

Women, Equity and the North-East State of Tripura: A Melody in the Making

Madhurima Naha

Guest Faculty and Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Law, Tripura University and National Law University Tripura

ABSTRACT:

Women have been subjected to atrocities round the globe. Her entire existence has been undermined, her voice sabotaged and her rights abridged. It is the absolute need of the hour to address and redress every sort of atrocity advanced towards women. Equity should be administered so as to provide women with the resources, benefits and opportunities that she is desirous of. The State of Tripura has endeavoured to empower women and to align its legislations, policies and schemes for upward social mobility of women. The State has consistently strived towards making welfare and well-being of women a priority. This Article encompasses the endeavours of the state of Tripura towards according equity to women.

KEYWORDS: Women, rights, equity, upliftment, welfare.

INTRODUCTION:

A mother, a daughter, a wife, a friend, an aunt, a partner or just an acquaintance, she is present around in the society in all forms but is her presence given the regard she rightfully deserves or is she coerced to be working selflessly towards making others dream a reality. Since times immemorial women's rights have been overlooked and her existence over time had just narrowed down to be a benefactress. Women have always been endowed with the responsibility of the family. Women's credibility has always been questioned and her intelligence undermined. She has always been viewed as weak, incapable and vulnerable. Women have been called names when she willingly wants to live a life where she can make her dreams a reality. Women who develop the courage to speak up for her rights have often been perceived as selfish, desperate and illogical raising a question on her audacity. Women are always burdened with preconceived notions and stereotypes. Indian women had specifically been tortured and deprived of realisation of their rights. Indian women have been dumped into pits of misery by invasions, colonization and also the patriarchal outlook of the society at large. The picture is as true for the North-East state of Tripura as is for the rest of India.

Equity refers to the allocation of opportunities, resources, benefits and responsibilities to men and women so as to subserve their greatest good and so as to accord them with possibilities of realisation of their full potential in every sphere of life. Equity with regard to women as a concept recognises that women and men are different be it physiologically or psychologically and therefore, endeavours should be made to cater to each genders needs specifically. Women round the globe has had a disadvantaged history. Women are still entangled in shackles and according them rights at par with men will in no way contribute to her well-being and empowerment. She deserves apportionment of opportunities, resources and benefits suited

to her circumstances so that she can very well make the best use of them to emancipate herself from the disadvantaged position that she began from.

The Constitution of India in itself enshrines provisions for administering equity to women in the domain of India. Article 15(3) of the Constitution of India authorises the State to make special provisions and legislations pertaining to women. Article 16(4) also acknowledges the fact that reservation in public employments should be made for Backward Classes of Citizens and women constituting a disadvantaged population can be accorded benefit under this Article. Alongside these Fundamental Rights that women are entitled to, the Constitution of India enumerates Directive Principles of State Policy wherein authority has been bestowed upon the state to formulate and promulgate provisions specially crafted to inform the needs of women in the society.

ADMINISTERING EQUITY FOR WOMEN IN THE STATE OF TRIPURA:

The state of Tripura has been fostering equity for attributing women with rights and opportunities suited to their interests and has been crafting laws and policies to align with the representation of women in every front. The state is actively pursuing activities towards making the society better suited for women and also towards uplifting women by according them the rights to realise their full potential. Tripura is a small state in the North-East of India. As of 2025, the gender ratio of Tripura is 960 females per 1000 males¹ and thus women in Tripura forms a substantial population of the state. Tripura is an abode to a wide array of tribes and a significant number of Bengali population and women from every community is striving towards betterment and aiming at achieving a respectable socio-economic status in the society. Women of the state of Tripura has had substantial growth in every domain for a couple of years now. The State has made significant endeavours towards administering equity to women.

Tripura Commission for Women:

The initiative worth a mention is the Tripura Commission for Women which is a statutory body established via the Tripura Commission for Women Act, 1993. The Commission was set up as a forum to redress the grievances of women of the State of Tripura and to address crimes committed in the state against women. The Commission tirelessly works towards the betterment of women and seeks to ensure the welfare of the women informing every stage of their life. The Commission has made significant contribution towards redressing crimes in the nature of domestic violence, desertion, torture with regard to dowry, sexual harassment at workplace etc. The Commission has also made significant efforts towards assisting the state Government in crafting policies for the empowerment of women and also engaged in active interaction with the administrative stakeholders, social activists, lawyers and academicians with regard to the increase in crimes against women in the state and the necessary precautions needed for prohibiting such crimes and has also highlighted the need to expediate the process of adjudication of offences against women. The Commission has also been engaged since its inception towards arrangement of awareness programs for making women informed about their rights and the proper channels to approach to in case of the abridgement of her rights. The Tripura Commission for Women works closely with the National Commission for Women for empowering women at every stage and age of their lives.

