

COMMITTEE ON THE WELFARE OF
SCHEDULED CASTES AND
SCHEDULED TRIBES

(2004-2005)

(FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA)

SECOND REPORT

ON

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
AND MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty-fifth Report (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes – Working of National Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC).

Presented to Lok Sabha on 23.12.2004

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 23.12.2004

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

December, 2004 / Agrahayana, 1926 (Saka)

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**COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE WELFARE OF SCHEDULED
CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES (2004-2005)**

Dr. Satyanarayan Jatiya - Chairman

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Secretariat

1. Shri R.C. Ahuja, Joint Secretariat
2. Shri Gopal Singh, Deputy Secretary
3. Ms. J.C. Namchy, Under Secretary

INTRODUCTION

I, 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 Second Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) on Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in their Twenty-fifth Report (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and Ministry of Tribal Affairs - Working of National Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC).

2. The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee on 16 December, 2004.

3. The Report has been divided into the following chapters: -

- | | |
|-----|--|
| I | Report |
| II | Recommendations/ Observations which have been accepted by the Government. |
| III | Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of replies of the Government. |
| IV | Recommendations /Observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration. |
| V | Recommendations / Observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been received. |

4. An analysis of the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty-fifth Report of the Committee is given

in the Appendix. It would be observed therefrom that out of 22 recommendations/observations made in the Report, 7 recommendations i.e. 31.82 per cent have been accepted by the Government. The Committee do not desire to pursue 8 recommendations i.e. 36.36 per cent in view of replies of the Government. There are 7 recommendations i.e. 31.82 per cent in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require further reiteration.

NEW DELHI
17 December, 2004
Agrahayana, 1926 (Saka)

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA
Chairman
Committee on the Welfare
of Scheduled Castes and
Scheduled Tribes

CHAPTER – I

REPORT

1.1 This Report of the Committee deals with the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations and observations contained in the 25th Report (13th Lok Sabha) of the Committee on “Working of National Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC).”

1.2 The 25th Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 9th May, 2003. It contained 22 recommendations. Replies of the Government in respect of all these recommendations have been examined and categorised as under: -

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

1.3 The Committee will now deal with Action Taken Replies of the Government which need reiteration or merit comments: -

Recommendation (Sl. No. 4, Para No. 2.9)

1.4 The Committee note that the NSCFDC and the NSTFDC provide financial assistance through various SCAs, nominated by the respective State/UT Governments for this purpose. The Committee are of the view that implementation of various schemes of the Corporations should not be left only to the SCAs. Some other governmental and non-governmental agencies should also be assigned this work. These bodies should be authorized to undertake the task of identification of beneficiaries and carry out implementation, co-ordination, supervision, monitoring and review of the programmes under various schemes.

Reply of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

1.5 The NSFDC also implements schemes through State Organizations, other than Scheduled Castes Development Corporations, which are nominated by the State Governments. Some of these Organizations are Leather Industries Development Corporation in Maharashtra and Handloom & Handicraft Corporation in Madhya Pradesh, Industrial Development Corporation in Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram Urban Co-operative Bank & Khadi & Village Industries Board in Mizoram.

Reply of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs

1.6 The recommendations of the Committee for providing assistance through some other governmental agencies besides the SCAs is already in vogue in NSTFDC. For undertaking procurement and marketing of agricultural/ minor

forest produce and related activities, NSTFDC provides loans to the Central/State owned organizations (e.g. TRIFED etc.) engaged in this field.

Since the financial assistance from NSTFDC at present are being channellised through the state level channelling agencies nominated by the respective State/UT Government, therefore the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has sought comments of the State Government on the matter of associating Established Voluntary Agencies and Non-Governmental Organisations under NSTFDC's assisted schemes.

Comments of the Committee

1.7 The Committee in their earlier recommendation had desired that implementation of various schemes of the Corporations should not be left only to the SCAs. Some other Governmental and non-Governmental agencies should also be assigned this work. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in their action taken reply have stated that the NSFDC also implement schemes through State Organisations, other than Scheduled Castes Development Corporations, which are nominated by the State Governments. However, nothing has been said about the steps taken to involve NGOs in the work. Therefore, the Committee would like to be apprised of the steps taken/ proposed to be taken to ensure involvement of NGOs and other Self Help Groups to undertake the task of identification of beneficiaries and carry out implementation of the programmes under various schemes. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs, have sought comments of the State Governments on the matter of associating Established Voluntary Agencies and Non-Governmental Organisations under

