

and tribals. Distribution of surplus and available land is to be ensured. Rehabilitation of displaced persons has to be ensured and they should be made partners in the projects. Government should initiate pro-active measures to prevent the owners and cultivators of land from sliding into the category of labourers and marginal holders.

- (4) The areas of SC & ST concentration often lack basic infrastructure and other minimum requirements such as roads, electricity, dwellings, safe drinking water, health and nutrition care, facilities for public hygiene and sanitation etc. The women and children are the worst sufferers in this regard. Thus, there is a need to concentrate on these aspects of development and to include in SCP and TSP strategies, schemes and programmes that will overcome these handicaps.
- (5) Maintenance of law and order is primarily the duty of the State and UT Governments. While on the one hand increase in registration of crimes is an indicator of growing awareness of rights amongst SCs and STs, at the same time it is indicative of conflicts between individuals and communities that have their origin in social and economic factors. Today land disputes are an important cause behind the atrocities on SCs & STs. The engine of economic development has also created rifts amongst SC communities and other 'backward' communities. In this regard the State Governments have to take action not only at the level of police and administration but to actively involve the public representatives and the community at large in keeping these disputes under control.

While we have mentioned the general issues pertaining to SCs & STs as above, there are other topics which are of specific relevance to a particular State. An attempt has been made to cover broad areas relating to development, atrocities and service safeguards in most of the State/UT chapters but the focus of analysis will vary from State to State. In our last Report we had also included a summary of our observations made during the visit of the Commission to various States/UTs. It is hoped that the State Governments will take necessary action to comply with those directions.

With a strong political will and a well-gearred administrative machinery for implementation of various laws and schemes, and active community participation, I am sure that the State Governments will do their best for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, more than half of whom are still below the poverty line. Our efforts should be continued in the direction of "wiping out every tear from every eye" which is a goal set by the founding fathers of the Constitution.

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