

## **5.6.2 EMPOWERMENT OF THE SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED GROUPS**

34. Empowerment of the Socially Disadvantaged Groups viz. Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Minorities is the commitment of the Ninth Plan through a three-pronged strategy of - social empowerment, economic empowerment and social justice. Therefore, special efforts continued to be taken in action to bring their concerns on to the main Agenda of developmental planning and thus raise their status at par with the rest of the Society. To this effect, not only are the on-going programmes being strengthened/expanded, but also new measures are being initiated wherever necessary to accelerate the over-all development of these disadvantaged groups. One of the important initiatives taken in this direction was setting up of an exclusive Ministry of Tribal Affairs at the Centre in October 1999 to extend focused attention to the welfare and development of tribal population as they suffer from typical problems of their own such as illiteracy, ignorance, land alienation, displacement, bonded labour, indebtedness etc.

### **REVIEW OF THE ANNUAL PLAN 1999-2000 AND 2000-2001**

35. In the context of the Mid-Term Appraisal of the Ninth Five Year Plan, review of the Annual Plans 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 bear special significance not only from the point of the progress made in respect of the implementation of policies and programmes but also from the point of utilisation of plan allocations. Of the total Ninth Plan outlay of Rs.5399.18 crore [excluding Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) and Grant-in-aid under Article 275 (1) of the Constitution] earmarked for the Backward Classes Sector at the Centre in the budget of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (M/SJ&E), an amount of Rs.2690.23 crore was likely to have been spent during the first three years (1997-2000) leaving Rs.2708.95 crore for the rest of the two years (2000-02) of the Plan. Of this, an amount of Rs.1610.18 crore was earmarked for the Annual Plan 2000-01 (Rs.1000.18 crore for the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment and Rs.610.00 crore for the Ministry of Tribal Affairs). This includes Rs.740.18 crore for Central and Centrally Sponsored Schemes and Rs.437.00 crore as Special Central Assistance (SCA) for Special Component Plan (SCP) and Rs.400.00 crore for Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP). In addition to this, an amount of Rs.200 crore was provided under Article 275 (1) of the Constitution for raising the level of Administration of the Scheduled Areas especially focusing educational development amongst the tribals.

36. In the State Sector, an amount of Rs.9690.75 crore was allocated for implementing various socio-economic development programmes meant for the socially disadvantaged groups. Out of this, an amount of Rs.6308.67 crore was likely to have been spent during 1997-2000, thus leaving a balance of Rs.3382.08 crore for the remaining two years of the Ninth Plan (2000-02). While the Scheme-wise outlays and expenditure at the Central level for the Backward Classes and Tribal Affairs during 1998-99 to 2000-01 are given at Annexure 5.6.2.1, the details of the outlays and expenditure in the State Sector for the same period are given at Annexure 5.6.2.2. The sectoral outlays and expenditure along with a detailed review of the implementation of various programmes during 1998-99 to 2000-01 are given in the Table 5.6.2.1.

**TABLE 5.6.2.1**  
**Outlays and Expenditure for Welfare and Development of Backward Classes Sector**  
**and Tribal Affairs during 1997-98 to 2000-01**

(Rs. crore)					
S. No.	Schemes	Annual Plan (1998-99)	Annual Plan (1999-2000)		Annual Plan (2000-01)
		Actuals	Outlay	R.E.	Outlay
<b>I. BACKWARD CLASSES SECTOR (M/SOCIAL JUSTICE &amp; EMPOWERMENT)</b>					
1	Welfare and Development of SCs				
(i)	Central Sector Schemes	123.11	86.00	81.15	*90.50
(ii)	Centrally Sponsored Schemes	209.86	285.50	286.06	*304.00
	<b>Total (i+ii)</b>	<b>332.97</b>	<b>371.50</b>	<b>367.21</b>	<b>394.5</b>
(iii)	SCA to SCP	360.83	437.00	437.00	470.00
	<b>Total 1</b>	<b>693.80</b>	<b>808.60</b>	<b>804.21</b>	<b>864.50</b>
2	Welfare and Development of OBCs				
(i)	Central Sector Schemes	92.34	105.70	105.01	83.02
(ii)	Centrally Sponsored Schemes	7.46	20.80	13.50	20.01
	<b>Total 2</b>	<b>99.80</b>	<b>126.50</b>	<b>118.51</b>	<b>103.03</b>
3.	Welfare and Development of Minorities				
(i)	Central Sector Schemes	38.22	30.00	27.30	32.65
	<b>Total - I (1+2+3)</b>	<b>831.82</b>	<b>965.00</b>	<b>950.02</b>	<b>1000.18</b>
<b>II. TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT (M/TRIBAL AFFAIRS)</b>					
(i)	Central Sector Schemes	44.44	83.00	78.00	84.00
(ii)	Centrally Sponsored Schemes	28.10	47.00	43.50	126.00
	<b>Total (i+ii)</b>	<b>72.54</b>	<b>130.00</b>	<b>121.5</b>	<b>210.00</b>
(iii)	SCA to TSP	380.00	400.00	400.00	400.00
(iv)	Grants-in-Aid under Art. 275 (1)	75.00	100.00	100.00	200.00
	<b>Total-II ( M/Tribal Affairs)</b>	<b>527.54</b>	<b>630.00</b>	<b>621.50</b>	<b>810.00</b>

\* Figures under Backward Classes Sector include some of common Central and Centrally Sponsored schemes for both SCs and STs upto 1999-2000.

Source: Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment and Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

## SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT

### Scheduled Castes And Scheduled Tribes

37. Education being the most effective instrument for social empowerment, high priority continued to be accorded to the programmes that aimed at improving the educational status of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes (SCs/STs), especially amongst their women and the girl children. The scheme of Post-Matric Scholarships (PMS), a nation-wide programme for the educational development of SCs and STs, is being implemented through out the country for extending financial assistance to the students pursuing post-matriculation courses in recognised institutions. Under the scheme of PMS, 100 per cent Central Assistance is extended to the States/UTs over and above their respective committed liability. However, in the case of the North Eastern States, the committed liability on account of PMS has been

dispensed with effect from April 1998. So far, 22.68 lakh SC/ST students who were pursuing higher education, received Post-Matric Scholarships during 1999-2000. For the current year (2000-2001) an amount of Rs.214.00 crore has been earmarked to provide financial assistance as PMS to SC/ST and OBC students to pursue higher studies. Of this, an amount of Rs.70.00 crore was earmarked for the Ministry of Tribal Affairs for extending PMS to Scheduled Tribe students in the current financial year 2000-2001.

38. The scheme of Pre-Matric Scholarships for the children of those engaged in unclean occupations, is another important educational scheme which supplements the government efforts in eliminating the most in-human practice of scavenging and rehabilitating those engaged in the practice. Under the scheme, financial assistance is provided to the children of scavengers, sweepers having traditional link with scavenging, flayers and tanners to pursue education up to matriculation level. Nearly 4.37 lakh students have been given pre-matric scholarships during 1999-2000. An amount of Rs.10.00 crore has been earmarked for extending pre-matric scholarships during 2000-2001.

39. Under the Scheme of Hostels for SC/ST Boys and Girls, Central Assistance is extended to States/UTs for construction of hostels on 50:50 sharing basis, while 100 per cent assistance is provided to UT Administrations with the twin objectives of reducing the prevailing high drop out rates ranging from 66.6 per cent to 74.7 per cent amongst the SCs/STs students of classes I to VIII in 1993-94 against 60.5 per cent amongst general categories and ensuring their retention rates in schools thereby encouraging educational development amongst these disadvantaged groups. SC/ST students studying in middle schools, higher secondary schools, colleges and universities are the major beneficiaries under this scheme. Central Assistance to the tune of Rs.32.00 crore was provided for the construction of Hostels for SC/ST Boys and Girls during 1999-2000 and the same has been enhanced to Rs.47.00 crore in the current year (2000-01). About 10522 SC/ST boys and girls are expected to receive benefit under this scheme.

40. Another Centrally Sponsored Scheme viz. Coaching for Allied Services extends coaching to candidates through Pre-examination Training Centers to enable them to compete in the competitive examinations conducted by UPSC, SSC, Banking, Railway Board, Service Commissions, Public Undertaking and various other the recruiting bodies with ultimate objective of improving the representation of SCs and STs in different Central/State Governments, Public Undertakings etc. During the year 1999-2000, an allocation of Rs.4.00 crore was made to benefit 12189 SC/ST students through 75 Coaching Centres in 10 States. Further 15 Universities and 15 NGOs were involved in extending technical support to the beneficiaries. An allocation of Rs.3.00 crore has been made available for this scheme during 2000-01.