NSTFDC's assisted schemes. The Committee would like to know the final outcome of the efforts made by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs in this regard.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 9, Para No. 2.26)

1.8 The Committee note that the NSCFDC and the NSTFDC maintain co-ordination/liaison and flow of funds for economic development of SCs and STs whose annual family income is below double the poverty line limit by channelling their funds through State Level Channelling Agencies which are required to identify and formulate the schemes and examine and recommend them to the Corporations for considerations. As on 31 January, 2002 the NSCFDC and the NSTFDC had disbursed Rs. 850.40 crore under various schemes covering 2,79,032 beneficiaries. The Committee are unhappy to note that there are considerable variations from State to State in the net disbursements to the beneficiaries under various schemes. The Committee are of the view that unless liberal and sympathetic attitude is adopted towards SCs/STs, the situation will not improve. The Committee desire that particular attention may be given to those States/ Union Territories where disbursements to the beneficiaries are very less. The Committee hardly need to point out that mere provision for lending funds in favour of SCs/ STs, will have no meaning unless all the States/UTs actually utilise them for the approved purpose sincerely. The achievements relating to disbursement of funds and the number of SC/ST beneficiaries are not satisfactory in many of the States. The Committee desire that the Corporations should be more conscious in future about their social

obligation towards the SCs/STs in the matter of disbursement of loans to them. The Committee also urge upon the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and the Ministry of Tribal Affairs to issue instructions to all the State Government about timely disbursement of loans to SCs/ STs under the NSCFDC and the NSTFDC schemes.

Reply of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

1.9 Release of funds by the NSFDC to the State Channelling Agencies are subject to:-

- (i) Execution of General Loan Agreement by the SCAs.
- (ii) Availability of adequate State Government/Bank Guarantee.
- (iii) Acceptance of Letter of Intent by an authorized official of SCA.
- (iv) Satisfactory level of utilization of funds already released to the SCAs.
- (v) Satisfactory level of repayment of NSFDC's dues.
- (vi) Submission of list of selected beneficiaries by the SCAs.
- (vii) Tie-up of State/UT Share (Subsidy & Margin Money).
- (viii) Identification of assets & suppliers as per beneficiary's choice and in conformity to the terms & conditions of sanction.

1.10 The above conditions are specified by the NSFDC in order to ensure that the SCAs are in a position to utilize the funds released as soon as possible thereby passing on the benefits to the recipients at the earliest.

1.11 The NSFDC is sometimes compelled to withhold releases to some of the SCAs whose utilization of funds already released is poor or where the State Government concerned has not provided adequate guarantee cover.

1.12 All State Governments/UTs have been requested to take appropriate action on the recommendations of the Committee where a marked gap has been observed between the entitled Notional Allocation and the actual Net Disbursement of NSFDC's financial assistance (as on 31.03.03):

(Rs. in crores)

State/UT	Notional Allocation	Net Disbursement	Shortfall
Uttar Pradesh	233.64	91.73	141.91
West Bengal	150.63	33.73	116.90
Bihar	132.85	30.10	102.75
Rajasthan	91.19	16.50	74.69
Tamilnadu	89.18	36.18	53.00
Orissa	80.26	28.81	51.45
Madhya Pradesh	160.22	115.65	44.57
Punjab	46.18	16.25	29.93
Maharashtra	112.22	84.37	27.85
Haryana	26.13	19.79	6.34

Reply of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs

1.13 All the State level Channelling Agencies (SCAs) are periodically being requested for availment of concessional financial assistance from NSTFDC. Besides, during visits to the States/UTs and meetings with the concerned officials of SCAs, the issue of availment of financial assistance, timely disbursements of loans to STs and review of implementation of sanctioned schemes/projects is invariably discussed. If any SCA wants to avail funds from NSTFDC in addition to its notional allocation, such requests are also being considered favourably

subject to the SCA(s) fulfilling the norms stipulated for sanction/disbursement of funds.

1.14 The concerned State Governments have also been requested by the Ministry for timely implementation of the NSTFDC assisted scheme.