Legislations:

As the Constitution of India is a federal constitution, therefore each state in the country has authority to enact legislations as per the division of subjects enumerated in seventh schedule. In the year 2024 an

¹ <https://www.census2011.co.in/census/state/tripura.html>

amendment was given effect to the Tripura Shops and Establishment Act, 1970, wherein under the Act now women can participate in the workforce at any time of the day. Women are now allowed to work night shifts in shops and establishments in the States of Tripura. This amendment has widened the scope of earning and better involvement of women in the administration of works in the shops and other establishments engaging women staff for work while maintaining her rights and privileges as she is entitled to by virtue of being a woman.

Policies:

The State is actively pursuing policies to administer equity to women in every realm of life. The State of Tripura has in the year 2022 formulated a policy, 'Tripura State Policy for the Empowerment of women, 2022', for representation of women in all public employments which are being made via direct recruitment so as to give effect to the administration of equity to women and allocate her the opportunities and resources for transforming her socio-economic status in the society. The Tripura State Policy for Empowerment of Women, 2022 formulated 33% horizontal reservation in all State Government jobs in future vacancies for women domiciled in the State of Tripura.

This policy has been mapped out giving effect to the provisions of clause 3 of Article 15 of the Constitution of India which entitles the State to make special provisions for women and children and Clause 4 of Article 16 of the Constitution of India which enumerates that reservation of posts should be made in favour of backward classes of citizen. This initiative undertaken will foster empowerment of women by making her economically viable and attributing her a socially respectable position. This initiative subserves as a gender sensitive approach of the Government of Tripura for women of the State as for a nation to grow and develop every individual should get opportunity to realise their full potential. This opportunity will also invoke confidence and self-reliance of women and will allow her to engage in decision-making roles of administration in the State.

It has also been provided that if for any post the reserved 33% of women candidates happens to come to a fraction then it has been provided that it shall be rounded off to the next higher number. The policy also incorporates that the number of women candidates shortlisted for any post if happens to be more than 33 percent then this reservation will not apply but in case the number falls sort of 33 percent then this reservation policy will take effect.

Schemes:

The State of Tripura has also devised various schemes categorically targeting the welfare and empowerment of women and girls of the state. Some of the noteworthy endeavours has been enlisted below:

1. Mukhyamantri Samajik Sahayata Prakalpa-Vulnerable women:

Women who are either widowed, unmarried, deserted by their husbands or women who are out of work due to age, infirmity or is under risk of being abused constitutes a group of vulnerable women and are under the need of special attention and protection. The Directorate of Social Welfare and Social Education of the Government of Tripura has propounded the Scheme Mukhyamantri Samajik Sahayata Prakalpa-Vulnerable women'. In aegis of this scheme women who are vulnerable are provided 2000 rupees monthly pension to carry on with their livelihood. For women to be eligible to avail benefit under this scheme she should not be engaged in any other avocation and her family's annual income should be below one lakh rupees and the applicant shall have to be within the age frame of 18-59 years of age and if unmarried then above 45 years of age.

2. Mahila Nirman Shramik Vivaha Yojana:

Under this scheme if a female construction worker is a registered member of the Tripura Building and other Construction Workers Welfare Board for a period of not less than 1 year then she can claim financial assistance for the marriage of maximum of two daughters. An amount of 50,000 rupees is paid for meeting of the expenses for the marriage by the Government of Tripura.

3. Tripura Scheme for Incentive to Girl Child:

Under this scheme the Directorate of Social Welfare and Social Education of the Government of Tripura specifies that for a girl child born to a family which lives Below the Poverty Level on or after 1st June, 2009 will be given 300 rupees per head until the child attains the age of 15 years and the incentive is payable to the mother who has birthed the girl child.