41. In addition to the above, a few more educational programmes have been in operation for the benefit of SCs and STs. They include Book-Banks for SC/ST Students; Up-gradation of Merit of SC/ST Students' Special Educational Development Programmes for SC Girl Students in Low Literacy Areas; Educational Complexes for ST students; Ashram Schools in TSP Areas and other educational programmes being implemented by voluntary organisations. Also, there is a non-plan scheme called National Overseas Scholarships (NOS) under which financial assistance is extended to SC/ST students to pursue higher and specialised studies abroad. Every year, 30 overseas scholarships are awarded to help students belonging to these disadvantaged groups to pursue higher studies abroad. During 1999-2000,

under this Scheme 17 awards were given to SC students, 9 for ST students, 1 for de-notified, nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes and 2 for SC Converts to other religions and 1 for landless agricultural labourer and traditional artisans.

### **Other Backward Classes (OBCs)**

42. The major strategy of improving access to education to OBCs besides assisting them to upgrade their traditional skills and artisanship through various vocational training programmes has been in effective operation. This will continue during 2000-2001 with a commitment to improve the socio-economic status of the Other Backward Classes. Towards promoting higher education amongst OBCs, financial assistance under the Scheme of Post-Matric Scholarships (PMS) has been increased from Rs.5.5 crore in 1999-2000 to Rs.9 crore in the current financial year (2000-2001). Under the scheme of Pre-Matric Scholarships, financial assistance in the form of scholarships is being extended to those students whose parents/guardian's income from all sources does not exceed Rs.44500 per annum. The same level of income ceiling is applicable under the scheme of Post-Matric Scholarships also. An amount of Rs.6 crore is allocated in the current year (2000-2001) for the scheme of Pre-Matric Scholarships for OBC Students. In addition to this, other schemes viz. Hostels for OBC Boys and Girls; Pre-examination Coaching Centres for OBCs; and Grant-in-aid to NGOs to work for the well-being of OBCs, have also been put into action with a sole objective of improving the lot of OBCs.

### **Minorities**

43. In the field of education, the Maulana Azad Education Foundation continues to undertake various educational programmes for the educationally backward minorities. Of the total corpus fund of Rs.70.01 crore, the Ministry has released Rs.3.15 crore as a recurring Annual Grant during 1999-2000. The Foundation has so far sanctioned a total grant-in-aid of Rs.33.06 crore till January, 2000.

44. Under the Scheme of Pre-Examination Coaching Centres for weaker sections, financial assistance is extended to various Coaching Centres to prepare the Minority students to compete with other candidates in various competitive examinations, with a view to ensure their representation in various jobs. Around 320 Coaching Centres have so far received financial assistance to extend the much needed coaching to the Minority students.

## **ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT**

### **Scheduled Castes And Scheduled Tribes**

45. Economic Development being crucial for empowering the disadvantaged groups, the strategy of raising them from the levels below the poverty line will continue to receive high priority during the Annual Plan under report. To this effect, special thrust is being given to training-cum-employment-cum-income generation programmes to make the socially disadvantaged groups economically independent and self-reliant. The existing apex organisations viz. (i) National Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC); (ii) National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC); (iii) Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd. (TRIFED); and (iv) the State Scheduled Castes Development Corporations (SCDCs) are

being strengthened through increased outlays and also by enhancing the Authorized Share Capital (except for TRIFED) in some of the cases during the Ninth Plan. These Corporations are expected to play the role of catalytic agents besides extending both 'forward' and 'backward' linkages of credit and marketing facilities to the micro-level agencies, as per the details given below.

46. The National Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC) is functioning as a Government Company on a non-profit basis since 1989. NSFDC extends financial assistance at concessional rates for training for upgradation of skills and income generating activities for SCs and STs whose annual income is below double the poverty line. The Corporation provides term loans, seed loans, bridge loans etc. at concessional rates of interest. An amount of Rs.30.00 crore was provided during the Annual Plan 1999-2000 benefiting 13474 SC/ST persons. For the current year 2000-2001, an amount of Rs.35 crore has been provided. The NSFDC has, so far, sanctioned 1895 projects costing Rs.1112.91 crore with a share amount of Rs.790.34 crore, which on completion, are expected to benefit about 2.23 lakh SC/ST beneficiaries.

47. The National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC) was incorporated in January, 1997 under Section 25 of the Companies Act of 1956 as a non-profit making Company. The same is expected to act as an Apex Institution responsible for the economic upliftment of the Safai Karmacharis and their dependents all over the country by extending concessional finance for taking up various income generation activities as an alternative means of vocation.

