

Press Information Bureau
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Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment
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Increased Budget Allocation to Social Justice Ministry to Boost Social Welfare Schemes

National Hub for Dalit Entrepreneurs in MSME Sector Proposed

SC Sub Plan gets more than Rs.38,800 Crore

Rs.193 Crore Exclusively for Accessible India Campaign

Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot, Union Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment has said that, this year being 125th Birth Anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, will also be the Year of Economic Empowerment for SC/ST entrepreneurs. In this regard, Rs. 500 crore has been allotted in the budget for Stand Up India scheme, to promote entrepreneurship among SC/ST and women. This is in line with the Prime Minister's call for promoting entrepreneurship among SC/ST to become job providers rather than job seekers. This Scheme will facilitate at least two such projects per bank branch, one for each category of entrepreneur. This will benefit at least 2.5 lakh entrepreneurs. He said this while interacting with the media persons about provisions made in the budget 2016-17 for his ministry here today.

He said that, in the budget, Government has proposed to constitute a National Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Hub, in the MSME sector in partnership with industry associations for building an entrepreneurship eco- system among Dalits. This Hub will provide professional support to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe entrepreneurs to fulfil the obligations under the Central Government procurement policy 2012, adopt global best practices and leverage the Stand Up India initiative.

In the budget 2016-17 significant increase has also been made in the allocation of SC Sub Plan. Rs. 38,832 crore has been allocated under this head, while in the last budget this allocation was only Rs. 30,000 crore. Shri Gehlot said these measures show that welfare of the vulnerable sections of the society, including SC / ST is in the top of the agenda of the Government.

Highlighting initiatives taken for the welfare of the persons with disabilities, the minister said Government is committed to include these persons actively in the mainstream activities. Many schemes and programmes have been initiated recently. Under the time bound action plan, his ministry has taken initiative to make public spaces accessible to the persons with disabilities. Rs.193 crore has been exclusively allotted in the budget 2016-17 for this purpose. Prominent public spaces including Government buildings will made accessible, by the end of the current fiscal year.

The Government has also proposed to exempt custom duty for Braille paper, in the budget 2016- 17 in line with the existing exemptions for a number of assistive devices, rehabilitation aids and other goods for the persons with disabilities. Beside this, Service Tax on the 'Niramaya' Health Insurance scheme launched by National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disability has been exempted.

Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot said that his ministry has given final touches to the Rights of Transgender Persons Bill to empower them to lead a dignified life. He said the Government will try to place the Bill in Parliament during the ongoing budget session. He also informed that Government has already started setting up 5 National level sports centre for the persons with disabilities. Land has been acquired for 3 such centres. Shri Gehlot expressed the hope that very soon all the scavengers will be rehabilitated.

Efforts are also being made for rehabilitation and skill training of beggars in collaboration with the State Governments. He said his ministry has also provided 250 women with commercial motor driving skills and some of them are driving their own commercial vehicles after funding from National Safai Karamchari Finance Development Corporation.

Shri Gehlot asserted that these efforts will help in bringing SC, Transgender and other vulnerable people to the mainstream of the society. Shri Vijay Sampla, MoS and Shri KrishanPal Gujjar, MoS were also present during the interaction with the media.
