RAJASTHAN EXPOSURE VISIT REPORT

Tribal Exchange Programme (2025 -2026

(18 January 2026 – 24 January 2026)

Introduction

The Kerala Institute for Research, Training and Development Studies of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (KIRTADS), Kozhikode, organised a seven-day Exposure Visit to Rajasthan from 18 January 2026 to 24 January 2026 under the Tribal Exchange Programme 2025–2026. The programme was undertaken to promote inter-state learning, cultural exchange, and capacity-building among tribal communities and officials working in the tribal development sector. The delegation consisted of 17 members, including 5 officials from KIRTADS and 12 tribal community representatives from various tribal communities across Kerala. The exposure visit was organised in collaboration with the Manikya Lal Varma Tribal Research Institute and Tribal Area Development (TAD) Department of the Government of Rajasthan.



Knowledge-sharing and interaction session between the officials of TRI Rajasthan, led by Shri O. P. Jain, Director, and the KIRTADS Kerala Exposure Visit Team.



Group Photo: Shri O. P. Jain, Director, TRI Rajasthan, with the KIRTADS Kerala Exposure Visit Team



Traditional welcome accorded by Shri O. P. Jain, Director, TRI Rajasthan, to Dr. K. S. Pradeep Kumar, Deputy Director, KIRTADS, Kerala, who led the Exposure Visit Team

Rajasthan is one of India's leading states in tribal development initiatives and is home to several tribal communities, including the Bhil, Garasia, Saharia, Kathodi, Damor, and Meena. The state has implemented numerous programmes focusing on education, healthcare, livelihood enhancement, infrastructure development, social security, and community empowerment. The exposure visit was designed to provide a first-hand understanding of these initiatives and to identify innovative practices that could be adapted within Kerala's tribal development framework.



Visiting Team members presenting and discussing their exposure plans and development initiatives

Understanding Tribal Governance and Development Administration

One of the primary objectives of the exposure visit was to understand the institutional mechanisms and administrative structures responsible for tribal development in Rajasthan. During the visit to the Tribal Area Development Department in Udaipur and later at JanjatiBhawan in Jaipur, the delegation interacted extensively with senior government officials responsible for

planning and implementing tribal welfare programmes. Detailed presentations were made regarding the Tribal Sub-Plan, educational assistance schemes, housing programmes, livelihood promotion initiatives, infrastructure development projects, and monitoring mechanisms adopted by the Government of Rajasthan.

The interactions provided valuable insights into the decentralised planning process, convergence of departmental schemes, and effective utilisation of resources for tribal development. Participants learned about the administrative framework that facilitates coordination among various government agencies and ensures efficient delivery of welfare services. These discussions significantly enhanced the delegation's understanding of policy formulation, programme implementation, and institutional accountability in tribal development administration.



Discussion with the Tribal Development Commissioner, Udaipur, Rajasthan, on innovative approaches to tribal development, education, and livelihood enhancement



Group Photograph with the Tribal Development Commissioner, Udaipur, Rajastha

Learning from Tribal Education Initiatives

A major focus of the exposure visit was to examine successful educational models implemented for tribal communities. The delegation visited the Tribal Model Residential School at Dhikli, Udaipur, where participants observed modern educational infrastructure, residential facilities, smart classrooms, digital learning tools, sports facilities, and student support systems. The school demonstrated how quality education can be effectively delivered to tribal students through residential institutions that provide a supportive academic environment.

The delegation noted the emphasis placed on educational inclusion, academic excellence, and holistic development. Discussions with teachers and administrators highlighted the role of residential schools in reducing educational disparities and improving educational attainment among tribal children. Participants observed that Rajasthan has successfully integrated modern technology and innovative teaching methods into tribal education,

thereby creating opportunities for academic advancement and social mobility.



Visit to a Tribal Residential School in Rajasthan as part of the Exposure Visit Programme to understand best practices in tribal education.

Exposure to Tribal Livelihood Systems and Economic Development

The exposure visit provided extensive opportunities to study tribal livelihood practices and economic development initiatives. Visits to tribal settlements in Ranakpur, Kumbhalgarh, Abu Road, and Mount Abu enabled participants to interact directly with tribal families and community leaders. These interactions provided valuable insights into traditional occupations, agricultural practices, animal husbandry, forest-based livelihoods, handicraft production, and emerging entrepreneurial activities.

The delegation observed how livelihood diversification has contributed to economic resilience among tribal communities. Participants learned about the role of self-help groups, community enterprises, skill development programmes, and market linkages in improving household incomes.

Special attention was given to integrating traditional knowledge with modern livelihood opportunities. The visit demonstrated how community-based economic activities can contribute to sustainable development while preserving cultural traditions and local identities.



Field Exposure Visit with members of the Meena community in Rajasthan, facilitating interaction and learning on community development, livelihoods, and cultural practices

Understanding Community Participation and Tribal Empowerment

The exposure visit highlighted the importance of community participation in development planning and implementation. Throughout the programme, participants observed how tribal communities actively engage in decision-making processes, management of community resources, and implementation of development initiatives. Discussions with local tribal leaders revealed the significance of community institutions in promoting collective action, social cohesion, and local governance.

The delegation observed strong community ownership of development programmes and recognised this as a major factor in their success. The exposure enabled participants to understand the importance of participatory

development approaches that empower communities and sustain interventions. Tribal representatives from Kerala gained valuable insights into leadership development, community mobilization, and collective action.

Healthcare Innovations and Sickle Cell Disease Management

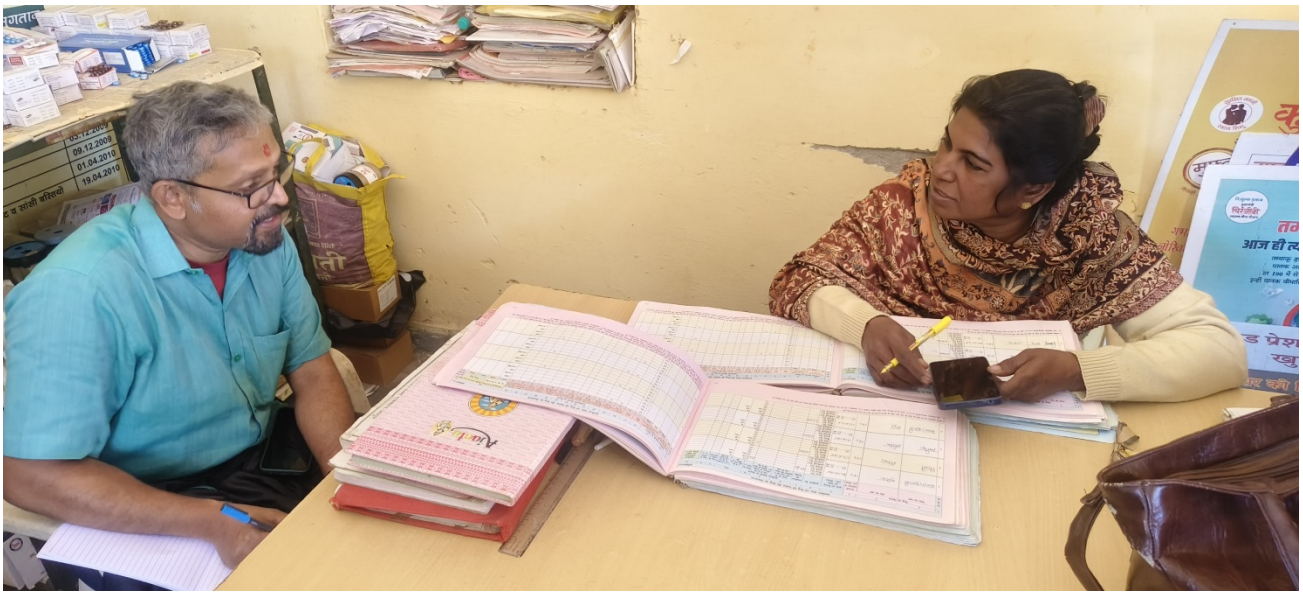
One of the most significant components of the exposure visit was the visit to the Centre of Excellence for Sickle Cell Disease at AIIMS Jodhpur. The delegation was introduced to comprehensive healthcare interventions designed specifically for tribal populations affected by sickle cell disease. Healthcare professionals explained the entire continuum of care, including screening programmes, early diagnosis, genetic counselling, treatment protocols, awareness campaigns, and patient monitoring systems.