48. The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd. (TRIFED), set up in 1987 with the prime objective of extending marketing assistance and remunerative price to STs for their Minor Forest Produce (MFP) and Surplus Agricultural Produce (SAP), and thus help reduce/control exploitation of tribals by the private traders and middle-man. While the authorized share capital of TRIFED is 100 crore, an additional amount of Rs.5 crore is being provided annually to extend Price Support to TRIFED (Rs.4 crore) and for Investment in TRIFED (Rs.1 crore) in the Annual Plan 2000-2001, as against Rs.5.25 crore for the Annual Plan 1999-2000.

49. The Centrally Sponsored Scheme for participating in the share equity of the Scheduled Castes Development Corporation (SCDCs) in the ratio of 49:51 was introduced in 1979. At present, SCDCs are functioning in 25 States/UTs, which including 2 SCDCs, which are common to SCs and STs. The main functions of the SCDCs include identification of eligible SC/ST families and motivating them to undertake economic development schemes, sponsoring the schemes to financial institutions for credit support, providing financial assistance in the form of margin money at a low rate of interest and subsidy in order to reduce the repayment liability and providing necessary tie up with other poverty alleviation programmes.

50. The SCDCs have been acting as guarantors as well as promoters for credit support and providing missing inputs by way of margin money loans and subsidy to the target group. The SCDCs mainly take up employment oriented schemes in the fields of (i) Agriculture and allied activities including minor irrigation; (ii) Small Scale Industry; (iii) Transport; and (iv) Trade and Service Sector. Project assistance from banks is arranged by SCDCs besides providing margin money out of share capital assistance and subsidy out of Special Central

Assistance (SCA) funds. As on 31.12.1999, the Ministry has released Rs.13.38 crore out of Rs.20 core allocated during 1999-2000 to cover 5.32 lakh beneficiaries.

### **Special Strategies Of SCP, TSP And SCA To SCP & TSP**

51. For the economic development of SCs and STs, special strategies of Special Component Plan (SCP) for SCs and Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) for STs have been in operation to ensure flow of funds in proportion to the population of SCs and STs from all other developmental sectors through earmarking in their Five Year as well as Annual Plans. The special strategies of SCP and TSP are being implemented only by 13 and 18 Ministries/Departments, respectively at the Centre in 1999-2000 (details of which are awaited). At the state level, 24 and 20 States/UTs are earmarking Rs.10278.30 crore (13.4 per cent) under SCP and Rs.5932.43 crore (8.4 per cent) under TSP during the same year. Further, to supplement the efforts of States/UTs towards economic development of SCs/STs, Special Central Assistance (SCA) is extended to fill the critical gaps in their SCP and TSP, especially through funding/supporting SC and ST families below the poverty line to take up various income generation and self-employment projects. While the funds under SCA to SCP has increased from Rs.437 crore in 1999-2000 to Rs.470 crore in 2000-2001, SCA to TSP has been increased from Rs.380 crore in 1998-99 to Rs.400 crore in 1999-2000 and 2000-01. The earmarking of funds under TSP and SCP by States/UTs during Ninth Plan (1997-2002) is given in Annexures 5.6.2.3 and 5.6.2.4.

52. As part of the Mid-Term Appraisal, Planning Commission made a review of the implementation of these special strategies and found that they have become very routinised and effective steps to improve the same are required to be taken urgently. As a follow-up, a Standing Tripartite Committee was set up in the Planning Commission in September, 1999 with the following Terms of References - (i) to look into the reasons for not implementing the Guidelines concerning SCP and TSP and to suggest specific measures for their compliance; (ii) to identify specific schemes which would benefit SCs and STs under various development sectors, their prioritization along with earmarking of funds for them; (iii) to review the process of implementation, impact assessment and monitoring of SCP and TSP and utilisation of Special Central Assistance (SCA) to SCP and TSP and the Grant-in-Aid (GIA) under Article 275 (1) and advise the Planning Commission on measures which would serve the interests of these communities more effectively; (iv) to recommend allocations/earmarking of funds under SCP and TSP as also specific/additional schemes consistent with the Guidelines, where necessary, for various Central Ministries and State Governments which would be taken into account while finalizing their Annual Plans each year; and (v) to suggest institutional and advocacy arrangements for participation of beneficiary groups in the preparation and implementation of schemes under SCP and TSP and Central allocations referred to above, taking into account, among others, priorities of the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Amendments and other Legislative measures flowing therefrom.

