

CHAPTER 4.1

SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

INTRODUCTION

4.1.1 Empowerment of the Socially Disadvantaged Groups viz., the Scheduled Castes (SCs), the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and the Minorities continues to be on the priority list of country's developmental Agenda, as they still lag behind the rest of the society due to their social and economic backwardness. Their share in the country's total population is quite substantial, as SCs account for 179.7 million, representing 17.5 per cent and Minorities being 188.9 million, representing 18.4 per cent in 2001 (projected on the basis of the trend of their decadal growth rates, in the absence of the data of 2001 Census). The population of OBCs, as estimated by the Mandal Commission, constitutes 52 per cent of country's total population (appears to be on a high side because of the possibility of certain communities of SCs and Minorities featuring in the list of OBCs).

POPULATION PROFILE

4.1.2 According to the 1991 Census, SCs account for 138.2 million, of whom 81 per cent live in rural areas, but spread all over the country, except in the state of Nagaland and the two UTs of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep. Uttar Pradesh alone accounts for 21.2 per cent of the total SC population in the country. Nearly 84 per cent of total SC population live in ten states viz. Andhra Pradesh (7.7 per cent), Bihar (9.1 per cent), Karnataka (5.3 per cent), Kerala (2.1 per cent), Madhya Pradesh (7.0 per cent), Maharashtra (6.3 per cent), Rajasthan (5.5 per cent), Tamil Nadu (7.8 per cent), Uttar Pradesh (21.2 per cent) and West Bengal (11.6 per cent). In a few states, they constitute more than 20 per cent of state's total population. These include - Punjab (28.3 per cent), Himachal Pradesh (25.3 per cent), West Bengal (23.6 per cent) and Uttar Pradesh (21.0 per cent).

4.1.3 OBCs, as per the Government of India's Notification No. 12011/68/93/BCC(C) dated 10

September 1993, consist of castes and communities which are common to both the Lists contained in the Report of the Backward Classes Commission (Mandal Commission) and those of the State Governments prepared for the purpose. So far, Central Lists of OBCs in respect of 21 States and 5 UTs have been notified.

4.1.4 The Minorities, as per the 1991 Census, constitute 145.31 million or 17.2 per cent of the total population of the country. While Muslims represent 12 per cent of the total population, Christians account for 2.3 per cent, Sikhs 2 per cent and Buddhists 0.8 per cent. The Zoroastrians number around 1 lakh. The Muslims constitute 94.3 per cent of total population in Lakshadweep, 64 per cent in Jammu & Kashmir, 28.4 per cent in Assam, 23.6 per cent in West Bengal and 23.3 per cent in Kerala, far above the national level average. A sizeable Muslim population is also found in Uttar Pradesh (25 million), West Bengal (18 million) and Bihar (13 million). The 20 million Christian population is predominantly found in Mizoram (85.5 per cent of the state's population), Meghalaya (64.8 per cent) and Nagaland (87.6 per cent). There is also a substantial Christian population in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Goa and the Union Territory of Andaman & Nicobar Islands. The Sikhs, numbering about 16 million, constitute 63 per cent of the population in Punjab and 20 per cent of the population in the Union Territory of Chandigarh. Their population ranges between 1 and 6 per cent of the population in Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and Haryana, while it is below 1 per cent elsewhere in the country. The total population of Buddhists in the country is 6.76 million. There are two categories of Buddhists in the country. The traditional Buddhists are concentrated in the hilly areas of Ladakh, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh, while the newly converted Buddhists are mainly found in Maharashtra (6.3 per cent of the state's population), Uttar Pradesh (0.2 per cent),

Madhya Pradesh (0.3 per cent) and West Bengal (0.3 per cent). The largest Buddhist concentration is in Sikkim, which has 27 per cent of the total Buddhist population in the country, followed by Arunachal Pradesh with 13 per cent. The presence of Zoroastrians is very negligible in most of the states, except for Maharashtra (about 60,000), Gujarat (about 13,000), West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Daman & Diu, where their number is about 3,000 in each.

CONSTITUTIONAL SAFEGUARDS

4.1.5 Recognising the relative backwardness of these weaker sections of the society, the Constitution of India guarantees equality before the law (Article 14) and enjoins the State to make special provisions for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes or for SCs (Article 15(4)). It also empowers the State to make provisions for reservation in appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens (Article 16(4)). The Constitution of India also states categorically that untouchability is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden (Article 17). Further, it enjoins the State to promote, with special care, the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and, in particular, of SCs and promises to protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation (Article 46). Reservation of seats for SCs in the democratic institutions (Article 330) and in services (Article 335) is another measure of positive discrimination in favour of these Groups. It empowers the State to appoint a Commission to investigate into the conditions of socially and educationally backward classes (Article 340) and to specify the Castes to be deemed as SCs (Article 341).

4.1.6 In the case of Minorities, the Constitution adopts certain safeguards to recognise their rights in conserving their culture and establish and administer educational institutions of their choice under the Articles 29 and 30. While the Article 350(A) advocates instructions in the mother tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to Linguistic Minorities, Article 350(B) provides for a Special Officer to safeguard the interests of the Linguistic Minorities. Besides these specific Articles, there are also a number of Constitutional provisions enabling protection and

promotion of the interests of these Socially Disadvantaged Groups.

POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES : A REVIEW

4.1.7 The developmental planning launched in 1951 through the First Plan (1951-56) envisaged that the programmes under various sectors of development would benefit all sections of the population including SCs, OBCs and Minorities. But, unfortunately, it never happened so. Therefore, special programmes under the Backward Classes Sector were formulated, keeping in view the special requirements of SCs. The Second Plan (1956-61) promised to ensure that the benefits of economic development accrue more and more to the relatively less privileged classes of society in order to reduce inequalities. The Third Plan (1961-66) advocated greater 'equality of opportunity' and a reduction in disparities in income and wealth and the even distribution of economic power. The Fourth and Fifth Plans (1969-78) envisaged the 'basic goal as rapid increase in the standard of living of the people through measures which also promote equality and social justice'. One of the important features of the subsequent Annual Plan (1979-80) was the launching of the special mechanism of Special Component Plan (SCP) for SCs to ensure that these groups receive their due share of funds/benefits from the other developmental sectors.

4.1.8 The Sixth Plan (1980-85) marked a shift in the approach to the development of SCs. Special emphasis was laid on the implementation of the newly launched SCP for SCs facilitating easy convergence and pooling of resources from all the other developmental sectors in proportion to the population of SCs and monitoring of various developmental programmes for the benefit of SCs. In the Seventh Plan (1985-90), SCP for SCs was strengthened, while the other schemes for the welfare and development of SCs continued. There was a substantial increase in the flow of funds for the development of SCs under SCP from State Plans, Central Plans, Special Central Assistance (SCA) and Institutional Finance resulting in the expansion of infrastructural facilities and enlargement of their coverage. Priority in the Seventh Plan was given to the educational development of SCs. Another important achievement of this Plan was the setting up of a

National Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC) in 1989 to extend loans-cum-subsidies and thus encourage these Groups to become gainfully engaged in various income-generation activities.

4.1.9 The major objective of the Eighth Plan (1992-97) was to intensify the efforts and to bridge the gap between the development of SCs, OBCs and Minorities and other sections of the society, so that by the turn of the century these disadvantaged sections of the population could be brought on par with the rest of the society. It was envisaged that all forms of oppression of SCs, suppression of their rights, untouchability, non-payment of minimum wages etc., would be eliminated, so as to enable them to avail of the benefits of all developmental efforts. Although the efforts have paid dividends with regard to improvement of socio-economic status of these groups, the benefits were, however, not evenly distributed among all communities. As such, a lot remains to be done to achieve the goal of bringing these groups on par with the rest of the society. For the economic development of SCs, OBCs and Minorities, the following three National-level Apex bodies were set up to act as catalytic agents in developing schemes for employment generation and financing pilot projects viz. i) The National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (1992); ii) The National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (1994-95); and iii) National Safai Karamchari Finance and Development Corporation (1996-97).

4.1.10 The Ninth Plan (1997-2002) was committed to empower the Socially Disadvantaged Groups as agents of socio-economic change and development through - creating an enabling environment conducive for SCs, OBCs and Minorities to exercise their rights freely, enjoy their privileges and be able to lead a life with confidence and dignity on par with the rest of the society; ensuring removal of disparities; eliminating exploitation and suppression and providing protection to the disadvantaged groups; ensuring developmental benefits to 'reach the un-reached' through equitable distribution and social justice; ensuring participation of these Groups in the process of planning not merely as beneficiaries but also as participants in planning programmes and their implementation; accelerating the on-going

process of improving socio-economic status through the effective implementation of various policies and programmes to bring them on par with the rest of the society; and ensuring a certain percentage of funds/benefits from all the relevant programmes to flow to women belonging to these groups who are the most affected. As most of the Ministries/Departments implement programmes common for both SCs and Scheduled Tribes (STs), including earmarking of a percentage of funds/benefits under SCP for SCs and Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) for STs, reference about STs also appears in this Chapter.

4.1.11 The approach adopted towards empowering these Groups in the Ninth Plan was holistic in nature, to accomplish their all round development through (i) Social Empowerment; (ii) Economic Empowerment; and (iii) Social Justice with an inter-sectoral focus and inputs from both governmental and non-governmental agencies. The same is sought to be achieved through the efforts put in by various welfare-related Ministries/Departments and the nodal Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment which is responsible for the development of SCs, OBCs and Minorities. They include the following:

Education & Literacy

4.1.12 Education being the most powerful instrument for empowering the Socially Disadvantaged Groups, the Ninth Plan committed to achieve the same through universalisation of primary education by 2005 with a special focus on low-literacy pockets and on the educationally backward communities like SCs, OBCs and Minorities.

4.1.13 In pursuance of the commitments made by the National Policy on Education, 1986 and in recognition of education as a Fundamental Right (yet to be announced), the Department of Education continued to take various steps to reduce drop-out rates and increase school enrolment and retention rates amongst the children belonging to SCs, OBCs and Minorities. The following special provisions for SCs have been incorporated in the existing schemes of the Departments of Elementary Education & Literacy and Secondary Education & Higher Education - relaxed norms for opening of

primary schools; a primary school within one km walking distance from habitations of 200 population instead of habitations of 300 population; and abolition of tuition fee in Government schools in all states, at least up to the primary level. Most of the states have already abolished tuition fee for SC students up to the Senior Secondary level, along with incentives like provision of free textbooks, uniforms, stationery, school bags etc. to these students. The other major programmes of the Department of Elementary Education & Literacy having relevance to SCs and OBCs include - the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), Lok Jumbish, Shiksha Karmi, Non-Formal Education (NFE) and National Programme for Nutritional Support to Primary Education (popularly known as Mid-Day Meals).

4.1.14 One of the strategies of the programme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is the educational development of children belonging to SCs, OBCs and educationally-backward Minorities. SSA is a historic stride towards achieving the long cherished goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) through a time-bound integrated approach, in partnership with the states. SSA aims to universalise elementary education to cover all children in the 6-14 age-group by 2010 through the community-owned and mission-mode approach. It also envisages bridging of gender and social gaps through a special focus on the children of SCs, STs and other disadvantaged groups.

4.1.15 The DPEP aims mainly at providing access to primary education for all children, reducing primary drop-out rates to less than 10 per cent and increasing learning achievement of primary school students by at least 25 per cent. It is also meant to reduce the gap among gender and social groups to less than 5 per cent. The NFE programme lays emphasis on girls, working children and those belonging to SCs. At present, there are 2,92,000 NFE centres covering about 7.3 million children in 25 States/UTs. The major thrust of the National Literacy Mission, which aims to attain full literacy, i.e. a sustainable threshold level of 75 per cent by 2005, is on the promotion of literacy among women, SCs, STs and OBCs. This is reflected in the fact that a high 61 per cent of learners are females, while 23 per cent belong to SCs and 13 per cent to STs.

Janshala, yet another community-based primary education programme, aims to make primary education more accessible and effective, especially for girls and children of deprived communities, marginalised groups, SCs, STs, Minorities, working children and children with special needs. Janshala is a block-based programme with emphasis on community participation and decentralisation. This is the first ever programme in the world where five United Nations agencies have collaborated and pooled resources to support an initiative in education. The programme now covers 105 blocks in 9 states - Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh - with a total project outlay of Rs. 98.29 crore. Janshala programme is to run for five years from 1998 to 2002.

4.1.16 To enable SC and ST students to pursue higher technical studies, the following special provisions have been extended by the Department of Secondary & Higher Education : reservation of seats for SCs/STs in the Central Government institutions of higher education, including Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), Regional Engineering Colleges (RECs), Central Universities, Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas, etc.; relaxation in the minimum qualifying cut-off percentages for admission to universities, colleges and technical institutions; remedial and special coaching for SC/ST students to improve academic skills and linguistic proficiency and raise their level of comprehension. The IITs have a scheme to provide one year's preparatory course for SC/ST students who fail marginally in the entrance examination. Out of 43,000 scholarships at the secondary stage for talented children from rural areas, 13,000 are reserved exclusively for SC/ST students. Besides, 70 scholarships are reserved exclusively for SC/ST students under the National Talent Search Scheme. SC/ST candidates are provided relaxation up to 10 per cent of cut-off marks for the Junior Research Fellowship (JRF) test and all SC/ST candidates qualifying for the JRF are awarded fellowships. Around 50 Junior Fellowships are awarded every year in sciences to SC/ST candidates who appear in the National Eligibility Test (NET) and qualify the eligibility test for

lecturership. Also, special attention is being paid to 146 districts identified as low female literacy districts.

4.1.17 The scheme of Area-Intensive Programme for Educationally Backward Minorities provides basic infrastructure and facilities in the areas with a concentration of educationally backward minorities and which do not have adequate provision for elementary and secondary education. Under this scheme, 100 per cent financial assistance is given to State Governments and voluntary organisations for the establishment of new primary/upper primary schools and multi-stream residential higher secondary schools for girls belonging to those groups. The scheme covers 325 Blocks in 13 states and 3 UTs and 4 districts in Assam.

4.1.18 To enhance skills and linguistic proficiency in various subjects, special coaching is provided to SC students. The scheme is in operation in 26 universities and 449 colleges. Coaching for students belonging to educationally backward minority communities to compete in various competitive examinations is being provided through 77 coaching centres, including 10 coaching centres for women functioning in 22 universities and 55 colleges. To facilitate educational development amongst the Minorities, the Scheme for Modernisation of Madarsa Education continues to encourage traditional institutions like Madarsas and Maktabas to introduce Science, Mathematics, Social Studies, Hindi and English in their curriculum. Hundred per cent financial assistance is provided for the appointment of qualified teachers.

Health & Family Welfare

4.1.19 The National Health Policy (1983) accorded high priority for extending health services to those residing in the backward rural areas, with a concentration of SCs. It laid special emphasis on endemic diseases. National Malaria Eradication Programme including Filaria Control, Japanese Encephalitis Control and Kala-azar Control were implemented by States/UTs with 50 per cent central assistance for spraying insecticides, supply of Anti-Malaria drugs etc. in the areas of SC concentration under SCP. The National Leprosy Eradication Programme is 100 per cent centrally assisted programme for the detection and treatment of leprosy cases. This programme has been in action

in all districts of the country and covers the entire SC population. The National Tuberculosis Control Programme (NTCP) implemented with central assistance, supplies anti-TB drugs, equipment etc. to areas with high concentration of SCs/STs under SCP/TSP. Further, the norms of NTCP were relaxed and the following steps were taken for facilitating effective service delivery in rural/tribal areas for – i) providing Senior Treatment Supervisors and Senior Tuberculosis Laboratories Supervisors for 2-3 lakh population against the established norms of 5 lakh; ii) opening of microscopic centres for 50,000 population against the established norms of 1 lakh; iii) opening of more Direct Observation Therapy (DOT) Centres; and iv) provision to reimburse the travel claims of patients and attendants for taking treatment at DOT Centres. Under the National Programme on Control of Blindness, 100 per cent central assistance is being extended for strengthening of ophthalmic infrastructure, training of personnel, etc. in areas with SC concentration for treatment of eye ailments and control of blindness under SCP. The National AIDS Control Programme is implemented in areas with sizeable SC population, though no separate provision is made for SCP (More details are available under the Chapters on 'Health' and 'Family Welfare').

Labour & Employment

4.1.20 In the field of Labour and Employment, the Ministry of Labour is implementing special training and rehabilitation programmes for SCs to equip them with necessary training in upgradation of skills and, thus, improve their employment opportunities. The scheme of 'Coaching-cum-Guidance Centre for SCs/STs' was implemented through 22 centres in various States/UTs to provide occupational information as well as individual guidance and to conduct confidence-building programmes for the benefit of the SC/ST job seekers. To facilitate the recruitment of SC/ST candidates against reserved vacancies in various Central Government Ministries/Departments, the Directorate-General of Employment and Training (DGET) has launched another scheme, viz. 'Special Coaching Scheme' in 1973 for SC/ST job-seekers registered with the employment exchanges to enable them to appear in Competitive Examinations/Selection Tests conducted for recruitment in Group C and equivalent posts. The scheme was launched on a pilot basis

at Delhi and Ghaziabad and so far 17 phases of this programme have been completed and the 18th phase is in progress since January, 2000. Encouraged with the success of the above scheme, the scheme has been extended to 12 more places through the Coaching-cum-Guidance Centres located at Bangalore, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Ranchi, Surat, Kanpur, Guwahati, Imphal, Hissar, Jabalpur, Chennai and Thiruvananthapuram.

4.1.21 Further, a number of welfare schemes for providing medical, housing, educational, recreational and family welfare benefits are being implemented under the Labour Welfare Funds with special dispensation for SC and ST workers engaged in mining. Also, 15 per cent of the houses built by mining managements are reserved for SCs/STs. Under the Integrated Housing Scheme for Beedi Workers, the exclusive ownership of land is not insisted upon in respect of SCs/STs. Under the Scheme 'Award of Scholarships to the Wards of Miners and Beedi Workers', reservation for SC/ST students is provided on the basis of percentage of SC/ST population in the district, subject to a floor of 15 per cent for SCs and 7.5 per cent for STs. The minimum marks for eligibility under the scholarship scheme for SCs are 35 per cent, against 45 per cent in case of other students. Thus, education and housing have been identified as the major thrust areas and the tempo of the welfare schemes relating to them have been substantially stepped up with the consequential benefits flowing in greater measure to the SCs/STs.

4.1.22 The rehabilitation of bonded labour has a special significance for SCs and STs, as these communities constitute 61.5 per cent and 25.1 per cent respectively of bonded labour in the country as per the Report of the National Commission on Rural Labour, 1991. According to reports received from State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar (including Jharkhand), Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh (including Chhattisgarh), Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh (including Uttaranchal) as many as 2.8 lakh bonded labourers have been identified and out of these 2.6 lakh have been rehabilitated up to March 2001. A

separate SC Development Planning Cell has been functioning under the Ministry, since 1981 to co-ordinate the policy, planning and monitoring.

Women & Child Development

4.1.23 Programmes for women and children implemented by the Department of Women and Child Development are primarily directed towards the most disadvantaged groups of population like SCs, STs and other economically backward classes living in backward rural areas, tribal areas and urban slums. The basic consideration of all the schemes is to ensure that the benefits flow to women and children belonging to the disadvantaged sections of the population. The Department has been implementing one of the largest area-based programme of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS). It aims to provide a package of 6 basic services of health, immunisation, supplementary feeding, referral services, non-formal pre-school education and health and nutrition education - for children below 6 years and for expectant and nursing mothers living in the most backward and rural areas and urban slums with high concentration of severely disadvantaged groups. By the end of the Ninth Plan, ICDS is expected to be universalised by covering all the 5,652 Blocks/Wards to benefit 54.3 million children and 10.9 million mothers. Most of the evaluation studies have indicated that out of the total beneficiaries under the schemes, about 78 per cent belong to SCs. Also, under the scheme of Hostels for Working Women implemented by the Department, there are stipulations to reserve 15 per cent of seats for SCs (More details are available under the Chapter on 'Women and Children').

Rural Development

4.1.24 The Ministry of Rural Development plays a vital role in raising the status of the poor above the poverty line and improving the quality of life in rural areas through the implementation of various poverty alleviation programmes and providing avenues for self/wage employment to the most disadvantaged Groups, viz. SCs, STs and others. Under the Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY), which provides wage employment, 22.5 per cent of Plan allocation is earmarked for SC/ST families living

'Below the Poverty Line' (BPL). During the Ninth Plan, 395.6 million man-days were provided for SCs, accounting for 28.5 per cent of total employment under this scheme. Under the Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) which is open to all rural poor who are in need of wage-employment, preference is given to SCs/STs and parents of child labour withdrawn from hazardous occupations who are below the poverty line. Around 500 million man-days were provided to SCs during the Ninth Plan under EAS, accounting for 33.7 per cent of total employment provided under the scheme. JGSY and EAS have been brought under the purview of the mega scheme of Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) since September 2001.

4.1.25 For taking up self-employment and income-generation activities, Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) stipulates that at least 50 per cent of the swarozgaris will be from SCs/STs. Under SGSY, 1.8 million SC swarozgaris accounting for 32.5 per cent of the total number of swarozgaris, benefited during the Ninth Plan. In addition to these poverty alleviation programmes, this Ministry also provides basic amenities like housing, drinking water, etc. Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) has the objective of providing dwelling units to BPL rural households belonging primarily to SCs, along with STs. About 1.8 million dwelling units were constructed for SCs accounting for 47.4 per cent of total houses under the scheme during the Ninth Plan. Around 60 per cent of the total allocation was earmarked for SCs/STs. Under the Credit-cum-Subsidy scheme of rural housing, a minimum of 60 per cent of the funds allocated as subsidy to each state has been earmarked for the construction of houses for SCs/STs.

4.1.26 Under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP), states are required to utilise a minimum of 25 per cent of funds for provision of drinking water supply to SCs. Around 23.1 million SCs have been benefited, accounting for 18.1 per cent of total beneficiaries under ARSWP. Under the Central Rural Sanitation Programme (CRSP), sanitary latrines are provided to rural population with preference to SC/ST families and people below the poverty line. A minimum of 20 per cent of the total funds is earmarked for providing subsidy to individual BPL households belonging to SCs and STs. Where

such households are more than 20 per cent of the total population, earmarking is enhanced at least to match the percentage of SC population. During the Ninth Plan, one million (21.2 per cent) sanitary latrines were provided to SCs.

4.1.27 The National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), comprising the National Old Age Pensions Scheme (NOAPS), the National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) and the National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS) introduces a national policy for social security assistance to the poor SC/ST families and represents a significant step forward. During the Ninth Plan, 7.8 million SCs were covered under NOAPS, accounting for 24.4 per cent of total 32.2 million beneficiaries. Of the total one million beneficiaries of the NFBS, 2 lakh (20.2 per cent) comprised of SC families. NMBS (now transferred to Department of Family Welfare w.e.f. 2001-02) benefited 1.2 million SC women, who accounted for 21.8 per cent of the total 5.6 million beneficiaries.

Urban Development

4.1.28 The special scheme of Urban Self-Employment Programme under Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) extends assistance to the urban poor living below the poverty line with special attention to women and persons belonging to SCs and STs to set up gainful self-employment ventures. The benefits for SCs are granted keeping in view the extent of the proportion of their strength in the local population. The National Agenda for Governance identified 'Housing for All' as a major programme with special emphasis on the needs of the vulnerable groups wherein it was proposed to facilitate construction of 20 lakh additional units every year, with emphasis on the Economically Weaker Sections and Low Income Groups as also the needs of SCs/STs. A special Cell in the Ministry of Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation monitors the implementation of the various Government Orders regarding reservation in services for SCs/STs through periodical returns. In addition, the Cell also monitors the filling up of the backlog of vacancies reserved for SCs, STs and OBCs under the Special Recruitment Drive in respect of the Attached/Subordinate Offices and the Public Sector Undertakings of this Ministry.

Social Justice and Empowerment

4.1.29 Supplementing and complementing the efforts of the sectoral Ministries/Departments, the nodal Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment continued to work through promoting educational and economic development, besides extending necessary protective measures, as detailed below. (Though the Ministry got bifurcated and an exclusive Ministry of Tribal Affairs came into existence in 1999, some of the educational schemes continued, as combined schemes for both SCs and STs till 2000-01).

Educational Development

4.1.30 Greater emphasis was laid in the Ninth Plan on the educational development of SCs. The nation-wide popular scheme of 'Post-Matric Scholarships (PMS) for SC Students', the largest educational scholarship scheme of its kind in the country, continued to promote higher education amongst SCs. The scheme extends scholarships to all eligible SC students who pursue post-matriculation courses in recognised institutions. The revision of the scheme in 1997-98 expanded its scope for enhancing the income ceiling of parents of the beneficiaries and for extending some additional benefits to persons with disabilities amongst SCs. Scholarships are given to all the eligible SC students based on a Means Test which includes provision of maintenance allowance, reimbursement of compulsory non-refundable fees, thesis typing/printing charges, study tour charges, book allowance for students pursuing correspondence courses etc. An expenditure of Rs. 457.29 crore was incurred benefiting around 21 lakh SC students studying at the Post-Matric and above levels, including the professional/technical courses. An evaluation study on the scheme conducted by the Ministry reveals that SC students in some states are facing hardships due to non-payment of scholarships in time, as the State Governments could not meet the expenditure on committed liability under the scheme.

4.1.31 The Scheme of 'Pre-Matric Scholarship for the Children of those engaged in Unclean Occupations' aims to motivate the children of scavengers, sweepers, flayers and tanners to pursue education and also to reduce school drop-

out rates amongst them. Special provisions for students with disabilities were also introduced keeping in line with the provisions of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995. Against the total Ninth Plan outlay of Rs. 30 crore, for the scheme, the expenditure was Rs. 36.25 crore. The scheme covered 19.2 lakh beneficiaries, 2.3 lakh more than the target of 16.9 lakh beneficiaries. An evaluation report on the performance of the scheme has revealed that the programme is instrumental in encouraging many people who are living below the poverty line to send their children to the schools.

4.1.32 The scheme of 'Hostels for SC Boys and Girls' launched in 1961-62, being one of the major support services to improve enrolment, aims at reducing the present high drop-out rates and increasing retention amongst SC/ST students by providing them hostel facilities in the middle, secondary and higher secondary schools, colleges and universities. The central assistance to the scheme has been declining, as the State Governments are not able to provide the required matching share under this scheme. Evaluation of the scheme carried out by the Ministry reveals that the performance of some states in providing matching grants, maintenance of services and management of hostels is not encouraging. Also, the basic amenities therein are substandard due to poor maintenance of buildings. As against the total Ninth Plan outlay of Rs. 97.05 crore for the scheme, the expenditure was Rs. 118.10 crore for the construction of 354 girls' hostels and 388 boys' hostels benefiting 25,196 SC girls and 17,244 SC boys.

4.1.33 The scheme of 'Special Educational Development Programmes for SC Girls belonging to Low Literacy Districts', introduced in 1996-97, aims to establish special residential schools for SC Girls who are first generation learners from low literacy pockets where the traditions and environment are not conducive to learning. The scheme covers 48 districts spread over Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh where the literacy amongst SC girls was less than 2 per cent, as per 1981 Census. Central assistance is given to Zilla Parishads to run the schools by themselves or through credible Non-Government Organisations (NGOs). Of the Ninth Plan allocation

of Rs. 7.70 crore, the expenditure was only Rs. 1.61 crore, and against a target of 140 schools, only 104 schools could be funded.

4.1.34 The 'Book Banks Scheme for SC/ST Students' continued to supply text-books to SC students for pursuing Medical, Engineering, Veterinary, Agricultural, Polytechnic, Chartered Accountancy, Business Administration, Bio-Sciences and Law Courses. Provision has also been made for Braille Books to visually disabled SC students. Against the total Ninth Plan outlay of Rs. 12 crore for the scheme, the expenditure was Rs. 10.61 crore for benefiting about 1.15 lakh SC/ST students.

4.1.35 The scheme of 'Up-gradation of Merit of SC/ST Students' aims to provide remedial and special coaching to SC students studying in classes IX to XII. While the remedial coaching aims at helping SC students weak in some school subjects, special coaching helps them to prepare for appearing in competitive examinations and for admission tests for professional courses like medicine, engineering etc. The Ninth Plan allocation of Rs. 5.26 crore was later raised to Rs. 42.50 crore which was earmarked for 2001-02 with a view to assisting 25,000 SC/ST students from Classes VI to Degree/Diploma-level courses. But, unfortunately, the expenditure was Rs. 4.72 crore only for benefiting 3,755 SC students. Despite the Centre's willingness to bear the entire cost, most of the States/UTs failed to respond favourably for implementing the scheme. Therefore, the scheme had very limited impact in achieving its objective.

4.1.36 Coaching and Allied Scheme for SC/ST students which aims to improve the knowledge and aptitude of SC/ST students by providing special coaching to them through Pre-Examination Training Centres (PETCs), was recast during the Ninth Plan by bringing revision in the unit-cost. Universities and private institutions receive 100 per cent Central assistance on a contractual basis, while State-owned PETCs receive the Central assistance to the extent of 50 per cent of the contractual amount. The scheme, which was common for both SC and ST students till the year 2000-01, is now exclusively meant for SC students, after a separate Ministry of Tribal Affairs was set up in 1999. Of the Ninth Plan

outlay of Rs. 16.71 crore for the scheme, the expenditure was Rs. 11.09 crore for coaching and training for 48,500 SC/ST students.

4.1.37 Educational development of OBCs, which made a beginning during the 1990s, received better attention during the Ninth Plan with many new initiatives coming up in the field of education. Towards ensuring educational development amongst OBCs, schemes for providing scholarships for pursuing both Pre-Matric and Post-Matric as well as other higher education, supported with hostel facilities, were introduced. Besides, children belonging to the OBCs were also allowed to enjoy the existing hostel facilities meant for SC boys and girls. For OBC students to participate effectively in the competitive examinations, Pre-Examination Coaching Centres were also set up in the Ninth Plan.

4.1.38 The scheme of Post-Matric Scholarships for OBC Students is intended to promote higher education amongst OBCs by extending financial support to poor OBC students studying at the level of matriculation and above, including Ph.D degrees etc. Of the Ninth Plan allocation of Rs. 49.90 crore, an expenditure of Rs. 40.57 crore was incurred benefiting 5.8 lakh OBC students. So far, only 15 states viz. Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttaranchal and Uttar Pradesh could avail the benefit of this scheme.

4.1.39 The scheme of Pre-Matric Scholarships for OBC Students aims to motivate children of OBCs studying at pre-matric stage in recognised schools. Of the Ninth Plan outlay of Rs. 49.90 crore for the scheme, the expenditure was Rs. 29.15 crore, benefiting 12.6 lakh OBC students. The states of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Sikkim, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh could utilise the funds under this scheme.

4.1.40 The scheme of Hostels for OBC Boys and Girls, being one of the major support services aims to reduce the high drop-out rate at middle/higher university level education amongst OBCs with the objective of providing accommodation with

congenial atmosphere. Of the Ninth Plan outlay of Rs. 49.90 crore for the scheme, expenditure incurred was only Rs. 20.76 crore, benefiting 11,470 students. The State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh could utilise funds under this scheme.

4.1.41 The scheme for Pre-Examination Coaching for OBCs was introduced with a major objective of providing special coaching/training for OBC candidates to help compete in competitive examinations for recruitment to various services. The candidates, whose parents' total annual income from all sources is below Rs. 1 lakh are eligible for admission to this special coaching scheme. Of the Ninth Plan allocation of Rs. 10 crore, only Rs. 1.03 crore has been spent benefiting 2,480 students. The scheme of Assistance to Voluntary Organisations for the Welfare of OBCs was launched with a major objective of involving the voluntary sector for improving the educational and economic conditions of OBCs. Of the Ninth Plan allocation of Rs. 10 crore, for the scheme, the expenditure was Rs. 1.03 crore to assist 20,880 beneficiaries.

4.1.42 For Minorities, education has become a key input in their development, as a large section amongst them continues to be educationally backward. Improvement in literacy levels, up-gradation of the quality of education and its relevance to the emerging employment opportunities are crucial to their development. Initiatives taken in this direction are enumerated below:

4.1.43 The Maulana Azad Education Foundation was set up as an autonomous organisation in 1992-93 with the objective of promoting education amongst educationally backward sections in general and Minorities in particular. The Foundation provides for remedial coaching, construction/expansion of schools/residential schools/colleges/polytechnics/hostels mainly for girls and purchase of machinery/equipment for laboratories and for setting up/strengthening vocational/technical training centres for women. As against the total Ninth Plan outlay of Rs. 70 crore, Rs. 52.75 crore was spent to assist about 417 NGOs.

4.1.44 The scheme of Pre-Examination Coaching for Weaker Sections, based on economic criteria, is extended to enable them to compete on equal terms with other candidates in competitive examinations for various jobs and it is being implemented through the Institutions of repute. Against a provision of Rs. 12 crore for the Ninth Plan, Rs. 11.29 crore was spent for funding 417 Institutions to train 30,310 students.

Economic Development

4.1.45 The National Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC) continued to function as a catalytic agent for financing, facilitating and mobilising funds from various sources for promoting economic development activities amongst SCs living below double the poverty line. Financial assistance, at a concessional rate of interest, is extended to the target groups for taking up viable economic activities through the 34 State Channelising Agencies, which include Scheduled Caste Development Corporations (SCDCs) and other recognised financial institutions. Skill and entrepreneurial training is also imparted to unemployed SC youths through reputed training institutions. A micro-credit scheme has also been taken up since 2000-01 for funding Self-Help Groups (SHGs) by which small loans are provided to the target groups through NGOs. The Authorised Share Capital of the Corporation was Rs. 300 crore and it was raised to Rs. 1,000 crore in 1999-2000. Its paid-up share capital is now Rs. 421 crore. The Corporation has so far sanctioned 2,759 projects, which on completion, would enable 3.4 lakh SC beneficiaries to take up various employment-cum-income-generating activities. During the last year of the Ninth Plan (2001-02), NSFDC was bifurcated into 2 separate Corporations - one for SCs and the other for STs viz. National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation for SCs and National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation for STs.

4.1.46 SCDCs are playing a key role at state level as guarantors, promoters and catalysts for generating credit from financial institutions and providing missing inputs by way of margin money loans and subsidy to SCs living below the poverty

line. At present, these Corporations are functioning in 25 States/UTs. This Scheme was revised in 1998-99 with a view to ensuring effective utilisation of central assistance extended to the states. Of the Ninth Plan allocation of Rs. 180 crore, an expenditure of Rs. 173.63 crore was incurred for extending financial assistance to 14.88 lakh SCs.

4.1.47 The National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC) was set up in January 1997 as a non-profit making company exclusively for promoting economic development/self-employment amongst the scavenging communities. NSKFDC acts as an apex institution for channelising funds through the State Channelising Agencies. Financial assistance on concessional rates is provided to persons engaged in scavenging occupations for the establishment of alternative viable income-generation activities. Under the Micro-Credit Scheme, introduced in 2000-01, Safai Karamcharis were organised into SHGs with the help of State Channelising Agencies/NGOs to receive loans to a maximum of Rs. 10,000 per beneficiary for undertaking income-generation activities. Financial assistance is also extended to Co-operatives formed by a group of 25 scavengers for setting up of Sanitary Marts production-cum-service centres and for conversion of dry latrines into wet ones. The Ninth Plan allocation of Rs. 81.75 crore has been released to the NSKFDC and the scheme has benefited 33,725 persons.

4.1.48 The National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC) was set up in 1992 with a major objective of promoting self-employment ventures and income-generation activities among the poorest of OBCs living below double the poverty line. The Corporation provides loans at concessional rates of interest and also arranges training for upgradation of technological and entrepreneurial skills amongst the individuals or groups belonging to OBCs through the State Channelising Agencies. The initial Authorized Share Capital of Rs. 200 crore has been raised to Rs. 700 crore. The Corporation has disbursed term loans to the tune of Rs. 614.08 crore to assist 3.75 lakh beneficiaries during the Ninth Plan. A micro-credit scheme has also been introduced for extending credit facilities to the target groups for small business especially for women beneficiaries through State Channelising Agencies as well as NGOs. It

has also launched a special scheme, viz. 'Swarnima' for providing a loan upto Rs. 1 lakh for self-employment activities. Of the Ninth Plan allocation of Rs. 400 crore for the NBCFDC, Rs. 191.50 crore was spent for the activities, mentioned above.

4.1.49 The National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC) was set up in 1994-95 to promote income generating activities among the poorest of the poor in the minority groups. The Corporation provides loans at concessional rates of interest and organises training programmes, especially for the craftsmen engaged in traditional occupations and trades. The Corporation operates all the programmes through networking with the State Channelising Agencies. The authorised share capital of the Corporation was Rs. 500 crore. The Corporation has a paid-up share capital of Rs. 257.95 crore, of which the Central Government contribution was Rs. 217 crore and the remaining amount was contributed by States/UTs. The scheme of 'micro-financing' has also been introduced in 1998-99 and the same is operated directly through NGOs and SHGs. Of the Ninth Plan allocation of Rs.111 crore for the Corporation, an amount of Rs. 92.26 crore was spent, benefiting 81,695 beneficiaries.

4.1.50 All the above-said 5 apex financial institutions, viz. NSFDC, State SCDCs, NSKFDC, NBCFDC, NMDFC which are expected to be working for the economic empowerment of the socially disadvantaged groups, have been strengthened by increasing their Authorised Share Capital during the Ninth Plan. These Corporations, in collaboration with the State Finance and Development Corporations, are expected to work as catalytic agents besides extending both 'forward' and 'backward' linkages of credit and marketing facilities to micro-level agencies to improve the economic status of these groups. But unfortunately, a critical assessment of the working of all these Corporations over a period of five to ten years has brought forth a most revealing truth that none of them justifies the name of being a Corporation, as they are heavily dependent upon governmental assistance. Generally, these Corporations are expected to become self-reliant over a period of two to three years of their establishment. Instead, they are becoming more and more dependent upon the Government and demanding a hike in the Authorised

Share Capital, from time to time, which is not a healthy sign. For example, the original Authorised Share Capital of Rs. 150 crore for NSFDC has been revised four times to raise it to Rs. 1,000 crore. Further, these Corporations have been maintaining a recovery rate to a maximum of 30 to 50 per cent. A study of the working of all these Corporations during the very first year of the Tenth Plan, with a major objective of introducing necessary reforms has been suggested by the Planning Commission, so as to make them financially viable and become effective instruments in empowering the disadvantaged.

Protective Measures

4.1.51 The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, in its nodal capacity, continued to make special efforts towards ensuring social justice to the weaker sections through enforcement of special legislations and implementation of protective programmes. Towards achieving the major objective of abolishing the practice of untouchability, curtailing/preventing the incidence of crimes and atrocities committed against SCs and ensuring rehabilitation of the affected victims, efforts were made through effective implementation of the Protection of Civil Rights (PCR) Act, 1955 and the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. To ensure speedy disposal of cases under the two Acts, 36 Special Courts were set up under the PCR Act and 113 Special Courts under the SC and ST (POA) Act.

4.1.52 With a major objective of accomplishing complete eradication of the obnoxious and in-human practice of manual scavenging, the National Scheme of Liberation and Rehabilitation of Scavengers and their Dependents was modified in 1998 to accommodate revised norms and involve NGOs in the efforts made for identification, liberation and rehabilitation of scavengers. Though, complete elimination of the practice of manual scavenging could not be achieved by the end of the Ninth Plan (2002) as targeted, yet around 3.84 lakh out of the 6.53 lakh identified scavengers were rehabilitated, while 1.47 lakh were imparted training to take up alternative vocations.

4.1.53 In addition to these efforts made through special legislation and programmes, the four statutory Commissions viz. i) National Commission for SCs and STs; ii) National Commission for Safai Karamcharis; iii) National Commission for Backward Classes; and iv) National Commission for the Minorities also played a very important role in safeguarding the rights and interests of their target groups. Armed with the powers of a Civil Court, the Commissions investigated individual complaints/grievances made on-the-spot visits to the areas where the incidence of crimes/atrocities took place and placed the 'Action Taken Reports' before both Houses of Parliament. The Commission for SCs and STs also played an effective interventionist role in reviewing the progress of the implementation of Special Component Plan (SCP) and Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) by the Central Ministries/Departments and the State Governments and also the utilisation of Special Central Assistance (SCA) to SCP and TSP. The outstanding contribution of the Commission during the Plan period was holding national-level consultations with District Development Commissioners/Collectors to develop a direct district-wise dialogue for receiving the first-hand report on the progress of the implementation of various policies and programmes in improving the status of these Target Groups. The National Commission for Backward Classes, set up to advise the Government with regard to inclusion of various communities in the List of OBCs and also attend thereto the complaints received, could successfully tender advice to the Government in respect of 1,067 castes/communities. Out of these, 652 castes were included and 415 were rejected. The Commission also initiated action on completing the task within the available time-frame. The other achievements include setting up of a Minority Education Cell by the National Commission for Minorities to look after exclusively the problems faced by the Minority Educational Institutions with regard to recognition, allocation, grant-in-aid etc. The National Commission for Safai Karamcharis, set up in 1994, has been playing its role in promoting as well as safeguarding the interests and rights of Safai Karamcharis, besides investigating specific grievances as well as matters relating to implementation of programmes and schemes for the welfare of the Safai Karamcharis. It also has the responsibility of over-seeing the progress of fulfilling the national commitment of Total Eradication of Manual Scavenging.

Table – 4.1.1
Flow of Funds under SCP and SCA to SCP for SCs during the Ninth Plan (1997-2002)

(Rs. in Crore)

Item	Outlay	Flow to SCP	Percentage (Col. 3 to Col.2)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Special Component Plan (SCP)			
- Flow from Central Plan (in respect of 14 Ministries/Departments)	15,478.90	1,646.00	10.63
- Flow from State Plan (in respect of 22* States/UTs)	3,46,717.05*	42,308.97*	12.20
Special Central Assistance (SCA) to SCP			
- SCA to SCP (Outlay & Release)	2,092.95	2,004.68	95.78

Note : * Information in respect of five states including the three newly formed states is not available.

Source : Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, GOI, New Delhi

Implementation of Special Mechanisms of SCP and SCA to SCP for SCs

4.1.54 The two innovative strategies of SCP for SCs and the SCA to SCP have been receiving special attention right from their introduction in 1979-80, as these are the most effective mechanisms to ensure additional flow of funds/benefits for SCs. SCP demands earmarking of population proportionate funds for the development of SCs from the general development sectors. As per the information available, only 14 Central Ministries/Departments and 22 States/UTs are adhering to the earmarking of funds for SCs.

4.1.55 SCA to SCP is a Central scheme to extend 100 per cent grant as an additive to strengthen the efforts of the states to fill the critical gaps under the family-based income generation projects, to cater to those SC families living below poverty line. SCA to SCP was enhanced from Rs. 1,125 crore in the Eighth Plan to Rs. 2,092.95 crore in the Ninth Plan, indicating an increase by 86 per cent. Details of the flow of funds, under SCP and SCA to SCP, both at central and state levels during the Ninth Plan are given in Table 4.1.1.

4.1.56 As could be seen from Table 4.1.1, funds to the extent of Rs. 1,646.00 crore (10.63 per cent)

from 14 Ministries/Departments at the Central level and funds to the extent of Rs. 42,308.97 crore (12.20 per cent) from 22 States/UTs are flowing to SCP. This indicates that efforts need to be made to improve the implementation of SCP at both the central and state levels to reach the expected level.

4.1.57 A quick review of the earmarking of funds under SCP brings forth certain issues like - while some Ministries/Departments being regulatory in nature are not able to earmark funds for SCP, some others having activities which are non-divisible in nature, are finding it difficult to earmark funds under SCP. In respect of SCA to SCP, it was observed that non-release of SCA funds on time by the State Finance Departments to the State/nodal departments of Welfare has been adversely affecting the smooth running of various income-generation programmes that are undertaken for SC families living below the poverty line. Such delays are not only affecting the beneficiary families but also causing predicament to the nodal department, as they are not able to make full use of the allocated funds, and finally resulting in unspent funds. Often, such unspent SCA funds, as reported, are getting diverted to other purposes leaving the earmarked/intended purposes unattended to.

4.1.58 To look into all the related issues, a Central Standing Tripartite Committee was set up by the

Planning Commission in May 1999 with the representatives of the Planning Commission, National Commission for SCs and STs, the nodal Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment and the concerned Central Ministries/Departments. The Committee has, so far, reviewed formulations of both SCP and TSP of the 14 Central Ministries/Departments of Agriculture and Co-operation, Environment and Forest, Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation, Rural Development, Indian Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy, Non-Conventional Energy Sources, Water Resources, Public Enterprises, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Sugar and Edible Oils, Drinking Water Supply, Statistics and Programme Implementation, Food Processing and Power and advised that all the

Ministries/Departments should put in their special efforts to revive the otherwise routinised SCP and TSP. It also suggested that the formulation of SCP and TSP should be right at the plan formulation stage through - identification of schemes and earmarking of funds so that a systematic monitoring of the utilisation of earmarked funds can be planned for. Similar Committees are also coming up at the state level. So far, 6 states viz., Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Punjab and Gujarat have set up such Committees. Other States/UTs are also expected to come up soon with such Committees to review the progress of the implementation of SCP, TSP and SCA to SCP and TSP on a continuing basis.

SCP, TSP AND SCA TO SCP & TSP

In search for a solution to revitalise/re-activate the special mechanisms viz. Special Component Plan (SCP) for SCs, Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) for STs and Special Central Assistance (SCA) for SCP and TSP launched during the 1970s to ensure population-proportionate funds flow for the development of SCs and STs from other development sectors, Planning Commission has set up a Central Standing Tripartite Committee, inter-alia, with the following mandate:

- to look into the reasons for not implementing the Guidelines concerning SCP and TSP and to suggest specific measures for their compliance;
- to identify specific schemes which would benefit SCs and STs under various development sectors, their prioritisation along with earmarking of funds for them; and
- to review the progress of implementation, impact assessment and monitoring of SCP and TSP and utilisation of SCA to SCP and TSP and the Grant-in-Aid under Article 275(1) and advise the Planning Commission on measures which would serve the interests of these communities more effectively.

The Standing Committee has, so far, reviewed the formulation of both SCP and TSP in respect of 14 important Central Ministries/Departments. This Review has brought forth certain important issues relating to the nature of schemes being non-divisible and that being a major obstacle for certain Ministries/Departments not being able to earmark funds under SCP and TSP and also other issues such as late releases, ineffective utilisation, and diversion of SCA etc. The Committee, besides suggesting certain remedial measures, has also advised the Ministries concerned to tie up effectively with the concerned State Governments and also with the State Tripartite Committees which are now coming up. So far, 6 states, viz. Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Punjab and Gujarat could set up such Committees, while the others are expected to follow very shortly.

PRESENT STATUS OF THE TARGET GROUPS

Scheduled Castes

4.1.59 As a result of various affirmative actions, pro-active policies and programmatic interventions put into action by the government,

along with the committed efforts of various NGOs, the status of SCs has registered quantifiable improvement during the last five developmental decades. Yet, a lot more needs to be done to fulfil the Constitutional commitment of raising the status of SCs to that of the rest of the population. The gains and gaps, as recorded through various developmental indicators, are detailed below:

Demography and Vital Statistics

Table – 4.1.2
Population and Decadal Growth Rate of SCs and Total Population (1971-2001)

(Figures in Million)

Census	Population		Decadal Growth Rate	
	Total*	SCs	Total*	SCs
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1971	548.1	80.0 (14.6)	24.8	24.2
1981	683.4	104.7 (15.3)	24.7	30.9
1991	846.3**	138.2 (16.5)	23.9	32.0
2001 (Projected)	1027.0	179.7# (17.5)	21.3	30.0 (estimated)

Note : * Includes SCs.

** Includes the projected population of Jammu & Kashmir

Estimated population based on the trend of the decadal growth rate of SCs between 1961 and 1991.

- Figures within the parentheses indicate percentage to total.

Source : Census of India, 1991 and Census of India, 2001: Provisional Population Totals, Registrar-General & Census Commissioner of India, GOI, New Delhi

Table – 4.1.3
Sex Ratio of SCs and Total Population (1971-2001)

Census	Sex Ratio (No. of Females per 1,000 Males)	
	Total Population*	SC Population
(1)	(2)	(3)
1971	930	935
1981	934	932
1991	927	922
2001	933	Not yet available

Note : * Includes SC population.

Source : Census of India, 1991 and Census of India, 2001: Provisional Population Totals, Registrar-General & Census Commissioner of India, GOI, New Delhi

Table – 4.1.4
Literacy Rates of SCs and Total Population (1971-2001)

(in per cent)

Category	1971	1981	1991	2001
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Total Population*	29.45	36.23	52.21	65.38
Scheduled Castes	14.67	21.38	37.41	Not yet
Gap between SCs and Total Population	14.78	14.85	14.80	available

Note : * Includes SC population.

Source : 1. Educational Development of SCs and STs, 1995, Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, GOI, New Delhi.
2. Census of India, 2001: Provisional Population Totals, Registrar-General & Census Commissioner of India, GOI, New Delhi.

4.1.60 SC population as a percentage of total population has increased from 14.6 in 1971 to 17.5 in 2001 (Table 4.1.2). Though the decadal growth rate for SCs, estimated to be 30 per cent, was more than the growth rate of 21.3 per cent of the total population in 2001, yet a decline was noticed between 1991 and 2001.

4.1.61 The sex ratio of SCs as it stood in 1991 was not only adverse, but also showed a declining trend as it fell from 935 in 1971 to 922 in 1991 (Table 4.1.3). In fact, the sex ratio of SCs, which held a better status than that of the total population in 1971, suddenly took a turn to worse in 1981 and continued with the same tempo. This, as a gender concern, needs to be looked into.

Higher mortality amongst females and their limited access to health and family welfare services could be attributed to the causes of this adverse sex ratio. However, this is not an exception to SCs alone, but a common feature in respect of general population also.

Educational Status

4.1.62 Education, being the most important instrument for empowering weaker sections of the society, every effort is being made to improve the educational status of SCs on priority basis. Between 1971 and 1991, the literacy rate of SCs increased by 2.6 times, while that of total population increased by 1.8 times (Table 4.1.4). However, the gap

Table – 4.1.5
Female Literacy Rates of SCs and Total Population (1971-2001)

(in per cent)

Category	1971	1981	1991	2001
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Total Population*	18.69	29.85	39.29	54.16
Scheduled Castes	6.44	10.93	23.76	Not yet
Gap between Female literacy of SCs and Total Population	12.25	18.92	15.53	available

Note : * Includes SC population.

Source : 1. Educational Development of SCs and STs, 1995, Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, GOI, New Delhi.
2. Census of India, 2001: Provisional Population Totals, Registrar-General & Census Commissioner of India, GOI, New Delhi.

Table-4.1.6
Gross Enrolment Ratios of SCs and Total Population (1990-91 to 1999-2000)

Year Classes		1990-91		1999-2000	
		I to V	I to VIII	I to V	I to VIII
(1)		(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Total Population*	Total	100.1	62.1	94.9	58.8
	Boys	114.0	76.6	104.1	67.2
	Girls	85.5	47.8	85.2	49.7
Scheduled Castes	Total	102.2	47.7	92.4	62.5
	Boys	122.7	61.4	103.6	73.6
	Girls	80.6	33.3	80.5	50.3
GAP	Total	(+) 2.1	(-) 14.4	(-) 2.5	(+) 3.7
	Boys	(+) 8.7	(-) 15.2	(-) 0.5	(+) 6.4
	Girls	(-) 4.9	(-) 14.5	(-) 4.7	(+) 0.6

Note : * Includes SC Population.

Source : Annual Report of respective years, Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, GOI, New Delhi.

between the literacy rates of SCs and of the total population continued during the two decades between 1971 and 1991 almost at the same level of 14 per cent and above, but with slight variations.

4.1.63 Female literacy, which is another important indicator in the field of education, reveals that the situation in respect of SC females was worse with 6.44 per cent when compared to the total population of 18.69 per cent in 1971. No doubt, SC females made a very good progress in increasing their literacy rate almost by four-folds i.e. from 6.44 per cent in 1971 to 23.76 per cent in 1991, when compared to the two times progress made by the total population, but it still continues to be very low (Table 4.1.5). Similarly, the gap between the literacy rates of SC females and that of the total females has widened from

12.25 per cent in 1971 to 18.92 per cent in 1981 and declined to 15.53 per cent in 1991.

4.1.64 The Gross Enrolment Ratios (GER) of SC boys and girls at the primary level not only declined over 1990-91 to 1999-2000, but they were also lower than those for the total population in 1999-2000 (Table 4.1.6). At the middle level, good pace of progress was maintained by the SCs, especially by the SC girls. In fact, GERs of both SC boys and girls were higher than those for total population, at the middle level in 1999-2000.

4.1.65 The drop-out rate is another crucial indicator in the field of educational development. The figures are still very high - 44.27 in classes I to V; 63.58 in classes I to VIII; and 76.63 in classes I to

Table – 4.1.7
Drop-Out Rates amongst SCs and Total Population (1990-91 and 1998-99)

(in per cent)

Category	Classes (I-V)		Classes (I-VIII)		Classes (I-X)	
	1990-91	1998-99	1990-91	1998-99	1990-91	1998-99
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Total*	42.60	39.74	60.90	56.82	71.34	67.44
SCs	49.40	44.27	72.09	63.58	80.58	76.63
GAP	6.80	4.53	11.19	6.76	9.24	9.19

Note : * Includes SC students.

Source : Educational Profile of States/UTs, Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, GOI, New Delhi.

X in 1998-99 (Table 4.1.7). This indicates clearly that the problem gets worse at the higher levels of schooling. However, an encouraging sign is the reduction in the gap between the drop-out rates of the total population and SCs at all levels between 1990-91 and 1998-99.

Economic Status

4.1.66 Poverty alleviation programmes put into action both in rural and urban areas since the 1980s have not only helped the poor people to rise above the poverty line, but also brought down the poverty rates quite effectively, as shown at Table 4.1.8.

Participation in Decision-Making

Administration

4.1.68 Participation of SCs in decision-making is a positive indicator of progress made by them. The two Tables 4.1.9 and 1.1.10 reflect the representation of SCs in the All India Services of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS) and Indian Forest Service (IFS) as well as Other categories:

4.1.69 Representation of SCs in All India Services of IAS, IPS and IFS is not very encouraging, as they

Table – 4.1.8
Population Living Below Poverty Line (1993-94 and 1999-2000)

(in per cent)

Category	1993-94		1999-2000		Percentage Decrease (1993-94 to 1999-2000)	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Total*	37.27	32.38	27.09	23.62	(-) 10.18	(-) 10.04
SCs	48.11	49.48	36.25	38.47	(-) 11.86	(-) 11.01
GAP	10.84	15.82	9.16	14.85	(-) 1.68	(-) 0.97

Note : * Includes SC population.

Source : Perspective Planning Division, Planning Commission, New Delhi.

4.1.67 The rate of decline in respect of the percentage of SCs living below the poverty line was marginally higher than that of the total population between 1993-94 and 1999-2000. The gap between the total population and the SCs also decreased during the same period in both urban and rural areas. However, the incidence of poverty amongst SCs still continues to be very high with 36.25 per cent in rural areas and 38.47 per cent in urban areas, when compared to 27.09 and 23.62 per cent respectively, in respect of total population in 1999-2000 (Table 4.1.8). This is primarily due to the fact that a large number of SCs who are living below the poverty line are landless with no productive assets and with no access to sustainable employment and minimum wages. The women belonging to these Groups suffer even worse because of the added disadvantage of being denied of equal and minimum wages.

represent 10.6 per cent of the total in the IAS, 12.4 per cent in the IPS and 11.5 per cent in the IFS in 2000 which is still below their expected level (Table 4.1.9). Although, the percentage of SCs in IAS and IPS declined between 1996 and 2000, yet the actual number has increased over the same period.

4.1.70 The rise in the total representation of SCs in Central Government Services covering A to D Groups from 13.66 per cent in 1974 to 16.70 per cent in 1999, is marginally higher than their share in the total population (Table 4.1.10). Although, their representation has shown an increasing trend from 3.25 per cent in 1974 to 11.29 per cent in 1999 in Group A Services, though not the expected level, it does reflect the impact of various affirmative measures taken for bringing them into the mainstream.

Table – 4.1.9
Representation of SCs in the All India Services during 1996 and 2000

Category	IAS		IPS		IFS	
	1996	2000	1996	2000	1996	2000
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Total*	5047	5519	2947	3301	2305	2557
SCs	546 (10.8)	548 (10.6)	381 (12.9)	408 (12.4)	261** (11.3)	295 (11.5)

Note : * Includes SC population

** Derived from Annual Report 2000-01, Ministry of Environment & Forests, GOI, New Delhi.

- Figures within parentheses indicate percentage to total.

Source : 1. Department of Personnel & Training, GOI, New Delhi

2. Ministry of Environment & Forests, GOI, New Delhi

Table – 4.1.10
Representation of SCs in Central Government Services (1974 to 1999)

Category	Groups				Total
	A	B	C	D	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
As on 1.1.1974					
Total*	33,672	52,343	15,66,796	12,42,548	28,95,359
SCs	1,094 (3.25)	2,401 (4.59)	1,61,775 (10.33)	2,30,203 (18.53)	3,95,473 (13.66)
As on 1.1.1984					
Total*	-	-	-	-	33,03,342
SCs	-	-	-	-	5,27,573 (15.97)
As on 1.1.1994					
Total*	59,016	1,03,198	23,81,613	10,23,285	35,67,112
SCs	6,046 (10.25)	12,442 (12.06)	3,74,758 (15.73)	2,09,423 (20.47)	6,02,670 (16.90)
As on 1.1.1999					
Total*	93,520	1,04,963	23,96,426	9,49,353	35,44,262
SCs	10,558 (11.29)	13,306 (12.68)	3,78,115 (15.78)	1,89,761 (19.99)	5,91,740 (16.70)

Note : - *Includes SC population

- Data refers to Government of India only

- Figures within parentheses indicate percentage of SCs to the total Central Government Services, excluding Sweepers

Source : Department of Personnel & Training, GOI, New Delhi.

Political

4.1.71 Affirmative discrimination through reservation for SCs in the Lok Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies and in the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) has established the growing strength of SCs not only in

terms of their participation in the democratic processes of the country since independence, but also their increasing representation in the political decision-making, as shown at Table 4.1.11.

Table - 4.1.11
Representation of SCs in Political Decision-Making Institutions (1995-2001)

Category	Panchayati Raj Institutions (By 2001)				State Leg. Assemblies (By 2000)	Lok Sabha (1999)
	Gram Panchayats	Panchayat Samitis	Zilla Parishads	Total PRIs		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Total*	25,80,261	1,28,581	13,484	27,22,326	4,072	543
SCs	3,67,941 (14.3)	18,546 (14.4)	1,822 (13.5)	3,88,309 (14.3)	562 (13.8)	79 (14.5)

Note : * Includes SC population.

- Figures within parentheses indicate percentage of SCs to the total

Source : 1. Election Commission, New Delhi
2. Department of Rural Development, GOI, New Delhi.
3. National Informatics Centre, Parliament House, New Delhi.

Table - 4.1.12
Representation of SCs in the Central Council of Ministers (1991 & 1999)

Year	SCs	General	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1991	6 (10.5)	51	57
1999	7 (9.5)	67	74

Note : Figures within parentheses indicate percentage to total.

Source : National Informatics Centre, Parliament House, New Delhi

4.1.72 The representation of SCs in the political decision-making institutions at various levels has been quite impressive, though yet to receive their due share in PRIs, State Legislative Assemblies and Lok Sabha (Tables 4.1.11 and 4.1.12). Further, while in the PRIs, the share of SCs stood at 14.3 per cent in 2001, their share in State Legislative Assemblies was 13.8 per cent in 2000 and 14.5 per cent in the Lok Sabha in 1999. The representation of SCs in the Central Council of Ministers has increased marginally in absolute numbers from 6 to 7 during the period between 1991 and 1999. However, their representation as a percentage to the total has declined from 10.5 per cent to 9.5 per cent over the same period. Of the 7 SCs in the Central Council of Ministers in 1999, 3 are of Cabinet rank and 4 are Ministers of State.

Other Backward Classes

4.1.73 As already explained in the very beginning of this Chapter, no authentic data is available even about the size of the population of OBCs, leave aside on the other aspects of development to assess

their status. However, OBCs by profession, being small cultivators, agricultural labourers, artisans and also being engaged in weaving, fishing, construction work etc. and these occupations being common to SCs and OBCs, the status of OBCs cannot be treated as very much different from that of SCs.

Minorities

4.1.74 Even in the case of Minorities, non-availability of authentic data makes it difficult to assess their socio-economic status. Therefore, one has to depend upon the information generated either by occasional surveys or by various research studies. Based on the data emerging through a survey conducted by the National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER), New Delhi in 1994 covering 33,230 rural households in 16 states, Muslims have been identified as backward, both educationally and economically, when compared to the other Minority Groups. The findings of the Survey have been dealt with briefly under the following Section on the 'Persisting Problems' of this Chapter.

However, as the sample of the Survey is so very limited, the findings/conclusions of the Survey cannot be taken as a true reflection of the national profile of the Minorities.

PERSISTING PROBLEMS

4.1.75 Notwithstanding the improvements accomplished in the overall living conditions through various welfare and developmental efforts made so far, the disadvantaged groups continue to remain backward due to certain persisting problems that they have been facing. In fact, these problems which are of considerable complexity and magnitude are standing as major hurdles in empowering these Groups with social justice. The following paragraphs enlist some of those problems which have emerged as critical areas of concern :

Scheduled Castes

4.1.76 Amongst the disadvantaged groups, SCs remain the most backward, as they continue to suffer from various forms of social disabilities as well as economic deprivation, as discussed below:

Educational Backwardness

4.1.77 The educational status of SCs continues to be much lower than that of the rest of society, as figures given earlier show, as they hold very low literacy rates (37.4 per cent for SCs against 52.21 per cent for total population in 1991), enrolment ratios (92.4 per cent for SCs against 94.9 per cent for total population at primary level in 1999-2000) and high drop-out rates (44.27 per cent at primary level, 63.58 per cent at middle level and 76.63 per cent at the secondary level against 39.74 per cent, 56.83 per cent and 67.44 per cent respectively for total population in 1998-99) besides the ever increasing gap between the educational status of SCs and that of the general population. Adding to this are the region/state and caste-wise variations which are quite disturbing as they continue to persist on very unequal terms. Further, the educational status of SC women is also very depressing as it continues to be very low at 23.8 per cent in 1991 when compared to the total female literacy of 39.3 per cent indicating a very wide gap. Owing to their social and economic disability, and inaccessibility to educational facilities, the educational backwardness

of SCs continues to persist as a major handicap in the process of empowering them socially.

Economic Backwardness

4.1.78 Economic conditions of SCs, as already discussed, continue to remain very depressing as 36.3 per cent of SCs in rural areas and 38.5 per cent in urban areas still live below the poverty line, while it was only 27.1 per cent in rural areas and 23.6 per cent in urban areas in respect of total population as per the Poverty Estimates of the Planning Commission in 1999-2000. The reason being SCs still continue to depend upon those very stereo-typed occupations which do not provide any scope or opportunity either for any occupational shift or for upward mobility. Also, the economic backwardness of SCs when compared to others is depressingly obvious as they continue to derive their livelihood from such occupations as could provide neither continuity of work nor minimum subsistence for their survival, including those menial occupations like scavenging, flaying, tanning etc. While the economic scenario of the country has taken striking strides registering change, growth and development, the situation of SCs continued with not much of a change, as reflected in their high poverty rates when compared to the general population, as pointed out in the previous section. Ultimately, unless there is a dramatic change in the economic occupation of SCs, their participation in the other productive sectors of economy will continue to be negligible, implying that the gap between the percentage of SC population and the total population will widen further as they continue to remain in the cycle of deprivation.

Lower Rates of Work Participation

4.1.79 The work participation amongst SCs, as per the 1991 Census, reveals that more than 76 per cent of them are engaged in the primary sector of the economy. Of these, nearly half of them (48.2 per cent) are agricultural labourers and a little more than one-fourth (28.2 per cent) are cultivators. The employment pattern amongst SCs indicates no significant shift during the 1990s. However, there has been a decrease in the number of SC cultivators from 28.17 per cent in 1981 to 25.44 per cent in 1991 and an increase in the percentage of agricultural labourers from 48.22 per cent in 1981

to 49.06 per cent in 1991. It is also likely that some of the SCs who have lost their lands may have also joined the ranks of labourers. Evidently, their hold on agrarian economy has also been declining as the number of cultivators has declined from 38 per cent in 1961 to 25.44 per cent in 1991.

4.1.80 Participation of SC workers in the other upcoming sectors of economy also continues to be negligible, as SCs can neither compete nor sustain in the liberalised market economy, wherein the national/multi-national companies with their cost-effective products are causing a serious threat to the tradition-based economy of SCs. In the absence of backward and forward linkages, SCs are being further marginalised in the new economic regime.

Social Exploitation

4.1.81 Letting certain communities do the job of manual scavenging, especially carrying the night soil as head-loads is no less than any crime that any civilised society can ill-afford to commit. In fact, it was the commitment of the Government to eliminate the practice of manual scavenging totally by the end of the Eighth Plan (1997) and to rehabilitate those liberated scavengers with alternative and viable occupations. This could not be achieved even at the end of the Ninth Plan (2002). Reasons for non-accomplishment of this commitment include tardy progress in the identification of scavengers as well as their rehabilitation; failure to convert the dry latrines into wet; demand for manual scavenging in those areas where the dry latrines still exist; lack of co-ordination between the State Welfare Departments and the Local bodies in respect of conversion of dry latrines; absence of follow-up on the rehabilitated persons etc. So far, out of the total of 6.53 lakh scavengers identified, only 3.84 lakh could be rehabilitated and 1.47 lakh could be trained. Thus, the most inhuman practice of manual scavenging continues to persist as a complex problem of serious concern even today. As a matter of fact, the perpetuation of manual scavenging is also adding to the otherwise existing practice of social segregation and the age-old social evil of untouchability.

Segregation and Deprivation

4.1.82 The SC dwellings, which are located outside the main settlements in rural areas due to

social segregation, continue to be deprived and denied of basic amenities and services. The conditions of SCs living in urban slums are no better as they also lack access to basic minimum services of connecting roads, supply of drinking water, primary health care, sanitation, housing etc. Non-availability of these basic services not only denies these deprived classes the right to lead a minimum standard of living but also has a negative impact on their capabilities, capacity, confidence and efforts to join the mainstream. With the growing population of SCs and the large influx of rural SC population into towns/cities, the problem is getting further compounded through emergence of a large number of SC-concentrated slums in and around the urban cities/urban agglomeration. This, in turn, has given birth to various social problems including resettlement and rehabilitation of migratory SC population.

Crimes and Atrocities

4.1.83 Closely related to the problem of inequalities and low status, are the increasing incidence of crimes and atrocities against SCs. As per the National Crimes Record Bureau (Crime in India – 1999), although the number of crimes against SCs has declined from 27,944 in 1997 to 25,093 in 1999, yet their share of 0.5 per cent in the total incidence of crime in the country remained almost the same in 1999. Some of the major states which had the dubious distinction of higher incidence of crime against SCs include Uttar Pradesh (24.4 per cent); Rajasthan (22.4 per cent); Himachal Pradesh (18.6 per cent); Gujarat (7.1 per cent); Andhra Pradesh (7 per cent) and Tamil Nadu (3.5 per cent). Further, the number of crimes committed under the Special Laws of PCR Act of 1955 and the Prevention of Atrocities Act of 1989, enforced exclusively for SCs and STs, has also shown a declining trend by coming down from 9,286 in 1997 to 7,979 in 1999, but continues to be very high.

4.1.84 Further, of the total crimes of 25,093 registered in 1999, the number of cases registered under the two Special Legislations account for 7,979 (31.8 per cent) having the biggest share and followed by the cases of hurt 3,241 (12.92 per cent); rape numbering 1,000 (3.98 per cent); murder 506 (2.02 per cent); arson 337 (1.34 per cent); kidnap and abduction 228 (0.9 per cent); robbery 109 (0.4

per cent); dacoity 36 (0.1 per cent) and others 11,657 (46.46 per cent) etc. To this effect, the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes has also been documenting in their Annual Reports about several recurring pathologies, such as delays in reporting, refusal to register complaints, half-hearted investigations, poor quality of prosecution, protracted pendency, procedural delays of the Courts etc. Offences committed against the SCs not only reinforce the problem of tyranny and fear psychosis in them, but also further weakens their struggle and aspirations to achieve better quality of life.

Other Backward Classes

4.1.85 As mentioned earlier, no authentic data either on the size of OBC population or on their socio-economic status is available, except for the fact that OBCs constitute a majority of poor and backward population which produces a variety of goods and provides a variety of services, but on terms and conditions unfair to them.

4.1.86 Although OBCs do not suffer from the social disability and economic deprivation of the kind SCs are subjected to, their social and economic backwardness is of nearly similar nature. While they account for major human resource with both skilled and unskilled workforce with artisanship and traditional activities like fishing, carpentry, tailoring, black-smithy, pottery, stone quarrying, they also form the major force of peasantry being engaged in agriculture and its allied activities. Thus, OBCs traditionally and otherwise form the main workforce in almost all the productive and service sectors. But, their socio-economic backwardness is such that it not only incapacitates them to enhance their production and productive capabilities in qualitative and quantitative terms, but also restricts their economic betterment.

Lack of advanced skills and technology

4.1.87 The traditional artisan communities ensuring their livelihood through hereditary occupations have already received a major setback as a result of modernisation and industrialisation. As a large number of OBC artisans engaged in manufacturing sector still continue to depend upon

the traditional methods and techniques that are outdated, they fail to manufacture qualitative products to withstand the challenges posed by the multinationals who through their advanced technology have made inroads into the Indian markets in a big way. Being educationally backward, technically not up-to-date and also lacking in economic capability to improve the quality of goods and artifacts, the dependent artisan families are placed in a very disadvantaged position and thus getting marginalized in the open market.

