

**COMMITTEE ON THE WELFARE OF
SCHEDULED CASTES AND
SCHEDULED TRIBES
(1995-96)**

(TENTH LOK SABHA)

SIXTY-SECOND REPORT

**MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS & EMPLOYMENT
(DEPARTMENT OF RURAL EMPLOYMENT &
POVERTY ALLEVIATION)**

[Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Forty-Fifth Report of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Tenth Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment (Department of Rural Employment & Poverty Alleviation)—Working of Integrated Rural Development Programme (Assistance Provided to SCs and STs)]



*Presented to Lok Sabha on 6.3.1996
Laid in Rajya Sabha on 6.3.1996*

**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

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**COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE WELFARE OF
SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES
(1995-96)**

1. Shri Paras Ram Bhardwaj—*Chairman*

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SECRETARIAT

1. Shri G.C. Malhotra — *Joint Secretary*
2. Shri Babu Ram — *Deputy Secretary*

INTRODUCTION

1. the Chairman, Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes having been authorised by the Committee to finalise and submit the Report on their behalf, present this 62nd Report (10th Lok Sabha) on Action Taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 45th Report (10th Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment (Department of Rural Employment & Poverty Alleviation) — Working of Integrated Rural Development Programme (Assistance Provided to SCs and STs)

2. The Draft Report was considered and adopted by the Committee on 15th January, 1996.

3. The Report has been divided into the following Chapters:

Chapter I Report

Chapter II Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government.

Chapter III Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies.

Chapter IV Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration.

Chapter V Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of the Government have not been received.

4. An analysis of the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the 45th Report of the Committee is given in the Appendix. It would be observed therefrom that out of 26 recommendations made in the Report 15 recommendations i.e. 57.69% have been accepted by the Government. The Committee do not desire to pursue 4 recommendations i.e. 15.38% . In case of 4 recommendations i.e. 15.38%, final replies have not been received; 3 recommendations i.e. 11.53% in respect of which reply of Government has not been accepted by the Committee, require further comment.

NEW DELHI;
February, 1996

Phalguna, 1917 (S)

PARAS RAM BHARDWAJ,
Chairman,
Committee on the Welfare
of Scheduled Castes and
Scheduled Tribes.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes deals with the Action Taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Forty-Fifth Report (Tenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes on the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment (Department of Rural Employment and Poverty Alleviation) regarding working of Integrated Rural Development Programme (Assistance provided to SCs and STs).

1.2 The Forty-Fifth Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 25.4.1995. It contained 26 recommendations/observations. Replies of the Government in respect of these recommendations/observations have been examined and may be categorised as under:—

- (i) Recommendations/observations which have been accepted by the Government; (Sl. Nos. 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 26).
- (ii) Recommendations/observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue taking into consideration the replies of the Government; (Sl. Nos. 1, 3, 4, 6).
- (iii) Recommendations/observations replies to which have not been accepted by the Committee and which need reiteration; (Sl. Nos. 5, 20 and 25).
- (iv) Recommendations/observations in respect of which final replies have not been received; (Sl. Nos. 2, 10, 14 and 18).

1.3 The Committee will now deal with those Action Taken Replies of the Government which need reiteration and Comments.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 5, Para No. 1. 19)

1.4 In para 1.19 of the Forty-Fifth Report (Tenth Lok Sabha), the Committee had recommended the Ministry to ensure that the SLCC actually conduct periodical and surprise visits to the Districts and Blocks to oversee the implementation of the programme at the grassroot level as in the opinion of the Committee it would help in providing not only proper leadership and timely guidance to Districts/Blocks but also a forum for meaningful dialogue between the policy makers at the State level and the implementors at the field level.

1.5 The Ministry in their reply have stated that as has been described in the reply of para 1.18 that it is not practically possible to organise SLCC

meeting on monthly basis and for the same reasons it is neither advisable for SLCC to take surprise visits to the districts and blocks nor required. The role of SLCC is to provide leadership, guidance and take policy decision within the framework of IRDP guidelines based on the experience of State Rural Development Department and not to indulge in day to day affairs of programme implementation. The Secretary and other Senior Officers of the Rural Development Department of the States undertake this kind of periodic visits and inspections.

