

**WELFARE
OF
SCHEDULED CASTES AND
SCHEDULED TRIBES**

**(Constitutional safeguards and
role of Parliament)**



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**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
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PREFACE

This brochure seeks to describe the Constitutional safeguards provided for the welfare of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, measures taken for amelioration of their conditions by the Government and the role of Parliament in ensuring the implementation of safeguards and the welfare of these sections of our society.

The brochure is largely based on published documents, Reports of the Committee on Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and the Debates of the two Houses of Parliament. For the sake of accuracy and veracity of data and facts, however only the original sources may be cited and referred to. So far as possible these have been indicated in the footnotes in the text.

It is hoped the brochure will be found informative and useful by Members of Parliament and others interested in the subject.

NEW DELHI;
December, 1985.

SUBHASH C. KASHYAP,
Secretary-General.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The caste system in India, whatever its genesis and its original justification, created a highly stratified societal structure with a hierarchy of castes and communities separated by barriers of exclusiveness and social inequality. It manifested itself in its most reprehensible form in relation to certain backward classes, some of whom were treated as 'untouchables' by the 'higher' castes. These unfortunate people (now included in the category of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes) were usually landless labourers serving the so called 'higher' castes in various ways in their fields, homes and elsewhere. They were denied even basic civil rights for thousands of years and subjected to the worst kind of discrimination, deprivation and custom-bred inequities and social disabilities. Theirs was a condition of economic poverty made more miserable by social injustices. They had no house to live in, generally not enough clothes to wear or food to eat and often no sanitary or drinking water facilities.¹

These castes were listed in a Scheduled in 1936 by the British government for the purpose of giving them some concessions because of their disadvantageous position in the social hierarchy. They came to be known as "Scheduled castes" in government records ever since.²

The Scheduled tribes are presumed to form the oldest ethnological sector of the population; the term "Adivasi" ("Adi"—original and "Vasi"—inhabitant) has become current among certain people. The International Labour Organisation has classified such people as "indigenous".³

One of the major concerns of Indian planning has been the welfare and development of the weaker sections of society, and among them more especially that of the scheduled castes, the scheduled tribes and the denotified, nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes who constitute nearly one quarter of the total population. These groups, for historical reasons, have remained socially and economically backward, and hence concerted efforts have been made under various plans to raise their social and economic status.⁴

1. Subhash C. Kashyap : *Human Rights and Parliament*: Metropolitan Book Company, New Delhi, 1978-p. 106.

2. N.D. Kamble : *The Scheduled Castes*. New Delhi, 1912, Ch. 3, pp. 30-31.

3. Government of India : *Report of the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission*. Vol. I, 1960-61, p. 1.

4. See Government of India, Planning Commission. *The Seventh Five Year Plan*, 1980-85, Vol. II, p. 741.

II. CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

The quintessence of the philosophy of the Indian Constitution may be said to be best illustrated and concretized by the special safeguards provided in respect of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Constitution. The Constitution provided the necessary legal infrastructure for action in this field by Parliament and other agencies. It sought to tackle the problem of untouchability in two fundamental ways: first by making provisions, general and specific, to meet effectively the social problems of the backward classes associated with 'untouchability', and secondly, by providing in the Constitution for special privileges and reservations in the economic and political fields for these classes. Thus, there are the Preamble and article 38 holding forth the ideal of a society in which social, economic and political justice shall inform all institutions of national life. The central provision, however, is in article 17, which declares that 'untouchability' is abolished and its practice in any form forbidden. The enforcement of any disability arising out of its practice becomes an offence punishable under the law. There are then the general provisions in articles 15, 23, 29(2) and 25. Article 15 prohibits discrimination against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them to ensure that no citizen shall be subject to any disability, liability, restriction or condition with regard to access to shops, public restaurants, hotels and places of public entertainment, or the use of wells, tanks, bathing ghats, roads and places of public resort maintained wholly or partly out of State funds or dedicated to the use of the general public. Article 23 prohibits traffic in human beings and *begar* and other similar forms of forced labour and makes any contravention of this provision an offence punishable in accordance with law. Article 29(2) provides that no citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained or aided by the State on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them. Lastly, article 25 envisages a law providing for throwing open of Hindu religious institutions of a public character to all classes and sections of Hindus. More specific are the injunctions in articles 46, 330, 332 and 335. Article 46 lays down as one of the Directive Principles of State Policy, the promotion with special care of the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes

and Scheduled Tribes and protecting these people from social injustice and all forms of exploitation. Article 330 makes provision for reservation of seats for these weaker sections in Lok Sabha (House of the People). Article 332 contemplates similar reservation for these classes in the State Assemblies⁴. Article 335 seeks to ensure that in making appointments to public services and posts, the claims of these sections are duly taken into consideration. Further, articles 341 and 342 empower the President to specify by public notification the castes, races or tribes or tribal communities which shall for the purpose of the Constitution be deemed to be Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, authorising at the same time Parliament by law to include in or to exclude from these lists any caste, race or tribe. Institutional arrangements for effectuation of the safeguards for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and for keeping a watch on their welfare are provided for in another set of provisions in the Constitution. Article 164 provided for the appointment in certain States of Ministers specially in charge of the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Article 338 makes provision for a Special Officer for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (designated Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) to report to the President at regular intervals upon the working of the safeguards in respect of these classes, with provision for laying his reports before the Houses of Parliament. The Commissioner presents a report for every year, which occasions a debate in Parliament and also provides valuable assistance to the Parliamentary Committee exclusively concerned with the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Article 339 envisages the appointment of a Commission on the expiry of 10 years to report on the administration of the Scheduled Areas and the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes in the States. Article 340 provides for the appointment of a Commission to investigate the conditions of socially and educationally backward classes and requires

⁴. There was no provision for reservation of seats in the House of the People for Scheduled Tribes in Meghalaya, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram. Seats were also not reserved for the Scheduled Tribes in Legislative Assemblies of Meghalaya and Nagaland. The Meghalaya Legislative Assembly passed a resolution on 31st March, 1980 urging the Government of India to provide for reservations of seats for Scheduled Tribes in the State Legislative Assembly and also in the House of the People on the pattern obtaining in other States in the country. The State Government therefore, recommended amendment of articles 330 and 332 of the Constitution. The Governments of Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram also supported the amendment in respect of their respective areas. Accordingly, article 330 of the Constitution to provide for reservation of seats in the Lok Sabha for Scheduled Tribes in Meghalaya, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram and article 332 to provide for similar reservation in the Legislative Assemblies of Nagaland and Meghalaya were sought to be amended through a Constitution Amendment Bill which was passed by both the Houses of Parliament (by Lok Sabha on 23rd August and by Rajya Sabha on 25th August, 1984). The Bill as passed received the ratification of State Legislatures. It has been assented to by the President on April 29, 1985.

its report to be laid before the Houses of Parliament with a memorandum on the action taken thereon.'

Lists of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes: There is no definition of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Constitution. In pursuance of the provisions of Articles 341 and 342, the President, after the promulgation of the Constitution, made two Orders, in 1950, in relation to the then Part 'A' and Part 'B' States, called (i) the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950, and (ii) the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order 1950. These Orders, *inter alia*, specified various Castes and Tribes as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in relation to respective States and Union Territories. In 1951, the President made similar orders for Part 'C' States. After the creation of the State of Andhra Pradesh under the Andhra State Act, 1953, and the creation of a new State of Himachal Pradesh under the Himachal Pradesh and Bilaspur (New State) Act, 1954, these Orders were again revised by a law of Parliament. On the reorganisation of States by the States Re-organisation Act, 1956 and on enactment of Bihar and West Bengal (Transfer of Territories) Act, 1956, the orders were further modified by the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Lists (Modification) Order, 1956. On creation of the new States of Maharashtra and Gujarat by the Bombay Reorganisation Act, 1960 these orders were again revised. Separate orders were also made at appropriate times in respect of Jammu & Kashmir (1956), Andaman & Nicobar Islands (1959), Dadra & Nagar Haveli (1962), Pondicherry (1964), Uttar Pradesh (1967), Goa, Daman & Diu (1968), Nagaland (1970) and Sikkim (1978).

A Bill called 'the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Bill, 1976', providing for the removal of area restrictions except in cases where it was considered necessary and for re-adjustment of representation of Parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies was introduced in the Fifth Lok Sabha. It was passed by Parliament and 'the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Act, 1976' came into force with effect from the 27th July, 1977. The existing lists of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes were kept untouched and no new caste or tribe was included or deleted.

After the removal of area restrictions as provided under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Act, 1976 the Mochi Community in Gujarat which had earlier been specified as a Scheduled Caste only in the Dang district and Umbargaon taluka of the Bulsar district was listed as a Scheduled Caste in whole of

the Gujarat State. Following representation of the Government of Gujarat 'the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Bill, 1978', was introduced in Parliament which sought to restore the position in respect of Mochi Community in the list of Scheduled Caste of Gujarat State which existed prior to the enforcement of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Act, 1976 i.e. prior to the removal of area restrictions. The question of drawing up of comprehensive lists of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled tribes was referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament to examine the lists contained in the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950 and to suggest amendments therein. The Committee had to make a report to the Parliament by the last day of the 1979 Budget Session but prior to that it ceased to exist with the dissolution of the Sixth Lok Sabha and thus the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Bill, 1978 also lapsed.

The Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, in its report for the period (April 1980—March 1981) has recommended that the Government of India may, as soon as possible, bring forward a suitable legislation for the revision of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes lists to remove the existing anomalies.⁷

Special Provisions for Scheduled Tribes

Ever since the promulgation of the Constitution the problems of the Scheduled Tribes are engaging the careful attention of the Government of India. The Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission was of the view that "the problem of problems is not to disturb the harmony of tribal life and simultaneously work for its advance; not to impose anything upon the tribals and simultaneously work for their integration as members and part of the Indian family." Both these objects were in the minds of the framers of the Constitution when they provided special measures in the Constitution.⁸ Under article 275 provision has been made for special grants by the Central Government to a State Government for the purpose of promoting the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes in that State or raising the level of administration of the Scheduled Areas therein to that of the administration of the rest of the areas of that State.

Apart from the special grants, the Constitution lays down under Article 339(2) that "The executive power of the Union shall extend to the giving of directions to a State as to the drawing up and execution of schemes specified in the direction to be essential for the

⁷ The Third Report of the Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (April 1980-March 1981), p. 8.

⁸ *Report of the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission*, Vol. I (1960-61), p. 6.

welfare of the Scheduled Tribes in the State." This provision is aimed at coordinating the activities of the Central and the State Governments in the matter of welfare schemes for the Scheduled Tribes. The executive power of the Union to issue directions to the State is not limited to the execution of schemes but also extends to the drawing up of the schemes considered essential for the well-being of the Tribes. So it covers both formulation and implementation of the schemes.⁹

The Constitution makes special provisions for the administration of certain areas called 'Scheduled Areas' in States other than Assam and Meghalaya even though such areas are situated within a State or Union territory¹⁰ because of the backwardness of the people of these Areas. The power to declare any area as a 'Scheduled Area' is given to the President. These are Areas inhabited by Tribes specified as 'Scheduled Tribes' in States other than Assam and Meghalaya. Special provisions for the administration of such Areas are given in the Fifth Schedule.

The executive power of the Union extends to giving directions to the respective States regarding the administration of the Scheduled Areas. The Governors of the States in which there are 'Scheduled Areas' have to submit reports to the President regarding the administration of such Areas annually or whenever so required by the President. Tribes Advisory Councils are to be constituted to give advice on such matters pertaining to the welfare and advancement of the Scheduled Tribes in the States as may be referred to them by the Governor.

The Governor is authorised to direct that any particular Act of Parliament or of the Legislature of the State shall not apply to a Scheduled Area or shall apply, only subject to such exceptions and modifications as he may specify. The Governor is also authorised to make regulations to prohibit or restrict the transfer of land by, or among members of the Scheduled Tribes, regulate the allotment of land to members of Scheduled Tribes in such area, and regulate the business of money-lending therein. All such regulations made by the Governor must have the assent of the President.¹¹

The Constitution provides for the appointment of a Commission to report on the administration of the Scheduled Areas and the welfare of Scheduled Tribes in the States. The President may appoint such Commission at any time, but the appointment of such Commis-

⁹. Kamesh Kumar Widhwa Minority safeguards in India, 1975, p. 113.

¹⁰. Article 244(1).

¹¹. Fifth Schedule to the Constitution.

sion at the end of 10 years from the commencement of the Constitution is obligatory.¹² A Commission was accordingly appointed with Shri Dhebar as Chairman in 1960 and it submitted its report to the President towards the end of 1961.¹³

While the administration of Scheduled Areas in States other than Assam and Meghalaya is dealt within Schedule V, the VI Schedule deals with the tribal areas in Assam and Meghalaya, as well as the Union territory of Mizoram.

These Tribal Areas are to be administered as autonomous districts. These autonomous districts are not outside the executive authority of the State Government but provision is made for the creation of District Councils and Regional Councils for the exercise of certain legislative and judicial functions. These councils are primarily representative bodies and they have got the power of law-making in certain specified fields such as management of a forest other than a reserved forest, inheritance of property, marriage and social customs. The laws made by the Councils shall have, however, no effect unless assented to by the Governor. The Governor may confer upon these Councils the powers under the Code of Civil Procedure and the Code of Criminal Procedure to try certain suits or offences. These Councils have also the power to assess and collect the land revenue and to impose certain specified taxes.

With respect to the matters over which the District and Regional Councils are thus empowered to make laws, Acts of the State Legislature shall not extend to such Areas unless the relevant District Council so directs by public notification. As regards other matters, the Governor of the State may direct that an Act of Parliament or of the Legislature of the State shall not apply to an autonomous district or shall apply only subject to exceptions or modifications as he may specify in his notification.¹⁴

For proper execution of the special plans, projects and schemes for the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes, the Constitution provides in article 164(1) that "in the States of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa, there shall be a Minister in charge of tribal welfare who may, in addition, be in charge of the welfare of the Scheduled Castes and backward classes or any other work." Paragraph 14(3) of the

12. Article 339.

13. Basu, Durga Das : *Introduction to the Constitution of India* (1963), pp. 248-249.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 248.

Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, relating to the Administration of Tribal Areas in the States of Assam and Meghalaya and in the Union territory of Mizoram states: "In allocating the business of the Government of the State among his Ministers, the Governor may place one of his Ministers specially in charge of the welfare of the autonomous districts and autonomous regions in the State".

III. REPRESENTATION OF SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES IN SERVICES

After independence, the whole policy of reservation in services for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was laid down by the Government in pursuance of certain constitutional provisions, namely, articles 16(4), 46 and 335. Article 335 states that—

“The claims of the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes shall be taken into consideration, consistently with the maintenance of efficiency of administration, in the making of appointments to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of a State.”

In pursuance of aforesaid provisions reservations of 15 per cent and 7½ per cent of vacancies has been fixed for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes respectively in appointments by direct recruitment on an all India basis by open competition through U.P.S.C. or by means of open competitive test held by any other authority. In direct recruitment on an all India basis otherwise than by open competition, the percentage prescribed is 16-2/3 per cent and 7-1/2 per cent for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes respectively. In direct recruitment to Groups C & D¹¹ posts, which normally attract candidates from a locality or a region, the percentage has been prescribed in proportion to the population of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the respective States/Union Territories or the region.

Reservation is applicable to all appointments made to all the groups by direct recruitment. Where the posts are filled by advertisement otherwise than through examination, provision has been made for advertising reserved vacancies twice. At the time of first advertisement, the reserved vacancies are to be exclusively advertised for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and applications are to be called only from SC/ST candidates, as the case may be. If such advertisement fails to secure SC/ST candidates

¹¹. Group A (class I)
" B (class II)
" C (class III)
" D (class IV)

the vacancies are to be re-advertised and, this time, general category candidates can also apply but their applications are to be considered only when suitable SC|ST candidates are not available. Where direct recruitment is made through examination, a single advertisement is to be made for both reserved and unreserved vacancies. For Group A&B posts, generally the Union Public Service Commission is the recruiting/selecting agency and it has well-established system of providing the requisite concessions, relaxations etc. to the SC|ST candidates, as stipulated by the Government. In order to attract more and more SC|ST candidates for direct recruitment to Groups C&D posts, the Government have evolved 'wide publicity network' requiring the vacancies to be notified to employment exchanges, advertised in newspapers announced over selected stations of All India Radio located in areas having concentration of SC|ST population, notified to the voluntary associations of SC|ST enlisted for this purpose and intimated to the Directors of SC|ST Welfare/Social Welfare in the States and Union Territories.

The concessions available for appointment by direct recruitment are relaxation of the maximum age limit by five years, reduction in examination fees to 25 per cent of the normal fees, relaxation of 'experience' qualification, grant of travelling allowance for journeys performed for interviews, relaxation of standards of suitability, etc.

There are instructions that in direct recruitment (through interview, whether coupled with written examination or not), the interview of the SC|ST candidates should be held on a day or sitting of the Selection Committee other than the day or sitting on which the general candidates are to be interviewed so that SC|ST candidates are not judged in comparison with the general category candidates and the interviewing authority Board is prominently aware of the need for judging the SC|ST candidates by relaxed standards.

Fifty nine Coaching Centres have also been opened for preparing SC|ST candidates for various competitive examinations and examination centres have also been opened in areas of tribal concentration to make it more convenient for SC|ST candidates to appear in such competitive examinations.

If SC|ST candidates are not available even with relaxed standard to fill reserved vacancies in direct recruitment in non-technical and quasi-technical groups C&D posts, the selecting authority should, to the extent of the reserved vacancies, select for appointment, on

probation, the best among the SC/ST candidates who fulfil the prescribed minimum educational qualifications, and thereafter give them in service training within the office to bring such candidates to the minimum standard necessary for maintenance of efficiency of administration.

Reservation in Promotion

Reservation is also applicable to promotions made by (i) seniority subject to fitness in all grades and in all groups (ii) limited departmental examination to Group B, C and D and (iii) promotion by selection upto the lowest rung of Group A.* Though there is no specific reservation in promotion by selection within Group A, there is a special concession available to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes officers in this segment of promotion. The Government has issued instructions that in promotion by selection within Group A (in posts carrying an ultimate salary of Rs. 2250 per month) the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes Officers who are senior enough in the zone of consideration for promotion so as to be within the actual number of vacancies for which the select list has to be drawn up, would be included in that list provided they are not considered unfit for promotion. There are also provisions that in promotion by selection, wherever adequate number of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes candidates are not available within the normal field of choice it may be extended to five times the number of vacancies and such Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes candidates coming within the extended field of choice should also be considered against the vacancies reserved for them. It has further been provided now in the interest of SC/ST candidates that those SC/ST officers who are selected even from the extended zone of consideration would not have their seniority downgraded but retain their rightful position in the select list in accordance with the grading assigned to them by the D.P.C. (Departmental Promotion Committee). In promotion by selection in Group C and D, the zone of consideration for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes is applied separately (though the size of the zone of consideration remains same). In promotion by selection, if the required number of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes candidates is not available by general standard, the difference has to be made up by selecting

* There is reservation of 15% and 3% for SC and ST respectively, provided the element of direct recruitment in all such grades/services does not exceed 66 2/3%.

candidates of these communities who are in the zone of consideration irrespective of merit but who are considered fit for promotion.

Instructions also exist to the effect that where eligible SC|ST candidates, though available, are not appointed or selected for reserved and unreserved vacancies, such cases of supersession should be submitted to the Minister concerned (in case of Group A promotion): reported to the Minister concerned within a period of one month of finalisation of the Select List (in case of Group B promotion); and in case of promotion to and in Group C & D posts, they should be reported to the Head of the Department and where the Head of the Department is the appointing authority to the Secretary of the administrative Ministry|Department.

