

## CHAPTER- 11

### Conclusions and recommendations

#### Recommendations on the Sachar Committee Report on Social, Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community in India

11.1 The Sachar Report on *Social, Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community of India* has produced a compendium of authentic information required by the Government for planning, formulating and implementing specific interventions, policies and programmes to address issues relating to the backwardness of the community.

11.2 The National Commission for Minorities has a statutory responsibility, under Section 9(1) (g) of the NCM Act, 1992, to evaluate the progress of the development of the minorities and to suggest appropriate measures, to be taken by the Government, in respect of any community. Pursuant to this the Commission is of the view that amongst the recommendations of the Report, those pertaining to (1) education (2) economy and employment opportunities (3) access to bank credit (4) government programmes and (5) public employment and recruitment procedures, require to be given the highest priority amongst the priorities being set by the Government for implementing the Recommendations of the Report:

#### **Education**

11.3 Access to education is critical to benefiting from emerging opportunities that go with economic growth. The right to education is a fundamental right; the Report establishes the extent of educational deprivation experienced by the Muslim community. Muslims are at a double disadvantage with low levels of education combined with low quality education. Their deprivation increases many-folds as the level of education rises. 25 per cent of Muslim children in the 6-14 year age group have either never attended school or have dropped out. At the level of higher education, less than 4 percent Muslims are graduates or diploma holders as against the national average of 7 percent for the age group 20 and above. At the post-graduate level, only one out of twenty students is a Muslim.

11.3.1 The improvements in educational patterns of SCs and STs suggest that they have benefited from targeted government programmes supporting their educational progress. This underscores the importance of affirmative action. While the nature of affirmative action that is required needs to be assessed, at a minimum the government may consider making available more schools in minority-concentration areas, instituting scholarships and making available free textbooks, and transport facilities etc.

#### **Recommendations**

11.3.2 Emphasis on providing a minimum level of school education by the State is necessary. Regular affordable school education that is available to any other child in India should be made available to Muslims in all localities. Primary education in mother tongue is equally important.

11.3.3 Access to government schools for Muslim children is limited. This is particularly so in regard to girls for whom the non-availability of schools within easy reach hampers access to education at the primary level.

11.3.4 More schools for girls should be set up in localities of Muslim concentration, particularly for the 9-12 standards. This would facilitate higher participation of girls in school education. Induction of more female teachers, provision of hostels for girls and transport facilities would be helpful.

11.3.5 Institution of more scholarships for professional and technical courses would encourage students to avail in greater measure of opportunities in higher education.

11.3.6 Skill development initiatives for those who have not completed school education may also be particularly relevant for some section of Muslims given their occupational structure. The pre-entry qualifications for admission to ITI courses should be reduced to Class VIII. The scope of ITI courses should be expanded to focus on emerging market needs. The eligibility of such programmes should also be extended to Madrasa educated children.

### **Economy and Employment Opportunities**

11.4 Compared to other socio-religious communities (SRCs), the participation in regular salaried jobs, especially in the government or large public and private sector enterprises, is much less than workers of other SRCs. The most striking feature is the relatively high share of Muslims engaged in self-employment activity. Muslims have higher than average reliance on self-employment, home-based work and are concentrated in self-employed manufacturing and trade activities. Given the informal nature of their work participation they tend to be more vulnerable than other workers with regard to work related industries in terms of type of contract, availability of social benefits and method of payment. Since a large section of the Muslim workers are engaged in self-employment, apart from better education facilities, improvements in employment opportunities for Muslims requires a sharper focus on skill development and credit related initiatives tailored for such groups.

### **Recommendations**

11.5 Specific programmes for self-employed or home-based workers to provide skill, credit, technology and market support in backward districts are needed. These programmes should effectively combine modern managerial, technical and design skills with artisanal skills to create effective intervention strategies.

11.6 ITIs, polytechnics and other institutions that provide skill training to non-matriculates need to be located in backward districts.

11.7 There should be a Central Public Sector Undertaking, namely, the Artisans Corporation of India Limited (ACIL) to provide institutional support, market linkages, skill upgradation and funding of trades being run by the Muslim artisans. The ACIL should be linked to SIDBI.

11.8 Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) should set aside a dedicated fund for training for minorities under its Entrepreneurial Development Programme.

11.9 Imparting skills both to those who have completed school education and those who have dropped out of school but have completed middle education needs to be reassessed. Most existing technical training programmes require higher secondary education. Given the school completion rates of Muslims and the significant need for skill upgradation, provision of certain types of skill training after middle education may be useful.

11.10 Given the precarious conditions of self-employed persons in the informal sector, especially the home-based workers, it is desirable to have a mandated social security system for such workers. Since the government

is already in the process of drafting a scheme to cover the unorganized workers, an early implementation would benefit a large section of the Muslim population along with helping the larger segment of the informal sector workforce.t108

### **Access to Bank Credit**

11.11 The access of Muslims to bank credit, including the Priority Sector Advance (PSA), is limited and this is well documented. The average size of credit is also meager compared with other groups both in public and private sector banks. The percentage of households availing banking facilities is much lower in villages where the share of Muslim population is high. While part of this could be due to lower demand for credit owing to low income levels of the community. Another reason for such an outcome could be non-availability of banking facilities in these villages. This is a serious problem as a significantly larger proportion of Muslims are engaged in self-employment, especially home-based work. Non-availability of credit can have far-reaching implications for the socio-economic and educational status of Muslims.

### **Recommendations**

11.12 Non-availability of banking facilities should be addressed on a priority basis by providing incentives to banks to open more branches backward district.

11.13 To empower Muslims economically, it is necessary to ensure smooth flow of credit/ micro credit and Priority Sector Advances. Steps should be introduced to specifically direct credit, Priority Sector Advances create awareness of various credit schemes, organize entrepreneurial development programmes, and bring transparency in reporting of information about SRCs on provision of banking services.

11.14 A policy to enhance the participation of minorities in the micro-credit schemes of NABARD should be laid down. This y should spell out the intervention required by NABARD and could be a mix of target and incentive schemes to enhance the participation of Muslims in micro-credit.

11.15 The practice of identifying 'negative geographical zones' on the basis of certain criteria where bank credit and other facilities are not easily provided needs to be reviewed so that people can fully benefit from banking facilities so as to promote access to banking in the light of government's socio-economic objectives of inclusion.

### **Government Programmes and Access to Social and Physical Infrastructure**

11.16 Although there are many Centrally Sponsored Schemes and Central Plan Schemes available for the welfare of SCs, STs and OBCs, such schemes for the welfare of minorities are very few, inadequately funded and Muslims have not benefited much from them. Muslims are concentrated in locations with poor infrastructural facilities. This affects their access to basic services like education, health facilities, transport etc.

### **Recommendations**

11.17 Targeting backward districts and clusters where special artisanal groups exist will ensure a sharp reduction in disparities of access and attainment.

11.18 Central Government should introduce a few schemes with large outlays for welfare of minorities with an equitable provision for Muslims.

11.19 A periodic monitoring and assessment of welfare and development programmes and the extent to which the benefits accrue to Muslims is imperative. The monitoring mechanism should be multi-level and should have a civil society component. This would enhance public confidence.

11.20 Public investment in infrastructure in Muslim concentration areas is urgently required to promote socio-economic development and access to public services.

### **Public Employment and Recruitment Procedures**

11.21 Analysis of Muslim participation in government employment and other programmes has shown very limited participation in both. Lack of access to regular salaried jobs, especially in the public sector has been a matter of major concern. It is imperative to increase the public employment share of Muslims particularly in contexts where there is a great deal of public dealing. To achieve this, efforts should be made to increase the employment share of Muslims amongst the teaching community, health workers, police personnel, bank employees and so on. The deficit in regular employment, especially in salaried jobs with the public sector or the large private sector, needs to be corrected.

### **Recommendations**

11.22 It may be desirable to have experts drawn from the Muslim community on relevant interview panels and Boards. This practice is already in vogue in the case of SCs/STs.

11.23 DOP&T issued instructions vide OM No. 42011/15/95-Estt. (SCT) dated 11.7.95 that whenever a Selection Committee/Board exists or has to be constituted for making recruitment to 10 or more vacancies in Group 'C' or Group 'D' posts/services, it shall be mandatory to have one member belonging to Minority Community in such Committees/Boards. The O.M dated 11.7.1995 also stipulates that where the number of vacancies is less than 10, no effort should be spared to find a Minority Community officer for inclusion in such Committees/Boards. Unfortunately, these instructions of DOP&T have not been implemented for the last 12 years in most of the States/U.Ts. Unless these instructions are enforced on the State Governments, they are not likely to be voluntarily adopted by them.

11.24 Strict instructions from the DOP&T will have to be issued to the State/U.T Governments to implement the Sachar Committee recommendation. Non-compliance of DOPT instructions should carry a punitive clause.

11.25 Measures like undertaking a visible recruitment process in areas and districts with high percentage of Muslims, job advertisements in Urdu and vernacular newspapers and other media, or simple messages like 'women, minority, and backward class candidates are encouraged to apply' should be undertaken to promote participation in public employment.

### **Recommendation to start a Special Plan for Minorities**

11.26 The Prime Minister's New 15-Point Programme for the Welfare of Minorities stresses the need for enhancing opportunities for education, equitable share in economic activities and improving the condition of living of minorities. One of the important mechanisms to ensure that the flow of outlays and benefits are in proportion to the population of the minorities would be to establish a Special Plan for Minorities on the lines currently used in the Special Component Plan for the Scheduled Castes and Tribal Sub-Plan for the Scheduled Tribes. Both the SCP and TSP are umbrella programmes under which all schemes implemented by the Central and State Governments are required to provide suitable proportion of expenditure specifically to benefit the target community.

The need for a special plan for minorities arises from the fact that in some cases, for example, education of girls there are special requirements of minority communities and also livelihood in certain sectors are currently under economic stress. Child labour is highest among minority communities and any intervention that would enable children to go to school and alleviate the problem of child labour would have a much wider impact in

improving the living conditions and indicators of human development in the backward regions. Similarly, financial allocation for locating schools closer to the habitation of minorities and providing hostel facilities would go long way in helping to retain children in schools.

11.27 The purpose of the special plan for minorities would be to channelise the flow of outlays and benefits from the general sectors in the Plan of States for the development of the minorities in proportion to their population to the total population of the States/UT and these should be non-divertible and non-lapsable. The modus operandi could be similar to the SCP/TSP but restricted to certain departments such as social sector.

11.28 The broad objective of the special plan should be:

- (i) Human resource development of the minorities by providing adequate educational and health services.
- (ii) Creation of productive assets for minorities to sustain the growth likely to accrue through development efforts.
- (iii) Provision of infrastructure facilities in minority concentration areas.

State and District/Block level Monitoring Committees should be constituted to monitor the implementation of the special plan. District and Block level committees may be constituted on the pattern of District and Block level committee constituted by the Ministry of Rural Development by involving elected members (MPs, MLAs and Panchayat members, and other prominent leaders in the districts) or the same committees may be entrusted with the responsibilities for monitoring.

- (iv) The Central Government should set up a Muslim Girls Education Fund to provide scholarships for Muslim girls from school to college level.
- (v) The Central Government should establish a scheme of Scholarships for Study Abroad on the lines of the Ambedkar Scholarships for Study Abroad for higher education.

#### **Other recommendations**

11.29 In the absence of stern action against those attacking Christian Pastors and Preachers people have been emboldened to take the law into their hands. The States should ensure severe punishment according to law against those who indulge in such activities especially when their images are captured by the visual media.

11.30 Anti conversion legislation put in place by different State Governments should be examined by legal experts of the Government of India to see how far these are in keeping with the liberal principles enshrined in the Indian Constitution.

11.31 Sweeping powers given to the District Authority to conduct enquiry and to hold permission to those seeking to convert must be reviewed and modified.

11.32 If the initiation of the anti conversion legislation is to prevent the use of force or fraud in conversion, this provision must equally be applied to re-conversion to a persons' original religion.

11.33 The provision of Section 170 B of Chattisgarh Revenue Code must be liberally interpreted to allow tribal initiative in the establishment of Schools, Dispensaries or places of worship through societies formed by and consisting of tribals. If necessary, suitable amendment to the Act itself should be undertaken.

11.34 Grant-in-Aid should not be denied to minority education institutions especially to those serving the poor in rural areas. If necessary, funds from the Sarvashiksha Abhiyan Scheme should be made available for this purpose in States where there is a resource crunch.

11.35 Christian and Muslim dalits like their Sikh and Buddhist counter parts must be given the benefit of affirmative action through reservation.

11.36 State Governments should be encouraged to take stern action against those who seek to divide tribal society on religious lines. If necessary, Government of India should convene a special meeting of States with large tribal population to consider these questions. Alternatively, it should be an Agenda item for discussion in meetings with State Governments on matters relating both to tribal welfare and to law and order.

11.37 The Indian Institute of Languages (IIL), Mysore should be asked to conduct a linguistic survey / study on the Bhoti language with special focus in the Himalayan Region from Ladakh to Arunachal Pradesh. Following this, the Bhoti Language should be included in the VIIIth Schedule of the Constitution of India.

11.38 Bodhgaya Temple Act 1949 should be amended to entrust the management of the Temple to the Buddhist community.

11.39 To address the question of inadequate data on the Buddhist community, a Documentation Centre for Minorities (Buddhist) should be set up in the Himalayan region to document relevant information on the Buddhist community. The data collected can be used for planning further programs for the development of the Buddhists. This documentation center can be extended to other Minorities also who inhabit in the Himalayan Region starting from Leh Ladakh to Arunachal Pradesh.

11.40 The Ministry of HRD / Ministry of Minority Affairs should initiate a scheme for modernization of Buddhist Monastic schools. The scheme should include grant of scholarships to the students of these schools.

11.41 The people who have embraced Buddhism, commonly called as Neo-Buddhists, have been complaining that in the records at the Taluk/district/panchayat levels their religion is not changed and they are still shown as Hindus. Therefore Caste certificates should be issued as per the "The Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Orders (Amendment) Act 1990".

11.42 The working of the Minority Finance Development Corporation at the Centre and the State Minority Development Corporation at the State level needs should be periodically monitored so as to ensure adequate credit flow to Minorities for their economic development.

11.43 Presently, there are six centres of Vulture breeding in the country. There should be one more centre at the Tower of Silence, Mumbai where Vultures are currently non-existent and the Parsi community has to depend on alternative methods for disposal of their dead bodies.

11.44 'Iranshah' situated in the coastal village of Udavada in Gujarat is the only pilgrimage station for Parsis from all over the world. It houses the holiest fire established centuries ago in true Persian tradition after Parsis fled Iran on account of persecution from Arabs. However, the same prestigious village of Udavada sadly lacks basic amenities like sanitation, disposal of waste, a proper approach road, security and faces massive erosion due to the fury of the Arabian Sea. The Udavada village in Gujarat should be protected and provided with all basic amenities.

11.45 Affirmative action may be taken for the adequate representation of Parsi students in the Professional Colleges and the institutions established by the Parsi community.

11.46 Effective measures may be taken to stop encroachment of the land belonging to the Parsi community either by local authorities or the Government.

11.47 The compensation package for the loss of property during the communal riots to the minorities should be as per the actual loss.

11.48 The compensation for the loss of life to the minority communities during the communal riots and/or caused by the police should be paid at a uniform rate of Rs.5.00 lakh per head.

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