Comments of the Committee

1.6 The Committee are not satisfied with the reasons advanced by the Government for not accepting the recommendation. The Committee, therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation that the Ministry should ensure that the SLCC actually conduct periodical and surprise visits to the Districts and Blocks to oversee the implementation of the programme at the grass-root level.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 20, Para No. 2.34)

1.7 In para 2.34 of the Forty-Fifth Report (Tenth Lok Sabha), the Committee had recommended that those States who were not conducting the Below Poverty Line (BPL) survey or not adhering to the suggestions/instructions of the Central Government to ensure non-inclusion of ineligible families under IRDP, should not be given any assistance under the programme.

1.8 The Ministry in their reply have stated that all the States/UTs excepting U.P. and Maharashtra have conducted Below Poverty Line (BPL) survey in compliance with the instructions of the Ministry. The findings of the Survey have been received from these States/UTs. The Chief Ministers of U.P. and Maharashtra were reminded by the Minister of State (Rural Development) in this regard and subsequent reminders from Secretary (RD) and Additional Secretary (RD) have been sent to these two Governments. The copies of the letter to these Governments may be seen from Annexure I to VI. It may be noted that due to vigorous and relentless efforts made by this Ministry, the percentage of ineligible families being the recipient of assistance under IRDP have come down to 4% from 16%. This could well be eliminated once the strong elected bodies of Panchayati Raj institution takes over the scenario.

Comments of the Committee

1.9 The Committee appreciate the efforts made by the Government. However, Committee desire that the Central Government should continue to pursue the matter with both Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra Governments for conducting below poverty line survey in compliance with instructions of Central Government to ensure that assistance to ineligible families under IRDP is not given.

Recommendations (Sl. No. 25, Para No. 3.14)

1.10 The Committee had recommended that the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment in consultation with the Ministry of Welfare and other concerned Ministries should gear up all the machinaries at their command for ensuring expeditious removal of these shortcomings noticed in the implementation of IRDP for the benefit of needy SCs & STs.

1.11 The Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment (Department of Rural Employment and Poverty Alleviation) in their reply have stated that since the recommendation is basically related to the Ministry of Welfare, this has been sent to Ministry of Welfare for favourable action.

Comments of the Committee

1.12 The Committee are not convinced with the reply of the Government. In the opinion of the Committee, monitoring and implementation of IRDP is the primary responsibility of the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment and the Ministry of Welfare can give schemes and guidelines. Therefore, the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment by shifting the responsibility to Ministry of Welfare are trying to shirk the responsibility which is not totally acceptable to the Committee. The Committee, therefore, reiterate their recommendation that the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment in consultation with the Ministry of Welfare and other the concerned Ministries should gear up all the machinaries at their command for ensuring expeditious removal of the shortcomings noticed in the implementation of IRDP for the benefit of needy SCs & STs.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Sl. Nos. 7 & 8, Para Nos. 1.31 & 1.32)

The Committee note that the District Rural Development Agencies are the overall incharge of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Integrated Rural Development Programme in the District. They also note that the DRDAs have been provided a basic staffing pattern to discharge their day-to-day work. The Committee, however, desire that a SC/ST cell with adequate staff should be set up and attached to each DRDA to deal with matters pertaining to SC/ST beneficiaries exclusively. Taking into consideration the ignorance and illiteracy of SC/ST people residing in backward Districts, the Committee opine that these exclusive cells can provide them proper guidance and protect them from unscrupulous exploitation.

The Committee note that the Governing Body of the DRDA includes members of the weaker sections to assist the DRDA in discharging its duties. The Committee consider it an healthy trend and would like to recommend that the Executive Committee also whenever constituted, should include members belonging to the Weaker Sections so that they can be able to participate in the planning and implementation of the programme at the grassroot level.