SC/ST Member in DPC/Selection Boards/DPCs: The Government have also issued orders that the Ministries|Departments may endeavour to the maximum extent possible to nominate the SC/ST Officer while constituting the Selection Boards, Departmental Promotion Committees, etc. for the recruitment|promotion to the post and services under them, particularly where bulk selection for a large number of vacancies say for 30 or more at a time is involved. In respect of a D.P.C. for Group C & D posts, it has been provided that one of the members of the Committee should be an officer from a Department not connected with the one in which promotions are being considered and such an outside representative should invariably be an Officer belonging to SC|ST community failing which an Officer belonging to SC|ST from the same Department could be nominated to the D.P.C. If no SC|ST Officer is available for any reason for nomination to the DPC either from outside organisation or from the same Department, an endorsement to this effect should be obtained before holding the meeting of the D.P.C. from the Liaison Officer of the Ministry|Department Office concerned to the effect that all efforts have been made to find a SC|ST Officer in the D.P.C. but with no success

Ad-Hoc Promotions: Though the normal position is that *ad-hoc* promotions are to be resorted to when it becomes inescapable in public interest, it had been earlier provided that where such *ad hoc* promotions are made, claims of the eligible SC|ST Officers should also be duly considered along with others eligible in the field, though there was to be no formal reservation for Scheduled Castes|Scheduled Tribes in such promotions. Detailed guidelines have now been issued to facilitate the consideration of Scheduled Castes|

Tribes candidates. Under these guidelines the interest of SC|STs has been adequately protected in the matter of *ad hoc* promotions also.

Carry Forward of Reservation: When adequate number of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes candidates are not available inspite of best efforts made by the Government, dereservation of the reserve vacancies is permissible so that the work of the Government does not suffer due to vacancies remaining unfilled for want of Scheduled Castes|Scheduled Tribes candidates. Such dereservation permits appointment of general category candidates. At the same time, the interests of Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes candidates are also protected by the mechanism of carry forward of reservation to three subsequent recruitment years in all cases (except in promotion by selection from Group C to Group B, within Group B and from Group B to the lowest rung of Group A). Wherever vacancies are carried forward to three subsequent recruitment years, the reservation is exchangeable between Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes candidates in the third and final year of carry forward. In promotion by selection from Group C to Group B, within Group B, from Group B to the lowest rung of Group A, the reservation is exchangeable between Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes candidates in the same year itself.

The Government has built up an infrastructure consisting of various mechanisms such as, Rosters, Liaison Officers, Special Cells etc. which safeguard the reservations, relaxations and other concessions provided to Scheduled Castes|Scheduled Tribes. There exist also institutional safeguards such as Commissioner for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes, Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Parliamentary Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes|Scheduled Tribes etc. which keep constant vigil on the effective implementation of the official policies and programmes relating to reservations for Scheduled Castes|Scheduled Tribes. They also advise the Government on framing of new policies.

Representation over the years-trend

As will be seen from the figures given below, there has been considerable increase in the representation of Scheduled Castes|Scheduled Tribes during the period from 1-1-65 to 1-1-83 both in terms of absolute numbers and in their percentage relationship to

the total number of employees in all Groups (classes) of Central Services.

Group	Total No. of employees	Scheduled Castes	%age	Scheduled Titles	%age
	As on	1-1-1965			
A (Class I)	19,379	318	1.64	52	0.27
B (Class II)	3,621	864	2.82	103	0.34
C (Class III)	10,82,278	66,114	8.88	12,390	1.14
D (Class IV) (Excluding sweepers)	11,32,517	2,01,073	17.75	38,144	3.39
Total	22,64,795	3,98,369	13.17	50,980	2.25

	As on	1-1-1983*			
A (Class I)	52,683	3,536	6.71	741	1.41
B (Class II)	62,485	6,351	10.16	915	1.46
C (Class III)	21,28,650	310,949	14.61	38,149	1.14
D (Class IV) (Excluding sweepers)	13,02,534	255,094	19.58	70,812	5.51
Total	35,46,352	57,59,39	16.24	16,16.17	4.51

*Note : The information given in the statement including figures in respect of all Ministries/D pts. except the President Sectt.

In Groups C and D, the representation of Scheduled Castes stood at 14.61 per cent and 19.58 per cent respectively as on 1-1-1983. (In Group C also, their representation is not below the all India percentage of reservation, being 14.61 per cent). While in Groups A and B services, in percentage terms the Scheduled Castes component is still below the desired level, it will be pertinent to note that compared with 1-1-1965, in absolute numbers it has grown considerably.

It will be interesting to observe the numerical increase in absolute terms and percentage-wise in the representation of SC ST during 1965 to 1983. The following table speaks for itself:

Group	Scheduled Castes		Numerical increase	
	in 1965	in 1983*	Absolute terms	Percentage
1	2	3	4	5
A	318	3536	3218	101.20
B	864	6351	5487	635.07
C	96114	310949	214835	223.52
D	201073	255094	54021	26.87
Total	298369	575930	277561	93.03

Group	Scheduled Tribes		Numerical increase	
	in 1964	in 1983*	Absolute terms	Percentage
6	7	8	9	
A	52	6741	689	1325.00
B	103	915	812	788.35
C	12390	88149	75759	611.45
D	38444	71812	33368	86.80
Total	50989	161617	110628	216.96

*Note : The information given in the statement includes figures in respect of all Ministers/Depts. exc pt the President Sectt.

Though the representation of SC and ST in Group A was 6.71 per cent and 1.17 per cent respectively as on 1-1-84, it will be worth noting that their representation in IAS is far better. In IAS, the representation of Scheduled Castes is more than 10 per cent and of Scheduled Tribes more than 5 per cent. Details are given in the table below.

Total No. of I.A.S. Officers	Scheduled Castes	Percentage	Scheduled Tribes	Percentage
<i>As on 1-1-1984</i>				
IAS				
3862	416	10.8	200	5.2
	(exc pt for Andhra Pradesh and Assam Meghalaya cadre)			

The present trend in the All India Services shows that almost all the vacancies reserved for SC/ST are now being filled up by the candidates belonging to these communities and there is no shortfall in the annual recruitment in these services.¹⁶

Representation of SC/ST in Public Sector Enterprises

The present quota of reservation for employees belonging to Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes in Public enterprises where recruitment is on all India basis is indicated below:—

	Groups 'A' & 'B'	Group 'C'	Group 'D'
Scheduled Casts	15%	15%	15%
Scheduled Tribes	7½%	7½%	7½%

The overall performance of public enterprises with regard to employment of candidates belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes is given in the following tables:

Groups	Total No. of employees	Representation of SCs/STs			
		No. SCs	%	No. SCs	%
1	2	3	4	5	6
As on 1-1-1984					
(Based on information furnished by 195 enterprises)					
Group 'A'	1,40,700	5,534	3.93	1,245	0.89
Group 'B'	1,40,922	7,582	5.28	2,238	1.60
Group 'C'	13,62,412	2,48,312	18.23	1,17,849	8.65
Group 'D' (Excluding sweepers)	3,85,896	1,05,615	27.37	58,372	15.13
Group 'D' (sweepers)	32,734	24,613	75.19	1,060	3.21
Tota	6,62,664	3,91,656	18.99	1,80,784	8.76

Reservation of 15 per cent and 7½ per cent of posts for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in the case of recruitment on all India basis (and corresponding percentages based on the State level)

¹⁶ Government of India, Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms, Annual Report, 1984-85, pp. 48-55.

population of Scheduled Castes Scheduled Tribes in the case of region-based recruitment) are applicable to maintenance vacancies (i.e. vacancies arising either on account of expansion of workload or need to replace the employees who move elsewhere) and not to the total strength in the organisation.

It has been assessed that the overall percentage of representation of Scheduled Castes has stabilized at about 18 per cent during the last 4-5 years. The overall percentage of Scheduled Tribes has also stabilized to around 8 per cent during the last 4-5 years. Though the overall percentage is not low, the representation in Group 'A' and Group 'E' is not entirely satisfactory. The main reason of this is the fact that the private sector companies taken over by the Government which account for a significant percentage of total employment in the public sector at present did not necessarily have any schemes of reservation for Scheduled Castes Scheduled Tribes till these were nationalised.¹⁷

Representation in Public Sector Banks/Financial Institutions

The Public sector banks/financial institutions are also making efforts to recruit/promote candidates belonging to SC/ST communities against vacancies reserved for them.

The representation of these communities in 30 nationalised banks, State Bank of India and its Associate Banks, Reserve Bank of India, Industrial Finance Corporation of India, Industrial Development Bank of India and Industrial Reconstruction Corporation of India as on 1-1-1984 was as follows¹⁸:—

Category of Employees	Total Number of employees	Number of employees belonging to	
		Scheduled Castes	Scheduled Tribes
Officers	1,81,365	8,831	2,322
Clerks	3,77,628	50,915	11,189
Sub-Staff	1,53,971	35,650	6,108

Representation in University Services:

The Government has decided that reservation percentage for admission and appointments in Universities should be 15 per cent for

¹⁷. Bureau of Public Enterprises, Public Enterprises Survey, 1983-84, pp. 328-332.

¹⁸. Government of India Ministry of Finance, Annual Report, 1984-85, p. 11.

Scheduled Castes and 7½ per cent for Scheduled Tribes candidates. The University Grants Commission has informed the Universities accordingly and requested them to ensure immediate coverage of candidates belonging to these communities upto reservation percentage prescribed by the Government of India.¹⁹

In order to have an idea about the actual representation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in teaching posts under the various Universities in the country, the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes collected statistical data and noted that the representation of these communities in various grades was almost negligible. In the 112 Universities for which information was available, representation of these communities was 0.7 per cent in case of Professors; 0.6 per cent in case of Readers and 0.9 per cent as regards the posts of Lecturers.²⁰ The Commissioner reiterated its recommendation that the Ministry of Education should evolve uniform guidelines for all Central and State Universities to implement the constitutional provision either on the pattern of the Central Government or the State Government, as the case may be. The Commission also observed that the relevant provision of the University Grants Commission, University Acts, may also be suitably amended to achieve the objective of providing reservations for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.²¹

Representation in Judicial Services

There are no reservations among Judges of High Court, Supreme Court. Information about castes or community is not asked for at the time of receiving proposals from State authorities for making appointments to High Courts since the relevant provisions of the Constitution do not provide for reservation for any caste or class of persons. The Government, however, addressed the Chief Ministers of States and the Chief Justices of High Courts in August, 1980 saying, *inter-alia*, that it should be possible for them to locate persons from the Bar belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, minority communities, Backward Classes and other weaker sections who were suitable for appointment as High Court Judges. They were advised to keep this thing in view while making recommendations.²²

¹⁹. University Grants Commission, *Report for the year 1982-83*, p. 103.

²⁰. *27th Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes*, Part I, p. 74.

²¹. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

According to information received from High Courts as on 1-2-1983 there were 6 Judges belonging to Scheduled Castes, none belonging to Scheduled Tribes and 24 belonging to other Backward Classes. In Supreme Court, there was one Judge belonging to Scheduled Castes and none belonging to Scheduled Tribes²³

The Judicial Services in the various States of India consist of (i) State Higher Judicial Service, and (ii) State Judicial Service. In the former are included District and Sessions Judges, Additional District Judges, Chief Metropolitan Magistrates, etc. while the latter comprises of Munsifs, Sub-Judges, Metropolitan Magistrates etc.

According to the information available, reservation for Scheduled Castes/Tribes exists in direct recruitment to the Lower Judicial Services under all the High Courts except the High Courts of Gujarat and Sikkim. Reservation exists in direct recruitment to the Higher Judicial Services under the following High Courts:

- (i) Allahabad; (ii) Andhra Pradesh; (iii) Bombay; (iv) Delhi;
- (v) Karnataka; (vi) Kerala; (vii) Madras; (viii) Orissa;
- (ix) Punjab and Haryana (in respect of the State of Punjab only) (x) Rajasthan.²⁴

Representation of SC/ST in Private Sector.

In February, 1975, the Parliamentary Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes had expressed concern that no instructions had been issued by the Ministry of Industry to the Private Sector undertakings directing them to reserve a certain portion of vacancies in favour of persons belonging to those communities.

This question was again raised in November, 1976 and the Government decided to examine whether a condition could be imposed at the time of issuing of industrial licences and sanctioning financial assistance in the form of loans to the private sector establishments compelling them to give due representation to the Scheduled Castes' Scheduled Tribes. The Ministry of Law, however, felt that it was not permissible under the law to impose such a condition. The

²³. L.S. USQ No. 100, dated 15-11-1983.

²⁴. Government of India, Ministry of Law & Justice, *Annual Report 1984-85*, p. 35.

Ministry of Finance (Banking Division) in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India also did not favour introduction of measures to reserve posts for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the private sector undertakings as a precondition to sanction financial assistance since the Banks could not legally bind the borrowers in this regard as well as follow up this condition with a view to enforcing it.²⁵

The matter was also taken up with the Ministry of Industry (Department of Industrial Development) to consider whether it could impose conditions while issuing/renewing licences to the industrial units. The Department, after consultation with the Ministry of Law, felt that it was not possible legally to provide for reservation of posts in the private sector.²⁶

All that the Government has done in the matter is to issue appeals to the private sector undertakings to introduce reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in services and posts under them. Unfortunately such appeals have not yielded any appreciable result so far.²⁷

The Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in its Second Report had recommended that suitable amendments be made in the Law or the Constitution as required with a view to providing for reservation of posts for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in private sector establishments also on the lines of reservation in public services.²⁸ The Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in its 27th Report (1979-81) has also recommended that the question of introducing reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in services and posts under the private sector should be reconsidered and reviewed at the highest level and immediate steps should be taken to make statutory provisions for implementation of the Government policy in the private sector establishments.²⁹

²⁵. *Second Report of the Commission for SC and ST, op. cit.*, p. 249.

²⁶. *27th Report of the Commissioner for SC and ST, op. cit.*, p. 26.

²⁷. *Ibid.*

²⁸. *Second Report of the Commission for SC & ST, op. cit.*, p. 250.

²⁹. *27th Report of the Commissioner for SC & ST, op. cit.*, p. 71).

IV. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES

The bulk of the Scheduled Castes population are agricultural labourers or having minuscule holdings, or 'bargadars' (share croppers) or other types of insecure tenants. According to the 1961 Census data for the country as a whole, the Scheduled Castes agricultural labourers constitute 48.22 per cent of the total Scheduled Castes workers. Among the States/UTs which have higher percentage of Scheduled Castes agricultural labourers than the national average are:—

States	Percentage of S.C. agricultural labourers to total Scheduled Caste workers.
1. Bihar	72.88
2. Andhra Pradesh	68.24
3. Punjab	60.83
4. Kerala	58.08
5. Haryana	51.28
6. Pondicherry	73.95

For the Scheduled Castes cultivators, the all-India percentage is 28.17. Of the total Scheduled Castes workers, 28.17 per cent are cultivators. Almost all of them are only marginal holders and naturally are in the poverty group along with the landless agricultural labourers. They together form 76.39 per cent of the total Scheduled Castes workers. Then there are traditional occupations such as leather work, handicrafts especially bamboo and cane, weaving, fishery etc. These occupations are all in the unorganised sector, providing employment to the Scheduled Castes. These along with the degrading professions like carrying of night soils, flaying and tanning account for their very low economic and social status. Almost all of them are concentrated in the rural areas. They have hardly any assets and they suffer from the dual handicap of social disability and economic deprivations: social disability arising out of the stigma of untouchability and the economic deprivations arising out of exploitation and denial of opportunities for centuries to develop economic capability.

The practice of untouchability still persists in many regions mostly in the rural areas. In the urban areas the overt practice of this form of social discrimination is much less although covert|disguised practice of it can be discerned in group actions.

The Constitutional provisions mentioned earlier have ensured the socio-economic development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and empowered the government to make arrangements for the implementation of the high ideals of Article 46.

Concrete steps have been taken for development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and several schemes for their upliftment were included in the Five Year Plans. Information regarding the expenditures incurred on development plans for the backward classes in the Central and State sectors from the First Five Year Plan up to Fifth Five Year Plan is given in the Table³⁰ below:

Plan	(Rs. in crores)	
	Scheduled Castes	Scheduled Tribes
First Plan	7.08	19.83
Second Plan	27.48	42.92
Third Plan	37.78	51.05
Fourth Plan	16.12	80.98
Fifth Plan	220.07	76.12

The Sixth Plan outlays and Expenditures on Socio-Economic Programmes for SCs/STs are as follows:³¹

	(Rs. Crores)	
	Sixth Plan outlays	Sixth Plan expenditure
A. Scheduled Castes		
1. States' allocation for SCP@ (Special Component Plans)	4204	3555
2. Special Central Assistance	600	595
3. Institutional Finance	N.A.	2110@
	<u>4804</u>	<u>6258</u>
B. Scheduled Tribes		
1. States' allocation for TSP@ (Tribal sub-Plans)	3521	3409
2. Special Central Assistance	485	485
3. Institutional Finance	N.A.	800@
	<u>4006</u>	<u>4694</u>

³⁰. 27th report of the Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, 1979-81, p. 96.

³¹. The Seventh Five Year Plan, 1985-90 *op.cit.*, p. 747.

@ Include outlay/expenditure under welfare of Backward Classes Sector.

●● Estimates.

The Sixth Plan document had identified the "lack of economic support" as the main cause of extremely slow pace of development of the Scheduled Castes during the earlier Plans. Though it was inherent in the earlier Five Year Plans that the benefits of economic development resulting from the investments in agriculture and industry in particular would, in course of time, trickle down to the poorest of the poor, the experience was otherwise. This necessitated the search for a new strategy during the Sixth Five Year Plan. The new strategy so evolved was a combination of the following three instruments:—

- (i) The Special Component Plans of the States and Central Ministries: (SCP)
- (ii) The Special Central Assistance. (SCA)
- (iii) Scheduled Castes Development Corporations in the States. (SCDC)

(i) *Special Component Plan*

The role of different departments of State Governments and Central Ministries in the development of Scheduled Castes was underlined by the late Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi, in her letter of March 12, 1980 in which she exhorted them for the development of Scheduled Castes to be made by bringing in expertise to ensure a better planning and better implementation. In her own words:—

"The Special Component Plans already prepared by the State Governments, have not only to be improved quantitatively and qualitatively but should also be implemented **satisfactorily**. For this purpose, it is particularly important to **take** note of the developmental needs of the Scheduled Castes in each occupational category, identify the **available opportunities** suitable for them, formulate **appropriate developmental** programmes in the light of the above and **build** these programmes and corresponding outlays into the **Special Component Plan**."

The Special Component Plan was designed to channelise the flow of benefits and outlays from the general sectors in the plan of the States and Central Ministries for the development of Scheduled Castes in physical and financial terms. These plans were envisaged to help poor Scheduled Caste families through composite income generating programmes during the Sixth Plan period. Such family oriented programmes are to cover all the major occupational groups

amongst Scheduled Castes such as agricultural labourers, small and marginal farmers, share-croppers, fishermen, sweepers and scavengers, urban un-organised labourers below the poverty line. In addition, the Special Component Plans also sought to improve the living conditions of Scheduled Castes through provision of house sites and housing improvements, establishment of such services as primary schools, health centres, veterinary centres, panchayat ghars, community halls, nutrition centres etc. in the Scheduled Caste bastis under the Minimum Needs Programme to improve their access to social, educational and other community services and earmarking outlays for this purpose in appropriate sectors.

20 States and 4 Union Territories with sizeable Scheduled Castes population had formulated their special component Plans. The outlays in the SCPs rose from Rs. 528 crores in 1980-81 to Rs. 630 crores in 1981-82, Rs. 675 crores in 1982-83, and Rs. 755 crores in 1983-84.

