

The scheme of Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Caste Sub Plan was started in 1980 to give a thrust to the development programmes for the Scheduled Castes, with particular reference to their occupational pattern and to the need for increasing the productivity of and income from their limited resources.

2. In view of the varying needs and availability of opportunities in different States of the country and even with different regions of the same State, State Governments have been given flexibility in choice of scheme to be implemented out of SCA. However, this Ministry has been issuing enabling guidelines from time to time to focus directions of the State Governments towards newer avenues and to address some of the chronic disabilities suffered by Scheduled Castes, especially with respect to lack of access to essential services.

3. Atrocities on Scheduled Castes is an area of concern. Lack of basic infrastructural facilities is one of the important factors responsible for incidents of atrocities in the remote and inaccessible villages/habitations of Scheduled. Further, awareness among Scheduled Castes about the legal provisions to check the atrocities is limited by the lack of education.

4. In order to address the concerns stated above, special steps are required to be taken. As a first step all the State Governments should identify atrocity prone areas. For development of these areas, State Government are requested to undertake following activities out of the SCA released by the Ministry:

i) Guidelines for utilizing upto 10% of SCA released in a year on infrastructure development in SC dominated Blocks/villages were issued vide this Ministry's letters dated 29.7.1993 and 7.9.1998. Priority should be given to identify atrocity prone areas in implementation of infrastructure development schemes.

ii) Setting up of primary schools for Scheduled Castes; and

iii) Coverage of beneficiaries from these identified Districts on priority basis under the income-generating beneficiary oriented schemes.

5. Since SCA is provided as an additive, the funds earmarked for SCSP under different sectors of the State Plan should be effectively mobilized and pooled together for deriving optimum outcome.

6. These guidelines will come into effect immediately.

Yours Sincerely,

Sd/-

(Dr. Arbind Prasad)

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