

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINORITY AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:348

ANSWERED ON:25.02.2015

BUDDHIST MINORITIES

Pal Shri Jagdambika

Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the genuine socio-economic backwardness of the Buddhist minorities in India, particularly in Uttar Pradesh; and

(b) if so, the details of the measures taken by the Government to ameliorate the condition of the Buddhists living below poverty line?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI)

(a) The Government had constituted the National Commission for Religious and Linguistic Minorities (NCRLM) to suggest inter-alia criteria for identification of socially and economically backward sections among religious and linguistic minorities (including Buddhists) and to recommend measures for their welfare, including reservation in education and government employment all over the country including Uttar Pradesh. The report of the NCRLM was tabled in the Lok Sabha on 18.12.2009. The report of NCRLM is available on the website of this Ministry at www.minorityaffairs.gov.in.

(b) This Ministry is implementing the following schemes for amelioration of all notified six minorities and also including Buddhists living below poverty line:

(i) Multi-sectoral Development Programme: The Multi-sectoral Development Programme (MsDP) is an area development initiative to address the development deficits of minority concentrated areas by creating socio-economic infrastructure and providing basic amenities.

(ii) Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme: Under this Scheme, scholarships are awarded to minority students including Buddhists below poverty line up to class X, who have secured not less than 50% marks in the previous final examination and the annual income of their parents / guardian from all sources does not exceed Rs. 1.00 Lakh. 30% of the scholarships are earmarked for girl students.

(iii) Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme:- Under this Scheme, scholarships are awarded to minority students including Buddhists below poverty line from class XI onwards who have secured not less than 50% marks or equivalent grade in the previous final examination and the annual income of whose parents/guardian from all sources does not exceed Rs. 2.00 lakh. 30% of the scholarships are earmarked for girl students.

(iv) Merit-cum-Means Based Scholarship Scheme: The Merit-cum-Means Based Scholarship Scheme provides financial assistance to the poor and meritorious minority students including Buddhists below poverty line pursuing professional studies at graduate and post-graduate levels. 30% of the scholarships are earmarked for girl students.

(v) Free Coaching & Allied Scheme : This scheme is to assist students belonging to the minority communities including Buddhists below poverty line by way of special coaching for qualifying examinations for admission in technical/ professional courses such as engineering, medical and Competitive examinations for recruitment to Group 'A' , 'B' and 'C' services and other equivalent posts under the Central and State governments including public sector undertakings.

(vi) Maulana Azad National Fellowship - The Fellowship is provided to students from minority communities including Buddhists below poverty line, as notified by the Central Government to pursue higher studies such as M.Phil and Ph.D. The Fellowship covers all Universities/Institutions recognized by the University Grants Commission (UGC).The Fellowship is on the pattern of UGC Fellowships awarded to research students pursuing regular and full time M.Phil and Ph.D. courses. 30% of the scholarships are earmarked for eligible girl students.

(vii) Padho Pardesh- Interest Subsidy on Educational Loans – This scheme is to award interest subsidy to meritorious students belonging to economically weaker sections of notified minority communities including Buddhists below poverty line so as to provide them better opportunities for higher education abroad at Masters and Ph.D levels and enhance their employability.

(viii) Support to minority candidates clearing Prelims conducted by UPSC/SSC, State Public Service Commission (PSC) etc. – This Scheme provides financial support to the minority candidates including Buddhists below poverty line clearing prelims conducted by Union Public Service Commission, Staff Selection Commission and State Public Service Commissions to adequately equip them to compete for appointment to Civil Services in the Union and the State Governments and to increase the representation of the

minorities in the Civil Services.

(ix) Seekho aur Kamao; –"Seekho aur Kamao" is a scheme which aims at upgrading the skills of minority youth including Buddhists below poverty line in various modern/ traditional skills depending upon their qualification, present economic trends and market potential, which can earn them a suitable employment or make them suitably skilled to go for self-employment.

(x) Nai Roshni: The objective of the scheme is to empower and instill confidence in women including Buddhists below poverty line, by providing knowledge, tools and techniques for interacting with Government systems, banks, and intermediaries at all levels so that they are emboldened to move out of the confines of home and community and assume leadership roles and assert their rights, collectively and individually, in accessing services, facilities, skills and opportunities besides claiming their due share in development benefits for improving their lives and living conditions.

(xi) Following schemes are being implemented for notified minorities including Buddhists below poverty line by National Minorities & Finance Development Corporation (NMDFC):

a). Concessional Credit Schemes

i. Term Loan:- Term Loans ranging from a maximum of Rs.20 lakhs to Rs.30 lakhs are offered at concessional interest rates depending on the income criteria. The scheme is implemented through State Channelising Agencies (SCAs).

ii. Micro Finance:- The micro-finance scheme is primarily aimed at extending concessional credit to women beneficiaries. The scheme is implemented through SCAs and NGOs.

iii. Education Loan:- Educational Loans for professional and technical courses ranging from Rs.3 lakhs to Rs.20 lakhs in India and upto Rs.30 lakhs for studying abroad are offered at concessional interest rates depending on the duration of the Course and the gender of the applicant as the rates are lower for female applicants.

iv. Mahila Samridhi Yojana:- Skill development training is imparted to group of women in women friendly trades. Training period is of maximum 6 months with training and raw material cost of upto Rs.1,500/- per women and stipend @ Rs.1,000/- per women. During the period of training, the women are formed into Self Help Group, followed by infusion of micro-credit maximum upto Rs.1.00 lacs per member for the purpose of using the skill developed during the training, for income generation activities.

b). Promotional Schemes:-

i. Vocational Training Scheme:- The Vocational Training Scheme of NMDFC aims at imparting skills to the targeted individual beneficiaries leading to wage/self employment. The scheme is implemented through the State Channelizing Agencies (SCAs) which organize need based skill development training with the help of local Govt owned/recognized training institutes in trades having potential wage/self employment. Under the scheme, the training institutes /implementing agencies are being assisted to ensure employment of at least 80% trainees with at least 50% in the organized sector.

Besides, NMDFC has also entered into MOU with Maruti Suzuki India Limited (MSIL) for extending driving training to members of the minority community including Buddhists below poverty line leading to their wage employment.

Recently, Maulana Azad National Academy for Skills (MANAS) has been registered by NMDFC as a non-profit society on 11th November, 2014 on the occasion of 125th Birth Anniversary Celebrations of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to promote Entrepreneurship & trade wise, to impart composite training in Entrepreneurship & Skill Development Programs (ESDPs) and then link these beneficiaries for concessional credit.

ii. Marketing Assistance Scheme:- The Marketing Assistance Scheme is meant for individual crafts persons, beneficiaries of NMDFC as well as SHGs and is implemented mainly through the SCAs. The scheme envisages promoting sale and marketing of their products at remunerative prices through participation /organizing exhibitions at State/District level.