Observations/recommendations of Party Committee on the Welfare of SC/ST

The Parliamentary Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (1982-83) examined this subject. In its 36th Report it was stated that from the information furnished to the Committee, it was seen that the percentage of allocation made under the Special Component Plans of various States was much lower than the percentage of Scheduled Caste population in the respective States. The Committee recommended that the percentage of outlay in the special Component Plan of a State should not be less than the percentage of Scheduled Caste population in that State.⁸²

Government accepted the recommendation and informed the Committee that every effort was being made to increase the percentage of the outlay on the Special Component Plan in a State in line with the percentage of Scheduled Caste population in a particular State.⁸³

The Committee also recommended that while scrutinising the allocations of amounts shown in the Special Component Plans it should be ensured that the qualification was not done mechanically but was related to the actual benefits likely to accrue to the Scheduled Castes. Government noted the recommendation of the Committee for action.⁸⁴

⁸². 36th Report of the Committee on the Welfare of SC/ST 1982-83, p. 3, para 3.37

⁸³. 37th Report of the Committee on the Welfare of SC/ST (1984-85) p.12.

⁸⁴. 36th Report of the Committee on the Welfare of SC/ST *op. cit.* p.31 para 3.39 37th Report of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes *op. cit.* p.11

As regards the 'Special Component Plan—Central' the Committee pointed out that several of the Central Ministries/Departments had not prepared Special Component Plans in their respective sectors even after three years of the Sixth Plan were already over. The Committee expected that every Central Ministry/Department whose activities had or could have a bearing on the development of Scheduled Castes would identify the schemes which directly benefited the Scheduled Castes and quantify outlays for the Special Component Plan in their respective sectors.⁵⁵

The Government in their reply stated that the Planning Commission had been pursuing with the Central Ministries/Departments the question of identifying schemes which directly benefited the Scheduled Castes and quantifying outlays for the Special Component Plan in their respective sectors. The Committee was not satisfied with the reply and reiterated the recommendation.⁵⁶

(ii) Special Central Assistance

The Special Central Assistance is an additive to the States' Special Component Plans and Programmes for the development of Scheduled Castes. During the Sixth Plan, it had not been tied to specific schemes on a schematic pattern. It was meant for the totality of the States efforts for the development of Scheduled Castes; and the only condition laid down was that this fund was to be used by the States only for income generating economic development schemes (including directly relevant training, directly relevant back-up services and arrangements for implementation, supervision, monitoring and evaluation). The assistance was distributed among the State Governments and Union Territories taking into account factors like population of Scheduled Castes, backwardness of the States and the efforts of the State Governments as reflected in their annual Special Component Plans. The total allocation of SCA for the Sixth Plan Period was Rs. 600 crores.

It has been found that a very large chunk of the Special Central Assistance had been utilised as subsidy either to raise the total rate of subsidy to 50 per cent by linking it up with IRDP provision or by providing it for schemes outside the IRDP. In some of the States in respect of some of the schemes the rate of subsidy was as high as 75 per cent and bulk of the amount of subsidy was spent out of the Special Central Assistance. It was noticed that initially, in respect of many schemes, Special Central Assistance was spent without

⁵⁵. 56th R. port of the Committee of the Welfare of SC/ST *op. cit.* p. 39, para. 5-5, 57th R. port of the Committee of the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, *op. cit.* p. 17

⁵⁶. 57th R. port of the Committee on the Welfare of SC/ST *op. cit.* p. 26.

effective linkage with the viability of the scheme. Ideally, the Special Central Assistance should go for meeting the critical gaps in such a way as to give a composite and integrated shape to economic development programmes for Scheduled Caste families.

The Parliamentary Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes had suggested that emphasis should be on **utilisation** of Special Central assistance for infrastructure development schemes, research oriented programmes, training of staff and programmes of similar values for which the resources of the State Governments in their State Plan outlay might not be adequate.³⁷ The recommendation was accepted by the Government.³⁸

(iii) Scheduled Castes Development Corporations

The Scheduled Caste Development Corporations in the States are envisaged to inter-face between the poor Scheduled Caste entrepreneurs and the financial institutions in respect of bankable schemes of economic development. 17 States with the substantial population of Scheduled Castes and 2 Union Territories have already set up such Corporations. When the Sixth Plan strategy for the development of the Scheduled Caste was being formulated the utility of these **specialised Corporations** was recognised. The main functions of the SC Development Corporations are mobilisation of institutional credit for the economic development schemes of the Scheduled Castes entrepreneurs by functioning as catalysts, promoters and guarantors. The Government of India provide assistance to States for share capital investment in their Corporations, in the ratio of 49 : 51, and this has helped the Corporations in expanding their activities and rejuvenating some which have been dormant. The following releases had been made in this behalf:-

Year	Rs. in lakhs)	
	State Govt. contribution	Amount released by the Govt. of India
1978-79	710.55	50.00
1979-80	793.10	124.00
1980-81	1403.00	1300.07
1981-82	1367.56	1332.37
1982-83	1364.40	1350.00
1983-84	Final figure not yet available	1400.00 (Provisional)

³⁷ 36th Report of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes op. cit., p. 39 para 5.5

³⁸ 37th Report of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes op. cit., p. 17.

The proposed outlay for 1984-85 is Rs. 16 crores. The Corporations were to ensure flow of every possible assistance available to the Scheduled Caste beneficiaries from different Government agencies. Loan subsidy and margin money were to be routed through one window, preferably the bank.

Another facility offered to the States' Scheduled Caste Corporations by the Government of India was the matching grant for promotional activities (1 per cent of cumulative share capital contribution) and staff for monitoring technical and recovery wings and (8 per cent of cumulative share-capital contribution). These funds could be drawn upon by the State Corporations for undertaking a number of activities and to provide support services for recovery of dues. The Corporations, however, have started submitting proposals to the Government of India in this regard only very recently.

The task of monitoring and ongoing evaluation of the Scheduled Caste Development Corporations (SCDCs) has been entrusted by the Ministry of Home Affairs to the Agricultural Finance Corporation (AFC) which has set up a Special Cell in Delhi for this purpose in June, 1982.

In the course of reviewing of the Special Component Plans for the last 4 years it has been noticed that there is gradual improvement in the quality of the schemes and also in the quantity of implementation. Given the fact that the strategy of SCP was evolved only during the Sixth Five Year Plan, it can be said that generally the schemes have made good progress during the last 4 years in terms of financial as well as physical achievements.

Under the IRDP, for instance, it has been observed that while the quantitative parameters show satisfactory and healthy trends, efforts are also being made to put due emphasis on the qualitative aspects also. Given the methodology, coverage and objectives of this programme it would probably be too early to attempt to arrive at a definite conclusion on the impact of the IRDP schemes on the beneficiaries. A number of Scheduled Caste beneficiaries have been provided with a package of assistance, and the different components of this package were delivered to them over a period of time.

The difficulties noticed in the implementation of the IRD Programmes are in the nature of administrative, organisational and of coordination. The major difficulty is in the field of mobilisation of credit and linkage of the schemes with banks and other financial institutions. The other deficiency noticed is that of inadequacy of dosage of assistance made available to the Scheduled Caste bene-

ficiaries. Particularly in the sector of animal husbandry the general experience is that one milch cow or some five goats per family would not be expected to be sufficient to generate adequate income to take the poor SC families above the poverty-line. When the poor Scheduled Caste families are provided with assistance through IRD Programme for enabling them to become small entrepreneurs, care has to be taken to link it up properly with back-up services particularly provision of raw materials and marketing. In many cases inadequacy of infrastructure support has been identified as one of the deficiencies and the State Governments are advised to take remedial measures.

The Special Component Plan in the agricultural sector in different States encompasses a very large number of small schemes like distribution of mini-kits, distribution of seeds saplings, land levelling, land bunding, minor irrigation etc; but there is hardly an integrated approach in many of the States, land holding pattern of the Scheduled Castes is not fully known. In the absence of this basic data it would be difficult to formulate meaningful programmes that would make an impact on the Scheduled Caste families having land.

Most of the Scheduled Caste cultivators have land of minuscule sizes scattered in a number of very tiny plots. Most of the programmes so far taken up for agricultural development are directed towards the land holders having sufficient land, say more than 5 acres. As a result, the small and marginal Scheduled Caste cultivators are still outside the pale of many programmes taken up in the agricultural sector. The fund earmarked in the Special Component Plan in this particular sector is very little and is often frittered away without making the desired impact. Even in the cases of new allottees on ceiling surplus land, the land distribution has not been linked up with meaningful programmes. Quite often such ceiling surplus land are of marginal or sub-marginal quality needing development before these can be put proper economic use.

In the case of minimum needs programmes for the development of Scheduled Caste bastis in the shape of providing drinking water, street-lights, link roads etc. much is left to be done. The impact could not be felt in the absence of priority being assigned to these important needs of the poor Scheduled Castes.

Some of the major difficulties noticed in the implementation of Special Component Plan in many States are as follows:—

- (1) Implementation of Special Component Plan schemes suffered a good deal in many States because the physical

and financial targets under various sectors were not disaggregated and communicated to the District and Block level by the Departments concerned. The disaggregation of targets should be made at the beginning of the financial year and communicated to the officers at the district and block levels with such detailed programming done well in time. The targets should not appear very ambitious and would infact be fully achievable.

- (2) Even while sufficient funds might be available, the implementing agencies are structurally weak for absorption of large amounts under different programmes. It is, therefore, essential that each department reviews the staff position particularly at the field level for strengthening the implementing machinery wherever necessary. The States are also somewhat slow in suitably strengthening the monitoring machinery due to financial and other constraints.
- (3) In some States it has been found that because of lack of coordination and proper tie-up and linkage even the fund made available by the Ministry of Home Affairs as Special Central Assistance was lying unutilised. In some of the States the State Governments transferred the amount of Special Central Assistance to a number of State Corporations where it was lying unutilised and without notice of the State Government.
- (4) In some of the States, the District Magistrates/Collectors were not made directly involved with the Special Component Plan schemes either at the stage of formulation or at the stage of implementation. This has resulted in blurring of the focus.

On the basis of these experiences, the main stress should be on the development of different occupational categories specially the agricultural labourers and marginal farmers, leather workers, fisherman and vulnerable groups. With this end in view the cluster approach which was evolved during the Sixth Plan should be intensified to ensure the total coverage of those indentified clusters having concentration of Scheduled Caste population. In other words, it should be a cluster saturation approach. In such an approach the investment for the development of individual families and on the development of infrastructure of the Scheduled Caste basties will be made in an integrated way to have the desired impact.

In the first two years of the working of the Special Component Plan two tendencies were noticed. One was to inflate the outlays under Special Component Plan with all sorts of notional outlays without quantifying the SC families to be benefited. This tendency was basically to get more Special Central Assistance. This only indicates that proper exercises were not made by the Departments of the State Government to go through the stages of preparation of Special Component Plan.

The very first stage for such plan is to identify the number of SC families below the poverty line to be taken up under any of the schemes under Special Component Plan. The second stage is to quantify the amount needed for programmes relevant to the development of these pre-identified families.

The *second tendency* noticed was that some of the major Departments of the States were avoiding the strenuous exercise of earmarking of funds specifically for development of Scheduled Castes. It was mainly due to their inertia of rest and complacency. Both of these tendencies could be brought under a general heading "attitudinal problem—lack of proper orientation". In many States the officials at the field levels are not fully oriented to the needs and programmes for the Scheduled Castes. It is essential to have officials with right attitude with reasonable amount of commitment to the development of the poor Scheduled Castes. The work involved in the Special Component Plan is not a routine job; and for this the officials particularly the field staff should go through reorientation courses.

During the last two years, the States and Union Territories have shown gradual improvement in the planning as well as implementation of the Special Component Plan schemes. The outlay of the Special Component Plan as compared to the total plan outlay for the annual plans 1982-83 and 1983-84 are given in the following table:—

OUTLAY OF SPECIAL COMPONENT PLAN VIS-A-VIS THE TOTAL PLAN OUTLAY FOR THE ANNUAL PLANS 1982-83 AND 1983-84

(Rs. in Crores)

Sl. No.	State/Union Territory	1982-83			1983-84		
		Total Plan	S.C.P. outlay	Percentage Plan	Total Plan	S.C.P. Outlay	Percentage
1	Andhra Pradesh	100.00	63.67	10.52	826.23	130	1.59
2	Assam	238.00	4.21	1.81	291.00	5.68	1.95

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3.	Bihar . . .	676.00	58.77	8.77	687.00	4.77	
4.	Gujarat . . .	750.00	17.58	2.31	900.00	19.06	2.2
5.	Haryana . . .	320.00	24.68	7.71	446.59	24.57	6.92
6.	Himachal Pradesh	120.00	10.16	8.46	138.58	17.58	
7.	Jammu & Kashmir . . .	168.00	0.86	0.51	185.00	0.15	7.32
8.	Karnataka . . .	475.00	63.39	13.35	575.00	53.14	9.24
9.	Kerala . . .	275.00	15.59	5.66	320.00	20.75	6.48
10.	Madhya Pradesh	725.00	46.71	6.44	855.00	46.98	5.49
11.	Maharashtra . . .	1322.00	31.01	2.34	1500.00	30.81	2.05
12.	Manipur . . .	48.00	0.90	1.87	52.80	0.78	1.48
13.	Orissa . . .	300.00	11.57	3.86	345.00	27.25	7.90
14.	Punjab . . .	385.00	20.50	5.32	440.00	23.47	5.33
15.	Rajasthan . . .	340.00	30.73	2.03	401.00	40.31	10.05
16.	Sikkim . . .	25.41	0.41	1.61	30.50	0.44	1.43
17.	Tamil Nadu . . .	711.00	103.41	14.54	845.00	76.00	9.99
18.	Tripura . . .	50.00	4.61	9.22	58.00	5.78	9.97
19.	Uttar Pradesh . . .	1132.00	121.00	10.69	1375.00	117.60	8.55
20.	West Bengal . . .	490.00	29.17	5.95	549.00	36.14	6.75
21.	Chandigarh . . .	23.77	0.99	4.16	28.00	1.52	5.42
22.	Delhi . . .	200.00	11.92	5.96	250.00	12.87	5.15
23.	Goa Daman & Diu . . .	44.12	0.30	0.67	56.60	0.26	0.47
24.	Pondicherry . . .	18.91	2.60	14.29	20.50	2.92	14.31
TOTAL		9445.40	675.76	7.15	11127.80	754.81	6.79

It can be observed from the table that the percentage of outlays under the Special Component Plan is much smaller than the percentage of Scheduled Caste population in each State/Union Territory except Andhra Pradesh and Manipur. Considering the socio-economic conditions of the Scheduled Caste communities it does not make much sense to argue that a share of the outlays concerned with general infrastructure under the indivisible sectors like power, irrigation, communication, roads and transport etc. which often accounts for

about 60 per cent of the plan outlays, also goes to benefit them. Since it is the outlay in the Special Component Plan which directly benefits the Scheduled Castes, the percentage of SCP outlay to total State Plan outlay should have some parity with the percentage of Scheduled Caste population of the State. In respect of many States and Union Territories, the percentage of outlay is very low.

In certain States where the Special Component Plan scheme have been taken up in clusters and for specific number of pre-identified Scheduled Caste families in occupational groups the reports of implementation of such schemes have shown that discernible change could be brought about for the Scheduled Castes families. Illustrations can be drawn from the Tamil Nadu clusters, Andhra Pradesh community irrigation programmes etc. In certain other States, composite and integrated programmes for the economic development of Scheduled Caste families were taken up. Such programmes have met with considerable degrees of success. Illustrations can be drawn from the State of West Bengal in respect of Schemes for agricultural development taken up by the West Bengal State Scheduled Caste Development Corporation where a large number of registered Scheduled Castes share-croppers and small allottees on ceiling surplus land could be provided with loans from banks.

The general experience in the implementation of Special Component Plan during the last four years indicates that:—

- (1) For appropriate schemes, the Districts should be taken as a planning unit and Collector be given the total responsibility for formulation and of course of implementation of the Special Component Plan. In the States where District Collectors have been put incharge of these programmes, there have been considerable results.
- (2) States like Kerala and Andhra Pradesh have attempted decentralisation of the planning in respect of Special Component Plans and entrusted the District Collectors with the same. Apart from properly identifying the need-based schemes depending on the peculiarities and situations obtaining in different districts, the District Collectors were able to ensure better participation of the prospective beneficiaries of individual schemes.
- (3) In those States where exercises have been completed for preparation of lists of villages in rank order of absolute number of SC families it has been easier to identify the

localities with much concentration of SC families for taking up schemes in clusters. [This should be done in all the States.]

- (4) In some of the States the Panchayati Raj bodies in the district and sub-district levels could be effectively involved not only in identification of schemes but also in formulation and implementation. [The beneficiaries should be allowed to gain experience of management of different programmes taken up for them. This will ensure better utilisation and effective supervision.]

Special Component Plans of the Central Ministries

The idea of all the Central Ministries and Departments identifying schemes under each Sector having direct relevance to the development of Scheduled Castes and earmarking of funds for them out of divisible pool of the Ministries' plans in proportion to the population of the individual target groups was first initiated by the Planning Commission.¹ In March 1980, Prime Minister reiterated the need to form Special Component Plans by the Central Ministries. The Planning Commission as well as the Ministry of Home Affairs have continued to pursue the Central Ministries. So far, however, only five Central Ministries viz., Ministry of Agriculture, Human Resource Development, Health and Family Welfare, Labour and Energy (Department of Power) have identified Schemes relevant to Scheduled Castes and quantified outlays for Special Component Plan. Indeed, the scope for identification is limited in a number of Ministries/Department's programmes. The Ministries/Departments having prima-facie no schemes relevant for Scheduled Castes include, Atomic Energy, Chemicals and Petro-Chemicals, Fertilizers, Civil Aviation, Defence, Law and Justice, Tourism, External Affairs, Railways, Surface Transport, Electronics, Environment, Ocean Development, Space, Steel and Mines and Petroleum and Natural Gas.

(i) Ministry of Agriculture

The schemes under the agriculture and allied sectors for the development of Scheduled Castes are crop production programmes especially millets and oil seeds, soil conservation, poultry, duck, pig and sheep breeding, dairy development, fisheries and social forestry. The Sixth Plan outlay for the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation was of the order of Rs. 1810.16 crores. The flow of funds for the development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was Rs. 3 crores for 1980-81 but was raised to Rs. 14 crores during

1981-82. From 1982-83, for the development of Scheduled Castes specifically an outlay of Rs. 607.54 lakhs was provided. For 1983-84 the outlay for the Special Component Plan was raised to Rs. 753.77 lakhs for all Central and Centrally Sponsored Schemes relating to agriculture extension training, crop-oriented programmes, horticulture, soil and water conservation, plant protection, dairy development, animal husbandry, fisheries and forestry.

The Indian Council of Agriculture Research has initiated an integrated all-India co-ordinated research project for the rapid improvement of agricultural technology directed at socio-economic development of the Scheduled Castes. The project has been started since 1st April, 1982 and is located in 17 Agricultural Universities spread over 16 States.

(ii) Department of Rural Development:

The Department of Rural Development had prepared a Special Component Plan in respect of beneficiary oriented programmes such as IRDP and NREP. It had been decided that during the Sixth Plan period, the minimum coverage of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes that would be attempted under the programme would be 30 per cent of the total coverage under the programme. It had also been provided that 30 per cent of the resources in terms of subsidy and credit should also go to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Also the implementing agencies had been urged to attempt a higher percentage wherever practicable.

According to the provisional information received from the State Governments and U.T. Administrations, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe families (9,82,005) formed 34.7 per cent of the total number of families (28,29,393) benefited under the programme during the year 1981-82. In 1982-83, State Governments attempted higher targets for covering SC/ST families on the basis of their concentration in each district/block and other relevant criteria. Upto October 1982, out of 9.08 lakh families assisted 3.83 lakh families constituting 42.18 per cent of the total belonged to the SC/ST.

Under land reforms, the Ministry has been implementing a scheme for financial assistance to the assignees of lands rendered surplus on the imposition of Ceiling on agricultural holdings. Under this scheme, financial assistance is provided to the States for distribution amongst the allottees of such lands. Ordinarily, the surplus lands are allotted to landless people belonging to the weaker sections of

society and persons belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are given priority in the allotment of such lands. Upto the end of January 1982, financial assistance amounting to Rs. 15.90 crores had been made available to the State Governments for distribution to the allottees of ceiling surplus lands.