53. The Central Tripartite Committee thus set up could so far review the formulation as well as implementation of SCP and TSP of 14 Central Ministries/Departments viz., Agriculture and Co-operation, Environment and Forest, Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation, Rural Development, Indian System 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 made certain recommendations based on

which the concerned Ministries/Departments are expected to revise their SCP and TSP and submit the same to the Planning Commission. The same are still awaited. The State Governments and UT Administrations were also advised to set up similar Standing Committees to review the implementation of SCP and TSP at State/UT level and report back to the Standing Tripartite Committee at the Centre as all the States/UTs are the Members of the Central Committee. So far 6 States/UTs viz., Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab and West Bengal reported to have been set up State level Standing Tripartite Committees. These special strategies of SCP, TSP and SCA to SCP and TSP will continue to be the main instruments throughout the Ninth Plan to ensure that all the other general development sectors do not by-pass SCs and STs.

### **Other Backward Classes (OBCs)**

54. The National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC) set up in 1992 assists OBCs in a wide range of income generating activities through both wage and self employment ventures in the areas of agriculture and its allied activities viz., dairying, fisheries, animal husbandry; traditional and other artisan occupations; small scale and cottage industries; transport services; small business; and petty shops etc. The NBCFDC is functioning with an authorised share capital of Rs.700 crore at present and had sanctioned loans amounting to Rs.771.07 crore benefiting 4,26,326 beneficiaries. Out of this sanctioned loan, Rs.392.82 crore has been disbursed to 3,00,151 beneficiaries. Against the outlay of Rs.100 crore provided in the Annual Plan 1999-2000, an amount of Rs.76.50 crore is allocated to the Corporation during 2000-2001.

### **Minorities**

55. As part of the efforts for economic development of Minorities, the National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC) set up in 1994 with an authorised share capital of Rs.500 crore, continues to extend concessional finance to eligible beneficiaries for employment and income-generation ventures with a special focus on those who are living below poverty line including women. Of the total paid up share capital of Rs.186.69 crore, while the Government of India's contribution is to the tune of Rs.157 crore, the States and UTs have paid Rs.29.69 crore against their total share of Rs.130 crore. During 1999-2000, the Corporation has disbursed Rs.164 crore benefiting 44,381 minorities.

56. Under the scheme of Multi-Sectoral Development Plans for the 41 districts with a conciliation of Minorities, action has been initiated to undertake Needs-Assessment Surveys and identify the credit, marketing, training and technological needs, and formulate economically viable projects for the development of Minorities. The cumulative amount released so far amounts to Rs.1.29 crore. Reports, thus received, in respect of 29 Minority Concentration Districts, have already been processed by the National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation for translating these reports into viable projects.

### **SOCIAL JUSTICE**

57. The major initiative of setting up of an exclusive Ministry of Tribal Affairs to strengthen the existing national machinery for the welfare and development of the socially disadvantaged clearly reflects the firm commitment of the Government in ensuring social justice to these disadvantaged groups. In addition, the on-going special efforts will continue

to be taken to ensure effective implementation of the two Special Legislations viz. the Protection of Civil Rights (PCR) Act, 1955 and the SCs/STs (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 and thus prevent the increasing problems of social discrimination, exploitation, untouchability and violence/atrocities against SCs, STs, OBCs and Minorities including sexual exploitation of women and the girl children belonging to these Groups. As per the mandate, 98 Special Courts/Mobile Courts have been set up so far in seven States. Central Assistance is also extended to States/UTs on 50:50 basis (100 per cent to UTs) under a scheme called the Protection of Civil Rights (PCR) Act, 1955 and the SCs/STs (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.

58. In addition to the above listed legal protection, there are four National Commissions to safeguard/protect the rights and interests of SCs/STs, OBCs, Minorities and Safai Karamcharis through a constant vigil besides investigating into the individual complaints/grievances in close co-ordination with both the Central and State machineries including the enforcement machinery.

### **Efforts Of NGOs**

59. Besides the above governmental interventions, a wide spectrum of projects which are of direct benefit to SCs/STs are being implemented by the NGOs sector with the grant-in-aid/financial assistance from the Government. They include ashram/residential schools, hostels, mobile medical unit, balwadi/crèches, vocational training centres, employment-cum-income generation activities, etc. While the grant-in-aid is generally restricted to 90 per cent of the approved total cost of the projects, the balance of 10 per cent is to be borne by the voluntary organisations. An amount of Rs.60 crore was provided for the year 1999-2000 to support 515 NGOs all over the country working for the welfare and development of the socially disadvantaged groups. In the current plan of 2000-2001, an amount of Rs.33.5 crore has been made available for supporting the voluntary sector.