

the ecological performance of industries. To achieve the aforesaid objective, these policies envisage promotion of clean and low waste technologies, waste minimization, reuse or recycling, environment audit, environment impact assessment, development of load based standards, fiscal measures, eco-labelling / certifications, integration of environmental concerns in sectoral policies etc. In addition, polluter pays principle, precautionary approach and use of economic principles in environment decision making are also ingrained in these policies. To implement these policies, there exists a robust legislative, regulatory and institutional framework in the country.

The Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-2017) of the Government of India also emphasizes *inter-alia* on ecologically sustainable industrial growth by mainstreaming and promoting green businesses, creation of a green technology fund, promotion of green products and disclosure of environment performance including sustainable environment management in micro, small and medium enterprises.

Implementation of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989

*151. DR. BHALCHANDRA MUNGEKAR: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry agrees that the implementation of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) (POA) Act, 1989 is very poor, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(b) the steps the Ministry proposes to take to implement the said Act more effectively?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI THAAWAR CHAND GEHLOT): (a) and (b) Provisions of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) (PoA) Act, 1989 are implemented by the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations. However, Central Government has been advising them from time to time to implement the Act in letter and spirit with specific emphasis on sensitization and training of the police personnel/law enforcement agencies, minimizing delays in investigation of cases of atrocities against Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) and improving the quality of investigation, undertaking programmes for creating awareness among vulnerable sections of the society and legal recourse open to them, identification of atrocity prone areas as an ongoing process, setting up of exclusive special courts for speedy trial of cases under the Act and review of cases ending in acquittal.

In pursuance of relevant provisions of the PoA Act, an Annual Report on the measures taken by the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations and the Government of India itself is also placed on the Table of both Houses of Parliament. The Annual Report up to the calendar year 2012 has already been laid on the Table of both the Houses of Parliament.

Towards effective implementation of the PoA Act, Central assistance is also provided to the concerned State Governments and Union Territory Administrations mainly for functioning and strengthening of the SC and ST Protection Cells and Special Police Stations, setting up and functioning of exclusive Special Courts, relief and rehabilitation of atrocity victims and awareness generation. During 2013-14, Central assistance of about ₹ 128 crore was provided to them. The minimum scale of relief and rehabilitation for the affected persons as prescribed in the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Rules, 1995, which was between ₹20,000/- to ₹ 200,000/-, depending upon the nature of offence, has been raised twice in December, 2011 and in June, 2014, by amending the said Rules, and is now between ₹ 75,000/- to ₹ 7,50,000/-.

A Committee under the Chairpersonship of Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment constituted in March 2006, and comprising of members from Ministries of Social Justice & Empowerment, Home Affairs, Tribal Affairs, Law and Justice, Department of Justice, National Commission for Scheduled Castes, National Commission for Scheduled Tribes and three non-official Members (two amongst SCs and One amongst STs) also reviews implementation status of the PoA Act in the States and Union Territories. The Committee has so far held twenty one meetings wherein implementation of the two Acts in 24 States and 4 Union Territories has been reviewed.

Whereas most of the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations have designated District Courts of Session as Special Courts for trial of cases under the PoA Act, for ensuring speedy trial of cases under the Act, 189 exclusive Special Courts have also been set up by the States namely Andhra Pradesh (23), Bihar (11), Chhattisgarh (6), Gujarat (25), Karnataka (8), Kerala (2), Madhya Pradesh (43), Rajasthan (25), Tamil Nadu (4), Uttar Pradesh (40) and Uttarakhand (2).

Further, SC/ST Protection Cells have also been set up in the States and Union Territories of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Andaman and Nicobar

Islands, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, NCT of Delhi and Puducherry, besides Special Police Stations for registration of complaints of offences against SCs and STs having been set up in the States of Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Kerala and Madhya Pradesh.

The available data of National Crime Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, indicates insignificant variation in the number of cases registered during 2012 *i.e.* 39,512, *vis-a-vis* cases registered during 2011 *i.e.* 39,401, under the PoA Act in conjunction with the IPC in the country.

Further, to deliver members of SCs and STs, greater justice as well as be an enhanced deterrence to the offenders, the President on recommendations of the Government and in exercise of powers conferred by clause (1) of article 123 of the Constitution had promulgated the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Ordinance, 2014 on 04.03.2014. To replace the said Ordinance with an Act of Parliament, the Central Government has decided to introduce the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Bill, 2014 in Parliament and the Bill has been introduced in the Lok Sabha on 16.07.2014.

The Government of India is, thus, making earnest efforts towards effective implementation and further strengthening of the PoA Act.

Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007

*152. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that District Tribunals (DTs) to hear appeals of senior citizens under the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 have not been established in Maharashtra and rest of the country, if so, the details thereof and reasons for this laxity; and

(b) the action Government has taken or propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI THAAWAR CHAND GEHLOT): (a) and (b) Under the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 so far, 23 States and 6 Union Territories have established Appellate Tribunals. They are Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand,