction of new HIV infections.
- Ensure India is polio free through vaccination (Polio free country). Ensure universal coverage of routine immunization through campaigns and effective monitoring in districts throughout the country.

- Ensure effective implementation of all health related initiatives and strengthen the primary health workforce including ASHAs, ANMs, MMWs, AWWs, and community health workers etc., fill vacancies and improve their skills.
- Create more jobs in the health sector and start diploma course in public health.
- Strengthen primary healthcare infrastructure across the country.
- Provide more budgets on disease prevention, health promotion and improving the quality of health services at the primary care level.
- Private sector can also support the health promotion and disease prevention activities under Public Private Partnership and through the corporate social responsibility initiatives.
- Provide more trained para-medicals (like barefoot doctors) for serving in rural & tribal areas
- Put focus on improving health infrastructure.
- Hire sufficient health staff for our population as there is a shortage of medical personnel like doctors, a nurse etc., in India.
- Encourage Ayurveda, Unani and Homeopathy systems and make them less costly and ensure they will serve the common man in a better way. As allopathic health services are quite expensive.
- Increase the number of medical and para-medical colleges to make India self-sufficient in human resources.
- School health program should be a major focus area, and health and hygiene would be made a part of the school curriculum.
- Senior Citizens healthcare should be a special focus area.
- Universalization of emergency medical services-108.
- Programme for Women Healthcare with emphasis on rural, SC, ST and OBC in a mission mode.
- Mission mode project to eradicate malnutrition.
- Launch National Mosquito Control mission.
- Make potable drinking water available to all; thus, reducing water-borne diseases, which will automatically translate into Diarrhea-free India.

Education:

Education is the backbone of human development and is vital for ensuring equal social, political, and economic opportunities for all citizens. In 2009, the Right to Education Act was enacted for providing free and compulsory education for children between age of 6 to 14 years. As a result, country saw increased enrolment of children at the primary education. 1.98 lakh primary schools, 1.1 lakh upper primary schools have been constructed in rural areas for primary education. Now, major focus should be on improving quality education and making 100% children in the schools. Education is the most powerful tool for the advancement of the nation and an important weapon in fight on poverty.

Children represent 40% of total population of the country. Less than half of Indian children between the age of 6-14 years go to school. Around 35 million children aged 6-14 years do not attend school. In India, only 53% of habitations have a primary school, only 20% of habitations have a secondary school. In nearly 60% of schools, there are less than two teachers to teach Classes I to V. Almost 90% of working children are in rural India, 85% of working children are in the unorganized sector, 80% of child labour is engaged in agriculture works.

- Sarva Siksha Abhiyan would be implemented on similar ground.

- Universalization of secondary education & Skill Development to be the major agendas.
- Special Pedagogy & infrastructural support to specially-abled persons.
- Establishment of National e-library with membership to all accredited school & college enrolled students.
- Provide interest free educational loans to students at all levels especially weaker sections of society.
- Focus on improving Student-Teacher Ratio and also improve Student-Classroom Ratio in government schools in India.
- Take stringent and closely monitored steps to ensure social inclusion and provision of safe and secure school environment in all schools and ECCE centres and address the specific barriers to education faced by Adivasi, Dalit, Muslim minority children and girls and children with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.
- Atleast 3 % of the GDP would be extended towards Research & Development.
- National Commission to review & recommend on the status of commercialization & privatization of education in the country to be promoted.
- Promote girl education as only 60 per cent of girls get enrolled into schools and majority of them dropout before completing grade five.
- Fill all vacancies with fully qualified teachers and strengthen academic support systems in government schools.
- Increase residential schools as at least 20% of the students may require residential (ashram) schools. Another 5% of the students with merit may require Gurukulams.
- Mid-day meal scheme should be revitalized in terms of management and delivery.
- Correspondence courses should be started in new domains for self-employment, family run businesses, entrepreneurship and innovation, and these courses should be provided for free to women.
- Run short-term courses in the evenings, focusing on employable skills.
- Promote vocational training on a massive scale.
- Launch a national programme for digital empowerment through computer literacy of the people, especially the youth.

Artisans:

Artisans form a critical group of India's non-farm rural economy. The number of Indian artisans has been rapidly decreasing in the country.

- Schemes should be drawn for skills upgradation and enhancement of business opportunities for artisans like smiths, weavers, carpenters, hair-dressers, shoe-smiths, and potters.
- Improve market linkages, both national and international.
- A comprehensive policy catering to upgradation, Value addition like branding, packaging and technology to be enacted.
- Encourage the development of village level collectives of all artisans. They should be trained on marketing their products.
- Provide shed, storage space and electricity to continue their work.
- Provide quality raw materials for subsidy and also provide loans for lower interest rates.
- Artisan societies should be registered under producers' company.

- Designs by artisans should be patented. Duplicate and imitation of artisan products should be banned.
- Should give publicity to the products developed by artisans.

Vulnerable People

In India, different types of vulnerable people are there like elderly, women, single women, youth and disabled. Elderly, Women, Youth and Disabled have by and large one characteristic in common – ‘Vulnerability’. While natural vulnerability is only minimum or absent, vulnerability enforced by the society, culture and changes happening within them, industrialization, globalization leading to rapid urbanization, rapidly changing livelihoods and skill requirements and other economic transformations, global recession, unemployment, unprecedented consumerist trends, increased responsibility/ burden on women handling both household chores and external employment are more impacting their vulnerability. While migration of youth to urban areas for jobs are leaving the elderly behind in the villages to fend for themselves, lack of access to and/or poor quality of education and inadequate skills and trainings are hurting the youth.

Youth are falling prey to various influences and lack proper counselling mechanisms in place. Women are engaged in all kinds of works and much more than men but for the most part are continuing to struggle for equal treatment. As a society, we have minimal to no infrastructure in place that is disabled-friendly.

The Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) per lakh live births has reduced to 130 in the country. The Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) is 34 per 1000 live births in the country.

Ensure the safety and security of our women and children and provide them equal access to social, economic and political opportunities.

- Implement all laws for the welfare of children including the Child Labour (prohibition and regulation) act and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012.
- Strengthen and expand the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights.
- Stringent norms to curb child trafficking.
- Enactment of the Women Reservation Bill to reserve 33% of all seats in the Lok sabha and in all state legislative assemblies for women.
- Take action to formulate citizen charter for women’s safety and security.
- Improve women literacy 75% across the country.
- Establish more hostels for girls, particularly in tribal areas and hostels for working women with day care to encourage women to become well educated and earn their own livelihoods.
- Start functional help-lines in all major towns and cities and rural areas for prompt grievance redressal for women.
- Open special centres for women in all hospitals to provide medical, legal and psycho-social aid in cases of rape and domestic violence against women.
- Increase participation and reservation for women at all levels.
- Provide Special packages to GPs and Municipalities for women and children development.
- Provide credit, marketing and trainings for self employed women.
- Distribution of sanitary napkins for adolescent girls through SHGs and schools.
- Provide low interest loans to women for their livelihood purposes under NRLM.
- Put special focus on transgender community for their development. -
- Equal wages for men and women in agriculture sector and other sectors.

- Compensate 100% loss of wages for maternity leave up to 4 months to the mother from poor family.
- 1/3rd reservation to women should be strictly implemented in PRIs, State Legislative Assemblies, Parliament, Political parties and all other political forums.
- Gender budgeting in every department at both state and national levels and
- 1/3rd of any budget in both state and center should be spent on women.
- Compulsory and free education for at least upto graduation.
- Health care and emergency services are the rights of every women
- Provide insurance with low or no premium to all the poor women.
- Free soft skills training for women.
- Increase the number and categories of vocational trainings in the country and ensure that at least 1/3rd are women.
- Program for women healthcare in a mission mode, especially focusing on domains of Nutrition and Pregnancy - with emphasis on rural, SCs, STs and OBCs.
- Strict implementation of laws related to women, particularly those related to rape.
- Government should create an Acid Attack victims welfare fund to take care of the medical costs related to treatment and cosmetic reconstructive surgeries of such victims.
- Make police stations women friendly, and increase the number of women in police at different levels.
- Introduce self-defense as a part of the school curriculum.
- Using information technology for women's safety.
- Special skills training and business incubator park for women.
- Setting up special business facilitation center for women.
- Set up a dedicated W-SME (Women Small and medium enterprises) cluster in every district.
- Special adult literacy initiative should be started for women with focus on SCs, STs, OBCs, and slum residents.
- Ensure loans to Women Self Help Groups at low interest rates.
- Appropriate measures to check female feticide, dowry, child marriage, trafficking, sexual harassment, rape and family violence.
- Transform the quality of life of women in Rural India by providing electricity, tapped water, cleaner fuel and toilets in every home.

Elderly People /Senior Citizens

India is a young nation now but we are steadily greying. Therefore, it is critical to have systems in place for the aging population. The number of elderly persons in India is progressively increasing. By 2025, it is expected that India will be home to more than 175 million people that are over 60 years and above of age. About 70 per cent of the elderly in India work. At least, half of the elder population lives in poverty. They are a highly vulnerable group with very low/no income. Many also suffer neglect. The intensity of poverty is relatively higher in households with elderly, particularly dependent elderly.

The elders are seeking their comprehensive care. In this context, we voice the following demands for elders to be met in the coming years, committed to the welfare of senior citizens, especially their security and healthcare.

- Provide financial support, exploring ideas like additional tax benefits and higher interest rates.

- Invest in setting up and improving old-age homes.
- Universal pension and improve pension amount at least provide Rs.2000/- per individual, per month to all poor elders at 60 years.
- Universal access to free geriatric care through community health care system/mobile medical care in the village and in the neighborhood.
- Geriatric wards in all hospitals (including private hospitals).
- Organize elderly into elder self-help groups (ESHGs) and their higher order federations for solidarity and increased economic security.
- National federation of elders.
- National commission for the aged-care.
- Widespread national campaigns on elder care.
- The curriculum of every school should have elder-care as a mandatory subject.
- Policy to reorient the transition towards retirement & post retirement services of the population would be constituted
- Build a cadre of elder-care community workers to service the needs of the elders in every village.
- Provide food for poor elderly people in Anganwadi centres.
- Community centers that provide for library and other recreation for elders in every village.
- Universal access to old age homes for all the elders who seek.

Youth

According to World Health Organization, approximately 35% of the total population in the country consists of youth (between 15-24 years). More than 50 per cent of the youth in India live below the poverty line. Poverty, unemployment, minimal/no access to opportunities, poor infrastructure etc., are disrupting the flow the youth energy into proper channels. According to the employment market, half of the youth churned out by our educational institutions lack employable skills and also the skills/orientation to learn on job.

Youth, as the most productive asset of the nation, have played a key role in our growth. India is the oldest civilization but the youngest country and this necessitates that the policies must be based on the judicious mix of experience of energy and 'Youth inclusive', so that youth are an integral part of the development process.

- Focus on youth capacity building, education, leadership, and development.
- Increase budget for youth development.
- Promote social inclusiveness, employability, and entrepreneurship development among the youth.
- Special youth development package for employment and entrepreneurship and special focus on women and SCs and STs.
- Improve implementation of NSS for graduates to increase IT literacy, financial literacy, English communication and other soft skills to make youth more employable.
- Give priority to specially-abled youth with respect to education and employment opportunities.
- Initiate nation-wide 'district level incubation and accelerator programme' for encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship.
- Procedure to avail Students' loans should be simplified and loans made affordable.

- Launch a programme, 'Youth for Development'.
- Soft skill training should become part of the curriculum. Learning skills should become part of the curriculum.
- All schools should have special classes (out of the school time) for children with learning disabilities.
- Trainings in entrepreneurial skills for self-employment.
- Provide for unemployment stipend.

Persons with Disabilities

As per 2001 census, it is estimated that there are 2.13% disabled in the country. This in absolute numbers means that there are 22 million disabled people. According to NCPEDP, there are about 5 to 6 percent disabled in India, which means 60 to 70 million population in the country fall under this category.

Indian Government has passed “The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act”, 1995. This Act is guided by the philosophy of empowering persons with disabilities and their associates.

The 1995 Act has reserved 3% of poverty eradication funds for the disabled. Also under the Act 3% of seats in all educational institutions and 3% of all job vacancies are reserved for the disabled. Further, this Act advocates employment for educated disabled through special employment exchanges. All disabled who are above 2 years old and are poor receive lifelong pensions from the government. But the Act has not been implemented anywhere in its true sense.

About 70 million people are suffering from disability and are being neglected. The welfare and rehabilitation of disabled people is integral to our vision of a caring society and that of a responsive government. Enact the 'Rights of the Persons with Disabilities bill' (RPWD).

- Use technology to deliver low cost quality education to specially-abled students 'in-home' – through E-learning.
- Identify each and every special needs person across the country - establishing a web based disability registration system to issue universal ID for all applicable government benefits (healthcare, transportation, jobs, education etc).
- Ensure disabled friendly access to public facilities, public buildings and transport.
- Support and aid voluntary organizations working for the care of the disabled.
- Provide a higher tax relief for the family members taking care of the disabled.
- Disability certificate is very important for any disabled person to access any benefit from the government.
- There should be space for participation of disabled people at all levels in all government programs.
- Increase disability pension to at least Rs.3000/- per person per month and pay through post office at village level for easy accessing across the country.
- There is a need to organize the disabled people into SHGs, networks and other solidarity groups.
- Where special education is needed, the government should set up special schools in the areas where disabled children have decent access.
- Employees of all government departments should be sensitized on the issues of disabled so that they will respond to the disabled persons quickly.
- Community Based Rehabilitation programs should be promoted for the Persons with severe disability.
- All development plans should be formulated with the participation of Persons with Disabilities.

- Special life and health insurance packages should be announced for the Persons with Disabilities.

Tribal

The tribal people constitute 8% of the country's population. They are economically the poorest people of India. These extremely backward tribes need urgent government assistance. About 90% of the tribal people are engaged in cultivation and most of them are landless and practice shifting cultivation. For their benefit, there is need for some steps to be taken, which are as follows:

- All the pending cases should be settled on the priority and illegally alienated land should be restored to the tribal people.
- Improve interventions such as WADI approach for sustainable income, Grain Bank concept for food security for tribal people's development.
- Increase Tribal Development fund to cover more number of tribal hamlets.
- Special emphasis to be made on the value addition for the NTFP collected by the tribal people.
- Provide Financial and technical support to all tribal people.
- Create employment opportunities by promoting small scale units.
- Providing at least 150 working days for tribal people under MGNREGS and increase wage rates for tribal people.
- Providing trainings on banking facilities in the tribal areas for easy accessing for tribal people.
- Special education facilities for the children should be provided with special emphasis on girls. The hostels and schools should be set up and run by the government.
- Additional incentives, residence and health facilities are to be provided for tribal people.
- Provide emergency and regular treatment facilities and provide Medical Mobile Van at block level for primary treatment facilities and medicine.
- Adopt best models from the states for tribal welfare and development through commission recommendations.
- Electrification of tribal hamlets and provision of all - weather roads.
- Enhancing the funds for tribal welfare and development.
- Provide and increase MSP for NTFPs and improve function of GCCs.

Social Justice and Empowerment

- Implement land reforms and provide land (at least 3 acres of cultivable per family) to the Dalits in rural areas.
- Formation of review commissions to study the fund utilization unto Special Component Plans & Tribal Sub-Plans will be earmarked
- A special programme for identification & rehabilitation of manual scavenger by working on generating alternate livelihoods
- Accord highest priority to ensuring the security, especially the prevention of atrocities against SCs & STs.
- Enact central legislation on the SCs, STs, sub plans.
- Establish high standard school for weaker sections in every block of the country.
- Continue to provide assistance to fund the cost of education in both private and government institutions for SCs, STs students (priority whose parental income is less than Rs.6 lakh per annum).

- Encourage and support SCs and STs entrepreneurs by providing them easy access to credit.
- Focus on development activities for creating social and economic opportunities for STs.
- Ensure effective implementation of PESA, 1996 and Forest Right Act, 2006 to ensure that STs are empowered and brought into the mainstream.
- Develop a National Action Plan for the development of SCs and STs and other backward classes.
- Mission mode project should be made for housing, education, health and skills development.

Minorities - Equal Opportunity

India's 'Unity in Diversity' is India's biggest strength. We cherish the depth and vibrancy that the diversity in Indian society adds to the nation. It is unfortunate that even after several decades of independence, a large section of the minority, and especially Muslim community continues to be stymied in poverty. Modern India must be a nation of equal opportunity. We should ensure that all communities are equal partners in India's progress, as we believe India cannot progress if any segment of Indians is left behind.

Government has to focus on accelerating concrete, sustainable and long term plans for the welfare of the minorities. A separate and dedicated Ministry of Minorities Affairs was established. Since then many development programmes in various sectors have been implemented. Some more measures should include:

- Provide scholarships for students from the minority community for higher studies.
- Encourage minority entrepreneurs and also provide credit with low interest rates.
- Provide reservations to backward minorities in educational institutions and in government employment.
- Skill development programmes for minorities.
- Strengthen and modernize minority educational systems and institutions; dovetailing them with modern requirements. National Madrasa modernization programme should be initiated.

Rural Development and Panchayat Raj:

Two-thirds of our people live in villages. Lack of amenities to live and opportunities to work, however, are restricting our rural life. Both these factors are the result of prolonged neglect. We have to work progressively to ensure the prosperity of rural India.

- Follow up all development functionaries like VROs, Secretaries, AWWs, ANMs, VRAs, ASHAs etc at the village level have to work properly at village level.
- Implementation of Food Security Act, to ensure adequate quantity and quality of food at affordable prices to people to live their life with dignity. Add some more items under Act like cooking oil, pulses, millets, etc
- Gram Sadak Yojana will be strongly endorsed
- 100% modernization and digitization of land records to ensure transparency in land titles. A fast track judicial services to address farmers' land issues in less time
- Increase GP funds and encourage them to raise their own resources for development.
- Pucca house for every family equipped with the basic facilities of toilet, Piped water supply, electricity and proper access.
- Establish 100% drainage system in tribal, rural and urban areas of the country.
- Provide safe drinking water to all households in the country regularly.
- Provide electricity facility in rural and urban areas especially in tribal areas.

Urban Development:

Around 30 crore Indians currently live in towns and cities. Within 20-25 years, another 30 Crore people will get added to this. More than one-third of our population is living in our cities and towns. The urban areas will cover half our people. Moreover, our cities should no longer remain a reflection of poverty and bottlenecks. Rather they should become symbols of efficiency, speed and scale.

- Continue to work towards providing affordable and quality housing for all sections.
- Expand PM Awas Yojaa to cover all poor urban households in urban areas.
- Upgrade existing urban centres, transitioning focus from basic infrastructure to public utility services like Waste and Water Management - for a clean and healthy city life.
- PURA will be the special focus part of agenda
- Efficient & Effective Waste and Water management systems should be set up.
- Model towns will be identified for rolling out integrated waste management
- Wi-Fi facilities will be made available in public places and commercial centres.
- Build quality integrated Public Transport systems & discouraging usage of private vehicles.

Governance: Governance has to be close to the people. We need smaller Panchayats, smaller blocks/mandals, smaller districts and smaller states for this purpose. We have to rationalise and increase their numbers. We may have to at least double all of them in these five years.

E-Governance: IT is a great enabler for empowerment, equity and efficiency. India is the IT capital for the whole world. But back home, the benefits of IT have not percolated down. IT touches the lives of ordinary men and women. Good Governance and e-Governance will become the backbone for good Governance. Therefore, we need to:

- Mandate digitization of all government work to reduce corruption and delays.
- Use mobile and e-Banking to ensure financial inclusion.

Micro Small Medium Enterprises (MSME)

- Promotion of Special Economic Zones
- Building world class ports
- The port folios namely, SME Bank, Supply Chain Management, Block Chain Management and R&D will be the foci
- Intellectual Property Rights will be endorsed as a nation
- Easy availability of institutional credit
- Review obsolete norms & multiple laws for simplification

Miscellaneous

- Ensure the appointment of at least five development professionals in each village for village development
- Provide MUDRA loans for people who need to establish businesses for less interest loans and provide easy process to avail schemes.
- Grass Root Level Democracy will be the foci
- Merging of similar schemes, unification of departments on similar lines under one umbrella & bridging a comprehensive scheme would be acted upon
- PDS-Direct Benefit Transfer scheme will be promoted

- Universal Basic Income will be the core agenda of the manifesto
- Annual Turnover until Rs. 50 Lakh will be exempted from GST. Tax exemption upto 7 Lakh.

In a democracy, political will with integrity can help translate the demands of the people into reality. People in the country should try to know about manifestos of political parties. Elect an appropriate party for people's development. The promises made in the manifestos should not only be the evaluation criteria in next election, but also should be made legally accountable. After formation of government, elected party should implement the promises they made in the manifesto. If they implement manifestos properly, some percentage of people may come out from the poverty. ❖