(iii) *Ministry of Labour.*

The Ministry of Labour which are concerned with two important schemes, viz. enforcement of minimum wages for agriculture labourers and rehabilitation of bonded labourers (Points 5 and 6 of the 20 Point Programme) and which are of special significance to Scheduled Castes population, has advised the State Governments to take effective steps to implement these programmes. They are formulating Special Component Plan for Scheduled Castes annually. As against a Plan budget of Rs. 12.47 crores for 1983-84, the quantum of benefits flowing to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities come to Rs. 3.92 crores (31 per cent).

The Ministry of Labour had advised the State Governments to devote attention, in the first instance, to the vulnerable areas or low wage pockets and particularly the blocks where there was a concentration of 50 per cent or more of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. In 1982, a survey on enforcement of minimum wages was completed in Gujarat and was likely to be completed in some selected States like Karnataka and Bihar.

(iv) *Ministry of Urban Development:*

Though the Ministry of Urban Development (formerly known as Ministry of Works and Housing) had not prepared Special Component Plan for the Scheduled Castes it had indicated the activities for the benefit of Scheduled Castes.

Under the Sixth Plan, the specific programmes which were to cover the Scheduled Castes related to supply of drinking water to problem villages, house-sites-cum-construction assistance for rural landless labourers and environmental improvement of urban slums and housing for economically weaker sections. All these schemes fell into the State sector. The Ministry had, however, requested the State Governments to give priority to Scheduled Castes in the execution of these programmes.

Supply of drinking water in problem villages

It had been estimated that there were about 2.31 lakhs problem villages in the country which need drinking water on a priority basis. The objective in the Sixth Plan was to provide at least a single source of safe drinking water to all these problem villages. In the Sixth Plan, an outlay of Rs. 2007.11 crores has been provided for this purpose. Of this amount, Rs. 1407.11 crores were in the States Sector (Minimum Needs Programme), and Rs. 600 crores in the Central sector (for Centrally Sponsored accelerated rural water supply programme). The State Governments had been requested that if it was technically and logistically not impossible to do so all new spot sources in the problem villages should be located in the Scheduled Caste bastis with free access to all other communities. In the case of piped water supply also, a fair proportion of the water through hand pumps, was to be provided in the Scheduled Caste habitations. By the end of 1982, 18,287 problem villages were covered benefiting 1.13 crores of rural population. Of this, 18.46 lakhs population (16.21 per cent) had been estimated to belong to Scheduled Castes.

House-sites-cum-construction assistance to rural landless labourers

A provision of Rs. 353.50 crores has been kept in the Sixth Plan for this scheme. Rs. 170 crores were to be utilised for allotment of house-sites to 6.8 million families. There were 14.5 million estimated rural families and 7.7 million families had already been covered before the commencement of the Plan. In regard to construction assistance, an outlay of Rs. 183.50 crores has been provided for helping 3.6 million families. Information available in respect of 13 States and Union Territories showed that 52 lakhs Scheduled Castes had been given house-sites up to the month of December, 1982. Of this 31.5 lakhs Scheduled Castes were given construction assistance.

Environmental improvement of urban slums

The programme of environmental improvement of urban slums envisaged provision of basic amenities such as water supply, drainage, community latrines, paved roads, street lighting etc. in the slum areas. The programme formed part of the Minimum Needs Programme and was in the State sector. It had been estimated that there would be 33.1 million slum population by 1985. Of this, about 6.8 million slum dwellers were covered before April 1980 leaving a balance of 26.3 million people to be taken care of. A provision of Rs. 151.45 crores made for the Sixth Plan was expected

to cover about 10 million people at Rs. 150 per capita. Priority was given to areas inhabited by Scheduled Castes, scavengers and other weaker sections. The majority of slum dwellers were known to belong to Scheduled Caste communities.

(v) *Ministry of Health and Family Welfare*

Out of the total outlay of Rs. 1821.05 crores for the health programme in the Sixth Plan, the State Health Sector accounted for Rs. 1220.05 crores and Central Sector for Rs. 601 crores. States provide funds towards health care of Scheduled Castes in their annual plans. Similar provision is made in the Central Sector for Central Schemes and Centrally Sponsored schemes which are implemented by the States and Union Territories.

The Ministry of Health and Family welfare has issued instructions to the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations to ensure that they channelise substantial benefits to Scheduled Castes. Some of the important instructions issued are as under:—

- (a) The States/Union Territories have been advised that while selecting areas for establishment of new primary health centres/sub-centres preference should be given to such areas which are having backward and vulnerable groups on population;
- (b) The States/Union Territories have been instructed that while selecting the candidates for ANMS and LHV's training, due representation may be given to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes;
- (c) While filling up the posts of Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANMs) at the sub-centres, provision may be made for reservation of posts for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes and such posts may be filled from among members of these categories only; and
- (d) For villages having more than 1500 population, States have been advised to consider selection of more than one Health Guide out of which at least one should be a member of the Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe.

The Ministry has also taken up a programme in hand to train up the Dais and pay them a stipend of Rs. 300 per month during the training period. After training, they are provided with a kit to conduct aseptic delivery. An amount of Rs. 3 per delivery is given to them to meet the replenishment cost of consumable articles in the kit.

A Planning Cell has been set up in the Ministry during 1981-82 to coordinate the planning work in respect of Special Component Plan for Scheduled Castes.

Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)

The Integrated Rural Development Programme was launched in 1978-79 in 2300 Development Blocks which were earlier covered by special programmes like Small Farmers Development Agency, Drought Prone Areas Programme, Command Area Development etc. This Programme was extended to all the Development Blocks of the country with effect from the 2nd October, 1980. This programme is a part of the New 20-Point Programme.

As a major poverty alleviation programme in the Sixth Plan, the objective of the IRDP is to provide assistance to families below the poverty line to enable them to improve their income level and eventually cross the poverty line. This is to be achieved by providing productive assets to the identified families. The capital cost of the asset is subsidised to the extent of 25 per cent for small farmers, 33-1/3 per cent for marginal farmers, agricultural labourers and rural artisans and 50 per cent for the Scheduled Tribes. A family may receive up to Rs. 3000/- by way of subsidy. In DPAP (Drought Prone Areas Programme) areas the limit of subsidy admissible is Rs. 4,000/-. Tribal beneficiaries can get up to Rs. 5,000/- by way of subsidy. For meeting the balance of the cost of asset, credit is provided by the banking institutions. The Sixth Plan allocation for the programme was Rs. 1,500/- crores, shared equally by the Centre and States. In addition, Credit to the extent of Rs. 3,000 crore was to be mobilised during this period. Thus, the total investment under this programme would be approximately Rs. 4,500 crores.

In physical terms, the programme aims at providing assistance to 15 million families during the Sixth Plan period. This was sought to be achieved by providing assistance to at least 600 families on an average in a Block in a year.

Since Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes constitute a significant proportion of the population below the poverty line in rural areas, it has been laid down that at least 30 per cent of the families assisted through the IRDP Programme should be drawn from SCs/STs. It has also been emphasised that at least 30 per cent of the resources in terms of subsidy and loan should go to SC/ST beneficiaries.

The achievement in extending the coverage to the SCs/STs has been satisfactory. During 1980-81, the SC/ST families covered constituted 28.60 per cent of the total coverage while during 1983-84, the figure rose to 41.71 per cent.

For 1984-85 a budget provision of Rs. 216 crores exists towards central share of expenditure. Against this funds to the tune of Rs. 140.45 crores had been released to the agencies in various State/UTs up to the end of February 1985.

During 1984-85, an amount of Rs. 274.82 crores had been utilised up to December 1984. Term credit of the order of Rs. 518.92 crores had been mobilised during this period. As against the annual target of assisting 30.27 lakh families, 24.03 lakhs had been assisted up to November 1984. Of these 10.18 lakhs belonged to SC/ST. The pace of progress during 1984-85 was even faster vis-a-vis the achievements for the same period during 1983-84.

While the quantitative parameters show satisfactory and healthy trends, every effort has been made to emphasise qualitative aspects also. The final impact of such investment in terms of self-employment, incremental incomes and consumption can, however, be estimated only after a lapse of some time.

A few studies conducted including those by NABARD, RBI, Institute of Financial Management and Research have shown increasing trend of the outcome of the Programme.

The study carried out by NABARD reveals that the programme had helped 47 per cent of the beneficiaries to cross the poverty line and also helped push up the average income of beneficiary by 32 per cent. The Reserve Bank of India study indicates that the assistance provided under the programme has resulted in a progressive shift in rural income in respect of 51 per cent of the beneficiaries and 17 per cent have been able to cross the poverty line.²²

Special Livestock Production Programme

The Special Livestock Production Programme (SLPP) was initiated in 1975-76 on the basis of the recommendations of the National Commission on Agriculture.

The programme is in operation in 183 districts in 21 States and 4 Union Territories. The programme consists of two parts viz., (i)

²². Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Development (D. part-2) of Rural Development Annual Report 1984-85, p. 111.

Cross-bred heifer rearing and (ii) setting up of sheep, poultry and piggery production units. Under the scheme (ii) assistance is provided at the rate of 50 per cent to small and marginal farmers and 66-2/3 per cent to agricultural labourers for feeding of cross-bred heifers from 4th to 32nd months of age. Under the scheme (ii), assistance is given for setting up of sheep, poultry and piggery production units. Under the scheme (ii), assistance is given for setting up of sheep, poultry and piggery production units for which subsidy is provided at the rate of 25 per cent to small farmers, and 22-1/3 per cent to marginal farmers and agricultural labourers, subject to a maximum of Rs. 3,000/- per beneficiary. In the case of tribal participants the rate of subsidy is 50 per cent subject to a maximum of Rs. 5,000/-. Thirty per cent of the beneficiaries selected under the Programme are to be from the Scheduled Caste Scheduled Tribe communities. The expenditure on the programme is shared by the Central Government on a 50:50 basis with the State Governments and 100 per cent to Union Territories."

National Rural Employment Programme

As a major programme to tackle unemployment/under employment in the rural areas, the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) was launched in October, 1980 replacing the earlier Food for Work Programme (FWP). It became a regular part of the Sixth Five Year Plan from 1st April, 1981 and since then it is being implemented as a centrally sponsored programme on 50:50 sharing basis between the Centre and the States. It envisages generation of additional employment opportunities in the rural areas of the order of 300-400 million mandays every year, simultaneously, creating durable community assets to strengthen the rural infrastructure, and raising the nutritional standard of the rural poor. The programme operates in close conjunction with the ongoing developmental works ensuring that employment and development support each other and the benefits flowing to the community are maximised.

One of the salient features of the NREP is that:

- 10 per cent of the resources is earmarked for works of direct and exclusive benefit to the SCs/STs. Further 10 per cent of the allocations are earmarked for utilisation on Social Forestry works. Diversion of the earmarked allocations to other beneficiaries/sectors is not permitted;

For the Sixth Plan period, there was a total allocation of Rs. 1620 crores for the Programme. Of this, the shares of the Central sector and the State sector were Rs. 980 crores and 640 crores respectively. The entire expenditure in the first year i.e. 1980-81 was borne by the centre. The expenditure under the Programme was likely to exceed the plan allocation substantially.

For the year 1984-85 an outlay of Rs. 230 crores had been provided for this Programme as Central share and an equal amount had to be made available by the State Governments. In addition, the State Governments had been permitted to utilise the unspent balance of Rs. 143.94 crores carried over from previous year. Of the Central share of Rs. 230 crores, (up to February 1985), an amount of Rs. 226.55 crores had been released to States/U.Ts. The reported utilisation up to January, 1985, was Rs. 327.32 crores. This was higher than last year's utilisation level of Rs. 240.73 crores up to January 1984.

The primary objective of this Programme is to generate additional gainful employment to the extent of 300-400 million mandays per year for the unemployed and under-employed men and women in the rural areas. This has been consistently achieved during the first four years of the Sixth Plan.

Year	Employment Generation (Million mandays)	
	Target	Achievement
1980-81		413.58
1981-82	335.22	354.52
1982-83	353.22	
1983-84		(Provisional)

During 1984-85 against a target of 309.130 million mandays, the reported employment generation up to January, 1985 was 240.53 million mandays. This was higher than last year's employment generation level of 196.63 million mandays during the same period.

As mentioned earlier, 10 per cent of the funds are earmarked for utilisation on works exclusively benefiting the members of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes. Such works can be drinking

water wells in SC/ST basties, link roads from SC/ST basties, to the nearest main road, land development for their houses, construction of houses for SC/STs etc. The States/U.Ts are, however, free to utilise more resources than earmarked for their sector. The utilisation of funds in this sector during 1981-82, 1982-83, and 1983-84 was Rs. 48.36 crores, Rs. 53.62 crores and Rs. 62.79 crores, respectively. Thus utilisation has been more than the earmarked allocations by about 15 per cent. Similarly in the matter of employment generation, the proportion of SC/ST beneficiaries during 1982-83 and 1983-84 was roughly 42.65 per cent and 40 per cent respectively. This indicates that the programme caters to the needs of the weaker sections particularly SCs/STs to a great extent.⁴¹

The New 20-Point Programme

The New 20-Point Programme, announced by the Prime Minister in January 1982, reiterates the Government's concern for tribal development by including as the seventh item 'acceleration of development of Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes'.

Under the programme, Tribal Research and Training Institutes have been functioning at Hyderabad, Gauhati, Ranchi, Ahmedabad, Calicut, Bhopal, Pune, Bhubaneswar, Udaipur, Calcutta, and a Cell has been functioning at Lucknow. The Institutes have been effectively contributing to tribal development efforts. In particular, they have helped in formulation of tribal sub-Plan, IIDP (Integrated Tribal Development Project) reports, evaluation of schemes and in research and training of personnel. The schemes of research fellowships to students and supporting research projects on tribal problems are being continued. Till the end of January 1982, a total of 76 students were selected for award of fellowships and 14 research studies were sponsored.⁴² A provision of Rs. 70 lakhs existed for the year 1983-84 and Rs. 75 lakhs were proposed for 1984-85.

During Sixth Plan period about 39.64 lakhs tribal families have been economically assisted as against revised target of 27.6 lakhs, thus achieving 140 per cent out of which during 1984-85, up to December, 1984, 6.68 lakh tribal families had been assisted economically.⁴³

⁴¹. Ibid pp. 26-30.

⁴². Ministry of Home Affairs, Annual report, 1982-83, pp. 1983-84, pp. 22-23 and Annual report 1984-85, pp. 58-59.

⁴³. Ministry of Home Affairs, Annual Report 1984-85, pp. 58-59.

Institutional Finance

Institutional Finance is an important ingredient in the entire beneficiary-oriented programme. Subsidy is available from the Central and State funds, the loan component has to flow from financial institutions. The establishment of more than 2,500 large-sized Multi-purpose Cooperative Societies (LAMPS) in tribal areas since the Fifth Plan period⁴⁴ has been an important step to promote the flow of credit at reasonable rates to tribals.

Further, the National Co-operative Development Corporation was also established in March 1963. In December 1976, the Corporation introduced the scheme to promote and finance co-operative societies having a minimum of 50 per cent Scheduled Castes members. In addition to agriculture and food stuff, the National Co-operative Development Corporation Act also covers a number of notified commodities. Fishery, Dairy, Weavers and Poultry Co-operatives of which majority of members generally belong to Scheduled Castes, can also avail of financial assistance from the Corporation for the expansion of their activities.

The Regional Rural Banks were set up as credit institutions for small and marginal farmers, agricultural labourers, artisans and small entrepreneurs. So far, 80 regional rural banks covering 141 districts in 17 States of the Country have been established. The total number of loan accounts at the end of March 1980 was 17.09 lakhs and the total amount of loans outstanding was Rs. 168.41 crores. Around 1.45 lakh persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes were provided financial assistance amounting to Rs. 2023.02 lakhs by Rural Banks.

Commercial Banks introduced Differential Rate of Interest Scheme in 1972 to meet the credit requirements of the weaker sections of the society, including the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The rate of interest charged from these sections under the scheme was 4 per cent. 40 per cent of the total advances under the scheme should be directed to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Besides, the scheme provides the house loan to an individual up to Rs. 2,500. These special concessions were meant to finance individuals or groups of individuals in the specific weaker sectors for construction of dwelling places.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Government of India : *Tribal Development in Retrospect and Prospect—Sixth Plan Mid-term Review*, Ministry of Home Affairs, May 1983, pp. 8-10.

⁴⁵ Government of India : *Tenancy Seventh Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes 1979-80*, Ch. 4, pp. 124-127.

Since the nationalisation of 14 large banks in 1969 several instructions had been issued to the banks with a view to increase the flow of credit to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The banks had been advised to evolve special schemes tailored to meet the requirements of members of these communities to give wide publicity to such schemes and to ensure their participation in such schemes and to enlarge the flow of credit to them for self-employment. In general, the banks had been advised to consider loan proposals from members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes with utmost sympathy and understanding.

The District/Block Credit plans had been specially weighted in favour of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. These included special bankable schemes suited to ensure participation of these communities in such schemes and allow larger flow of credit to them for self-employment.

The Margin Money Scheme provided for margin money assistance upto 10 per cent of the total investment for small units with investment in plant and machinery upto Rs. 1 lakh, so that the borrower's contribution was reduced upto 10 per cent. In the case of entrepreneurs belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, the margin money was increased upto 15 per cent and borrower's own contribution came down by 5 per cent. (The Scheme now forms part of District Industries Centres Scheme).

In all lendings to priority sector, preference was given to members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The target for priority sector advances which was 33.13 per cent to be achieved by March, 1979 had been raised to 40 per cent of bank's aggregate credit to be achieved by 1985.

Banks had been asked to grant loans upto Rs. 5,000/- to small marginal farmers without margin. Mortgage of properties should not be insisted upon for loans upto Rs. 5,000/-. For loans upto Rs. 2,500 to farmers the rate of interest charged could not exceed 10.85 per cent.

Credit limits upto Rs. 25,000/- to village or cottage industries may be sanctioned as composite term loan for equipment finance or working capital or both with repayment period of 7 to 10 years. There should be no insistence as margin and the bank should not ask for any collateral security. In addition all concessions meant for weaker sections of the society were available to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in obtaining bank credit.

Loans could also be obtained from Primary Credit Societies, Land Development Banks and Large Size Multipurpose Societies organised in tribal and hill areas to provide credit and non-credit requirements of tribal population.

The all-India Financial Institutions, namely the Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI), Industrial Financial Corporation of India, Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India and Industrial Reconstruction Corporation of India mainly cater to the needs of the medium and large scale industrial concerns in the Corporate Sector. They do not give direct financial assistance to individuals and partnership concerns. The needs of the small scale industrial concerns are met by the State Financial Corporations or commercial banks.

The IDBI which provided refinance assistance to commercial banks and State Financial Corporations in respect of loans given by them, on its part had decided to extend refinance in respect of small composite loans under its Automatic Refinance Scheme (ARS). It was expected that the small composite loans would go a long way in making credit available to the economically weak members of Schedule⁴ Castes & Scheduled Tribes and backward classes. For encouraging entrepreneurs belonging to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe, IRBI had made the following relaxations with effect from September, 1979 in its Refinance Scheme:

(i) Promoter's contribution might be reduced to 5 per cent of project cost exclusive of any seed capital assistance that may be available.

(ii) Levy of a uniform rate of interest of 6 per cent p.a. irrespective of the location of the project in backward/non-backward areas, so that the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe borrowers need not pay interest in excess of 9½ per cent per annum i. e. the rate normally applicable to projects in backward areas:

(iii) These relaxations will be extended initially in the case of refinance of term¹⁶ loans, including the composite loans upto Rs. 25,000/-.¹⁶

¹⁶ 14th report of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Caste & Scheduled Tribes (198-81), pp. 3-5.

Allotment of surplus land to the Scheduled Castes/Tribes

Ceiling Surplus Land, that becomes available as a result of implementation of land reform measures by the State Governments, is allotted by these Governments to the landless agricultural labourers.

