

## **Welfare of Weaker Sections**

50. The National scheme for Liberalisation and Rehabilitation of Scavengers aims to provide alternate dignified and viable occupation to each scavenger and his/her dependents. The scheme has been modified w.e.f. 1.4.1996. The modification, inter-alia, includes adoption of TRYSEM norms for training, release of central assistance directly to Scheduled Castes Development Corporations, higher average project cost of Rs.50,000 per beneficiary and adoption of cluster approach in the training and rehabilitation programme. A sum of Rs.90 crore has been provided in 1997-98 (RE).

51. A National Safai Karamchari Finance and Development Corporation has been incorporated on 24.1.1997 and will soon embark in its activities. Under the Scheme, loans for higher education will be provided to students from safai karamchari community for pursuing higher education besides providing assistance in self-employment ventures and technical and entrepreneurial skills. The corporation has sanctioned a total of 1180 schemes costing Rs.869.90 crore which on completion will help 2,19,921 beneficiaries.

52. The National Backward Classes Finance Development Corporation set up with the objective

of promoting economic development of the backward classes has sanctioned loan amounting to Rs.501 crore of which Rs.249 crore was disbursed as on 31.1.1998 benefiting 1,44,791 beneficiaries creating wage employment for 1,07,439 persons.

53. The National Commission for Minorities has been reconstituted w.e.f. 26.11.1996. Special attention is focused on effective implementation of 15 Point Programme for welfare of minorities. The National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation set up in 1994 has sanctioned schemes worth Rs.188 crore for 46,035 beneficiaries and disbursed an amount of Rs.94 crore benefiting 27621 persons as on 31.1.1998.

54. The State Governments look after the welfare and development of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes (SCs/STs) through the Special Component Plan and Tribal Sub Plan with the support of Special Central Assistance provided by the Central Government. On going schemes like pre-matric and post-matric scholarship and providing hostel facilities to SC boys and girls continued to be operative during 1997-98. An outlay of Rs.2 crore for Pre-Matric and Rs.39 crore for Post-Matric Scholarship Schemes has been provided during 1997-98 (RE).