4. Mukhyamantri Balika Samridhi Yojana:

This scheme was announced in the month of March, 2025. Under this scheme on the birth of a girl child to a family living Below the Poverty Level a bond of 50,000 rupees will be deposited by the Government of Tripura and she will receive the amount on maturity after attaining the age of 18 years.

5. Mukhyamantri Kanya Atmanirbhar Yojana:

The State Government will under this scheme provide a scooter as a means of transport to 140 girl students who have passed the Higher Secondary Examination. Thus, this scheme ensures that girls who are willing to pursue higher education will not be compelled by hurdles of transport in achieving their goals.

Gender Budgeting:

The state of Tripura is actively engaging in gender budgeting which implies that the state is pursuing its administrative policies in a way so as to ensure allocation of resources to every section of the population and in a way is crafting outcomes better suited for the empowerment of women in the state of Tripura. All the Departments of the Government of Tripura has gender budget for 2025-26 as was the case in 2024-25. Some of the Departments worth a mention are the following:

1. In the Department of Secondary Education, supplies for schools, hostels, scholarships were provided and an allocation of 13.64 crore was gender budget in 2024-25 and 36.72 crores will be spent in the year 2025-26.
2. The budget of 2024-25, allocated a total of 75.23 crore rupees for women belonging to the scheduled tribes by the Department of Schedules Tribes. The amount was spent on financial support, special coaching, supplementary education for elementary classes, pre-metric scholarship, merit award and construction of girl's hostel. The increased gender budget for 2025-26 is 108.06 crore.
3. The Department of SC welfare has spent a total of 55.88 crore rupees was spent as gender budget wherein the amount was allocated for providing scholarships, stipends etc and for 2025-26 the gender budget allocated is 63.97 crores.
4. The Department of Information and Cultural Affairs has spent a total of 21 crore rupees in publicizing empowerment of women through electronic media alongside organizing awareness programs and information centres and the salary of women employees in 2024-25. The gender budget for 2025-26 has been increased to 24.96 crores.
5. The Department of Rural Development has spent on construction of toilets, sanitary vending machines, assistance to Self Help Groups (SHG), construction of Gender Resource Centres and other works related to women, a total of 108.11 crore in 2024-25 and will spend 192.32 crore in the year 2025-26.
6. The Department of Social Welfare and Social Education has spent in the year 2024-25 on payment of social security pension, assistance to pregnant women and has provided finances with regard to One

Stop Centres, Women helpline etc. a whopping gender budget of 1000.77 crore rupees and the allocated amount for 2025-26 is 1066.85 crore.

CONCLUSION:

Women in the Indian society and in the state of Tripura forms a substantial part of the society and development of the state and the country cannot be envisioned without catering to the development of the women population of the clan. Women in every sphere of life is still utterly disadvantaged and thus needs administration of equity before equality comes into play. As we stand in the 21st century, equity is the virtue which should be administered. Equity refers to providing of resources and opportunities which would specifically cater to the needs and upward mobility of women in the society be it in the realm of education finances or her decision-making aspect. Equity should be administered in every front, every domain and every facet of life so as to accord women equal footing with that of men. Equity should be the new reality as years of subjugation and atrocities meted out to women cannot be done away with administration of just equality. The state of Tripura has substantially and categorically dedicated efforts towards making the state inclusive for women in every front. The state has acknowledged the various needs of women living in the society. The state has had a Commission in place since 1993 for addressing the grievances of women and has crafted policies, schemes and legislations to give effect to equity to women existent in the state. While the endeavours of the State of Tripura is worthy of appreciation but there is still a long way to go before women can entirely be emancipated from her miseries and can acquire a place of respect and regard in the society where her voice is heard, her rights upheld and her necessities well taken care of.

REFERENCES:

BOOKS:

1. Kumai, R. (1992), Women in Decision Making, New Delhi, Vikas Publication House.
2. Parvin, Razia (2005), Empowerment of Women: Strategies and System for Gender Justice, New Delhi: Dominant Publishers and Distributors.

ARTICLES:

1. Chandra, C.B. Naveen, Concept of Gender Justice in India: A Constitutional Perspective, International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts.

WEBSITES:

1. <https://www.census2011.co.in/census/state/tripura.html>
2. <https://tripura.gov.in/>
3. <https://ecostat.tripura.gov.in/>