Comments of the Committee

1.15 The reply of the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment in response to the recommendation of the Committee is not at all convincing. The Ministry have stated that NSFDC have specified certain conditions in order to ensure that SCAs are in a position to utilize the funds released as soon as possible thereby passing on the benefits to the recipients at the earliest. They have also admitted that the NSFDC are sometimes compelled to withhold releases to some of the SCAs whose utilisation of funds already released is poor or where the State Governments concerned have not provided adequate guarantee cover. Similarly the Ministry of Tribal Affairs have stated that NSTFDC provide funds, other than notional allocation, to SCAs subject to the SCAs fulfilling the norms stipulated for sanction/disbursement of funds. The Committee note that the release of funds by NSCFDC and NSTFDC to SCAs depends on the fulfillment of certain conditions, which, if not fulfilled become the root cause for under-utilisation of funds as is apparent from the Table showing Actual Net Disbursement of NSCFDC's Financial Assistance as on 31.3.2003. The Committee are, therefore, of the opinion that while ensuring fulfillment of these conditions, NSCFDC and NSTFDC should take a lenient view in releasing the

funds to SCAs so that the funds may not remain under utilized and may reach the needy people in time.

1.16 The Committee are of the view that NSFDC (now NSCFDC and NSTFDC) was established with the sole purpose of providing institutional finance for self employment activities of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes at a concessional rate of interest. The Committee feel that NSCFDC and NSTFDC have not been able to meet with success in fulfilling this purpose as they are not acting differently from other commercial banks/institutions in the disbursement of loans to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The Committee, therefore, reiterate that NSCFDC and NSTFDC should be realistic towards their social obligation and review their approach in this regard.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 10, Para No. 2.37)

1.17 The Committee find that a large number of loan applications are rejected because of inadequate scrutiny of applications by the concerned SCAs. The Committee feel that SCs and STs have to be initiated into commercial activities. The Corporations should cover under their schemes not only those SC/ST persons who are below the poverty line but also those who are above the poverty line and particularly the young blood among the SCs and STs should be brought into such activities and no obstacle should be put in their path. While preference should be given to those SC/ST persons who are below the poverty line, those who are above the poverty line and want to adopt these schemes should also be permitted to do so. The suggestion about giving loans to all SC/ST applicants irrespective of their income criteria has been agreed during the evidence by the

representatives of the Ministry with the promise that they would “go into the details of it.” The Committee, may be apprised of the action taken in this regard urgently.

Reply of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

1.18 Since its inception NSFDC has been covering beneficiaries up to double the poverty line income limits i.e. presently Rs. 40,000/- p.a. family income in rural areas and Rs. 55,000/- p.a. family income in urban areas. As regards the suggestion of giving loan to applicants irrespective of their income criteria, the matter is under consideration of the Ministry.

Reply of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs

1.19 The observation of the Committee does not pertain to NSTFDC since according to the data furnished by NSTFDC (in respect of Para 9) about the loan applications received, sanctioned and rejected, only one sanction was cancelled as per the request of the Channelling agency.

1.20 As regards extending financial assistance to the STs having income above the poverty line, it is clarified that under NSTFDC's assisted schemes financial assistance is being extended to Scheduled Tribes persons having annual family income upto double the poverty line limit. While setting up NSFDC in 1989, a conscious decision was taken by the Government to restrict the benefit of concessional finance to persons belonging to SCs/STs category with income upto double the poverty line.

Comments of the Committee

1.21 The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in their reply have informed that the suggestion of giving loan to applicants irrespective of their income criteria is under consideration of the Ministry. The Committee would like the Ministry to take urgent action on the recommendation and apprise the Committee of the decision taken at the earliest. The Committee also urge the Ministry of Tribal Affairs to consider the matter afresh so that more and more tribal people could be covered under the scheme.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 14, Para No. 2.44)

1.22 The Committee recommend that for understanding the difficulties in implementing the schemes, the Corporations should initiate review meetings and make vigorous correspondence with the States/UTs at the appropriate level. Visits to those States/UTs where the implementation is slow may be undertaken. The Committee also desire that the NSCFDC and the NSTFDC should intensively and vigorously monitor the implementation of the schemes to achieve their objectives.

Reply of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

1.23 Review & monitoring of NSFDC's schemes has been activated through:

- * Site visits by Zonal Officers of NSFDC
- * Site visits by Teams comprising of Officers of NSFDC's Headquarters & Zonal Offices.

- * Review of schemes by meeting of NSFDC officials with MDs of SCAs.
- * Review meetings with Secretaries (Welfare) of States/UTs.

Reply of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs

1.24 Review of the NSTFDC's assisted schemes is regularly being done and for this purpose periodic visits are undertaken to various States/UTs. Efforts are being made to increase such reviews and for wider monitoring of the implementation of NSTFDC assisted schemes.

