

P R E F A C E

The Commission interacted with a large number of Government Organizations, Non-Government Organization, and peoples representatives at various levels, has come to the conclusion that in spite of specific provisions made in the Constitution the over all socio-economic conditions of the SCs, despite several legal and policy initiatives, institutional network and large financial allocations, have not brought them to the national mainstream and remains still far from expectations. The main instrument for achieving this objective is the policy of reservations in employment and admission in education and professional courses as also in elected bodies. Protective legislations were also framed to ensure to protection against exploitation and discrimination through enhanced and specific financial allocations for their development.

The provision of reservations in elected bodies including in Panchayati Raj Institutions, have been made for ensuring participation of SCs representative in the Planning process at various levels. Due to compulsions of electoral and party politics, relative inexperience of elected representatives in Panchayati Raj bodies, the representatives of SCs have not been fully successful in making a common cause on issues relating to social disabilities and economic deprivation. This needs an introspection not only among the SCs representatives but also by other sections of society to initiate measures for creating conditions conducive for their integration with and bringing them into the national mainstream.

The policy of reservations in appointments and educational institutions was provided in the Constitution to ensure equitable share to the SCs in governance. It is true that reservation in appointments would benefit only a small proportion of their population but their representation at various levels was expected to ensure incorporation of the concerns and development needs of these communities in the formulation and implementation of programmes for their socio-economic development. In spite of reservations, the representation of SCs in services continues to be much lower than the prescribed proportion in Group A

and Group B services, both under the Government and the Public Sector Undertakings etc. One of the reasons for this situation is low level of literacy and very poor quality of education imparted to them. Besides this the SCs who come from the rural areas do not have access to good quality of education and thus are unable to compete at the higher levels of posts and in particular requiring technical and professional qualifications.

The implementation of reservation policy through executive instructions are frequently subject of judicial intervention, has failed to achieve the desired objectives. In order to improve the representation of Scheduled Castes in posts & services there is strong and urgent need to pass the bill on reservation for Scheduled Castes in post and services under the Government to bring uniformity in the implementation of the policy with punitive measures against the non-implementing organizations and individuals. The Commission has also noted that no improvement in filling up the posts arising out of this exercise on backlog/shortfall has been carried out so far. Commission therefore, urges that the Govt. of India should calculate the backlog of the shortfall of SCs and launch SRD to cover backlog in a time bound manner.

The Commission during its reviews with various State Governments is of the view that a large number of cases go unregistered because of reluctance on the part of Police Officer to register the cases and also because of lack of awareness among the Member of these communities about the provisions under the PCR Act. 1955 and SC/ST POA Act. 1989. Delay in investigation, collusion with offenders and manipulation of witnesses and evidence which all contribute to reduce the effectiveness of these protective measures. As a result of lack of awareness among the Police officials and the SC people, a large number of cases end up with the investigations in filing of final report and the accused are acquitted in a very high number in states. The Central Government should initiate action to promote awareness about the above protective Legislation through in house training for police personal like special lectures and display of material in local languages to enhance the information level of general public and especially the SC people.

The Commission had interaction with the State SC/ST Commission and State Governments during the period under report and observed that the States are not allocating funds out of their State Plans to the Special Component Plan in the proportion required. Even the funds allocated under SCP are either not utilized or diverted to other Sectors. This leads to adverse effect on the over all socio-economic development of the people belonging to the SCs. The drop out rate among the SC students at the post matric level of education is high among the SCs due to the fact that the scholarships are not disbursed in time. The Commission is of the view that in order to ensure proper educational and economical development of the SCs funds out of the Central Ministries and State Ministries should be released strictly in proportion to the population of SCs and in no case be allowed to lapse or diverted. In inevitable conditions the funds should be utilized in the succeeding year that too with the consent of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes.