
Towards an Inclusive Society and a Stronger Nation

Equal Opportunities for Minorities

Objectives

- To ensure equitable share of benefits to the minorities including access to education, credit, employment, infrastructure and basic services like housing

What was done?

- The Prime Minister's New 15 Point Programme for the Welfare of Minorities, launched in June, 2006, envisages the location of a certain proportion of development projects and schemes in minority concentration areas to ensure the equitable flow of benefits.
- Under the programme, more than 10000 primary and upper primary schools and 363 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidhyalayas constructed in educationally backward blocks with a substantial population of minorities.
- Credit flows to minority-run enterprises enhanced. An amount of Rs.58,662 crore, nearly 10% of the total priority sector lending, provided in 2007-08. The target for lending to the minorities out of the priority sector lending for 2008-09 is Rs.86,774 crore.
- All public sector banks directed to open more branches in districts with a substantial minority population. In 2007-08, 523 branches opened in such districts. In 2008-09, 329 new branches opened till 31st December, 2008.
- **Revised guidelines to improve the representation of minorities** in government service and public sector undertakings issued. Improvement in the recruitment of minorities from 6.95% in 2006-07 to 8.65% in 2007-08 in Central Ministries/Departments.
- A **Coaching and allied scheme** launched in July, 2007. Proposals for coaching candidates sanctioned.
- Three scholarship schemes for students belonging to the minority communities launched. 31325 Merit-cum-means, 1.49 lakh Post-matric and 2.75 lakh Pre-matric scholarships granted. More than 50% scholarships granted to girls.

Over the next four years, more than 40 lakh children and youth will be covered.

- 2,64,470 persons belonging to BPL families among minorities were provided assistance for self employment under SGSY. Similarly 3.23 lakh minority BPL families were assisted for construction of pucca houses under the Indira Awas Yojana.
- **Special area development programme:** A multisectoral development programme to address development deficits launched in 90 districts with minority concentration. Plans for 43 districts in Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Assam, Manipur, Bihar, Meghalaya, Jharkhand and Andaman & Nicobar Islands approved and Rs.195.82 crore released till 31st December, 2008.
- The corpus of the Maulana Azad Educational Foundation corpus more than doubled to enable it to expand its education development activities.
- The National Minority Development Finance Corporation strengthened. Since inception the NMDFC has assisted 4.25 lakh beneficiaries and disbursed nearly Rs.1200 crore.
- The Madarsa modernization programme is revised providing better salary to teachers, increased assistance for books, teaching aids and computers, and introduction vocational subjects, etc.