Comments of the Committee

1.25 The Committee are not satisfied with the reply of the Government. They are of the view that mere visits to the States are not enough to improve the situation. The Ministries need to go into the reasons for the States/Union Territories not being able to implement the schemes and find out ways and means for overcoming the hurdles in implementing the schemes and in achieving their objectives. The Committee, therefore, would like the Government to take concrete steps in this direction and apprise them of the same within three months.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 15, Para No. 2.45)

1.26 The Committee suggest that instead of depending only on the State Governments to find guarantee, the Corporations may explore the possibility of securing guarantee from various banks for this purpose. They may also consider having tie ups with some commercial banks, public sector banks and non-

banking financing corporations in the country. The projects should be made so viable that the banks get attracted. The Corporations should act like leading institutions and open up new vistas, new areas and initiate new schemes for the SC/ST population otherwise they cannot come up quickly to the mainstream.

Reply of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

1.27 The action taken in this regard since the observations of the Committee (dated 6.2.2002) are indicated below:-

- Preparation of a medium-term Strategic Plan (2003-2013) of NSFDC.
- Preparation of 101 Opportunity Profiles, especially for the target groups, covering economic activities in emerging sectors.
- Enhancement of ceiling-limit for Micro-Credit (From Rs. 10,000 per unit to Rs. 25,000 per unit).
- Enhancement of income-limit for availing loans (Annual Family Income –Limit raised to Rs. 40,000 for rural areas and Rs. 55,000 for urban areas).
- Reduction in Interest Rates.
- Interest rates reduced by 1% for Term Loans and 7% for Micro-Credit Finance (Now payable by the beneficiary @ 5% for Micro-Credit Finance and 6% or 8% for Term Loans depending on the project-cost).
- Standardization of eligibility norms for institutions imparting skill-training and enhancement of quantum of grants to cover 100% cost of training.

- Addition of Madhya Pradesh Hastshilp Evam Hathkargha Vikas Nigam in the list of Channelling Agencies.
- Baseline Household Sample Surveys of SC-concentrated Districts.
- District Credit Plans for SC-concentrated Districts.

Reply of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs

1.28 NSTFDC's guidelines already have a provision for release of funds against bank guarantee. Therefore, the state level Channelling agencies are at liberty to either arrange State Government Guarantee/ or Bank Guarantee for availing the financial assistance from NSTFDC. The Corporation is further exploring the possibility of opening new vistas through the SCAs of financing in association with other financial institutions for undertaking developmental schemes in operation.

Comments of the Committee

1.29 The Committee find that their earlier recommendation made at para No. 2.45 of the Report has not been addressed fully by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. The Ministry have responded to only second part of the said recommendation. They are yet to respond to the recommendation regarding the possibility of securing guarantee from various banks/commercial banks for the purpose. The Committee would like to have the reply of the Government in this regard.

1.30 The Ministry of Tribal Affairs in their reply have stated that the Corporation is further exploring the possibility of opening new vistas through SCAs of financing in association with other financial institutions for undertaking

development schemes in operation. The Committee would like to be apprised of the progress made in this direction and action if any, taken in this regard.

Recommendation (Sl.No. 16, Para No. 3.5)

1.31 The Committee note that in remote areas, SCs /STs are not generally aware of the details of various welfare programmes /schemes launched by the Government, due to their general ignorance and leading a life in isolation. Therefore, steps should be taken to popularise various schemes among them by distributing literature and pamphlets in vernacular languages.

Reply of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

1.32 Awareness Campaign Strategy of the Corporation during the current financial year includes:

- * Print Media Campaigns covering (i) schematic details, (ii) eligibility norms, (iii) contact-addresses and (iv) beneficiary's duties & privileges under the schemes.
- * Audio-Publicity Campaigns through All India Radio, during peak hours, in the SC-concentrated States/UTs.
- * Special Awareness Campaigns in SC-concentrated Districts [taken up so far in Cooch Bihar, Sonebhadra, Jalandhar, Nawanshahar, Jalpaiguri, South 24 Parganas, Faridkot, Hoshiarpur, Sitapur, Hardoi, Bankura, Solan, Birbhum, Unnao, Sirmour, Rae Bareilly, Nadia, Datia and Ujjain].
- * Exhibitions & Fairs [the biggest being the Social Development Fair at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi].
- * Dissemination of Leaflets & Lending Policy Documents.