Minorities

4.1.88 Just as in the case of OBCs, lack of data on Minorities and their constituents, makes it difficult to make an assessment of their socio-economic status. However, as mentioned in the previous section, the study of NCAER indicates that the Muslims who constitute about 70 per cent of the Minority population live in relative socio-economic backwardness. The problems that are typical and specific to Minorities are discussed in the following paragraphs:

Educational Backwardness

4.1.89 Minorities, especially those belonging to the economically weaker sections viz., the Muslims, continue to lag behind when compared to the rest of the population. Non-adoption of modern syllabus in the traditional Madarsas not only makes them lag behind the others educationally, but also causes impediments in the process of mainstreaming them. Further, the students from Madarsas are unable to take advantage of the up-coming employment opportunities, as they mismatch the qualifying educational requirements.

Women - The Weakest Link

4.1.90 Educationally, women and the girl children of the backward minority communities, especially amongst the Muslims, continue to remain as the weakest link because of the economic inability of the family to support education of women and the girl child due to the inherent social/cultural gender discrimination. The impact of poor educational status, especially as reflected in the high illiteracy rates, ignorance, poor health, large-size families and

high fertility rates, has pushed them further down into a vicious cycle of poverty.

Wide Economic Gaps

4.1.91 The economic status of Muslims when compared to the other Minority Groups presents a depressing scenario. As per the NCAER study (1994), Muslims lag behind when compared to the other Minority Groups in terms of both household and per capita income with a wide gap between Muslims and other Minority Groups. The gap in the per capita income is as wide as Rs. 2,242/- between the Christians holding the highest of Rs. 5,920/- and the Muslims with the lowest of Rs. 3,678/-. While the Muslims are largely engaged as artisans in small production units, mainly at the household level, they lack advanced skills, technical know-how, entrepreneurship, credit and marketing facilities to improve their products qualitatively and optimise their marketability. Like any other traditional artisans, they also get marginalised and fall victim to the onslaughts of the upcoming economic liberalization and invasions of the multinational companies in the consumer market. As referred to earlier, industrialization and modernization has already had the most devastating effect on the economy of the artisans while the opening of the new market economy and liberalization has further compounded their woes and led them to complete pauperisation. Even the one-time flourishing handicrafts and handloom activities, wherein the participation of women workers was prominent and now remains under a serious threat. Also, the steady decline in the prospects of the artisanship-based vocations has been causing increase in the unemployment rates amongst the Minorities.

APPROACH TO THE TENTH PLAN – PATH AHEAD

4.1.92 The long-drawn process of empowering the socially and economically Disadvantaged Groups launched during the Ninth Plan has, no doubt, enabled them to develop their capacities and capabilities to be the active partners and partakers of the country's development, rather than continuing as passive recipients of various developmental benefits. Therefore, the very process of empowering these Disadvantaged Groups, viz. SCs, OBCs and Minorities will continue as the major approach in the

Tenth Plan and beyond till the Constitutional commitment of raising their status to that of the rest of the society is fulfilled.

4.1.93 The first step in this direction will be to initiate action with a holistic approach to alter the harsh conditions in which these Groups live and work so as to accomplish all round development of these weaker sections with an effective inter-sectoral co-ordination inputs from both the governmental and non-governmental organisations. Improvement in the socio-economic conditions of these vulnerable groups will be made possible only by removing the disparities and eliminating exploitation and suppression. To this effect, due weightage and priority will be given to programmes catering to educational and economic development by taking into consideration the varying status of each target group viz. SCs, OBCs and Minorities. Also, every effort will be made to reach the developmental benefits to all the needy persons belonging to these Groups and thus ensure equitable distribution and growth with social justice.

4.1.94 In these efforts, the major focus will be to accomplish the task of providing basic needs to one and all as an essential measure for realizing empowerment amongst these weaker sections. Accordingly, the fulfilment of basic needs viz. food and nutrition, safe drinking water, primary health care, primary education, shelter, sanitation, good environment etc. becomes a priority. To this effect, special attention will, therefore, be paid to attend to the problems of resettlement and rehabilitation of the large influx of rural population belonging to the Socially Disadvantaged Groups congregating into urban slums. Efforts will, therefore, be made through the on-going programme of Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana to ensure that the above said basic minimum services reach every habitation with concentration of these groups.

4.1.95 Further, while formulating/implementing programmes for these Groups, the Tenth Plan will strive to ensure 'People-Centred Development' and 'People's Participation' with effective involvement of PRIs in pursuance of the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments. Immediate steps will also be taken for the devolution of financial as well as administrative powers to PRIs and Local Bodies so that these marginalised groups will get

APPROACH TO THE TENTH PLAN (2002-07)

The Approach

To continue the process of Empowering the Socially Disadvantaged Groups viz. SCs, OBCs and Minorities which would help develop their capacities and to become active partners and partakers of country's development and thus raise their status to that of the rest of the society

Major Strategies

To adopt a **3-pronged strategy** of empowering the Socially Disadvantaged Groups through:

- **Social Empowerment:** through the removal of all the still existing inequalities, disparities and other persisting problems besides providing easy access to basic minimum services;
- **Economic Empowerment:** through employment-cum-income generation activities with an ultimate objective of making them economically independent and self-reliant; and
- **Social Justice:** through elimination of all types of discrimination against the Socially Disadvantaged Groups with the strength of Constitutional commitments, legislative support, affirmative action, awareness generation, conscientisation of target groups and change in the mind-set of people

opportunity to participate in the formulation of the need-based programmes, as well as in their effective implementation, supervision and monitoring. This will not only go a long way in empowering these Groups, but will also ensure that implementation of various developmental programmes is taken care of in the true sense of decentralised planning.

4.1.96 While SCs, OBCs and Minorities, in general, occupy a lower status in the society, their women and children, especially the girl child

represent the weakest link. Though there has been a perceptible improvement in the overall situation of these women, yet the development indicators that reflect their status imply that they are the most deprived and discriminated, when compared to their counterpart women belonging to other communities. While taking note of their plight, the Tenth Plan proposes to adopt a comprehensive strategy towards ensuring their protection, welfare, development and empowerment through extending special educational, health, nutrition, employment, legal and other services. (For further details, refer to the Chapters on 'Women and Children' and 'Other Special Groups'). The nodal Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, in collaboration with the Department of Women and Child Development, will ensure that SC women receive their rightful share, both funds and benefits, from all the other developmental sectors under the Women's Component Plan.

4.1.97 While the above paragraphs outline the general approach towards empowering the Socially Disadvantaged Groups during the Tenth Plan, details of the Group-wise strategy in achieving the much wanted – 'Social Empowerment' through removal of the still existing inequalities, disparities and other persisting problems; 'Economic Empowerment' through various employment-cum-income generation activities with an ultimate objective of making them economically independent and self-reliant; and 'Social Justice' through elimination of all types of discrimination against these Groups with the strength and support of legislative measures, awareness generation and change in the mind-set of the people, are discussed below:

I. Social Empowerment

Scheduled Castes

4.1.98 Education being the best means not only to empower the disadvantaged, but also to provide the essential base for all developmental pursuits, the Tenth Plan will work out special effective interventions to 'reach the un-reached' and thus fill the existing gaps between the SCs and the general population, with a focus on SC women and the girl children. All the efforts in this direction will, therefore, take into consideration the scenario that has emerged i.e. on the one

hand, there exists a definite improvement in the literacy rates of SCs and on the other, there persists a gap between the literacy rates of SCs and the general population, even till today.

4.1.99 Further, the Tenth Plan will endeavour to improve the educational status of SCs on a time-bound basis, in close collaboration with the Department of Elementary Education, as part of the

SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT

Create an enabling environment for the welfare and development of the Socially Disadvantaged Groups by removing the still existing inequalities, disparities and other persisting problems besides providing easy and equal access to basic minimum services through -

- Education being the most effective instrument of empowering the Socially Disadvantaged Groups, all-out efforts will be made to improve the educational status of these Groups, especially of Women and the Girl Child
- Universalisation of primary education by 2007 and at elementary stage by 2010 with a special focus on low literacy pockets, and educationally backward communities viz. SCs, OBCs, Minorities and women with a special focus on the girl child
- Improving enrolment/retention rates of these Groups in schools and thus reduce school drop-out rates through special incentives/support services like hostels, financial assistance, scholarships, free books, uniforms etc and thus improve the educational status of these Groups, especially that of their women and girl children
- Priority to the educational development of the Minorities, especially Muslims, with special focus on women and girl children besides modernising and mainstreaming traditional educational systems/institutions viz. Madaras by adopting regular education syllabi
- Vocational training/education to improve the technical and productive capabilities of these Groups, suiting local needs and market demands
- Expanding/strengthening national health programmes such as control of Blindness and Tuberculosis, Eradication of Leprosy etc. in the SC/OBC/Minority concentrated areas
- Supplementing primary health care services through the Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY) so as to fill the critical gaps, both in the infrastructure and services in the SC/OBC/Minority concentrated areas
- Extending ICDS and RCH to take care of the expectant and nursing mothers and children with a major objective of reducing the existing high Infant/Child and Maternal Mortality Rates amongst these Groups. Also, help stabilise the population of these Groups
- 'Reaching the Un-reached' viz. SC/OBC/Minority groups, those living in the most backward and neglected areas, in general and their women and the girl children, in particular through the Universalised/Expanded programmes of ICDS, RCH, Supplementary Nutrition Programme, Mid-Day Meals, PMGY, NNM etc.
- Encouraging the participation of the Socially Disadvantaged Groups in the planning and developmental processes at every level through ensuring their adequate representation in various democratic decision making Institutions like Panchayati Raj / Local Bodies, State Assemblies/ Parliament etc.

total commitment of making the country fully literate by the year 2007. The Tenth Plan will make special efforts to fulfil this commitment through universalisation of elementary education with a special focus on low-literacy pockets and on the educationally backward SCs, whose literacy rates are very low compared to the rest of the population. The on-going programmes of the Department of Elementary Education viz. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, DPEP, Shiksha Karmi, NFE, Mid-Day Meals etc. are going to play a major role in this endeavour.

4.1.100 In fact, the recent directive of the Supreme Court to treat education as a fundamental right imposes an ultimatum on the Tenth Plan to act rigorously to improve the educational status of SCs and thus accomplish social empowerment. The first step in this direction will be to arrest the problem of school drop-outs, and improve enrolment/retention rates by ensuring easy access; and provision of adequate support facilities like hostels, crèches and special incentives to poor students like scholarships, free books, free uniforms, transport charges, besides compensation to families etc. In this context, the earlier initiatives of starting crèches/Anganwadis within the school campus or near to the school will be revived to ensure that the girl children are not deprived of education, while substituting for their mothers when the latter go out to work. To this effect, the scheme of Balika Samridhi Yojana, an exclusive programme for girl children living below the poverty line and the much wanted nutritional support through the popular scheme of Mid-Day Meals will be expanded/universalised to improve both enrolment/retention rates.

4.1.101 Further, steps will also be taken to ensure provision of quality education to equip the educationally backward SCs to enhance their employment prospects with competitive ability and thus mitigate the problems of their marginalisation and deprivation in the employment market. Along with the general education, efforts will also be made to vocationalise education both at the middle and high school levels to enable SC students to enhance their technical and productive capabilities in those vocations that have a direct bearing/relevance to their local needs and market demands. To this effect, job-oriented condensed courses of education and training will be given priority. In all these efforts,

the ultimate objective will be to fulfil the Tenth Plan commitment of minimising the gap between the educational status of SCs and that of the general population.

Other Backward Classes

4.1.102 The new interventions launched during the Ninth Plan for improving the educational status of OBCs, viz. scholarships for both post-matric and pre-matric students and hostels for OBC students, will continue with much larger coverage to enlarge the accessibility to the otherwise educationally backward OBCs. The special programmes of National Literacy Mission and Shiksha Karmi run by the Department of Elementary Education will also take care of the needs and interests of OBCs by extending a special focus as well as the coverage. Steps will also be taken not only to bring about qualitative improvement in the education for OBCs, but will also be enriched through adding vocational education/training which is of great functional utility/value and thus prevent educational wastage. To this effect, the Tenth Plan will make special efforts to expand the on-going schemes and thus extend easy accessibility to OBC students through the existing network of the Ministry of Labour viz. National Vocational Training Institute, Regional Vocational Training Institutes, Industrial Training Institutes and Craft Training Centres spread all over the country. The Tenth Plan will extend priority attention to OBC women and girl children in all the on-going educational and training programmes.

Minorities

4.1.103 Minorities who constitute a sizeable and potential population to contribute to the country's development process will be given prominence and priority in the Tenth Plan through a comprehensive approach towards their educational development, and economic prosperity by maximizing their productive potentialities in various sectors with a special focus on their traditional artisanship. As the crucial drawback in the development of Minorities, especially Muslims, primarily lies in their educational backwardness, exclusive efforts in the Tenth Plan will be made to promote educational development of Muslims, especially of their women and girl children by modernising and mainstreaming their traditional education system and institutions

viz. Madarsas, through adopting syllabi being followed in the regular education system.