Reply of the Government

In the existing frame work. of Composition of DRDAs, the Governing Bodies have been constituted drawing members also from the bodies specially meant for upliftment of SCs/STs such as Project Officer, ITDP, Regional/District Officer, Scheduled Caste Finance Corporation and a representative from SCST community. The Governing Body in this manner is capable of preventing such exploitation of SCs/STs. Apart from this, Ministry is of the view that a proper awareness generation is essential and keeping this in view, awareness generation and publicity mechanism have been strengthened. The State Governments have been advised to give greater importance to generate awareness and wider publicity to the programme and its provisions. The formation of any kind of Act or its enforcement won't work unless the class concerned is adequately enlight-

tened about their legitimate rights and provisions assured to them by the Government for their upliftment. This can be achieved only through proper awareness, generation activities and implementation of the publicity mechanism. The Ministry is now stressing hard on these aspects of the programme and the State Governments have been instructed accordingly.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 9, Para No. 1.33)

The Committee are dissatisfied to note that the Project Officer/Director of the DRDA has no disciplinary authority over the Block Staff. When the sole responsibility of implementing the programme at the grass root level lies with the PO/PD the Committee fail to understand the constraint in empowering him with disciplinary powers over the Block Staff. Taking into consideration many preoccupations of the District Collector and notwithstanding the fact that the PO/PD is drawn on deputation, the Committee would like the Ministry to instruct the State Governments to empower the PO/PD of DRDA with adequate disciplinary authority over the Block Staff so that corruption can be nipped in the bud.

Reply of the Government

With the provisions and implementation of 73rd Constitution Amendment, the rural development activities would come under direct control of the strong elected bodies of Panchayati Raj institutions. It is expected that the State Government while implementing the Panchayati Raj will frame provisions so that all the rural development functionaries at the grassroots level would be answerable to this body. The Ministry is of the view that all such irregularities would be checked once the Panchayati Raj institution takes over the control of rural development activities. This Ministry is vigorously ensuring the election and Constitution of these bodies. The State Government have been directed on these lines. Further State Government are being advised to consider vesting Project Directors of DRDAs with adequate control and disciplinary powers over the block staff.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 11, Para No. 2.11)

The Committee note that the Ministry of Rural Development has been issuing guidelines from time to time to the States/UTs for proper implementation of the working of IRDP at various levels. The Committee also note that the performance report with regard to the key indicators are to be sent by the States/UTs for all the District Rural Development Agencies to the centre in monthly, quarterly and yearly proformas which have been made precise and need oriented during the VIIth Plan. The Committee desire the Ministry to ensure that all the States/UTs are sending the performance report of the DRDAs in the monthly quarterly

and yearly proformas to the Central Government. They also recommend that any deviation made by any States/UTs in this regard should be set right without loss of time.

Reply of the Government

Performance Report in the prescribed proforma are regularly received from all States/UTs. In case of delayed despatch of these reports from any States/UTs, there is prompt follow up action from the Ministry to ensure timely receipt of these performance reports.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 12, Para No. 2.12)

The Committee note that a definite number of inspections to be carried out at different levels by State Officials has been prescribed by the introduction of a qualitative monitoring system since March, 1988. But they are unhappy to note the casual reply given by the representative of the Ministry that the aforesaid, inspections are supposed to be held properly. In their opinion mere issuance of guidelines to the States for conducting a minimum number of inspections on monthly basis would serve little purpose unless and until there is constant persuasion by the Central Government in this regard. The Committee, therefore, desire the Ministry to motivate the State Governments for carrying out inspections meticulously in commensurate with the prescribed norms. They also recommend the ministry to persuade the State Governments to take action against the officials who fail to comply with the orders/guidelines in this regard.

Reply of the Government

The States/UTs Government have been advised to issue instructions to their officials to undertake the required number of inspection as per IRDP guidelines and action against the erring officer should be taken.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 13, Para No. 2.13)

The Committee simultaneously recommend that the State Officials who conduct monthly inspections of the working of IRDP at the grassroot level should be given independent power and authority to carry out such inspections and to arrest any incidence of non-Implementation of the programme, misappropriation of fund etc.

Reply of the Government

The inspecting official has been given authority to inspect the programme implementation from all angles and submit a detailed report. Based on his findings, prompt action is ensured by the concerned authorities. Though there is clear cut instruction in this regard and the same is also insured by the Area Officers of this Ministry under the Area Officers

Scheme, the State/UT Governments have again been reminded accordingly.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 15, Para No. 2.24)

The Committee note that the evaluation study of IRDP conducted by the Reserve Bank of India, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, Institute for Financial Management and Research, World Bank etc. has hailed the programme as a sound and ambitious effort towards poverty alleviation of the rural poor. The Committee would however, like the Ministry to encourage more such evaluation studies in future for the economic betterment of the rural poor including SCs & STs.

Reply of the Government

To find out the effectiveness of IRDP, the evaluation studies on regular intervals are necessary. Apart from concurrent evaluation studies and the studies mentioned in the recommendation, the Ministry has recently entrusted two evaluatory studies on IRDP to independent research institute/N.G.O i.e. study of "Impact of IRDP on SCs/STs in Rajasthan" has been entrusted to IIRM, Jaipur and another study has been entrusted to I.M.M., Bombay on "Total Development Impact of Rural Development Programme". The Ministry would sponsor more such studies in future.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 16, Para No. 2.25)

The Committee note that the Ministry have taken several steps to do away with the shortcomings pointed out by the aforesaid evaluation studies. They are, however, unhappy to note that the number and percentage of SC/ST families given supplementary assistance is not available with the Ministry. The Committee therefore, recommend that henceforth whenever supplementary assistance is given to the beneficiaries, a detailed record of such assistance given to the SC/ST beneficiaries should be maintained meticulously by the Ministry.

Reply of the Government

The proforma in which the performance report is received from States/UTs containing family assisted with the break up of old and new families, the total families has further been bifurcated in further disadvantage groups like scheduled caste/scheduled tribe families, women and Handicapped beneficiaries. However, the States/UTs have now been requested to send monthly report on supplementary assistance provided to SC/ST families.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 17, Para No. 2.26)

The Committee note that the Ministry do not encourage the practice of giving supplementary assistance on a continuous basis and the same is extended only after a case by case scrutiny of the borrowers performance.

The Committee agree with the method adopted by the Ministry for extending supplementary assistance to the beneficiaries. They, however, suggest that while scrutinizing the performance of the borrowers, special attention be paid towards the SC/ST beneficiaries as they are unable to cross the poverty line due to the prevailing social stigma and other vulnerable factors.

Reply of the Government

The factors mentioned above are taken care of while identifying the beneficiaries eligible for supplementary dose. The basic principle which is kept in mind is that the beneficiary who could not cross the poverty line for no fault of their own are considered for supplementary assistance under IRDP.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 19, Para No. 2.33)

The Committee note that so far three rounds of concurrent Evaluation Studies have been undertaken by several Institutions at the behest of the Ministry to streamline and improve the pace of implementation of the programme. They also note that the latest round of Study (January-December, 1989) has pointed out elaborately both positive and negative aspects of the implementation of the Integrated Rural Development Programme. One such negative point that has come to the notice of the committee is the assistance of ineligible families upto the tune of 16%. The Committee, however, note that the Ministry have formulated detailed guidelines on the basis of recommendations of the Expert Committee of the Reserve Bank of India to see that no ineligible family is assisted under the Programme. These guidelines have been communicated to the States from time to time as a result of which, the percentage of ineligible families has come down to 4% only. The Committee feel that assistance to ineligible families under the Integrated Rural Development Programme can very well defeat the purpose for which the programme was initiated i.e., poverty alleviation of the rural poor including SCs and STs. They, therefore, recommend that the Central Government should relentlessly persuade the State Governments to take necessary steps viz. selection of beneficiaries by Gram Panchayats, public display of the list of beneficiaries etc. so that the remaining ineligible families are completely debarred from being assisted under the programme.

Reply of the Government

The Ministry is of firm belief that the selection of beneficiaries should be done very carefully following meticulously the guidelines laid down. The guidelines specifically provide for placing the list in the meeting of village assembly (Gram Sabha). The list of selected beneficiaries is to be displayed on the notice board of village panchayat and block office.

Sufficient time is to be given for filling objections. State Government now been advised to get the guidelines followed strictly.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 21, Para No. 2.39)

The Committee note that the working Group on the Development of Scheduled Tribes has made several good recommendations during the VII and VIII plans for the economic upliftment of Tribal people under IRDP. They also note that although the Ministry taking steps to comply with the recommendations made by the Working Group, they are yet to fully implement the same. For example the desirable per capita investment as the recommendations of the working Group should be fixed at Rs. 8000/- at 1988-89 prices whereas the per capita investment for ST families is only Rs. 6551/- during 1993-94 as per the information furnished by the Ministry. The Committee, therefore, recommend the Ministry to make vigorous efforts to meet the desirable per capita investment as recommended by the Working Group at the earliest.

Reply of the Government

To improve the level of per family investment under IRDP, a number of steps have been taken. Recently, to overcome the problem of under financing which results in low per family investment thereby forcing the income generating activity uneconomic and pushing back the beneficiary into the poverty trap, the prevailing system of evaluating the programme on the basis of physical performance has been changed and henceforth, the performance of the State/UTs would be reviewed on the basis of Credit disbursement. To achieve this goal, credit targets have been fixed for each of the State/UTs. The Credit targets have been fixed keeping in view the optimum subsidy credit ratio of 1:2 which would ensure financing of full unit cost of economic activities. This would also ensure utilisation of permitted subsidy to the fullest extent for each of the disadvantaged group. This system of evaluating the programme on the basis of Credit disbursement has come into vogue from 1995-96 and is expected to give its fruits in the form of increased per family investment in the coming months.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 22, Para No. 2.40)

The Committee also recommend that the Government should take immediate steps to implement the other recommendations of the working Group for the economic betterment of Scheduled Tribes. Special attention in this regard ought to be paid for separate monitoring of the programme for ST beneficiaries, compulsory issuance and maintenance of 'Vikas Patrika' in respect of ST families, establishment and involvement of the organisations of the

ST beneficiaries, assistance to the primitive tribal groups and coverage of ST women in much larger number under the programme.

Reply of the Government

The monitoring of ST beneficiary families is done separately since the coverage and flow of funds and the per family investment for this category forms an integral part of IRDP monitoring. The 'Vikas Patrika' is issued to all the beneficiary families of IRDP including the ST families. As discussed in the explanation of point No. 2.24 that a study has been entrusted to IIRM, Jaipur to assess the Impact of IRDP on SC/STs in Rajasthan which would enable the Ministry to take suitable policy decision in this regard. This Ministry has clearcut guidelines with regard to formation of Organisation of beneficiaries of the programme including the SC/ST beneficiary families. The Chapter 9.3 of the Manual on IRDP and allied programmes of TRYSEM and DWCRA clearly spell out this provision. This is also reviewed by the officers of this Ministry during their inspection visit under Area Officers Scheme.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 23, Para No. 3.12)

From the physical performance statement for the year 1993-94 under IRDP furnished the Committee observe that out of 2534925 families assisted during the aforesaid year in various States 912918 families belong to SC category and 432555 to those of STs. It amount to 36.01% achievement in case of SCs and 17.05% in case of STs thereby meeting the 50% target. But the Committee are unhappy to note that some of the States viz., Assam, Goa, Sikkim, Karnataka, Maharashtra and West Bengal have shown inadequate achievement of physical targets for SCs and STs during 1993-94. The Committee are convinced with the reason put forward by the Ministry i.e. lower population of SCs and STs in the aforesaid States for such under achievement. The Committee, however, desire the Ministry to constantly persuade these states to improve their performance in the coming years.

Reply of the Government

As was explained earlier that due to lower population of SC/STs in these States, the coverage of this class of beneficiaries under IRDP has shown less percentage than the target of 50%. However, these states have been advised to step up the percentage of coverage of SC/ST families.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 24, Para No. 3.13)

The committee note that the North Eastern States have not been able to utilise fully the funds allocated to them during 1993-94 due to poor infrastructural facilities. Similarly due to short release of funds by some other State Government like Bihar, West Bengal etc. these States have also not been able to fully utilise the funds. The Committee, therefore,

urge upon the Ministry of Rural Development to coordinate with all concerned Central Ministries as well as with the North Eastern State Governments for providing adequate infrastructural facilities to these States so that funds provided under the programme are properly utilised for the economic betterment of STs. The Committee also desire the Ministry to refrain the State Governments of Bihar, West Bengal etc. from resorting to the practice of short release of funds.