Reply of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs

1.33 Since incorporation, NSTFDC has been according high priority to publicity of its programmes/schemes. For this purpose, periodic advertisements are released by NSTFDC through various national/regional newspapers, magazines, souvenirs etc.

1.34 Further, steps have been taken in printing of NSTFDC's assisted guidelines in regional languages through the concerned SCAs for which the entire cost would be borne by NSTFDC. NSTFDC also launched its Website (www.nstfdc.nic.in) in April, 2003 containing the details of its assisted programmes.

1.35 Further, NSTFDC has been actively participating in the organization of public functions where the beneficiaries are handed over physical assets/loan amounts. So far, a number of such functions have been organised in the States of Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The activities of the Corporation are also highlighted in these functions. The Corporation intends to organise more such functions in future which would help disseminate the details of NSTFDC schemes among the target group.

Comments of the Committee

1.36 The Committee are happy to learn that some steps for publicising the schemes have been taken by the concerned agencies to make them popular. They, however, feel that the steps taken so far do not appear to be sufficient and that the schemes have not been properly publicised by the concerned agencies. In the opinion of the Committee, they have only covered the Scheduled Caste

and Scheduled Tribe people living in urban areas. The targeted groups should also include those living in rural and remote areas and in their case it should be kept in mind that many of them do not have access to newspapers or television/radio sets and hence are unaware of various publicity campaigns carried out by the Government. The Committee feel that the schemes should also be popularised through personal interaction – by the word of mouth, showing of films/film slides or by short plays. The Committee, therefore, urge the Government to involve the representatives of village panchayats and NGOs in popularising the schemes. As the audio-visual media has more impact on the viewers, the Committee feel that stress should be laid on broadcasting/telecasting of films/programmes relating to the schemes throughout the nation on official and non-official electronic media.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 18, Para No. 3.7)

1.37 The Committee note that training programmes for the unemployed SC/ST persons are being undertaken by reputed and established training centres through the Corporations. Therefore, no grant for setting up of training centres has been sanctioned. The Committee feel that it is not sufficient to provide training to SC/ST candidates only through well established and reputed centres. As these centres are situated in urban areas, they must be taking candidates from other categories also whereas a large number of SC/ST persons are living in backward and remote areas from where their access to these centres is difficult, if not impossible. Keeping in view the magnitude of the problem, the

Corporations should establish their own training centre also and associate NGOs in the implementation of the training programmes. The main advantage of involvement of NGOs is that they can interact directly with the needy SC/ST persons and function more effectively at the grass root level. In the opinion of the Committee the involvement of NGOs will benefit more and more SC/ST persons and thus help achieve the objectives of the programmes.

Reply of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

1.38 The NSFDC has standardized its norms for skill training programmes from 01.10.02 under which 100% grants will be provided to Government & Semi Government Skill Training Institutions for conducting Programmes in emerging trades such as Apparel Design, fashion technology, Advanced Software Technology etc. Due care is being taken to cover candidates both from the urban and rural areas.

Reply of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs

1.39 Since the financial assistance from NSTFDC at present are being channellised through the state level channelling agencies nominated by the respective State/UT Government, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has sought comments of the State Governments on the matter of associating Established Voluntary Agencies and Non-Governmental Organisations under NSTFDC's assisted schemes.

Comments of the Committee

1.40 The Committee are not satisfied with the reply of the Government. In their earlier recommendation, the Committee had desired that NGOs should also be associated in the implementation of training programmes. While going through the action taken reply, the Committee note that the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment have mentioned only about the 100% grants which will be provided to Government and Semi-Government Skill Training Institutions for conducting Programmes but nothing has been mentioned as to whether the NGOs would be associated in implementation of training programmes or not. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs have informed that since the financial assistance from NSTFDC at present are being channellised through the State level Channelling Agencies nominated by the respective State/Union Territory Government, they have sought comments of the State Governments on the matter of associating Established Voluntary Agencies and NGOs under NSTFDC's schemes. In view of the importance of the scheme, the Committee are of the view that the Government should impress upon the States/Union Territories to make all out efforts to provide sufficient training and infrastructure facilities to Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribe candidates on priority basis. Reiterating their earlier recommendation, the Committee expect that the Government would make sincere efforts to involve NGOs in the implementation of training programmes.

NEW DELHI

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA
Chairman

17th December, 2004
Agrahayana, 1926 (Saka)

Committee on the Welfare
of Scheduled Castes and
Scheduled Tribes