

## **Scheduled Castes**

10.70 Special Central Assistance to Special Component Plan is a major scheme for economic advancement of Scheduled Castes. During 2004-05, an allocation of Rs.402 crore has been made under this scheme. Up to 14.1.2005, the Ministry has utilized Rs.206.13 crore. The formulation and implementation of Special Component Plan for welfare for Scheduled Castes by the State Governments is being monitored intensively.

10.71 A number of Schemes are being implemented to encourage Scheduled Caste students for continuing their education from school level to higher education. During the year 2004-05 (up to 14.1.2005), Rs.7.56 crore has been released for 4.32 lakh (anticipated) beneficiaries under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Pre-Metric Scholarships to the children of those engaged in unclean occupations. Rs.287.59 crore has been released under the Scheme of Post Matric Scholarship to an anticipated number of over 17.76 lakh SC students. Against an allocation of Rs.48 crore, Rs.27.23 crore has been released for construction of hostels for boys

and girls belonging to the Scheduled Castes, Rs.0.95 crore has been released for Upgradation of Merit of SC students. Coaching and allied activities for weaker sections which cover students belonging to the SCs, OBCs and Minorities are also being undertaken. To abolish the practice of un-touchability and curb the high incidence of crimes and atrocities against SCs, efforts are made through effective implementation of the Protection of Civil Rights (PCR) Act, 1955 and the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, with the help of 22 Special Courts under PCR Act and 137 Special Courts under the POA Act.

10.72 The Ministry has initiated affirmative action for providing reservation to persons belonging to Scheduled Castes in private sector as envisaged in the NCMP. One of the items mentioned in this document is to launch a comprehensive programme for minor irrigation of all lands owned by dalits and adivasis. The Government has set up a Task Force in the Planning Commission in this regard.