During the Sixth Plan period 8,06,143 acres of land declared surplus under the ceiling laws were distributed among 6,88,175 Scheduled Caste families.¹⁷

Up to July 1985, 13.53 lakh acres of surplus land had been distributed among 12.70 lakh beneficiaries belonging to the Scheduled Castes and out of this 5.95 lakh acres had been distributed among 5.27 lakh Scheduled Tribe beneficiaries.¹⁸

Assistance given for implementation of Protection of Civil Rights Act

In pursuance of Section 15A of the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 Central Assistance is given to the State Governments and Union Territories for strengthening machinery for the effective enforcement of the Act.

During 1984-85 an amount of Rs. 3.60 crores was released to 14 States for improving and strengthening the machinery for implementing the provisions of the Protection of Civil Rights Act, including the Scheme for Liberation of Scavengers. Under the Scheme assistance has been provided to 50 towns in 14 States since 1980-81. So far 8 towns of Bihar have been made scavenging free towns by conversion of all dry latrines into water borne ones and providing alternative employment to thus free scavengers. For the speedy trial of untouchability offences, 8 special courts have been set up in Rajasthan, followed by 7 in Andhra Pradesh and 4 each in Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Bihar States.

Special Cell-squads manned by officers specially appointed for the purpose have been created in seventeen states for investigating and prosecution of cases under the Protection of Civil Rights Act 1955, Committees with official and non-official members have been set up in 17 States to review/supervise the working and implementation of the Protection of Civil Rights Act.¹⁹

On the suggestion of the Ministry of Home Affairs, slogans against untouchability were carried on postal inland letter cards during 1982, Publicity Programmes through mass media were arranged by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

¹⁷. The Seventh Five Year Plan, 1985-90, *op. cit.*, p. 750.

¹⁸. *L.S. Debates*, 29-11-85, pp. 15443-44 (ycl.) Discussion on Motion re: Third and Fourth R. port of Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

¹⁹. Ministry of Home Affairs, D-ptt. of Home Affairs Annual R. port, 1984-85, pp. 51-52.

V. TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

As discussed earlier the Indian Constitution envisages a special position for the protection and development of tribal communities. The Fifth Schedule of the Constitution gives the Union Government a special responsibility for administration of the scheduled areas. There are provisions for special development programmes as also for providing financial assistance to raise the level of administration of these areas and their development. The legal framework for administration of these regions has been kept extremely flexible so that a smooth transition could be ensured for them as the Nation as a whole marches ahead. Under the Constitution, the Union Government's responsibility for administration of the Scheduled Areas extends not only to the supplementing of funds for their development but also in guiding the State Governments and giving directions to them. The Union Government has so far not issued any directive to the State Governments. It has relied only on persuading the State Governments to adopt appropriate policies for the development of the tribal areas.⁵⁰

A review of the problem and performance of tribal development from First Plan to the Fourth Plan revealed that the problem of development of tribal areas is primarily linked with the backwardness of these areas, poverty of the people and the problem of integration of tribals with the rest of the population.

The task force on "Development of Tribal Areas" constituted by the Planning Commission on the eve of the Fifth Plan, after reviewing the past performance, recommended that "to ensure balanced socio-economic development of tribal areas, a policy of integrated development of tribal areas may be emphasized" from the Fifth Plan onwards.

As a consequence, the tribal development scene was critically reviewed on the eve of the Fifth Plan. The problem of tribal development was broadly classified into two categories (i) areas of tribal concentration and (ii) dispersed tribals. In respect of the former, it was decided to accept an area development approach with a focus

⁵⁰. National Committee on the Development of Backward Areas *Report on Development of Tribal Areas*, p.1.

on tribals. For dispersed tribals, it was decided that family oriented programmes would be taken up. Thus, the strategy of tribal sub-plan for areas of tribal concentration was evolved in the Fifth Plan and implemented in 16 States and 2 Union Territories, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, A & N Islands and Goa, Daman & Diu.

The tribal sub-plan was initially expected to include all the Scheduled Areas and Tehsils/Blocks with more than 50 per cent tribal population. As per this approach, tribal majority States, namely, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Lakshadweep and Dadra and Nagar Haveli were not included since the development plans of these States/UTs were primarily meant for the Scheduled Tribes themselves. While identifying Tribal sub-Plan areas, substantial tribal population was covered by the tribal sub-plans in Madhya Pradesh (74.83 per cent), Orissa (68.41 per cent), Bihar (76.75 per cent), Rajasthan (43.67 per cent), Gujarat (72.42 per cent), Manipur (93.71 per cent), Himachal Pradesh (59.15 per cent), A.&N. Island (99.45 per cent) and Goa, Daman and Diu (100 per cent.) In other States where the tribal population was of lower concentration, these norms were relaxed with a view to covering a reasonable proportion of the States' tribal population.⁵¹

The majority of 42 million tribal population in the country is concentrated in eastern, central and western parts of the country and about 25 per cent are dispersed in small pockets in the southern zone. It was proposed in the Sixth Plan that some further areas of tribal population would be brought within the ambit of Tribal Sub-plans through Modified Area Development Approach (MMDA) by identifying tribal pockets of 50 per cent concentration in a population of 10,000 in contiguous areas. The coverage of tribal population was thus likely to go up from 63 per cent as at the end of the Fifth Plan to 75 per cent in the Sixth Plan.

The Tribal Sub-plans envisage development effort in the identified areas with resources pooled from (i) outlays from State Plans; (ii) investment from Central Ministries; (iii) special Central assistance; and (iv) institutional finance. An analysis of the investments made in the Fifth Plan shows that out of States' share of funds larger outlays had gone into infrastructural schemes and only a limited investment was made for beneficiary-oriented schemes. Though

allocation for infrastructural programmes might help create employment and build facilities, there would be a long time-lag between the infrastructural facilities being created and utilisation by the tribals. To expedite this, it is necessary that the planning process be re-oriented in favour of family-oriented schemes with a sharper focus to the target group. In family-oriented planning, institutional finance becomes crucial. In the Fifth Plan period, the contribution of financial institutions in tribal areas has been inadequate in relation to need. The same was true for the flow from Central and Centrally Sponsored Schemes. It was proposed in the Sixth Plan that both these sources would be tapped more fully to promote tribal development.

So far as administrative machinery in tribal areas is concerned, there has been adverse criticism about the complex pattern of administration. A multiplicity of Government Departments advising beneficiaries or development activities and separation of revenue, judicial and development administration has caused confusion and resulted in lack of confidence in administration. It is necessary to have integration of administrative functions in the area of an Integrated Tribal Development Project. The chain of command can be from the State level through the Commissioner of a Division, Collector of a district, project administrator of ITDP, BDO to block level extension officer and to the village level worker. An attempt had been made in the Sixth Plan to have such unified administration.⁶²

According to the mid-term appraisal of the Sixth Plan, the strategy of tribal sub-plan during the Sixth Plan was modified from the previous Plan to place more emphasis on family-oriented programmes than on infrastructure development. In the Sixth Plan there was also an emphasis on development of tribal pockets with a minimum of 10,000 population containing at least 50 per cent tribal population, as well as on development of primitive tribes.

The Tribal sub-Plans (TSP) are divided into a number of Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDPs) for planning and operational purposes. By the end of the Fifth Plan, 180 projects had been recognised. While the TSP programmes had been implemented since Fifth Plan, and a system of flow of State Plan funds to tribal areas established, it was found that with the exception of a few States like Gujarat and Maharashtra, the formulation of the programmes was not being done at the ITDP level.

⁶². Sixth Five Year plan, pp.419-420.

As regards programmes under TSP, although in the sixth plan emphasis had shifted from area based infrastructure to family-oriented programmes there was still considerable investment in such sectors as power, Irrigation, Roads and Communications, and construction of buildings for administrative purposes, and health and educational services. Of the total outlay, 42 per cent was accounted for by the infrastructure development in Irrigation, Power and Roads. Sectors. It was only from 1981-82 that the State Governments had been requested to identify tribal families who would receive direct benefits from various programmes.

Although, in the Tribal Sub-plan, emphasis is on family-oriented programmes, infrastructural base is not over-looked. Besides, there are group-based programmes like LAMPS (Large-sized Multipurpose Cooperative Societies), for bringing the tribals into the cooperative movement and to eliminate money-lenders, middlemen and forest contractors. Organisation of LAMPS was taken up in the Fifth Plan itself. So far, more than 2,000 such LAMPS have been set up with about 58 per cent tribal members. The LAMP societies in most States undertake functions related to credit, marketing and distribution of essential consumer articles. The performance of these societies has been uneven and many of them are beset with management problems. A Committee was constituted in 1981 to ascertain (i) the present stage of management of LAMPS in States concerned, (ii) the suitability of the present personnel relative to the tasks devolving on LAMPS and (iii) ways and means of improving the working of LAMPS.

It has been found that varied forms of cadre-structure are prevalent in LAMPS in different States and even within the same States. The employees of LAMPS form a heterogeneous cadre. There is need to have a common cadre of LAMPS Managers in all the TSP States.

For the most backward tribal groups who are existing at a pre-agricultural levels of economy/low literacy levels, special comprehensive development programmes are being formulated. 71 such communities have been identified and project reports for 29 groups have been finalised.²²

It has been stated in the Seventh Five Year Plan that for the Tribal Sub-Plan, States have not been able to prepare even by the end of the Sixth Plan project reports for all Integrated Tribal Deve-

²². Government of India, Planning Commission, Mid-term Appraisal of the Sixth Plan, pp. 215-217.

lopment Projects (ITDPs), or for tribal pockets or for the development of primitive tribes. Coordination between the different tribal programmes which are taken up at the project level has been lacking, also involvement of tribals and their traditional institutions, both in the development and the reproductive spheres, has left much to be desired.⁵⁴

*Examination of Working of Tribal Development Project by
Committee on the Welfare of SC/ST*

Parliamentary Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes also examined the working of Integrated Tribal Development Projects. In its fifteenth report the Committee (1980-81) examined the projects in Orissa. The Committee noted that 68.22 per cent of tribal population of the State had been covered under the Tribal Sub-Plan and under Modified Area Development Approach an additional 6.51 per cent of tribal population would be covered. Thus, under Tribal Sub-Plan and Modified Area Development Approach taken together, 74.73 per cent of the total tribal population of the State were covered. The remaining 25.27 per cent of the tribal population who were living in a dispersed manner would be covered under normal State Plan Programmes, Integrated Rural Development Programmes and the State's Economic Rehabilitation of Rural Poor Programme. The Committee, however, was surprised to know that no detailed study had been undertaken to assess the degree of achievement made under the Tribal Sub-Plan approach during the Fifth Plan period. In the absence of firm data as to how many tribal families had been benefited during the Fifth Plan and how many were yet to be covered during the Sixth Plan period, a systematic implementation of various Programmes would not be possible.⁵⁵

The Government in their reply stated that the State Government had decided to evaluate the 5th plan achievements of some of the projects through non-governmental agencies.⁵⁶

In its 33rd report (1982-83), the Committee also examined the working of projects in Madhya Pradesh. The Committee was distressed to note that suitable programmes for Scheduled Tribes and Tribal areas had not been drawn up by all the concerned Ministries/

⁵⁴ The Seventh Five Year Plan, 1985-90, p. 750.

⁵⁵ 15th Report of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (1980-81), p. 11 paras 1.20, 1.21.

⁵⁶ 35th Report of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes (1982-83), pp. 13-14.

Departments although two years of the Tribal Sub-Plan for the Sixth Plan period i.e. 1980-81 and 1981-82 had already elapsed. The Committee felt that the Central Ministries had not risen to the occasion to discharge their Constitutional responsibility for development of the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled areas. It therefore, stressed that all the concerned Central Ministries/Departments should come forward and prepare special programmes relating to their sectors for the development of Scheduled Tribes, quantify funds for implementation of specific programmes without any further loss of time. The Committee regretted to note that there was no distinct machinery in the Ministry of Home Affairs to oversee the implementation of developmental programmes in the Tribal areas. The Ministry of Home Affairs, as the nodal Ministry, for the development of tribal areas must devise a suitable machinery to oversee the implementation of developmental programmes as the Committee was not convinced that the entire responsibility for monitoring such programmes should be left to the respective State Governments only. The Committee was however, informed that the Ministry of Home Affairs proposed to set up a Centre State Coordination Committee with the Chief Secretary of the State Government as the Chairman and officers of the Central and State Governments as members.⁶⁷

The recommendation was accepted and the Government, in their reply, stated that a Monitoring Cell headed by a Joint Director had been created for the purpose and that a post of Director for monitoring and evaluation had also been sanctioned.⁶⁸

Tribal Development Cooperative Corporations

Tribal Development Cooperative Corporations (TDCCs) are functioning in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Kerala, Maharashtra, Manipur, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tripura and West Bengal. These are intended to serve the tribal by advancing loans for agricultural produce, exploitation of forest wealth, sale of consumer goods, grant of loans for new occupations, trades, etc. The performance and programmes of these TDCCs are reviewed at the time of Annual Tribal Sub-Plan discussion with the representatives of the State Governments.⁶⁹

Funds for Tribal Development

Special Central Assistance is one of the four sources of financing tribal Sub-Plan programmes; the other sources being flow from State

⁶⁷. 33rd report of the Committee on SC/ST (1982-83), p. 19.

⁶⁸. 44th report of the Committee on the Welfare of SC/ST (1983-84), p. 18.

⁶⁹. R.S.U.S.Q. No. 448, dt. 1-3-84.

Plan, investment by the Central Ministries, and institutional finance. As against the outlay of Rs. 125.50 crores as Special Central Assistance during 1984-85 the Planning Commission has approved an outlay of Rs. 175.00 crores for 1985-86. It is estimated that the flow from State Plan during 1984-85 will be of the order of about Rs. 928 crores as against Rs. 776 crores in 1983-84. While the Plan size increased from about Rs. 1180 crores during Fifth Plan to around Rs. 5535 crores during the Sixth Plan, Special Central Assistance of the Home Ministry increased from Rs. 190 crores to Rs. 485.50 crores during the same period. The flow to the TSP area from State Plan investments rose very substantially from Rs. 900 crores during the Fifth Plan to over Rs. 3500 crores during the Sixth Plan. While quantification of funds by the Central Ministries during the Fifth Plan was negligible, an amount of around Rs. 900 crores has been quantified by the Central Ministries during the Sixth Plan for Scheduled Tribes and tribal area development. Investment from institutional finance during the Fifth Plan was estimated around Rs. 150 crores. Though no accurate figures are available, the estimate of investment during the Sixth Plan from this source is about Rs. 800 crores.

It has been proposed in the Seventh Plan to cover the left out 25 per cent scheduled tribe population under the cluster approach wherein contiguous villages or habitations having substantial ST population will be taken up for intensive and integrated development. It has also been proposed to set up a national level Tribal Marketing Cooperative Federation (TRIFED) during the Seventh Plan to provide much needed marketing support to tribal produce particularly farm produce and minor forest produce.⁶⁰

Upgradation of Standards of Administration in Tribal Areas

For the first time the Seventh Finance Commission (1978) recognised that the administration of tribal areas stands in particular need of upgradation of standards and the Commission made a separate award of Rs. 42.63 crores for payment of compensatory allowance and construction of residential quarters for government employees working in tribal areas. The Eighth Finance Commission selected the following programmes for support through upgradation provisions:

- (i) Payment of compensatory allowance;
- (ii) Construction of staff quarters; and

⁶⁰. Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Annual Report of 1984-85, pp. 56-67.

(iii) Provision of infrastructural facilities in selected tribal villages.

The Commission recommended a sum of Rs. 114.88 crores for the purpose for the period 1984-89 for 17 States including 4 revenue surplus States of Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. Government of India accepted the recommendations of the Commission for implementation for a period of four years commencing from 1st April 1985. The provision for the purpose will come to Rs. 88.70 crores for 1985-89 in respect of 13 States of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Orissa, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal (excluding revenue surplus States of Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu).⁶¹

⁶¹ Ministry of Home Affairs, *Annual Report, 1984-85*, pp. 58-59.

VI. EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Problem of education in Indian society is chiefly the problem of backward classes for it is they who are extremely backward in education.

The literacy rate among the Scheduled Castes, as recorded in the 1981 Census, is only 21.38 per cent as against the all-India average of 41.30 per cent (excluding Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes). In the following States the levels of literacy among the Scheduled Castes continues to be much lower than the all-India level of their literacy:—

State:	Literacy rate among S.C.
1. Bihar	10.49
2. Rajasthan	11.04
3. Uttar Pradesh	11.96
4. Madhya Pradesh	

Some of the communities have hardly any literate person among them. The condition of education among them is very unsatisfactory. The percentage of literacy among S.C. women in 1981 was only 10.93 as against 39.43 among other women (excluding the Sch. Castes & S. T. Women).

There are about 48 districts in the country where the literacy amongst Scheduled Castes women is even less than 2 per cent (1981 Census). In the following States levels of literacy among the Scheduled Castes women continues to be much lower than the all-India levels of their literacy:—

State	Literacy rate among S.C. women
1. Bihar	2.51
2. Rajasthan	2.69
3. Uttar Pradesh	3.89
4. Madhya Pradesh	6.87
5. Haryana	7.06

Education is widely regarded as the prime instrumentality for improving the condition of the backward: "one of the most important social objects of education is to equalize opportunity, enabling the underprivileged castes and individuals to use their education as a lever for the improvement of their condition".

Thus, the Scheduled Castes are still far below the general population in educational accomplishments. While free primary education was gradually extended to larger portions of the whole population, in some States the education through the Second level was made free to the SC students. But it must be conceded that mere exemption from fees was found insufficient. Economic distress, apathy and reliance on school-age children to earn or look after younger children disinclined many parents from enrolling their children in school, and encouraging them to stay in schools. Moreover, there is a strong co-relation between social status and proclivity to stay in school. Caste factor and its aspect in the social structure has the strongest effect, alongwith a few others, or the wastage (dropping out) and also on stagnation (repeating a grade)."

The educational development amongst the Scheduled Castes is lagging behind in the backward states who are not able to provide for the necessary cost which a poor can ill afford to bear if he has to send his children to a primary or a middle school.

Solution to educational problem in India lies not only in introducing the system but also spreading it as widely as possible. In Article 45, provision for free and compulsory education for children has been made. The said Article states that "The State shall endeavour to provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years."

Priority is given in plans for spreading education among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. With a view to fulfilling the objective of spreading the education among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Central and State Plans have given high priority to the question. The expenditure incurred on various educational Schemes under the State and Central Sectors during the Fifth Plan

period and 1979-80 as well as the outlay made for the Sixth Five Year Plan, are given in the Table below:⁶²

(Rs. in crores)

Category	Fifth Plan 1974-79	1979-80	Sixth Plan outlay
Scheduled Castes :			
(i) State	56.14	11.93	349.00
(ii) Centre	63.91	8.12	157.51
TOTAL	120.05	20.05	506.51
Scheduled Tribes :			
(i) State	37.60	7.28	Included in outlay for Scheduled Castes.
(ii) Centre	13.90	7.51	
TOTAL	51.50	14.79	

It would be seen that the expenditure incurred/outlays made by the Central and State Governments have been gradually increasing, indicating that the scope of various educational schemes being implemented by the Government, is being gradually widened and more and more Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe students are deriving benefits therefrom. The details about some of the important educational schemes are given below:

Educational Schemes

(i) Universalisation of Elementary Education

The most important problem in the field of education is universalisation of elementary education. This is all the more pronounced in the case of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The hard core of the non-enrolled children belong to the socially disadvantaged and economically deprived sections including Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. A sizeable proportion of such groups has no tradition of learning in their families. Children belonging to such groups remain at a considerable disadvantage, even when they are persuaded to join schools. They are required to earn and support the family and do various household jobs while their parents are away at work. Girls of such groups are also required to look after their younger siblings. What is more, social inhibitions out of traditional prejudices in some States and parts of the country do not allow even girls of more than 9 years of age to join schools. Even if they

⁶² Government of India : 27th report of the Commission of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, New Delhi, p. 162.

do, they drop out soon thereafter. Girls constitute 71 per cent of the non-enrolled children. The proportion of non-enrolled children is more in the case of SCs and STs. Taking the country as a whole, the drop out rate in 1978-79, in the case of Scheduled Castes at the primary stage had been 62.1 per cent and for Scheduled Tribes 76.8 per cent. With this high rate of drop-out, the problem of imparting education to these communities becomes all the more difficult⁶⁰

In order to fulfil the objective of one of the Directive Principles for providing free and compulsory education to all Children upto the age of 14, the Sixth Five Year Plan had set the target to enrol all children in the age-group of 6-14 years, by 1990 as a time-bound programme. Accordingly, elementary education was accorded a very high priority in the Sixth Plan with a total plan outlay of Rs. 905 crores.