Reply of the Government

A High Level Committee under the Chairmanship of Additional Secretary of this Ministry has been constituted to review the performance of rural development programmes and the infrastructural development activities in the North Eastern States. The other members of this Committee are drawn from Ministry of Health, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Ministry of Petroleum, Ministry of Home Affairs etc. The Committee would review the Status of rural development programmes and infrastructural development activities on quarterly basis. The Committee would ensure rapid infrastructural development in the North East.

So far as West Bengal is concerned, there is not the case of short state release during 1994-95. The State could not take the entire central allocation during 1994-95 due to slow progress etc. The State had released Rs. 4504.11 lakh as against the central release of Rs. 3295.74 lakh during 1994-95. The central allocation was Rs. 3739.00 lakh. The State did not release the matching share during 1993-94 but has exceeded the central release during 1994-95. Apart from the letters written by Joint Secretary of this Ministry advising the two State Governments of Bihar and West Bengal, there were two letters written to the Chief Minister of Bihar and Chief Secretary of West Bengal by Minister of State (RD) and Secretary (RD) respectively to take personal interest to do away with such shortcomings, may be seen at Annexure VII and VIII.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 26, Para No. 3.15)

The Committee agree with the views expressed by the Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development that "Once a person is brought above the poverty line it is not automatic that he goes on becoming richer and richer" due to inflation. But the committee do not agree with the Statement made by the Secretary that once a person is assisted they do not go to him time and again to harass him whether he is doing well or not. In the opinion of the committee any assistance to SCs, STs and other rural poor is meaningless without proper follow up action. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the persons, especially SCs and STs, assisted under IRDP should be continuous/periodically attended to, to ensure that he is at least doing well with the funds provided to him if not becoming richer and richer.

Reply of the Government

As has already been described in the preceding paras that the basic purpose of monitoring and evaluation is to find out the weaknesses of the programme implementation and locate thrust areas and then to take corrective measures. The Vikas Partrika has been provided to each beneficiary with the view that each visiting officials from blocks and banks would make entries regarding the health of the project. Based on this, all efforts are done to do away the difficulty being faced by the beneficiary. This has clearly been laid down in the IRDP guidelines. Block and District officials monitor the status of the beneficiaries during their periodic visits and inspections.

CHAPTER III

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF GOVERNMENT REPLY

Recommendation (Sl. No. 1, Para No. 1.9)

The Committee note that there is an exclusive Department *i.e.* Department of Rural Development headed by the Secretary and assisted by one Additional Secretary, one Joint Secretary, four Officers of Deputy Commissioner/Deputy Secretary level, two Under Secretaries and seven sections. In the opinion of the Committee it is a well defined system to deal with a programme of IRDP's magnitude. The Committee, desire that out of the seven sections dealing with the programme at least one section should be entrusted to deal with the SCST beneficiaries exclusively under the Programme to facilitate smooth and expeditious disposal of their grievances besides maintaining meticulous record of all the aspects of such beneficiaries.

Reply of the Government

In the IRD Division of this Ministry which looks after IRDP and allied programmes of TRYSEM, DWCRA and Toolkits, there are seven sections. The policy section of the division is also entrusted with the issues related to SC/STs. In addition to this, one Social Security Scheme Cell has been created in the Ministry *vide* Ministry's Office Order No. 60/95 E.I dated 20th April, 1995. The cell will also monitor various aspect of rural development programmes relating to SC/STs. The cell is meant to look into the issues, related with weaker sections.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 3, Para No. 1.11)

The Committee note that those States who take inordinately long time in releasing Central share of funds have been warned against such practices. The Committee feel that the Ministry have also taken steps to motivate the States for releasing Central share of funds. The Committee recommend that after exhausting all the means at their disposal in persuading the States to release without delay Central share of funds, the Ministry may take other suitable measures against the habitual defaulting States and devise method to ensure that the Central assistance is released without fail.

Reply of the Government

Under IRDP, funds are directly released to the DRDAs with a copy of the sanction order to the State headquarters to match the Central funds. The position of release of matching funds by the States is reviewed on

monthly basis. The second instalment of Central funds is released only when the matching funds are released by the respective State or if released otherwise, there is a provision of penal deduction. This aspect is further discussed in action point No. 3.13

Recommendation (Sl. No. 4, Para No. 1.18)

The Committee note that a State Level Coordination Committee has been constituted in each and every State to ensure smooth implementation of Integrated Rural Development Programme as per the guidelines issued by the Centre. They also note that the frequency of the periodic meetings of the SLCC varies from State to State. The Committee desire the Ministry to instruct all the State Governments to conduct periodic meetings of the SLCC at least once in a month so that shortcomings in the implementation of the programme are wiped out in time for the benefit of the rural poor including SCs and STs.

Reply of the Government

As per the existing guidelines of IRDP, there is a provision of SLCC meetings on quarterly basis. The Ministry feels it appropriate as SLCC comprises of 18 heads of various departments of the State Government and a Senior Officer of this Ministry in addition and therefore it would be difficult to organise such meeting on monthly basis. This will also not serve any meaningful purpose. The Ministry is of the view that if the SLCC meet every quarter, would serve the purpose.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 6, Para No. 1.20)

The Committee note that the State Governments are authorised to include any official or non-official as a Member in the State Level Coordination Committee. They recommend the Central Government to instruct the State Governments to include at least one knowledgeable person belonging to the SCST community as official or non-official member in the SLCC so that his views are taken care of while framing policies for the betterment of SCs and STs.

Reply of the Government

The SLCC is basically a Coordinating body among the various line departments which provide inter-departmental linkage, monitoring of rural development programme and provide forum for meaningful dialogue between policy maker and implementors at the field level. Therefore, all the member of the SLCC are the heads of various departments/bodies and not any individual representative is on the board. Moreover, Managing Director SCST Development Corporation is also a member of the SLCC who is there to take care of the issues related to SCSTs.

The involvement of the concerned categories is essential at the district level where the projects are formulated and selection/identification of beneficiaries are finalised. Keeping this in view, the Governing body of DRDAs are represented by SC/ST members and officials related to the bodies meant for upliftment of SC/ST.

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE AND WHICH REQUIRE REITERATION

Recommendation (Sl. No. 5, Para No. 1.19)

The Committee are not satisfied with the reply of the Ministry that Members of the SLCC are required to conduct regular and surprise visits to Districts/Blocks for overseeing the implementation of the programme. The Committee recommend the Ministry to ensure that the SLCC actually conduct periodical and surprise visits to the Districts and Blocks to oversee the implementation of the programme at the grass root level. In the opinion of the Committee it will help in providing not only proper leadership and timely guidance to Districts/Blocks but also a forum for meaningful dialogue between the policy makers at the State level and the implementors at the field level.

Reply of the Government

As has been described in the reply of 1.18 that it is not practical possible to organise SLCC meeting on monthly basis and for the same reasons it is neither advisable for SLCC to take surprise visits to the districts and blocks nor required. The role of SLCC is to provide leadership, guidance and take policy decision within the frame work of IRDP guidelines based on the experience of state rural development department and not to indulge in day to day affairs of programme implementation. The Secretary and other Senior Officers of the Rural Development Department of the States undertake this kind of periodic visits and inspections.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 20, Para No. 2.34)

The Committee also recommend that those State who are not conducting the Below Poverty Line (BPL) survey or not adhering to the suggestions/instructions of the Central Government to ensure non-inclusion of ineligible families under IRDP, should not be given any assistance under the programme.

Reply of the Government

All the State/UTs excepting U.P. and Maharashtra have conducted Below Poverty Line (BPL) survey in compliance with the instructions of

this Ministry. The findings of the Survey have been received from these State/UTs. The Chief Ministers of U.P. and Maharashtra were reminded from Minister of State (Rural Development) in this regard and subsequent reminders from, Secretary (RD) and Additional Secretary (RD) have been sent to these two Governments. the copies of the letter to these Governments may be seen from Annexure I to VI. It may be noted that due to vigorous and relentless efforts made by this Ministry, the percentage of ineligible families being the recipient of assistance under IRDP have come down to 4% from 16%. This could well be eliminated once the strong elected bodies of Panchayati Raj institution takes over the scenario.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 25, Para No. 3.14)