4.1.104 To inculcate a sense of security and prevent marginalisation and isolation of Minorities, both protective and promotional measures as per the Constitutional provisions in favour of Minorities, will be taken in educational, economic and legislative spheres. To accomplish their socio-economic upliftment and mainstreaming, steps will be taken to generate responsive awareness amongst the civil society and thus create an enabling/conducive atmosphere for the

advancement of the Minorities. To this effect, involvement of the Minorities, especially their women, in the grassroot level institutions will be encouraged as the best means towards empowering them. Special attention will also be paid to the backward Minority concentrated pockets/ areas in providing basic amenities/services viz. primary education, health, nutrition, safe drinking water, sanitation etc. The Tenth Plan will also ensure effective implementation of the 15-Point Programme which is a comprehensive package of both protective and developmental measures towards improving the status of Minorities.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

To empower the Socially Disadvantaged Groups economically through promotion of employment-cum-income generation activities with an ultimate objective of making them economically independent and self-reliant through -

- Optimising the traditional ability of SCs/OBCs in agricultural production and maximize their productive capacity through endowing a piece of land, upgradation of skills, modern technology, equipment and ensured irrigation facilities
- Special legislative measures to ensure payment of minimum wages and equal wages with no gender discrimination to the SCs, especially in the informal sector
- Expanding and reinvigorating the on-going poverty alleviation programmes to improve qualitatively the economic conditions of SCs/OBCs/Minorities, through specifically designed activities in the programmes best suited to their skills and requirements
- Motivate the landless and agricultural labourers, especially women to form economically viable Self-Help Groups on the pattern of Swarozgaris to ensure employment and income-generation, on a sustainable basis
- To re-orient the employment opportunities for the disadvantaged to enable them to face the challenges of economic reforms and expanding private sector through equipping them suitably with the technical skills and emerging trades
- Encourage development of small entrepreneurship through formation of Self-Help Groups and with the support of both 'forward' and 'backward' linkages of credit and markets through the corporations, exclusively set up for these Groups
- Modernization of technologies and upgradation of skills in traditional arts and crafts sectors such as handlooms, handicrafts, lace making, glass work, metal work etc. and thus ensure value addition to the products to compete with the quality of the products of modern markets
- To review the working of all the 4 National Finance and Development Corporations for SCs, OBCs, Minorities and Safai Karamcharis and bring forth the most wanted reforms, to play an effective catalytic role in assisting the weakest amongst the disadvantaged to become economically self-reliant
- Definite earmarking of population-proportionate funds under SCP besides effective utilization of funds released under both SCP and SCA to SCP to better the economic status of SCs
- To motivate the private and corporate sectors to invest on the welfare and development of weaker sections and thus fulfill their social obligations/ responsibilities

II. Economic Empowerment

Scheduled Castes

4.1.105 Towards the economic upliftment of SCs, the Tenth Plan will prioritise those activities that ensure employment and income generation which can provide them sustainable income to meet their basic needs. Recognising their traditional ability and skills in the agriculture production, efforts will be made not only to endow every landless SC family with a minimum piece of land with ownership rights but also to maximise their productive capacities through upgradation of their skills, modernisation of methods and equipment and supply of seeds and pesticides etc. Also, the State Departments will be persuaded to ensure that irrigation facilities are extended to the small land holdings of SC farmers, collectively so as to reduce the relative costs. Special legislative measures will also be taken to ensure payment of minimum wages and equal wages for women, with no gender discrimination, especially in the informal/un-organised sector.

4.1.106 The on-going efforts made for uplifting SCs above the poverty line will be further intensified/expanded, with an ultimate objective of enhancing their income levels at a higher pace so that they could be brought above the poverty line on a priority basis. To this effect, all the poverty alleviation programmes would be reinvigorated and expanded to make a better impact on the economic conditions of SCs leading to qualitative betterment in their overall living conditions. Thus, the strategy in the Tenth Plan will be to implement the on-going nation-wide poverty alleviation programmes, with enriched components, best suited to the specific needs and poverty situation of the SCs. This will include organising landless and agricultural labourers to constitute the largest occupational segments amongst SCs on the pattern of swarozgaris of the SGSY with special focus on women.

4.1.107 In the changing economic scenario wherein the private sector is being consciously promoted to take up all production and commercial activities and the role of government sector is getting restricted to core activities, the Tenth Plan will endeavour to reorient SCs to face the challenges arising out of the inevitable economic reforms.

Further, as the services sector today represents the fastest growing sector of the economy whose contribution is going to increase manifold in providing new employment opportunities in the coming years, the strategy to be adopted for empowering SCs will be in consonance with this changing phenomenon.

4.1.108 With the globalisation and liberalisation of economy, new opportunities and avenues, both at the national and international levels, are being opened up substantially. The Tenth Plan will, therefore, endeavour to, in collaboration with the concerned Ministries/Departments, equip SCs with technical knowledge and ability to cope with the upcoming trades and trends in the employment market. Interventions with appropriate training, technology, capacity-building, development of entrepreneurship, either individually or collectively through formation of Co-operatives/Self-Help Groups (SHGs) along with both 'forward and backward' linkages will be made to produce quality goods, as per the demand, and thus exploit the market to the extent possible. To this end, the Tenth Plan will initiate action to tie up with the concerned Ministries dealing with agriculture, fisheries, dairying, animal husbandry, handlooms and handicrafts to open up avenues for exports.

4.1.109 The exclusive Financial Institution working for the economic empowerment of SCs viz. the NSFDC and State-level Corporations, will be geared to function as catalytic agents for accomplishing economic development of respective weaker sections by making them self-reliant and self-sustaining mechanisms. For this purpose, the functioning of this Apex Corporation will be reviewed and necessary reforms be brought into with the strength of professional expertise in marketing and business management to ensure that this exclusive Corporation proves its worth as an effective financial institution in improving the economic status of SCs.

4.1.110 Simultaneous efforts will also be made to ensure effective earmarking and utilisation of funds under the special strategy of SCP, both at the central and state levels, besides the funds released under SCA to SCP to ensure optimum benefit to improve the economic status of SCs through family-oriented income-generation activities. Special efforts will also be made by both Central and State Standing Tripartite Committees (CSSTC) to impress upon

those Ministries/Departments, which are not earmarking funds, under SCP in the name of non-divisibility of the programmes of their Ministries/Departments to do the needful. While the nodal Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment will keep a close vigil on the utilisation of these special funds, the on-going reviews at the Centre both by the CSSTC and the National Commission for SCs and STs will continue on a regular basis to assess how effective are these instruments in supplementing/complementing the efforts of the nodal Ministry in empowering these disadvantaged groups economically.

Other Backward Classes

4.1.111 Recognising the productive potential of the OBCs who form the major workforce, the strategy for the development of OBCs in the Tenth Plan will be to optimise their productive and technical abilities, so that they can develop the formidable human resource of the country. Thus, efforts will be made for the socio-economic development of OBCs, as a strategic input for building up human resources of the country.

4.1.112 As OBCs engaged in the primary sector also depend upon a broad spectrum of occupations/artisanship and provide a variety of services/products for consumption of the society, efforts of the Tenth Plan will be to encourage those productive sectors that the OBCs are engaged in, especially by extending necessary support including skill up-gradation, capacity building, training, market linkages, credit support etc. so as to accomplish betterment in their economic status. Also, as a majority of OBCs depend upon agriculture, OBC farmers will be encouraged and supported to adopt innovative land-based activities viz., the cultivation of medicinal plants, horticulture, commercial crops etc. with a major objective to bring them above the level of their subsistence economy and rescue them from the risks and uncertainties involved in agricultural practices.

4.1.113 Some of the OBC communities, especially those living in rural areas, depend upon the traditional occupations/artisanship viz. fishing, stone crushing, tailoring, weaving, scavenging, carpentry, pottery, blacksmithy, etc. and are languishing in the

worst forms of social and economic backwardness. Efforts in the Tenth Plan will, therefore, be to encourage occupational mobility for those OBCs, especially the youth, who intend to discontinue their traditional occupations, by providing facilities for appropriate educational and vocational training in modern and up-coming technologies, supplemented with financial and other assistance to enable them to enter successfully into new avenues.

4.1.114 As the New Economic Policy has opened up vast markets abroad for Indian exports, especially in the field of software industry and other Service Sector Enterprises leading to an explosion in job and business opportunities, the Tenth Plan will concentrate on intensifying various training programmes through careful planning to equip these disadvantaged categories to enable them to capitalise on the emerging employment opportunities. In addition, efforts will also be made within the country to open up opportunities for small entrepreneurial ventures to increase the reach of the weaker sections.

4.1.115 Towards ensuring economic development of OBCs involved in the traditional occupations, the Tenth Plan will have a special commitment of ensuring their capacity building through skill up-gradation, training and entrepreneurial development programmes. The strategy of the Tenth Plan will, therefore, be to help/encourage the artisans belonging to these weaker sections to trigger both horizontal and vertical mobility in their occupations. Further, a gradual infusion of technology will be planned for, especially in the handlooms and handicrafts sectors, so that the value is added to the goods produced for effective marketing, both in the national and international markets. In these efforts, NBCFDC is going to play a very major role in tying up both backward and forward linkages of credit and marketing.

Minorities

4.1.116 As a sizeable population of the Minority communities is engaged in the traditional arts and crafts like handlooms, handicrafts, chikan work, zari work, lace making, glass work, metal works etc. and continue to depend upon these low-paid traditional artisanship for their livelihood, the Tenth Plan will

give priority to modernize the technologies especially in the much needed handloom sector to add value to their produce by extending appropriate support in terms of vocational training in the up-coming technologies, skill upgradation, credit facilities etc. Special efforts will also be made to encourage export-oriented handicrafts in view of their increasing demand outside the country. NMDFC will be encouraged to extend financial and other technical support like provision of machinery, expertise, training, market linkages etc. Efforts will also be made to provide technical and vocational education/training facilities to the Minority artisans and craftsmen focusing on their women and girl children engaged in such pursuits. Also, to preserve their traditional skills, they will be encouraged to form into SHGs/Co-operatives for which financial assistance will be extended along with credit and marketing services.

4.1.117 The on-going economic reforms of globalisation, liberalization and privatisation, resulting in the emergence of new opportunities at the national and international levels will be exploited for the economic benefit of the Minorities. Towards this end, modernisation of traditional education, imparting of vocational and technical education, introduction of appropriate technology, and development of entrepreneurship along with necessary financial support will be adopted as one of the key strategies for their economic development during the Tenth Plan. Effective implementation of the existing schemes and programmes for the welfare and development of Minorities and for integrating them into the national mainstream, both economically and socially will be given priority attention in the Tenth Plan. NMDFC will be encouraged to promote self-employment activities amongst the various minority groups and to provide upgraded/ entrepreneurial technical skills, especially focusing on their women, traditional artisans and other occupational groups.

III. Social Justice

4.1.118 A conscious shift in the name and role of the nodal Ministry from 'Welfare' to 'Social Justice and Empowerment' in 1998 is not only to re-affirm the governmental commitment of ensuring social justice, but also to extend a focused attention to these Groups.

4.1.119 Affirmative action and legislative measures being the most powerful instruments to ensure social justice to the Disadvantaged Groups, the Government renews its earlier commitment of instituting a 'National Charter for Social Justice' based on the principles of social harmony with social and gender justice and necessary legal measures to protect their interests. To this effect, implementation of the reservation policy both in the educational institutions and services for SCs, and in services for OBCs will be strictly adhered to by filling up all the reserved posts promptly. Arrangements will also be made simultaneously for quick judicial disposals of complaints and grievances in matters related thereof.

4.1.120 As the most inhuman practice of carrying the night soil manually continues to be a matter of national concern, the Tenth Plan will embark upon a nation-wide programme for total eradication of manual scavenging on a time-bound basis by 2007. To this effect, the Tenth Plan will emphasise preparation of State-specific Plans of Action to initiate time-bound programmes in respect of - conversion of dry latrines into wet ones; identification of scavengers; wean them away from this profession; and rehabilitate them with training and alternative jobs; keep a follow-up of the rehabilitated persons; and bring forth an effective co-ordination between the Welfare Departments of the States and the Local Bodies. In these national endeavours, the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis is going to play a lead role.

4.1.121 Taking note of the urgent need for upholding the Civil Rights on the one hand and preventing/curbing the persistent problems of social discrimination, exploitation, untouchability, and atrocities against these disadvantaged groups, on the other, the Tenth Plan will initiate collaborative efforts with all the concerned for effective implementation of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 and the other two Special Legislations viz. the PCR Act, 1955 and the SC & ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. To this effect, efforts will also be made to prepare state /district-specific Programmes of Action ensuring preventive, investigative and rehabilitative measures in those districts/areas where the incidence of crime/

atrocities/violence against these weaker sections is high. Measures will also be undertaken to ensure that adequate number of Special/ Mobile

Courts are set up with adequate staff in each district to provide both speedy and on-the-spot settlement/redressal of grievances.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

To eliminate all types of discrimination against the Socially Disadvantaged Groups with the strength of legislative support, affirmative action, awareness generation/conscientisation of the target groups, and change in the mind-set of the people through -

- Renewed commitment to institute a 'National Charter for Social Justice' based on the principle of social harmony with social and gender justice and necessary legal measures to protect the interests of SCs, OBCs and Minorities
- Strict implementation of reservation policy in education and services for SCs and in services for OBCs
- Total eradication of the most inhuman practice of manual scavenging continuing still in the present day civilised world on a time-bound basis and with a Mission Mode Approach by 2007, by conversion of dry latrines into wet and weaning away the manual scavengers from this profession and rehabilitate them with alternative attractive and sustainable jobs
- To uphold Civil Rights and prevent/curb social discrimination, exploitation, untouchability and atrocities against the disadvantaged groups through the collaborative efforts for effective implementation of IPC, 1860 and other special legislations viz. PCR Act, 1955 and SC and ST (POA), 1989
- To prepare state/district - specific Programmes of Action (POA) ensuring preventive, investigative and rehabilitative measures in those areas/districts where incidence of crime/atrocities against the disadvantaged sections is high
- To set up adequate number of Special/ Mobile Courts in each District for speedy settlement/redressal of grievances for these groups and extend timely and adequate financial support as a measure of social justice to compensate/rehabilitate the victims
- To develop a community-based defence mechanism by empowering the institutions of local governance and NGOs
- Effective implementation and monitoring of the 20-Point Programme (Point 11.A) for ensuring Social Justice to SCs and the 15-Point Programme for protection and development of Minorities
- Revitalising the already existing 4 Statutory Commissions viz. for SCs and STs, for OBCs, for Minorities, and for Safai Karamcharis and thus make them effective instruments to safeguard the rights and interests of these Groups and thus ensure social justice to them
- Special 3-pronged strategy of '**Awareness Generation**' - through changing the mind-set and attitudes of the people towards these Groups; '**Conscientisation of the Target Groups**'- to make them conscious of their own rights, privileges and governmental support available for them; '**Sensitizing both officials and non-officials**' - with special training programmes so that they can work with right perspective to meet the special needs of these Groups

4.1.122 Further, the problem relating to the practice of untouchability which is still in vogue in certain pockets will be addressed squarely towards total elimination of the same from the face of the society. As an important measure of social justice, special efforts will be made to extend timely and adequate financial support, as per the provisions, to compensate/rehabilitate the victims. Simultaneously, efforts will also be made to develop a community-based defence mechanism by empowering the institutions of local governance and NGOs. As part of these, a few selected local NGOs will also be identified to help assist the victims besides acting as the authorised informants to the Enforcement Authorities.