Some of the measures taken up for achieving the goal of universalisation of elementary education by 1990 are as follows:

- (i) Opening of primary and middle schools within easy walking distance covering the needs of habitations and on priority basis to habitations having Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population;
- (ii) Conversion of single teacher schools into two teacher schools; and
- (iii) Improvement of physical facilities of the primary and middle schools which include school buildings, science laboratories, drinking water facilities, toilets etc.

Special incentives like free text-books and stationery, free uniforms particularly for girls, provision of mid-day meals, stipends and scholarships at all levels of education, hostel accommodation etc. are being provided to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students.⁶¹

The major development in elementary education has been its inclusion in the new 20-point programme of the Government as point No. 16. The target year for realising the constitutional goal under the new 20-Point Programme is also 1989-90. Legislation for compul-

⁶⁰ P.K. Thangar, From his talk 'Educational Development of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes delivered under the auspices of BPST, M-y 9, 1984.

sory education as per constitutional directive exists in 16 States and three Union Territories, namely Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh and Delhi. In Himachal Pradesh, the Act covers the entire elementary stages (classes I—VIII), while in the remaining States/Union Territories it covers only the primary stage (Classes I—V).

Besides this, nineteen States and seven Union Territories have quantified the sizes of non-enrolled Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes children and fixed year-wise targets for enrolment. Effort, generally, is to achieve the same percentage of enrolment as for "all children". Although enrolment of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe children in elementary classes is gradually increasing, yet it has been observed that most of the efforts made and money spent to achieve this, go waste because a large number of children belonging to these communities drop out by the time they are due to complete the primary stage.

Seeing the high drop-out rates, Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes recommended in his report of 1978-79 that all the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations should take urgent steps to provide sufficient incentives to the Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe children to enable them to continue in school and to ensure that wastage of education was reduced to the minimum.

Early Childhood Education (pre-school) (Early Childhood Education) in rural and backward areas, specially for first-generation learning families, was suggested under the Sixth Plan as a distinct strategy for reducing drop-out rate and improving retention. ECE centres are accordingly being set up as adjuncts of primary and middle schools. ECE is specially designed for the children of the weaker sections for improving their communications (language) and cognitive (social, emotional, intellectual and personality development) skills as a sure preparation for entry into primary schooling. Such centres, as adjuncts of schools, will also enable girls particularly, to join and attend schools leaving their siblings in the care of the centres. A scheme for giving central assistance to voluntary organisations for running such ECE centres in rural and backward areas was framed with a total Sixth Plan outlay of rupees 1 crore.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Government of India, Department of Education and Culture, Annual Report, 1982-83, New Delhi, p. 5.

Non-formal Education

To achieve the goal of universalisation of elementary education, Non-formal Education for elementary age-group (6—14) is being developed as an alternate supportive system to formal schooling in a big way. Under this Scheme, children who cannot join and attend formal schools because of socio-economic reasons are offered elementary education at places and timing suited to their needs and conveniences. The problem of non-enrolled and drop-out is most acute in 9 educationally backward States, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. These 9 educationally backward States have among them 80 per cent of the total non-enrolled children in the country of which Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes form a major portion. Special central assistance is being extended to these States for development of Non-formal Education in a massive way. It is expected that 25 per cent and 20 per cent of enrolment would be from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes respectively.

Higher Education

Various steps taken to provide educational facilities to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes students at higher level are mentioned below:

(A) Steps taken by the University Grants Commission

(a) Reservation for admission in Universities and Colleges

The existing guidelines of the Ministry of Education/University Grants Commission providing for reservation of seats in admission for S.C./S.T. have been brought to the notice of the universities by the U.G.C. in January 1973 and from time to time thereafter. According to these guidelines 22.5 per cent of seats (15 per cent for Scheduled Castes and 7½ per cent for Scheduled Tribes) are required to be reserved for admission in all courses in the universities and colleges.

Where there is minimum percentage of marks of any course, concession of 5 per cent marks is to be given. Further relaxation in marks may be considered so that all the reserved seats are filled by the candidates belonging to these communities.

(b) Reservation of seats in universities/colleges' hostels

22.5 per cent of seats are required to be reserved for S.C./S.T.

(c) Junior Research Fellowships

Out of 2870 Junior Research Fellowships allocated to various universities/institutions, 10 per cent are required to be reserved for the S.C./S.T. candidates.

In addition, 50 Junior Research Fellowships which are exclusively reserved for S.C./S.T. candidates and are directly awarded by the U.G.C. every year.

(d) Research Associateship

Out of 150 positions of Research Associateships under the General Scheme, 10 per cent are reserved for S.C./S.T. candidates.

Apart from 20 Research Associateships instituted exclusively for annual award to S.C./S.T. students. 20 posts of Post-Doctoral fellowships exclusively meant for S.C./S.T. candidates have been renamed as Research Associateship and are awarded under four categories type 'A', type 'B', type 'C' and type 'D' (the total number of Research Associateships exclusively awarded to S.C./S.T. is thus 40).

(e) Post-graduate scholarships in Science, Humanities

25 scholarships are awarded by the Commission every year to S.C./S.T. and backward classes of border Hill areas students in Science Humanities, including Social Sciences.

(f) Research Fellowships in Engineering and Technology

Out of 60 Research Fellowships in Engineering and Technology awarded annually on All India basis 10 per cent are reserved for S.C./S.T.

(g) Award of Teacher Fellowships to S.C./S.T. candidates

The Commission has instituted 30 Teacher Fellowships for M. Phil and 20 Teacher Fellowships for Ph.D annually for S.C./S.T. candidates.

(h) Creation of Special Cells in universities

The University Grants Commission has decided to provide to the universities financial assistance for the creation of Special Cells in universities for S.C./S.T.

(i) Remedial Courses

The U.G.C. have circulated guidelines to the universities and colleges for organising special supplementary remedial courses to

make up for the deficiency of the early school education of the students from the weaker section of the society like S.C./S.T.

(B) Steps taken in respect of Medical Education

(a) Reservation of seats in Medical Colleges/for under-graduate courses under control of, or aided by, Central Government

The percentages of seats reserved for Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe candidates in under-graduate courses in the medical colleges under the control of, or aided by, the Central Government are given below:

Table "

Medical Colleges	Percentage of seats reserved for	
	Scheduled Castes	Scheduled Tribes
1. Jawahar Lal Institute of Post-Graduate Medical Education and Research, Pondicherry.	15	5
2. All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi	15	5
3. Lady Harding Medical College, New Delhi	15	5
4. University College of Medical Sciences, New Delhi	15	5
5. Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences, Sevagram, Wardha.	20	20
6. College of Medical Sciences, Banaras Hindu University.	20	20
7. Jawahar Lal Nehru Medical College, Aligarh Muslim University.	Nil	Nil

It would be seen from the Table that Aligarh Muslim University, which is a Central University, has not so far made reservation for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students in their medical college. In this connection, it was repeatedly recommended in Commissioner's Reports for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes that the Government and University Grants Commission should persuade the University to reserve the seats in medical colleges.

(b) Relaxation in minimum standards allowed for admission to under-graduate courses in medical courses

The Medical Council of India has decided that in respect of candidates belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes, the minimum

" Government of India, 27th Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Part-I, 1977-81, p. 175.

marks required for admission shall be 40 per cent in lieu of 50 per cent for general candidates. Where the seats for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes cannot be filled for want of the requisite number of candidates fulfilling the minimum requirements prescribed from that State, then such vacant seats may be filled up on all-India basis with Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes getting not less than the minimum pass percentage or reverted to the general category. Information regarding the relaxation in the minimum standards for the admission of Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe candidates to under-graduate courses, allowed by various State Governments/Union Territories Administrations, is given below:

Table 4*

Name of State/Union Territory	Percentage of relaxation in minimum marks for admission allowed to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes
1. Andhra Pradesh	5
2. Bihar	10 (1977 to 1979-Use 15%)
3. Himachal Pradesh	5
4. Karnataka	5
5. Kerala	10
6. Madhya Pradesh	15 to 30
7. Maharashtra	5
8. Rajasthan	15
9. Punjab	5
10. Uttar Pradesh	15
11. West Bengal	5
12. Delhi	5
13. Goa, Daman & Diu	5
14. Pondicherry	10

(c) Special Coaching Facilities

State Governments and Universities are strongly advised to arrange special coaching classes for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates before qualifying competitive examination to enable

*. *Ibid.*, p. 175.

them to come up to the appropriate standards for admission to the medical course. Once they are admitted with relaxed standards to the under-graduate courses, it is obligatory on the part of the medical college to arrange for further special coaching so that they will be able to come up to the required standard. This provision has been made by the Medical Council of India.⁶⁸

(C) Steps taken in respect of Technical Education

Reservation and Relaxation Scheme for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Engineering Colleges

In pursuance of the recommendations of the All India Council for Technical Education, the Union Ministry of Education issued guidelines to all the State Governments and universities in April 1984 to reserve 20 per cent of seats in all technical institutions with a distinct reservation of 15 per cent for Scheduled Castes and 5 per cent for Scheduled Tribes for under-graduate Courses. This reservation is inter-changeable i.e. if a sufficient number of candidates are not available to fill the seats reserved for Scheduled Tribes they could be filled up by suitable candidates from Scheduled Castes and vice versa. Admissions are restricted to candidates who obtain a minimum percentage of marks and not merely the passing of certain examinations. A 5 per cent reduction is allowed to these students.

Indian Institute of Technology

At each of the 6 Indian Institutes of Technology in the country, located at Bombay, Madras, Kanpur, Kharagpur, Delhi and Varanasi, 15 per cent of the seats are reserved for Scheduled Caste candidates and 5 per cent for Scheduled Tribe candidates in the various under-graduate courses. Government has decided that the cut off point for admission for Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe students is at 2/3rd of the aggregate rather than 2/3rd of the individual subject. The upper age-limit for Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe candidates is relaxable by 5 years. It was decided by Government in 1980 to extend all the concessions available to Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe candidates to the Indian Institute of Technology to the Neo-Buddhists, who formerly belonged to the Scheduled Castes. Information about total intake of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

⁶⁸ L. K. Sabharwal Secretariat : Forty-Second Report of Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, 1983-84, New Delhi, p. 1.

students in Indian Institutes of Technology in 1977—1982 is given in the following table:

Table 10

IIT	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
Kanpur	24	22	25	27	10	6
Bombay	17	20	11	23	10	8
Madras	40	30	5	26	7	7
Delhi	28	20	12	21	5	12
Kharagpur	NA	68	52	40	22	18

For increasing their number in future, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe students are exempted from payment of (a) Registration fee; (b) Tuition fee; and (c) Hostel seat rent. The rates of scholarships payable to these students, have been revised with effect from 1st July, 1981 to Rs. 185/- for boys and Rs. 195/- for girls.⁷⁰

Provision of facilities to SC/ST under National Adult Education Programme

Adult Education programme has been accorded a very high priority following its inclusion in the 20-Point Programme and the Minimum Needs Programme. Special emphasis is being placed on provision of facilities for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. The measures taken under National Adult Education Programme are as follows:

1. Instructions have been given to State Governments to lay special emphasis on provision of Adult education facilities in harijan bastis/tribal areas under all the schemes of the National Adult Education Programme. The State Governments have been advised that priority should be given for opening of Adult Education Centres in these areas.
2. The course content under Adult Education Programme is being revised to include instructions in citizenship education so as to enable them to deal with the problems connected with land, credit, currency, weights and measures, hygiene, local geography, local administration, lower Government functionaries, liquid vendors etc.

⁷⁰ L.S. USQ No 3179, 11-8-1983

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

3. The Adult Education Programmes are being made more functional so as to improve the functional competence of the SC/ST and induce them to participate in these programmes not only to learn the three Rs, but also as a help for economic development.
4. For the success of these programmes, the community support is being sought and use of voluntary organisations for the field is being made.

In the year 1982-83 out of total enrolment of 44 lakhs about 12 lakhs adults were from Scheduled castes and about 8 lakhs adults were from Scheduled Tribes which amounted to 26.77% and 18.13%, respectively.

Other Educational facilities

(a) Special Cell for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes:

The cell was established in 1977 in pursuance of a recommendation made in the 42nd report of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The cell is responsible for review of the policy regarding reservation in admission and appointment in the colleges and universities.

(b) Post-matric scholarship for SCs and ST students: The Centrally sponsored scheme of Post-matric Scholarships to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes students is one of the most important schemes under the Central Sector, to encourage higher education among the students belonging to these communities. The number of scholarships under the Post-matric Scholarship scheme was 5.65 lakhs in 1980-81 and 6.55 lakhs in 1981-82 and was estimated to have increased to about 7.5 lakhs in 1982-83 and 8.10 lakhs in 1983-84.⁷¹

(c) Pre-matric scholarships to children of those engaged in unclean occupations: Under this scheme pre-matric scholarships of Rs. 145/- per month are awarded to the children of those engaged in unclean occupations viz., scavenging etc. 6209 children were benefited from the scheme during 1983-84.⁷²

(d) Book banks for SCs and ST students: Under this scheme, book banks are established in the medical/engineering colleges in

⁷¹ Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs Annual Report 1982-83, p. 53, 1984-85, p. 59.

⁷² Annual Report Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Deptt. of Home Affairs 1984-85, p. 54.

the country to provide text-books prescribed for medical and engineering courses to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe students who cannot afford to purchase these costly books. During 1983-84, 17005 students were benefited by the scheme.⁷³

(e) *Coaching and Allied Schemes*: This scheme was initiated in the Third Plan period with the main object of improving the representation of Scheduled Caste/Tribe candidates in various government services, public sector undertakings, banks etc. There are separate pre-examination training centres for preparing these candidates for all-India services, State Civil Services and for Engineering Services. Under this scheme, 63 coaching centres have been set up in the country and over 775 candidates who got coaching from these centres had been appointed in the IAS, IPS and other Central Services,⁷⁴ 47 candidates were finally selected for appointment to these services on the basis of examination held in 1973.⁷⁵

(f) *The National Overseas Scholarships Scheme*: The National Overseas Scholarship Scheme is a non-plan scheme which was continued in 1983-84 for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, denotified nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes for study abroad in post-graduate and research level courses in engineering, technology, agriculture and other subjects. Since the inception of the scheme, 436 scholarships have been awarded, 19 scholarships were awarded in 1983-84.⁷⁶

⁷³. *Ibid.* p. 60

⁷⁴. Government of India: *Ministry of Home Affairs, Annual Report, 1985-86*, p. 34

⁷⁵. Government of India: *Ministry of Home Affairs, Annual Report, 1984-85*, p. 60

⁷⁶. Government of India: *Ministry of Home Affairs, Annual Report, 1984-85*, p. 30.

VII. STRATEGY FOR THE SEVENTH PLAN—SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROGRAMMES FOR SC/ST

Scheduled Castes

Beneficiary-oriented programmes and schemes for the socio-economic uplift of the scheduled castes will continue during the Seventh Plan. The strategy has to cater to two broad occupational categories, namely, (a) those engaged in land-based activities and (b) those engaged in non-land based activities. In the first category, the main problem is lack, or inadequacy, of assets. Allotment to the landless of ceiling surplus land, Government wasteland and other lands found surplus, will be undertaken. Implementation of ceiling laws will be speeded up. Land-holding families will be helped in the development of their land, through provision of agricultural credit, inputs, irrigation, etc. under the Small and Marginal Farmers Schemes. Where irrigation becomes available, enforcement of wetland ceiling can make available surplus land which can then be distributed among the scheduled castes. The programme of provision of irrigation to land owned by the scheduled castes in compact blocks will be continued. For agricultural labourers, enforcement of the statutory minimum wages is important; the enforcement machinery will be mobilised for the purpose, particularly in major wage-employment areas. Programmes of animal husbandry, handicraft, village and cottage industries and inculcation of skills for induction into the tertiary sector will also be taken up for them.

Efforts will be made to properly organise, and modernise all stages of activities of weavers, leather workers and other artisans. The necessary infrastructure and other facilities will be created for those engaged in fisheries. For all these occupational categories, comprehensive schemes for common facilities, skill improvement, supply of raw materials and marketing of products will be formulated and implemented. Formation of cooperatives of brick-kiln workers would prove useful for organising their work on a proper footing. Steps will be taken to make the unorganised labour in the urban sector comprised of rickshaw pullers, cart pullers, etc., owners of their vehicles. Details regarding the number of scheduled castes families in each occupational group needing assistance, the quantum of assistance required by each family and the manner

in which it should flow to them will be worked out by each State and UT Administration. All these schemes will form an important component of anti-poverty programmes aimed at raising the families above the poverty line.

The working of Scheduled Caste Development Corporation will be thoroughly evaluated and the shortcomings rectified.

Identification, release and rehabilitation of bonded labour will continue to be given priority attention. In reality, the per family requirement of funds for rehabilitation does not amount to much, and hence, the total outlay might not be very large; in any case this can be provided for fully. In fact, if funds available from all relevant sources for the rehabilitation of bonded labour are pooled, they will be adequate. A concerted effort and coordination between the different agencies are essential. Basic facilities like drinking water, housing, health facilities, electrification, links road, and fair price shops will be provided for in the bastis of Scheduled Castes by the end of the Seventh Plan. In the matter of sources of drinking water supply and other village-level amenities, social accessibility will be borne in mind, new sources will be located in SC bastis, which would be meant for all communities.

Total elimination of scavenging is one of the objectives of the Seventh Plan. For this purpose, low-cost sanitation and whole-town approach for conversion of dry latrines into water-borne latrines will be adopted. Sanitation workers of municipal bodies liberated from scavenging will be redeployed in other civic activities. The small number of those employed privately have to be trained for, and provided with, alternative avocations. Financial provision for elimination for scavenging, training of liberated scavengers and their employment will have a priority claim on the Special Central Assistance to the States Component Plans. A major task in the Seventh Plan will be the removal of deficiencies in the implementation of programmes. In the the Seventh Plan period, linkages between different sectors and programmes, back-up services, organisational structures and personnel coordination will receive close and continuing attention.

The programme of scheduled castes development is not likely to succeed without public participation. Decentralisation will be carried through to the last rung. The role of non-government voluntary organisations in activating the systems, training cadres of grass-root workers, mobilising the resources of the community and

providing professional and managerial expertise will be valuable. Even more important will be their attempt at raising the awareness of the people, through non-formal and informal educational methods. The media can render extremely useful service here.

As part of the strategy of the Special Component Plan, earmarking of outlays in the State Plan sectors has helped to galvanize larger flow of funds for scheduled castes' development. In the Seventh Plan, the States will set apart as large a proportion of the total State Plan outlay as is feasible for the SCP. Schemes and programmes will be formulated to the extent of this amount in accordance with the object and priorities of SC development and corresponding outlays will be distributed sector-wise. In the Sixth Plan, special Central assistance was introduced as an additionality to States' SCP with a view to creating a multiplier effect and to help fill gaps which financial flows from the Central and State plans were not able to fill. To make the maximum possible impact, the Special Central assistance was to be pooled with the States' own resources. The only condition imposed was that it should be used for programmes of economic development, including relevant training, back-up services, institutional build-up and arrangements for implementation, supervision, monitoring and evaluation. The versatility of the Special Central Assistance is yet to be fully exploited and overall planning for its use has to be done. The Special Central Assistance for Socio-economic programmes for SCs in the Seventh Plan will be Rs. 930 crores.