Visit to the Sickle Cell Unit at AIIMS Jodhpur

The delegation gained a deeper understanding of the importance of preventive healthcare and early intervention in managing hereditary diseases among tribal populations. The visit demonstrated how research

institutions, healthcare providers, and government agencies can collaborate to address public health challenges effectively. The lessons learned are particularly relevant for Kerala, where increasing attention is being paid to tribal health issues and the management of sickle cell disease.



Interaction with healthcare professionals at the clinic to understand healthcare delivery, community health programmes, and patient care services

Environmental Adaptation and Natural Resource Management

Another important objective of the programme was to understand ecological adaptation and resource management practices in diverse environmental settings. The delegation visited tribal regions in the Aravalli hills, Mount Abu, and the desert landscapes of Jaisalmer. These visits provided opportunities to observe how local communities adapt to challenging environmental conditions and manage scarce natural resources. Participants studied traditional water-conservation systems, rainwater-harvesting structures, watershed management initiatives, and community-based resource management practices. The visit demonstrated the critical role of indigenous knowledge in environmental conservation and climate resilience. The delegation recognized that many of these practices could

offer valuable lessons for sustainable resource management in Kerala's tribal areas.





Visiting Team with Meena community members

Cultural Exchange and Promotion of National Integration

The exposure visit served as an important platform for cultural exchange between the tribal communities of Kerala and Rajasthan. Interactions with local tribal communities enabled participants to learn about different cultural traditions, languages, art forms, customs, belief systems, and social

institutions. These exchanges fostered mutual respect and appreciation for India's cultural diversity.Visits to important historical and cultural sites such as FatehSagar Lake, Lake Pichola, MotiMagri, SajjanGarh Fort, Dilwara Temples, Nakki Lake, and Sam Sand Dunes enriched participants' understanding of Rajasthan's heritage and cultural landscape. The exposure strengthened national integration by creating opportunities for meaningful dialogue and interaction among tribal communities from different geographical and cultural backgrounds.





Hostel for Tribal Students in Jaisalmir, Rajasthan

Capacity Building and Leadership Development

The exposure visit significantly contributed to the personal and social development of the participating tribal representatives. Through interactions with government officials, educational institutions, healthcare professionals, community leaders, and fellow tribal communities, participants gained greater awareness of development opportunities and government support mechanisms. The experience enhanced their confidence, leadership abilities, communication skills, and understanding of development processes.

Officials from KIRTADS also benefited from exposure to innovative governance models, administrative practices, and successful development interventions. The programme provided opportunities for professional learning and institutional networking, which can support future policy formulation and programme implementation in Kerala.



Interaction with officials at the Panchayat Office, Rajasthan, on local governance and rural development initiatives



Group photograph with officials of the Tribal Research and Training Institute (TRI), Rajasthan,

Major Learnings and Best Practices

The delegation identified several best practices that merit consideration for adaptation in Kerala. These include the effective functioning of Tribal Model Residential Schools, integrated healthcare interventions for the management of sickle cell disease, community-based livelihood promotion programmes, participatory development approaches, innovative water conservation systems, and strong institutional coordination among the various departments involved in tribal welfare. The delegation also recognized the importance of community ownership, local leadership, and culturally sensitive development interventions in achieving sustainable outcomes.





Field visit photos

Recommendations

Based on the observations and experiences gained during the exposure visit, the delegation recommends strengthening residential educational

facilities for tribal students, expanding specialized healthcare services and sickle cell disease screening programmes, promoting diversified livelihood opportunities through skill development and entrepreneurship, encouraging community-based tourism initiatives, strengthening water conservation and natural resource management programmes, enhancing community participation in development planning, improving inter-departmental coordination, and organizing more inter-state exposure visits for tribal representatives and officials. The delegation further recommends systematic documentation and dissemination of successful development practices for wider adoption.

Conclusion

The Rajasthan Exposure Visit conducted under the Tribal Exchange Programme 2025–2026 successfully achieved its intended objectives and provided a valuable platform for learning, interaction, and knowledge exchange. The programme enabled tribal representatives and officials from Kerala to gain first-hand exposure to innovative development interventions in education, healthcare, livelihood promotion, environmental management, and tribal governance. The visit strengthened cultural understanding, promoted national integration, and enhanced participants' leadership capacity. The insights and experiences gained during the programme are expected to improve tribal development initiatives in Kerala significantly. The delegation strongly believes that such inter-state exchange programmes play a crucial role in promoting inclusive development, capacity-building, and the empowerment of tribal communities across the country.