

## **Scheduled Tribes (STs)**

10.70 According to the 2001 Census, STs accounted for 84.32 million, equivalent to 8.2 per cent of the country's total population. Compared to the rest of the society, STs continue to persist in socio-economic backwardness. The objective of the Tenth Plan is to empower the STs through their educational, economic and social development.

10.71 For the welfare and development of the STs, an outlay of Rs. 1,499 crore has been provided in the Annual Plan for 2005-06, up 30.79 per cent from the corresponding outlay of Rs. 1,146 crore for 2004-05. The outlay of 2005-06 includes Rs.727 crore provided as Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Tribal-Sub Plan (TSP) and Rs.380 crore provided as grant-in-aid under Article 275(1) of the Constitution.

10.72 SCA to Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) is a 100 per cent grant extended to States as an additive to undertake a number of developmental schemes. The focus is on family-oriented income-generating schemes, creation of critical infrastructure, extending financial assistance to SHGs for community-based activities, development of Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) and forest villages. Grant-in-aid under Article 275(1) is also being provided to the States with an objective to promote the welfare of the STs and improve administration

in the States to bring them at par with the rest of the States, and to take up such special welfare and development programmes which are otherwise not included in the Plan programmes. Under the flagship scheme of Post-Matric Scholarships (PMS), all eligible ST students are provided with stipend to pursue their education beyond matric including professional and graduate and post-graduate courses in recognized institutions. A new scheme of Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for ST students to pursue higher education is being introduced in 2005-06. Economic empowerment of the STs continued through extension of financial support to Finance Corporations and Tribal Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (TRIFED). Under the Scheme of National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation and Grant-in-Aid to State Scheduled Tribes Development and Finance Corporation, financial support is being extended to ST beneficiaries/entrepreneurs in the form of term-loans and micro credit at concessional rate of interests for income generating activities. An outlay of Rs.30 crore was provided in Annual Plan 2005-06 for these schemes. Other economic development schemes being implemented are grant-in-aid to NGOs, vocational training centres in tribal areas, investment in TRIFED and price support and grant-in-aid to STDCs.