4.1.123 Simultaneously, the Tenth Plan will also endeavour to reinforce the implementation of both the mechanisms viz. SCP for SCs and SCA to SCP which was launched specially in support of social justice to ensure that adequate funds flow for the development of SCs through various sources. While SCP ensures that additional funds, in proportion to the population of SCs, are earmarked for implementation of various programmes for their development, the SCA to SCP extends additional funds to fill the critical gaps in the family-based income-generation activities being implemented under State SCP. Taking note of the fact that the implementation of these mechanisms is becoming routinised, the Tenth Plan will activate all the concerned, especially the Central Tripartite Committee as well as the nodal Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment and the State Planning and Welfare Departments to keep continuous monitoring towards more effective implementation of these two mechanisms. In this context, the State Governments which are yet to set up State Tripartite Committees will be involved to initiate necessary action for setting up of these Committees and start the detailed reviews with regard to earmarking of funds under SCP and the utilization of SCA to SCP. Also, the Tenth Plan will take special measures to ensure effective implementation and monitoring of the other two Special Mechanisms viz. the '20-Point Programme' (Point 11-A) for ensuring Social Justice to SCs and the '15-Point Programme' for protection and development of Minorities. Thus, the Tenth Plan will ensure that these special mechanisms justify the purpose for which they were launched by keeping a special vigil on the effectiveness of their implementation.

4.1.124 Further, the Tenth Plan will invoke all the four statutory Commissions viz. National Commission for SCs and STs (1992), National Commission for OBCs (1993), National Commission for Minorities (1992) and National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (1994) to make a detailed review of their work since their inception and revitalise themselves to be able to play their role as Custodians and Public Defenders and thus, ensure Social Justice to the deprived lot.

4.1.125 Special efforts will be made to put into action simultaneously the three-pronged strategy of 'Awareness Generation, Conscientisation and Sensitisation', towards achieving a holistic impact. The first being awareness generation, efforts will be made to change the mind-set and the attitudes of the people towards these Groups as the same is very crucial in creating an enabling environment for empowering them. To this effect, awareness generation programmes/special campaigns will be taken up on a continuing basis all over the country, especially in rural areas by involving effectively both the governmental and the non-governmental organisations and the media towards erasing the long-standing social biases/stigmas like untouchability and thus create the feeling of all being equal. The second being conscientisation of the target groups, simultaneous efforts will be made to make the target groups conscious of their own rights, privileges and the governmental support available for them besides making them realise their own potentials to be self-confident and self-reliant. The third being sensitising both officials and non-officials, special training programmes, both pre-service and in-service, will be undertaken from time to time to sensitise all those working for these Groups so that they can work with right perspectives in handling/meeting the special needs and problems of these marginalised groups and thus ensure social justice. To encourage/reward those officials and non-officials, who are working for the good of these deprived lot by living in the most backward areas, efforts will be made to impress upon the State Governments the urgent need to revive the earlier practice of extending incentives, both in kind and cash.

RESEARCH, EVALUATION AND MONITORING

4.1.126 In the sphere of research and evaluation, the Tenth Plan will re-orient the on-going efforts of

the diagnostic and evaluative studies in response to the existing as well as emerging problems and fill the gaps related to the Socially Disadvantaged Groups. Increased financial support will be extended to conduct research studies on crucial problems related to SCs, OBCs and Minorities. Evaluation studies of the on-going programmes will also be given adequate weightage, as their findings will be of immense value for mid-term corrections.

4.1.127 As paucity of much needed authentic data on OBCs and Minorities is causing constraints to formulate and administer realistic and need based developmental planning, efforts will be made to direct research activities not only to generate a data base reflecting their varied socio-economic situations, but also to provide specific inputs/suggestions to trigger their potentials to accomplish socio-economic development. Further, priority will be accorded only to such research and evaluation projects that are action oriented, keeping in view the policies and programmes requiring governmental intervention.

4.1.128 In the sphere of monitoring, the Tenth Plan will develop effective monitoring and information systems, both at the centre and state levels, with adequate manpower by streamlining and strengthening the existing monitoring mechanisms. Efforts will also be made to link up the central and the state information systems through the existing Network of the National Informatics Centre (NICNET) and the District Planning Programme of NIC (DISNIC) systems facilitating smooth flow of information for effective monitoring. The system thus developed will take care of the much-needed monitoring of earmarking/utilisation of funds under SCP and SCA to SCP, besides monitoring of other important programmes. The Standing Tripartite Committees set up both at the central and state levels and also the National Commission for SCs and STs will continue to review/monitor the progress of the implementation of earmarking of funds for SCs besides utilisation of SCA to SCP.

IMPLEMENTING MECHANISMS

4.1.129 While developmental programmes implemented over a period of 50 years, reflect the progress made in improving the living conditions of these disadvantaged groups, they also bring out the

obstacles, lacunae and impediments inherent in the system being responsible for not achieving the expected results. Thus, there is a growing demand to strengthen and streamline the institutional mechanisms at various levels to function with an exclusive mandate for according undivided attention to the welfare and development of each of the Socially Disadvantaged Groups.

4.1.130 In this context, the supporting institutional structures of the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, such as the National Commissions for SCs, OBCs, Minorities and Safai Karamacharis, will be invoked to probe into and take necessary action to ensure that not only the interest of the concerned weaker sections are protected but also to maximise their role of a watch-dog especially on effective implementation of various welfare and developmental programmes of the Government. Similarly, functioning of the support Financial Institutions, viz. NSFDC, NSKDC, NBCFDC and NMDFC working for the economic upliftment of these weaker sections will be streamlined/optimised by bringing forth necessary modifications/revisions in their modus operandi and thus ensure that they not only perform their due role of being viable and sustainable financial institutions, but also accomplish the task of providing all the necessary inputs to the target groups to achieve their economic upliftment through employment and income generating activities. In this context, the need for re-establishing an independent Division in the Planning Commission to deal exclusively with the welfare and development of SCs, OBCs and Minorities comes up very strongly as an Action Point towards ensuring social justice and empowerment of these disadvantaged groups.

VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

4.1.131 Voluntary Organisations working for the welfare and development of the Socially Disadvantaged Groups have already established their credentials as effective agents of social change and development by virtue of their direct contacts/linkages with the target groups in the implementation of various developmental programmes in the most difficult areas where these Groups reside. In order to accomplish the Tenth Plan objective of empowering these Disadvantaged

Groups, voluntary organisations will be encouraged not only to play a key role in promoting people’s initiative and participation, but also to act as designated informants to assist both the Government and the Target Groups to fight against the social evils like untouchability, crimes/atrocities

against SCs/STs, and economic and social exploitation and thus help ensure social justice to these Groups. In the areas where voluntary action is at a low key, voluntary agencies will be encouraged to make their effective presence as there is a felt need for the same.

VOs : AGENTS OF WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT

VOs (Voluntary Organisations) have been playing the role of effective agents to bring forth the most desired social change and development by virtue of their direct contact and linkages with the target groups living in the most difficult areas. In fact, they act as a crucial link between the beneficiaries and the administrative mechanisms and facilitate easy flow of services to the needy. The credentials they have established for themselves in changing public perception/opinion about these Groups; reducing the social evils like untouchability; crimes/atrocities; social/economic exploitation is very well known, as they have been working relentlessly for this purpose. They also extend the most wanted support to the government in translating various policies and programmes into action besides implementing/supervising and monitoring the same. Today, though a well-established networking of VOs is working in the field of welfare and development for the Socially Disadvantaged Groups, yet there are a number of areas where the voluntary action is minimal. Thus, the need of the Day is to ensure effective presence through their numbers in the needy areas.

4.1.132 Although the Voluntary Organisations have creditably rendered their supplementary and complementary support to the Government’s efforts towards empowerment of the weaker sections, their spread is very uneven and concentrated largely in urban areas. Therefore, efforts will be made to encourage voluntary organisations to reach those rural and backward areas where the much needed voluntary action is thin, especially focusing on the localities/areas having concentration of the weaker sections.

PLAN OUTLAYS

4.1.133 A total outlay of Rs. 6,526 crore (which includes Rs. 2313.40 crore for SCA to SCP) has been earmarked in the Central Budget of the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (SCs, OBCs and Minorities) in the Tenth Plan. Also, this sector receives plan financial support from the state sector. In preparation to the Tenth Plan, special efforts were made to ensure effective distribution of the otherwise limited resources through the application of Zero Based Budgeting (ZBB). This has brought down the number of 31 on-going schemes of the Ninth Plan to 13 (4 Central Sector and 9 Centrally Sponsored Schemes) for empowering the Socially Disadvantaged Groups in the Tenth Plan. A statement reflecting the final outcome of the application of ZBB and the share of these 13 schemes in the total Tenth Plan outlay of the Ministry, is given in Annexure 4.1.1 and also in the Appendix.

**SCHEME-WISE BREAK-UP OF TENTH PLAN (2002-07) OUTLAY OF MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT
(SCHEDULED CASTES, OTHER BACKWARD CLASSES AND MINORITIES)**

(Rs. in crore)

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme	NINTH PLAN (1997-2002)		Application of ZBB Techniques	Sl. No.	TENTH PLAN (2002-07)	
		Outlay	Act. Exp.			Name of the Scheme (Final outcome of ZBB)	Outlay
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
I. CENTRAL SECTOR SCHEMES (CS)							
1	Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Special Component Plan (SCP)	2092.95	2008.64	Retained	1	Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Special Component Plan (SCP)	2313.40
2	National SC and ST Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC)	241.23	156.23	Merged & Retained (Renamed as 'National Finance Development Corporations for Weaker Sections'. Outlay provided for only one year 2002-03. Schemes will continue after recasting based on the findings of the Study).	2	National Finance Development Corporations for Weaker Sections	478.20
3	National Safai Karamachari Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFC)	81.75	81.75				
4	National BC Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC)	400.00	191.50				
5	National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC)	111.00	92.26				
6	Grant-in -Aid to Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) for SCs	118.03	105.12	Merged & Retained (Renamed as 'GIA to NGOs for SCs, OBCs & Research & Training'. Outlay provided for only one year 2002-03. Schemes will continue after recasting based on the findings of the Study).	3	GIA to NGOs for SCs, OBCs & Research & Training	193.85
7	Research and Training for Scheduled Castes	2.85	1.61				
8	Grant-in-Aid to NGOs for OBCs	10.00	7.07				
9	Special Educational Development Programmes for Girls belonging to SC low Literacy Areas	7.70	1.61	Weeded out		—	—
10	Dr. B.R.Ambedkar Foundation	200.00	54.00	Retained	4	Dr. B.R.Ambedkar Foundation	5.00
11	Strengthening of BC Bureau	0.75	0.00	Weeded out		—	—
12	Equity participation in State BC Corporation	10.00	0.00	Weeded out		—	—
13	Preparation of Multi-Sectoral Plan for Minority Concentration Districts	14.10	0.53	Weeded out		—	—
14	Grant-in-Aid to Maulana Azad Education Foundation	70.00	52.75	Weeded out (To be an Independent body)		Grant-in-Aid to Maulana Azad Education Foundation	30.00 *
Total - I		3360.36	2753.07				3020.45

* Spill-over of the total Corpus of Rs. 100 crore to be paid to the Foundation and to be weeded-out during 2002-03.

(Rs. in crore)

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme	NINTH PLAN (1997-2002)		Application of ZBB Techniques	Sl. No.	TENTH PLAN (2002-07)	
		Outlay	Act. Exp			Name of the Scheme (Final outcome of ZBB)	Outlay
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
II. CENTRALLY SPONSORED SCHEMES (CSS)							
15	Post-Matric Scholarships for SC Students	614.16	457.29	Merged & Retained (Renamed as 'Post-Matric Scholarships & Book Banks for SC Students'.)	5	Post-Matric Scholarships & Book Banks for SC Students	1558.00
16	Book Banks Scheme for SC Students	12.00	10.61				
17	Pre-Matric Scholarships for Children of those families engaged in Unclean Occupations	30.00	36.25	Retained	6	Pre-Matric Scholarships for Children of those families engaged in Unclean Occupations	87.00
18	Hostels for SC Boys	52.05	64.97	Merged & Retained (Renamed as 'Hostels for SC, OBC & Minority Boys & Girls'.)	7	Hostels for SC, OBC and Minority Boys & Girls	347.00
19	Hostels for SC Girls	45.00	53.13				
20	Hostels for OBCs Boys and Girls	49.90	20.76				
21	Scheduled Caste Development Corporations (SCDCs)	180.00	173.63	Retained	8	Scheduled Caste Development Corporations (SCDCs)	150.00
22	Coaching & Allied Scheme for SCs	16.71	11.09	Merged & Retained (Renamed as 'Coaching for SCs, OBCs & Other Weaker Sections for Competitive Exams'.)	9	Coaching for SCs, OBCs & Other Weaker Sections for Competitive Exams.	97.55
23	Pre-examination Coaching for OBCs	10.00	1.03				
24	Pre-examination Coaching for Weaker Sections based on economic criteria	12.00	11.29				
25	Upgradation of Merit of SC Students	5.26	4.72	Retained	10	Upgradation of Merit of SC Students	346.50
26	Implementation of PCR Act, 1955 & SC & ST (POA) Act, 1989	121.81	113.17	Retained	11	Implementation of PCR Act, 1955 & SC/ST (POA) Act, 1989	170.00
27	National Scheme of Liberation & Rehabilitation of Scavengers & their Dependents	335.00	236.02	Retained	12	National Scheme of Liberation & Rehabilitation of Scavengers & their Dependents	460.00
28	Post-Matric Scholarships for OBCs	49.90	40.57	Merged & Retained (Renamed as 'Scholarships for OBC and Minority Students'.)	13	Scholarships for OBC and Minority Students	289.50
29	Pre-Matric Scholarships for OBCs	49.90	29.15				
	Merit-based Scholarships for OBCs	*	*				
	Merit-based Scholarships for Minorities	*	*				
30	Mobile Schools, Shelter etc. for Nomadic Tribes	1.00	0.00	Weeded out		—	—
31	Residential Schools for OBC Boys and Girls	40.00	0.00	Weeded out		—	—
	Total - II	1624.69	1263.68				3505.55
	GRAND TOTAL - I+II	4985.05	4016.75				6526.00

* New Schemes in the Tenth Plan

Note : Total outlay of the Ministry includes earmarked outlay for the North Eastern States