Scheduled Tribes

The Tribal sub-Plan (TSP) strategy adopted comprises; (a) identification in a State of development blocks where tribal population is in a majority and their constitution into integrated tribal development projects (ITDPs) with a view to adopting therein an integrated and project-based approach for development; (b) earmarking of funds for the TSP and ensuring flow of funds from the Central and State Plan sectoral outlays and from financial institutions; and (c) creation of appropriate administrative structures in tribal areas and adoption of appropriate personnel policies. The TSP has, overall, a two-fold thrust: firstly, socio-economic development of tribal areas and secondly, that of the tribal families. These basic premises will continue to be operative in the Seventh Plan.

One of the major tasks in the Seventh Plan will be adoption of stringent anti-exploitative measures alongside socio-economic

development programmes. Particular care needs to be taken of the small primitive tribal groups. Some of which face extinction. One of the causes which has given rise to discontent among tribals is the loss of their lands, and remedial measures against this need to be given priority. Also, tribal families displaced as a result of location of projects like power, irrigation, industries, mining etc., in tribal areas will need to be properly rehabilitated.

The planning process in tribal areas has to be a judicious mix of beneficiary-oriented programmes, human resource development and infrastructure development the bias being towards the first two. 30 lakh tribal families in TSP will be assisted in the Seventh Plan to build up their economic base.

In the protective sphere, legislative measures already in force will be implemented stringently, as in the fields of agricultural tenancy, money-lending, debt-relief, bonded labour, forestry, excise and trade as well as in respect of socio-cultural exploitation, etc. Also, codification of customary laws still prevalent among the tribals will be attempted.

Large Agricultural Multi-Purpose Societies (LAMPS) in tribal area will be strengthened through broadening of their popular base in the board of directors and/or other executive bodies to make them effective instruments for the elimination of exploitation in the sale and marketing of tribal produce consumer necessities and credit. To coordinate the activities of State-level Tribal Development Corporations, the national-level Tribal Marketing Organisation already set up, needs to get into full gear. Plan formulation and project reports will be made in close consultation with beneficiary-participants. Scientific project reports will be prepared for ITDPs, tribal concentration pockets and primitive tribal groups with reference to the natural resource endowment, the traditional occupations and skills of the people and a properly drawn-up development perspective.

About 2 lakh tribal families of about 5,000 forest villages do not possess even now any rights to the land they cultivate. They have no access to development programmes. Without these forest villages being declared as revenue villages, the inhabitants cannot be the recipients of benefits flowing from development programmes. Appropriate remedial measures are required to be taken up by the State Governments.

A policy for the rehabilitation of project displaced persons has to be formulated at the national level prescribing the general policy for the rehabilitation of persons displaced by large-scale land acquisition for projects and the special measures to be taken in the interest

of scheduled tribes in such cases. Among other things, the policy will have to enjoin that rehabilitation of displaced persons, particularly the tribals, will form an integral part of the investment costs of projects relating to industries, irrigation, power, mining and forestry and wild life, of more than a certain magnitude, whether taken up in the Government, corporate, joint or private sectors.

For removing the backwardness of tribal women, adequate stress on economic development schemes aimed at them, or in which they can participate, needs to be given. While executing the programmes it has to be ensured that tribal women are assisted under income-generating programmes of IRDP and SCA.

The role of institutional finance in the beneficiary oriented programmes is vital. Financial institutions need to make an assessment of the role played by them so far and take the necessary steps for more active involvement. The plans of institutional finance have to be compatible with the partially-monetised economy of the tribals. The Fifth Schedule of the Constitution provides a legal and administrative framework for the Scheduled Areas. Even this schedule is not fully operational as yet and this lapse has to be rectified. Further, the design support of the Fifth Schedule will have to be meaningfully combined with the self-management thrust of the Sixth Schedule to lend emphasis to endogenous growth.

In order that the dynamics of development does not directly or indirectly conflict with the customary modes and usages prevalent in tribal areas it is necessary to codify the laws, conventions and usages, particularly in the developmental and functional areas. For want of adequate knowledge on the part of the planning personnel it is possible that by taking a wrong direction, the development process makes no headway at all. To avoid this, phased programme of codification of customary laws relating to property (particularly land), inheritance, family and kinship, traditional tribal institutions, traditional village officers, etc., will be taken up.

Earmarking of portions of funds allocated to various sectors of State and Central Plans has been a part of the tribal sub-Plan strategy. In the Seventh Plan period, of the total Plan outlay of a State/Ministry, a reasonable proportion needs to be reserved for the TSP. The Special Central Assistance for TSP has been fixed at Rs. 756 crores for the Seventh Plan.

Other Socio-economic Programmes for the Backward Classes

The schemes of welfare for the Backward Classes in the Seventh Plan will continue to lay emphasis on strengthening the educational

base of the Scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward classes, both in the State Plans and through Centrally Sponsored Schemes.

In order to increase the school enrolment of SC ST children, provision will be made for 100 per cent coverage along with supply of free text-books and stationery, provision of free uniforms, and provision of attendance scholarships, particularly for girls (including, possibly, some compensation to their parents for their opportunity cost). Other incentives like mid-day meals, hostel facilities special coaching in schools/colleges in classes IX, X, XI and XII for such children as are weak in some subjects, particularly English Science and Mathematics, will also be provided in the Seventh Plan. Introduction of merit scholarships at the post-matric stage at the rate of one-and-a-half times the rate of normal scholarships and removal of the present restriction limiting scholarships to two children of the same parents are also envisaged. Book-banks for all professional courses, liberalisation of pre-matric scholarship schemes for children of those engaged in unclean occupations (increasing the rate of scholarships) and inclusion of day-scholars in the scheme for pre-matric scholarships are other educational schemes. Suitable modifications of the schemes for educational development, keeping in view the needs of scheduled castes/scheduled tribes and the introduction of preparatory training, remedial teaching and special coaching for professional courses at the district level will be undertaken.

Schemes for economic aid to SCs/STs will also be formulated in areas where the norms of general sector schemes do not adequately cover these people. The existing framework of the Scheduled Castes Financial Development Corporations will be utilised to channelise margin money funds to scheduled tribes families also along with scheduled caste beneficiaries.

For all these programmes, an allocation of Rs. 1239.21 crores has been provided in the State Plans and Rs. 281.22 crores in the Central Sector.⁷⁷

VIII. MACHINERY FOR LOOKING AFTER THE WORKING OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL SAFEGUARDS FOR SC/ST

Realising the importance of the actual operation of the constitutional safeguards provided for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, the framers of the Constitution also provided for administrative machinery to look after the working of the safeguards. Article 338 of the Constitution provides:

- (1) There shall be a Special Officer for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to be appointed by the President.
- (2) It shall be the duty of the Special Officer to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards provided for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes under this Constitution and report to the President upon the working of those safeguards at such intervals as the President may direct, and the President shall cause all such reports to be laid before each House of Parliament.
- (3) In this article, references to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes shall be construed as including reference to such other backward classes as the President may, on receipt of the report of Commission appointed under clause (1) of article 340, by order specify and also to the Anglo-Indian community.

In accordance with this provision the first Special Officer designated as Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was appointed on 18 November, 1950.⁷⁶ The normal tenure of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was fixed at three years.

Pursuant to a recommendation of the Parliamentary Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, the tenure of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was raised to five years.⁷⁷ The Constitution is silent about the status of the Commissioner. He has been accorded the status of a Secretary of a Ministry of the Government of India. As regards the qualifications of the Commissioner, the Committee on the Welfare of Sche-

⁷⁶ 25th Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, 1977-78, p. 10.

⁷⁷ Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (4th Lok Sabha) 6th Report, 1970-71, p. 13.

duled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Fourth Lok Sabha) recommended that the incumbent of the post should be a man well known for his sympathies and active interest in the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The recommendation of the Committee was accepted.

Reports

The Commissioner is required to report to the President upon the working of the safeguards provided for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Constitution, at such intervals as the President may direct. Originally it was decided that the Commissioner would submit his report annually pertaining to each successive calendar year. He did so up to the year 1955. Subsequently, the reports cover financial year.⁶⁰ However, it is not necessary that the Commissioner should present only one consolidated report at the end of the year. The Commissioner is free to report to the President as often as is necessary on important matters affecting the interests of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.⁶¹

The Commissioner unhesitatingly brings to the notice of the President by means of his report the action or inaction of the authorities both Central and State, in implementing his suggestions.⁶² By pinpointing the faults of administration, these reports make Parliament's scrutiny of welfare programmes for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes easier and also provide opportunity to Parliamentarians to understand and review the problems of backward communities.⁶³

There is no constitutional obligation to lay the Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes before the State Legislatures. As the Commissioner's Report deals with matters falling not only within the purview of the Central Government, but also of the State Governments, the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Fourth Lok Sabha) in its first report considered it essential that the Report of the Commissioner should also be laid before State Legislatures so that they could initiate discussions on the report and also implement recommendations made therein. The Committee felt that, if necessary the matter should be regulated by means of a constitutional amendment. But even as it is, some of the State Governments are arranging discussions

⁶⁰ Kanchh Kumar Wadhwa, *Minority Safeguards in India* (1975), p. 151.

⁶¹ Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (4th Lok Sabha) 6th Report, July, 1970, pp. 21-22.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Economic and Political Weekly*, op. cit. p. 110.

on the Reports of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in State Legislatures.⁸⁴

The recommendations made by the Commissioner in his Reports are forwarded to the Central ministries and departments and States concerned for appropriate action. It is for the concerned State Governments or the Central Ministry to watch the progress of action taken thereon. There is no separate agency either in the Central Government or in the State Governments for the purpose. The action taken statements are prepared by the Ministry of Home Affairs on the basis of replies received from the concerned Central ministries and State Governments. Parliament is kept informed about the action taken on the recommendations made in the reports.⁸⁵

Functions and Role of Commissioner

Though the Constitution is very brief about the functions of his office, successive Commissioners have evolved a wider area of activity for themselves. The Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Fourth Lok Sabha) noted that from 1954 onwards the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes increasingly associated himself with the examination of schemes for grants-in-aid received by various State Governments and non-official agencies for the development of the scheduled and tribal areas. The Commissioner's organisation also helped the State Governments in the formulation of their schemes and in their proper implementation.⁸⁶

The question whether the Commissioner should be associated with the formulation of schemes was considered by the Estimates Committee (Second Lok Sabha) who, in its 48th Report on "The Ministry of Home Affairs: Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other Backward Classes," observed as under:

"In addition to the statutory functions, the Commissioner has been assigned the following duties:

- (i) Evaluation of the progress of the welfare schemes undertaken by the State Governments and non-official agencies with grant-in-aid from the Government of India.

⁸⁴. Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Fourth Lok Sabha), 6th Report, July 1970, pp. 33-34.

⁸⁵. *Indian Express*, New Delhi, 7 May, 1961.

⁸⁶. Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (4th L.S.) 1st Report, November 1969, pp. 10-11.

- (ii) Serving as a nominee of the Central Government on the Managing Committees of the non-official organisations receiving grants direct from the Centre.
- (iii) Examination of the accounts of the non-official organisations receiving grants direct from the Centre.
- (iv) Giving advice on any new schemes received from the State Governments.

The duties entrusted to the Commissioner under item (i) above are no doubt in consonance with the functions assigned to him under article 338(2). Regarding items (ii) to (iv) above, however, the Committee are of the view that these are not consistent with the role of the Commissioner as envisaged by the Constitution. . . . The Committee are of the view that it is not appropriate for him to serve as a nominee of the Central Government on the Managing Committees of the non-official organisations or to examine their accounts or to give advice on the new schemes received from the State Governments and thus become more or less a party to them. If he is associated at any stage with the formulation or examination of the schemes, which would make him partly responsible for the results flowing therefrom, then to that extent he ceases to be an independent judge as envisaged under the Constitution."

The Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes had also noted that there was an awareness of the fact that the Commissioner, who had to play an independent role as a critic of Government policies and actions, should not get involved in the implementation of the schemes undertaken to give effect to the safeguards provided under the Constitution for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The Committee made recommendation accordingly.⁸⁷

Later, in 1967 in consultation with the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes it was decided to relieve him of the functions of formulation and examination of such schemes.⁸⁸

With the increasing pace of development and launching of several schemes exclusively for the weaker sections during recent years as well as the extension of the reservation in many more areas of

⁸⁷. *Ibid.* p.11.

⁸⁸. Committee on Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (4th Lok Sabha), Sixth Report, p. 10.

public employment and educational institutions, the magnitude of the problems needing the attention and assessment of the Commissioner has increased manifold.⁸⁹

Role in Future

Considering the magnitude of the problem, a Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was constituted *vide* Ministry of Home Affairs Resolution dated 21 July 1978 in addition to the functioning and authority of the Special Officer i.e. Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The Commission consist of a Chairman and four Members, including the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, appointed under Article 338 of the Constitution. Thus, in addition to the constitutionally envisaged functions, the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes made an ex-officio member of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Commission. The functions of the Commission broadly correspond with the functions of the Special Officer. It has, however, been clarified that the functioning of the Commission would not be lessening the authority of the Special Officer.⁹⁰

The Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in his 27th Report (1979—81), while touching on the emerging situation, stated that the establishment of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Commission has not materially changed the situation with regard to the Office of the Commissioner. "There appear to be only two options open: (i) either to amend Article 338 of the Constitution and replace the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes by a multi-member Commission or (ii) to retain both the Offices of the Commissioner as well as that of the Commission, with distinctly drawn up functions and status. In the case of the latter option being accepted; it would be desirable to appropriately revise the functions assigned to the Commission so that these do not overlap with the functions assigned to the Commissioner under the Constitution. And there is a scope for such a revision in view of the magnitude of the problems relating to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes."⁹¹

⁸⁹. 27th Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, 1979—81 Part-I pp. 49-50.

⁹⁰. Second Report of the Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, 1976-78, p. 1.

⁹¹. Commissioner's 27th Report, op. cit., p. 51.

IX. ROLE OF PARLIAMENT

Parliament has always been anxious about the welfare of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. It has taken, from time to time, various steps to ameliorate their socio-economic conditions and has always been vigilant in the matters concerning the implementation of the constitutional safeguards for them. It has not hesitated in using even its constituent powers for ensuring their welfare.

Legislation

The following important Acts concerning Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes have been passed by Parliament:

Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955: For the effective enforcement of the declaration contained in Article 17 of the Constitution about abolition of Untouchability, the Constitution contemplates penal laws specifying the various acts which are to be prohibited and penalised. According to Article 35 of the Constitution, Parliament alone is given power to make laws for prescribing punishments for those acts. In 1955 Parliament, in exercise of the power conferred under Article 35, enacted the Untouchability (Offences) Act.⁶² This Act for the first time introduced a uniform law on the subject and has been regarded as a major achievement. Before this, there were scattered States' laws, some of which are: The Orissa Removal of Civil Disabilities Act, 1946, Bombay Harijan (Removal of Social Disabilities) Act, 1946, as amended in 1948. Uttar Pradesh (Removal of Social and Religious Disabilities) Act, 1948, West Bengal Hindu Social Disabilities (Removal) Act, 1948 and Bihar Harijan (Removal of Civil Disabilities) Act, 1948 as amended in 1951.

It was an important measure of far-reaching consequences for the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and backward classes in this country. The Act provided penalties for preventing a person on the ground of untouchability, from entering a place of public worship and offering prayers or taking water from a sacred tank well or spring. Penalties were also provided for enforcing any kind of social disability such as denying access to any shop, restaurant, public hospital or educational institution, hotel or any place of public entertainment; or denying the use of any road, river, well, tank, water tap, bathing ghat, cremation ground, sanitary convenience, dharma-shala, sarai or mausafirkhana or utensils kept in such institutions and

⁶² D.K. Singh: *V.N. Shastri's Constitution of India* Lucknow, Eastern Book Company, 1982. (7th edn), p. 66.

hotels and restaurants. The Act prescribed penalties for enforcing occupational, professional or trade disabilities, or disabilities in the matter of enjoyment of any benefit under a charitable trust, in the construction or occupation of any residential premises in any locality or in the observance of any social or religious usage or ceremony. The Act also laid down penalties for refusal to sell goods or render services to a person on the ground of untouchability for molesting, injuring or annoying a person, or organising a boycott of, or taking any part in the ex-communication of a person who had exercised the rights accruing to him as a result of the abolition of untouchability. Higher penalties were prescribed for subsequent offences. For purposes of awarding punishment, incitement or abetment of the offence was treated in the same manner as the commission of the offence. The offences under this Act were cognisable and the onus of proving innocence was on the accused.

Untouchability (Offences) Amendment and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1976: For enlarging the scope and making the penal provision more stringent, the Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955 was amended in 1976 and the original Act was renamed as the Protection of Civil Rights Act. The new Act aims at plugging the loopholes of the principal Act. It came into force with effect from 19th November, 1976.

Untouchability offences are cognisable and non-compoundable under this Act. There is a provision for minimum punishment of both imprisonment and fine. Offences with a minimum term of three months' imprisonment are triable summarily. A public servant who wilfully neglects the investigation of any offence, is deemed to have abetted an offence punishable under the Act. The States have been empowered to impose collective fines on the inhabitants of any area where such people are involving or abetting commission of untouchability offences. The Representation of the People Act, 1951 has also been amended to provide that the persons convicted of any offence under the Protection of Civil Rights Act would be disqualified from contesting election to the Parliament and the State Legislatures.⁹³

The Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 is administered by the State Governments also from time to time. Under a provision in the Act, the Central Government also lays, every year, before each House of Parliament an annual report on the working of the provisions of Section 15A of the Act.⁹⁴

⁹³ India 1977-78: Brought out by Publications Division, Ministry of Information, and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1978, p. 119-20.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.* 1983: *op. cit.* p. 138.

The Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976: The bonded labour system in the country has been abolished through the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976, to prevent the economic and physical exploitation of the weaker sections of society. Since a majority of the victims of the bonded labour system belong to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes, enactment of this Act by Parliament has given them a new lease of life.

Fifth Schedule to the Constitution (Amendment) Act: Of the other Acts concerning the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, a mention may be made of the Fifth Schedule to the Constitution (Amendment) Act, 1976. The Fifth Schedule to the Constitution envisages a special role and responsibility of the Governors and the Central Government in regard to the administration of Scheduled Areas. A review of the Sub-Plan area in States having Scheduled Areas showed that while bulk of the Sub-Plan area was covered under the Fifth Schedule some areas were left out. It was, therefore, considered necessary that the area covered under the Fifth Schedule be rationalised so that the Scheduled Area covered the entire Sub-Plan area in these States. The Schedule was, therefore, amended by Parliament, by the Fifth Schedule to the Constitution (Amendment) Act, 1976, empowering the President to (i) increase the area of any Scheduled Area in the State after consultation with Governor; and (ii) rescind, in relation to any State any order made under paragraph 6, and in consultation with the Governor of the State concerned, make fresh orders redefining the areas which are to be Scheduled Areas.⁶⁶

Discussions and Debates in Parliament: Members of Parliament have been utilizing, from time to time, various parliamentary tools such as Questions, Adjournment Motions, Motions for Calling Attention of the House, Discussions under Rule 193, etc. for not only eliciting information from Government on matters concerning the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes but also for focussing the Government's attention on various problems faced by these communities. On numerous occasions, the incidents of atrocities on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have been discussed in Parliament which has always expressed its great concern over such unfortunate happenings.

Various programmes and policies formulated and implemented by Government for Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Tribes, or proposals about such programmes, also come under close scrutiny in Parliament when different Ministries/Government Departments submit

⁶⁶. *Digest of Central Acts*, July-September, 1976, Vol. XIII, No. 2, p. 51-52.

their Demands for Grants each year for Parliament's approval. Information about governmental activities on such programmes is contained in the annual Reports of the Ministries/Departments which are laid before Parliament. The Reports of the Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes appointed in 1978 and of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are also laid before Parliament.

Reports of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

Reports of the Commissioner submitted to the President from time to time upon the working of the safeguards provided for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes under the Constitution have been discussed in both the Houses of Parliament. A motion is made by the Minister concerned in the Parliament in the following terms:

"That this House takes note of the...Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes for the year (or years).....laid on the Table of the House..."

After the motion is adopted, discussion follows. Members draw the attention of the House to the important recommendations contained in the Report as well as the *Omissions and commissions* on the part of the Government. At the end of the debate, the Minister makes a reply and the motion is put to vote.

Feelings have often been expressed in Parliament about the inordinate delay in the laying of the reports of the Commissioner on the Table of the House as also the lack of follow-up action by the Government on the recommendations contained in the reports. The Minister concerned has been frank enough to admit the delay in bringing forward Reports before the Parliament for discussion. Government has also shared the anxiety of the members that adequate and prompt action should be taken on the recommendations made by the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ B.K. Mukherjee: *Efficiency for the implementation of the constitutional safeguards for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes-I*. Journal of Parliamentary Information, July, 1971.

X. COMMITTEE ON THE WELFARE OF SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES

A substantial part of the parliamentary work is done in the Standing Parliamentary Committees. These Committees can also examine, within their respective terms of reference matters concerning Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and present reports of their findings to Parliament. For example, the Estimates Committee and the Public Accounts Committee have submitted some such reports to Parliament.⁹⁷ Parliament has, however, since 1968 set up a separate Standing Committee known as the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Constitution of the Committee

The Constitution of a Committee on the Welfare of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, can be traced to the initiatives from Parliament. In the course of the discussion on the 14th and 15th reports of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Lok Sabha in August, 1967, suggestions were made by several Members for the setting up of a standing Parliamentary committee with full investigation powers to look after the safeguards for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and all other backward classes. While replying to the debate, the Minister of Law and Social Welfare welcomed the suggestion and undertook to discuss the matter with the presiding officers of the two Houses. Intervening in the debate on the Commissioner's reports in the Rajya Sabha on the 12th August, 1967, the Prime Minister late Shrimati Indira Gandhi said that she "was happy" that her colleague had "accepted the suggestion in the other House to set up a parliamentary committee in the near future." Further progress in the matter, however, got stalled when divergent views came to be expressed at a meeting of Members of Parliament with the Minister of Law and Social Welfare to discuss the composition, terms of reference etc. of the Committee. There was likewise no unanimity of views at the Conference of State Ministers on the subject and a proposal for the setting up of a National Council of Adivasis was mooted. Members of Parliament were now exercised on this issue and they brought up a memorandum urging the constitution of a Parliamentary Committee. This mem-

⁹⁷ See 48th Report of the Estimates Committee (Second Lok Sabha) on Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other Backward Classes, 1958-59 and 150th Report of the Public Accounts Committee (Fifth Lok Sabha) on Education and Social Welfare and 157th Action Taken Report thereon.

mately led to the constitution of the Committee on December 18, 1968 following a motion adopted by Lok Sabha on August 30, 1968 and concurred in by Rajya Sabha on November 25, 1968.⁹⁸

The functions of the Committee are as under:

- (a) to consider the reports submitted by the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes under Article 338(2) of the Constitution and to report as to the measures that should be taken by the Union Government in respect of matters within the purview of the Union Government including the Administration of Union Territories;
- (b) to report on the action taken by the Union Government and the Administrations of the Union Territories on the measures proposed by the Committee;
- (c) to examine the measures taken by the Union Government to secure due representation of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Services and posts under its control (including appointments in the Public Sector Undertakings, Statutory and Semi-Government Bodies and in the Union Territories) having regard to the provisions of Article 335;
- (d) to report on the working of the welfare programmes for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Union Territories; and
- (e) to examine such other matters as may seem fit to the Committee or are specifically referred to it by the House or the Speaker.

Composition and Term of the Committee

The Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes consists of 30 members, 20 from Lok Sabha and 10 from Rajya Sabha, elected by the respective Houses of Parliament from amongst their members in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote.

A Minister shall not be elected a member of the Committee, and if a member, after his election to the Committee is appointed a Minister he shall cease to be a member of the Committee from the date of such appointment.

The term of office of the members of the Committee does not exceed one year.

⁹⁸ S.L. Shastri: *Glimpses of the working of Parliament*. New Delhi, Metropolitan 1977, pp. 211-214

The Chairman of the Committee is appointed by the Speaker from amongst the members of the Committee. If the Chairman is for any reason unable to act, the Speaker may appoint another Chairman in his place. If the Chairman is absent from any sitting, the Committee chooses another member to act as Chairman for that sitting.

A member may resign his seat from the Committee by writing under his hand addressed to the Speaker.

A casual vacancy in the Committee is filled as soon as possible after it occurs by electing a new member and any member so elected will hold office for the unexpired portion of the term for which the member in whose place he is elected would have normally held office.

Working of the Committee

The Committee selects, soon after its constitution, such subjects pertaining to the welfare of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as may seem fit to the Committee. The Committee also examine matters of special interest to the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes which may arise or come to light in the course of its working or which may specifically be referred to it by the House or by the Speaker.

For the purpose of selection of subjects a memorandum is placed before the Committee giving details of the subjects which have already been examined in the past by previous Committees, and the subjects which may be taken up by the Committee for examination during the year.

The Committee appoints from time to time one or more sub-Committee/Study Groups for carrying out detailed examination of various subjects selected by the Committee. The Committee also appoints a Study Group on Action taken Reports for examining statements showing action taken by Government on the various recommendations made by the Committee in its Reports. Appointments to the Sub-Committees/Study Groups are made by the Chairman after ascertaining the wishes of the members to serve on them. The Study Group on Action Taken Reports generally comprises the Conveners of all the Study Groups with the Chairman of the Committee as its Chairman. Conveners of the other Study Groups are nominated by the Chairman.

After the subjects to be examined by the Committee are selected, the Secretariat of the Committee writes to the Ministries/Departments concerned for the supply of preliminary material thereon. It also undertakes study of all relevant material such as Annual Reports

of the Ministry./Department/Undertaking, questions answered on the subject in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, Reports of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and Parliamentary debates having a bearing on the subject.

The members may also frame questions or give points on which information is required by them and forward the same to the Secretariat.

On the basis of the material received from the Ministries/Departments and also the suggestions from the Members of the Committee and the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, questionnaire for obtaining further information from the Ministries/Departments is prepared. The recommendations of the Commissioner made on the subject in his reports are also taken note of while preparing the questionnaire. The questionnaire is then sent to the Ministry/Department concerned for written replies. After replies to the questionnaire are received from the Ministries/Departments these are circulated to the Members of the Committee and the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

If it appears to the Committee that it is necessary for the purpose of examination of a subject that an on-the-spot study should be made, the Committee divides itself into various Study Groups and undertakes tours to have a close look on the problems of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and the measures which are necessary for bringing relief to them. When the Committee or its Study Group is on tour, only informal sittings are held at the places of visit. At such sittings, no formal evidence is recorded nor any decision is taken.

Later in the light of these informal discussions, and the memoranda and other information received, officials and, where considered necessary, non-official witnesses are invited to give evidence at formal sittings of the Committee held in Parliament House/Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

The procedure for examination of the witnesses is as follows:—

- (i) The programme for taking the evidence of the officials on the various subjects under examination by the Sub-Committee/Committee is drawn up and the witnesses are invited to appear before the Committee on the appointed dates to give evidence.
- (ii) The purpose of examining the witnesses is to obtain first-hand information on the working of an organisation which is being examined by the Committee.

- (iii) In the case of official witnesses, generally the Secretary of the Ministry is the principal spokesman. The Chairman or the Convener first welcomes the principal spokesman and then asks him to introduce his colleagues to the Committee.
- (iv) The Chairman or the Convener then asks questions one by one from the approved questionnaire. Whenever necessary, other questions outside the questionnaire are also asked by him.
- (v) After the Chairman or the Convener has put his supplementaries, he gives a chance to other members who desire to ask questions for clarification or elucidation of the point under discussion. When the particular question has been sufficiently answered, the Chairman or the Convener proceeds to the next question. Generally members are requested to put questions one by one starting from one end of the table.
- (vi) As soon as the oral evidence is concluded, the Chairman thanks the witnesses for their assistance to the Sub-Committee/Committee and the principal spokesman replies in suitable terms. Then the witnesses withdraw from the Committee Room.

A verbatim record of the proceedings of each sitting of the Committee/Sub-Committee, where evidence is taken, is kept by the Lok Sabha Secretariat.

Relevant portions of speeches are forwarded to the members and the officials tendering evidence before the Committee for correction and return within a week of their receipt. If the corrected copies are not received back in time, the Reporter's copy is treated as authentic. Portions of proceedings sent to the witnesses are invariably obtained back from them duly verified in time.

The minutes of each sitting of the Committee/Sub-Committee/Study Groups are prepared by the Secretariat as soon as possible after the termination of the sitting and after approval by Chairman/Convener or the member who presided at the sitting, circulated to the members of the Committee/Sub-Committee/Study Group, as the case may be.

Until the minutes are laid on the Table of the two Houses, they are treated as confidential

Reports

When the examination of any subject has been completed, a draft of the report is prepared and is circulated to the members of the Committee after it has been approved by the Chairman and then considered at a sitting of the Committee. The Reports of the Committee are unanimous and there are no minutes of dissent.

A copy of the draft Report as finalised by the Committee is sent duly marked 'confidential' to the Secretary to the concerned Ministry/Department/Government or Statutory Organisation for verification of factual details asking them to return the same by a specified date. In the case of a Report on a Statutory or Government Organisations, copies of the draft Report are endorsed to the Organisation and the Ministry concerned. The contents of the Report are required to be treated as confidential until the Report is presented to the Houses.

The Report is ordinarily presented to the Lok Sabha by the Chairman, but if he is unable to do so, one of the Members of the Committee who may be authorised by him may present the Report on his behalf. The Chairman simultaneously authorises a member of the Committee from Rajya Sabha for laying the Report on the Table of Rajya Sabha. He also nominates another Member from Rajya Sabha to lay the Report in case the member first authorised is unable to lay the same.

As soon as a Report has been presented to both the Houses, it is sent to the Ministry/Department/Public Undertaking concerned who are required to take action on the various recommendations and conclusions of the Committee and furnish action taken replies within a period of three months from the date of its presentation. These action taken statements of the Government are examined by the Study Group on Action Taken Reports and an Action Taken Report is then drafted and approved by the Chairman. The Report as approved by the Chairman is circulated to the members of the Committee for their consideration and comments, if any. The Chairman after taking into consideration the comments, if any, received from other members of the Committee may call for additional information from the Ministry or may hear the representatives of the Ministry to clarify the points. On the basis of the additional information received from the Ministry, the Report is then finalised by the Chairman and it is presented to both the Houses of Parliament in the usual manner.

Complaints/Representations

Ever since the constitution of the Committee complaints/representations from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes venti-

lating their grievances on matters pertaining to their welfare have been coming to the Committee.

The Committee has laid down the following procedure for dealing with representations/complaints:—

- (i) Memoranda/representations which make general suggestions for the welfare and improvement of the conditions of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are considered by the Committee on merit while dealing with the subjects referred to in those suggestions.
- (ii) Memoranda/representations which fall within the purview of the State Governments are forwarded to the Chief Secretaries to the State Governments concerned for disposal and the petitioner is informed of the action taken.
- (iii) Representations from Government employees in regard to their service matters are not entertained by the Committee as per a direction from the Speaker. Government servants have a prescribed hierarchy of Appellate and Reviewing Authorities with the President at the top. Such representations when received are forwarded to the Ministry/Department concerned for appropriate action.
- (iv) Anonymous representations, representations couched in intemperate and indecorous language or on matters which are *sub judice* are filed on receipt in the Secretariat of the Committee.

Impact of the Committee's work on the Executive

As mentioned above, one of the terms of reference of the Committee is "to consider the reports submitted by the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes under Article 338(2) of the Constitution and to report to both the Houses as to the measures that should be taken by the Union Government in respect of matters within the purview of the Union Government including the Administrations of the Union Territories." In consonance with its terms of reference, the Committee has taken particular care to seek information or clarification from the Government as to the action taken on the recommendations made by the Commissioner with particular reference to the subjects selected by the Committee for examination. The Committee has not hesitated to take the Executive to task whenever there has been any failure on the part of the Government to

implement any salutary recommendations of the Commissioner. For example, in his report for the year 1963-64, the Commissioner had observed that the relevant records relating to complaints alleging breach of safeguards in service matters should be made available to him by the Ministries/Departments concerned. In its Fourth Report on the reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in public services presented in January, 1970 the Committee regretted that it had taken more than 7 years to arrive at a decision in the matter and recommended that Government should issue a directive to the various Ministries, Departments requiring them to make available to the Commissioner invariably all the necessary records for investigation.

What is more important, in the same report, the Committee made the major recommendation that representation for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in services should be on the basis of their population. The acceptance of this recommendation by the Government has resulted in increase of representation for the Scheduled Castes from 12½ to 15 per cent and for the Scheduled Tribes from 5 to 7½ per cent in the Services.

In its Sixth Report (Fourth Lok Sabha) on action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the First Report, the Committee regretted that completely disregarding the views of the three previous Commissioners, Government had relied on the views of the present Commissioner in the matter of reorganisation of the Commissioner's field staff. The Committee, therefore, reaffirmed in no uncertain terms that Government had deprived the Commissioner of his 'eyes and ears' in the country by crippling his field organisation. Although Government did not agree to restore the field organisation of the Commissioner, it accepted the recommendation of the Committee that the Commissioner should be a public man and he should have a fixed tenure of five years. The Government also accepted the recommendation of the Committee that the Ministry/Department duly concerned would make available to the Commissioner relevant files and record required by him for purposes of investigation.

In the socio-economic sphere, the Committee has made recommendations which are of far-reaching importance in-so-far as the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is concerned. In its Fourteenth Report on Admission Facilities for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in educational institutions (technical and non-technical) the Committee noted that there was no uniform reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Medical Colleges of diffe-

rent States. The Committee, therefore, recommended that the Department of Health should take up with the State Governments concerned the question of providing a uniform reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Medical Colleges in the country. In its Sixteenth Report (Fourth Lok Sabha) the Committee expressed unhappiness over the fact that a number of States had diverted funds allotted to them by the Central Government for the improvement of the working and living conditions of sweepers and scavengers. The Committee, therefore, desired that the Central Government should find out ways and means to ensure that such diversion of funds did not take place in future. In its Nineteenth Report (Fourth Lok Sabha) the Committee gave brief summaries of some of the representative cases concerning complaints representations received by them and the factual comments furnished by the concerned Ministries/ departments."

Some of the important subjects on which the Committee in the later Lok Sabha has presented Reports to Parliament are: Plan allocations of Scheduled Tribes; Socio-economic conditions of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in some of the Union Territories; Tribal Development Blocks in some of the States; Working of Integrated Tribal Development Projects; Atrocities on Scheduled Castes in certain villages; Education facilities for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Indian Institutes of Technology, Central Universities, and in Medical Colleges under the control of or aided by, Central Government; Reservations for, and employment of them in various Government offices, Public Undertakings and Banks; Bank credit facilities for them etc. etc.

The problems faced by the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes due to their economic and social backwardness are not only varied but complex. The Committee had, therefore, recommended the setting up of a separate department in the Ministry of Home Affairs for looking after the entire work relating to the development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. In the opinion of the Committee the provision in the Special Component Plan for Scheduled Castes needed to be enhanced so that it was not less than the percentage of the population of these communities. The Committee further recommended that a Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe person who wished to set up an industrial unit with a total cost of upto Rs. 3 lakhs should be provided financial assistance up to 95 per cent of the cost of fixed assets, repayable within 6 to 10 years and that at least 10

"* Mulherjee, B.K., Machinery for the implementation of the special provisions and safeguards for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. I. Journal of Parliament & Information, July 1971.

per cent of total loans advanced by banks should be given to persons belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to meet their medium and long term requirements.¹⁰⁰

The Committee has been doing a commendable job ever since its inception. The Committee keeps a continuous watch on the recommendation in implementation-process through its Action Taken Reports and has thus evolved itself as an effective and vigilant instrument for safe-guarding the interests and rights of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The Committee's recommendations have made tremendous impact on the Government and it has really done an excellent work towards the welfare of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. An awareness has been created that there is a watch-dog Committee of Parliament to keep surveillance on the implementation of the constitutional safeguards for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Coordination of work in relation to Committee on Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Government

In the Central Government, the Ministry of Home Affairs is the nodal Ministry in respect of welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. This Ministry formulates the policy and coordinates the work relating to the welfare of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes. Various Ministries and Departments of Government of India deal with the respective matters coming within their jurisdiction.

The Ministry of Home Affairs have got 2 Divisions, namely, SC & BC Division and the Tribal Development Division. The work relating to the Scheduled Castes development is attended to by the SC & BC Division while the Tribal Division looks after matters relating to tribal development.

Matters relating to reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in service and posts in the Government of India and Central Public Undertaking/Corporations etc. are taken care of by the Ministry of Personnel and Training Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances and Pensions. The Administrative Ministries concerned with the Public Undertakings are responsible for the implementation of the Government orders regarding reservations etc. for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The then Department of Personnel and

100. Address by Chairman Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of Parliament at the Conference of Chairman of SC & ST Committee, *Journal of Parliamentary Information*, September, 1983, Vol XXIX, pp. 27-31.

Administrative Reforms now Ministry of Personnel and Training, Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances and (Pensions) had brought out a publication entitled "Brochure on Reservations for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes"—Sixth Edition which incorporates instructions so far issued by the Government regarding reservations, relaxations and concessions provided to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. A similar brochure has been brought out by the Bureau of Public Enterprises in so far as services/posts under Public Enterprises are concerned.

At the State level, several State Governments/Union Territory administrations have created separate Departments for the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Some State Governments are also having separate Directorates for the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Tribal Development Commissioners are functioning in the States of Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Orissa, Manipur, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. These Commissioners are also functioning as *ex-officio* Secretaries to Government incharge of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Welfare Department.

During the course of its work, the Committee on Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes keeps close liaison with the office of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. During the examination of a subject the Committee takes special care to elicit information or clarification from the Government as to the action taken on the recommendations made by the Commissioner on the subject. While forwarding to the Ministry concerned, the list of points prepared on a subject selected for examination, for furnishing written replies, the Committee also endorses a copy thereof to the office of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. In some cases, the office of the Commissioner also suggests to the Committee certain points on which information might be called for from the Ministry. A set of material received from the Ministry is also sent to the office of the Commissioner. A representative of the office of the Commissioner attends the sittings of the Committee to hear oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministries concerned with the subjects under examination. During the evidence the officer representing the Commissioner's Office may give clarification or factual information on any matter coming before the Committee with the permission of the Chair.

Field Offices of the Commission in States keep close liaison with the State Governments, in all matters relating to Scheduled Castes

and Scheduled Tribes. During the tour of the Committee, a representative of the Office of the Commission in the State accompanies the Committee during its tour in that State and remains present during informal discussions held with Government Officials or the representatives of the Public Undertakings, Banks etc., as the case may be. The Ministry of Home Affairs utilises the services of the Officers of the Commission posted in various States to collect information on matters pertaining to the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

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- Discussion (under Rule 193) raised by Sh. Amar Roy Pradhan on the situation arising out of the reported atrocities on the members of SC/STs in U.P., A.P., Bihar, M. P. and some other parts of the country resulting in several deaths and injuries to many persons and action taken by govt. in regard there to.-L.S. Deb., 13-8-85.
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- Matter under rule 377 raised by Sh. Ram vilas Paswan regarding need to ensure allotment of reserved seats in various university courses to S.C. and S.T. students. -L.S. Deb., 22-8-84
- Matter under rule 377 raised by Sh. Arjun Sethi regarding need to set up a suitable evaluating machinery to study the impact of welfare programmes on weaker sections particularly on S.C./S.Ts.-L.S. Deb., 26-7-83.
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