

Minorities

10.73 Five communities — Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsis — have been declared as minority communities by the Government. With a population of 189.5 million, the five notified minority communities constituted 18.42 per cent of the total population as per the 2001 Census.

10.74 An allocation of Rs.55 crore was made for 2005-06 for welfare and development activities of minorities. This includes Rs.30.00 crore for the Scheme of Maulana Azad

Education Foundation. A significant proportion of the minority communities are engaged in traditional arts and crafts, like handlooms, handicrafts, glass works and metal works; and priority has been given for up-gradation of the technical know-how of these trades. National Minority Development Finance Corporation has been extending financial assistance and other technical support to minority entrepreneurs. National Commission for Minorities strives to protect the interest of the minority communities and work for their welfare and development.