The committee note from the Statement made by the Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development that the Integrated Rural Development Programme sponsored by the Ministry is not getting the force and momentum due to non-implementation of the protective legislation in favour of SCs and STs against so many socio-economic disabilities. The Committee are also constrained to note that funds released under Special Component Plan and Tribal Sub-Plan are not reaching the Districts due to lack of proper administrative arrangements and supervision. The Committee take a serious view of the these lapses on the part of both Central and State Governments. They opine that any Central or Centrally Sponsored scheme aimed at the benefit of SCs and STs would prove useless unless and until protective legislation is adequately implemented a favour of these people and proper administrative arrangements are made to supervise and review the implementation of various programmes. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend that the Ministry of Rural Development in consultation with the Ministry of Welfare and other concerned Ministries should gear up all the machineries at their command for ensuring expeditious removal of these shortcomings for the benefit of needy SCs and STs.

Reply of the Government

Since, the recommendation is basically related to the Ministry of Welfare, this has been sent to Ministry of Welfare for favourable action.

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS AND OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN RECEIVED

Recommendation (Sl. No. 2, Para No. 1.10)

The Committee are happy to note that a Central Level Coordination Committee (CLCC) with well defined functions has been constituted to review the implementation of IRDP and other allied programme. The Committee also note that as a result of CLCC's efforts the State Governments in some cases have arrested, suspended or terminated the services of the corrupt officials. The Committee would like the Ministry to maintain that spirit in future also so that needy rural poor, especially SCs and STs do not suffer on account of corrupt officials.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 10, Para No. 1.34)

The Committee are pained that although the Central Government issued instructions to the State Governments in 1983 for setting up of Grievance Cells to avoid Corruption at grassroot level, the Ministry do not have information about the composition of these cells. The Committee apprehend whether these cells have been established at all. They, therefore, recommend the Ministry to collect detailed data about the establishment and composition of the grievance cells and apprise the Committee accordingly. The Committee also desire that after scrutinizing the data collected from various States, the Government should take suitable action against the State Governments wherever any deviation to their instruction is noticed.

Reply of the Government

The Ministry has written letter to all State/U.Ts to send information about the Status of functioning of these cells at the DRDA level. The Committee would be apprised when the complete information from all States/U.Ts are received.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 14, Para No. 2.14)

The Committee are glad to note that the Ministry of Rural Development have devised many appreciable methods e.g. appointment of Area Officers, conducting Project Directors Workshop, Secretaries Conference etc. to monitor the working of IRDP in various States/UTs. They are also happy to note that Ministry have issued instructions to the State Government/UT Administrations to do away with the shortcomings which came to notice as

a result of the inspections conducted by the Area Officers of the Ministry. The Committee feel that it is a step in the right direction and would like to encourage the Ministry to keep up their efforts in future also.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 18, Para No. 2.27)

The Committee note that the feed back received in the Ministry has shown that most of the States have passed on necessary instructions to their respective District Rural Development Agencies to revised guidelines as desired by the Ministry for better implementation of IRDP. The Committee also note the Ministry to keep a vigilant watch upon tea states through the CLCC and the area Officers to ensure that the State Governments are adhering to the advice/instructions given to them under the new initiatives. The Committee desire the Ministry to keep up the monitoring system in future also. They also recommend the Ministry to persuade those States who have not passed on the necessary instructions to the DRDA, to do the needful immediately.

NEW DELHI;
February, 1996
Phalguna, 1917(S)

PARAS RAM BHARDWAJ,
Chairman,
Committee on the Welfare
of Scheduled Castes and
Scheduled Tribes.

APPENDIX

(Vide para 4 of the Introduction)

Analysis of the Action Taken by Government on recommendation contained in the 45th Report (10th Lok Sabha) of the Committee on the Welfare of SCs and STs.

1.	Total number of the recommendations	26
2.	Recommendations/Observations that have been accepted by Government	
	Numbers.....	15
	Percentage to total	57.69%
3.	Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Governments replies	
	Numbers.....	4
	Percentage to total	15.38%
4.	Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration	
	Numbers.....	3
	Percentage to total	11.53%
5.	Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of Government have not been received	
	Numbers.....	4
	Percentage to total	15.38%