

**BUDGET 2017-18 AND
THE SPECIAL COMPONENT PLAN FOR SCHEDULED CASTES (SCP) and TRIBAL SUB-PLAN
(TsP):**

**THE HISTORY OF NEGLECT AND CASUALNESS OVER THE LAST MANY YEARS
ACROSS DIFFERENT GOVERNMENTS CONTINUES –
NEGLECT OF BACKWARD CLASSES ALSO CONTINUES
— REMEDIAL MEASURES ESSENTIAL AND POSSIBLE**

My Approach to this Budget and the Previous Budgets

I have, as I have been doing for the last many years, covering periods of different Governments, examined the Budget for 2017-18 in relation to the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), and also Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEdBCs). My examination of the Budget now, as in the past, is focused only on what directly and exclusively pertains to or ought to pertain to these three classes. In this Budget, as in the past Budgets, there are other aspects which may affect SCs, STs and SEdBCs favourably or adversely, along with other classes/categories and sections of the population. I am not dealing with them here. All these aspects have many other commentators, while there is silence about SC and ST aspects, except for this Paper and an analysis by the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR), and there is total silence about the SEdBC aspect. A paramount need of these three classes, suppressed and depressed in different ways and different extents, is to enable them to reach the level of Equality with Socially Advanced Castes (SACs), i.e, non-SC, non-ST, non-SEdBC castes (NSCTBCs) in all parameters of development, welfare and life. This is essential as a matter of their right, as an overdue rectification of historical wrongs done to them over the centuries and consequential damage to integration of our fractured society and optimal national progress, and as a matter of implementation of the Constitutional mandate of Equality, Justice, Liberty and Fraternity. The evocative slogan of *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikaas* will have full meaning for SCs, STs and SEdBCs only if the inequalities, deprivations and disadvantages they suffer from, as a centuries-old historical legacy, are corrected by legislations, schemes and programmes and Budget outlays directly and exclusively focused on them. Only then will they be able to develop, reach the level of Equality with the SACs/NSCTBCs, and become able to advance along with others. To understand and interpret the watchword *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikaas* in a mechanical way and taking it to mean that nothing direct and exclusively need to be done for these three deprived classes will have the effect of perpetuating the historically inherited inequalities based on our centuries-old Caste System-with-“Untouchability”.

Media’s near-total Black-out of SCs, STs and SEdBCs

This is the one aspect in Budget which the electronic and print media neglect, about which no questions are raised and no answers are required to be given by the Government. Political parties also do not touch upon this. This severe neglect is inspite of the fact that the SCs, STs and SEdBCs constitute about 3/4ths of India’s population and the near-totality of India’s physical labour force.

**I. Budget 2017-18 Continues Neglect of Past Budgets – Sore Disappointment for
SCs, STs and others Working for them**

This Budget, like the budgets of past years, has come as a sore disappointment for the SCs and STs and for me who has been working for their development, advancement and empowerment over the last nearly seven decades and for others working for them. The expectations and aspirations roused by the pronouncements and declarations of the leaders of the previous Governments and the present Government regarding their commitments to the SCs and STs have

not been reflected in the Budgets of the previous Government and present Government including the Budget of 2017-18, which is the fourth Budget of the present Government, except to some extent, but without consistency, regarding promotion of Dalit entrepreneurship.

I analyze below the Budget 2017-18 in relation to SCs and STs from different angles:-

A. Quantitative Angle — Financial Outlay under Special Component Plan for SCs (SCP) (miscalled as Scheduled Caste sub-Plan (SCSP) from the latter part of Dr. Manmohan Singh's tenure and now miscalled as "Allocations for Welfare of Scheduled Castes" in the present Budget) and under the Tribal sub-Plan (now miscalled as "Allocations for Welfare of Scheduled Tribes") (Statement Nos. 10A and 10B in the Expenditure Profile volume of Budget 2017-18, corresponding to Statements 21 and 21A of Expenditure Budget Volume 1 of Budget 2016-17) — Continuing Shortfall.

The quantitative aspect is important but it will become significant for the development and advancement of SCs and STs only if the qualitative criterion is fulfilled.

It is the accepted national policy that the population-equivalent proportion of the Plan outlay should go to schemes of direct and exclusive benefits to SCs and STs (16.6% and 8.6% respectively), which schemes should be carefully designed on the basis of the needs and priorities of SCs and STs. This alone will help to bridge the continuing wide gap between SCs and STs compared to the SACs/NSTBCs in the various parameters of development, welfare and life, which is the goal mandated by the Constitution. When I was Secretary, Ministry of Welfare (subsequently trifurcated into three Ministries of Social Justice & Empowerment; Tribal Affairs, and Minority Affairs) in 1990, I proposed this principle for approval. This was supported by the then Minister for Welfare and Labour Shri Ramvilas Paswan and approved by the then Prime Minister Shri V.P. Singh, who was also Chairman of the Planning Commission. This principle was laid down and was insisted upon since the 1970s by me as Joint Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs in charge of SCs and BCs Development and Welfare (before the Ministry of Welfare was created, the Ministry of Home Affairs was in charge of SCs, STs and BCs Development and Welfare) in respect of the SCP and by my colleagues and my batchmates of the IAS batch of 1956, Dr BD Sharma and Dr Bhupinder Singh, in respect of the TsP. My proposal of 1990 approved by the then PM-cum-Planning Commission Chairman also required the total share of the SCs and STs out of the total Plan outlay to be separated into the corpuses of the SCP and TsP and schemes relating to the SCs and STs to be formulated within these corpuses on the basis of their needs and priorities, and thus what was then approved covered also the qualitative aspect of the SCP and TsP. The then Planning Commission Secretary Shri P.B. Krishnaswamy and the then Additional Secretary, pursuant to the direction of the Planning Commission Chairman-cum-Prime Minister, came to my room to discuss the modalities of the implementation of this direction. This initiative came to an end with the fall of the V.P. Singh Government in November 1990 and my own retirement in December 1990.

After my retirement, I continued to pursue the quantitative as well as qualitative angles through various fora and documents including the *Dalit Manifesto* of 1996 which I formulated under the auspices of the National Action Forum for Social Justice, and was adopted by the United Front Government, which came to power the same year, as part of its Common Minimum Programme (CMP). While this effort for basic reform is being continually pursued by me personally all along as well as in association with organizations and social workers who have joined this effort in the last one decade, I have been examining the Annual Union Budgets as mentioned above.

Hitherto, the quantitative levels of the SCP and TsP were being arrived at by comparing each of them with the total "Plan Budget". Year to year improvements and deteriorations were being

computed with the amounts of allocations for SCP and TsP as the numerators and the amount of the total Plan outlay as the denominator for each year. Now with the abolition of the distinction between Plan and non-Plan classification of expenditures (para 18 of the Finance Minister's Budget speech), the above comparison is not possible. Therefore, a common comparable denominator has to be worked out for this year and the last year and previous years. The denominator available in the present Budget is the 'total expenditure through Budget', i.e., excluding resources of public enterprises. This 'total expenditure through Budget' is Rs. 2146734.78 crores (Statement No. 1 in "Expenditure Profile" volume of the Budget).

The total amount of Allocation for the Welfare of SCs in the present Budget is Rs 52392.55 crores. This works out to be 2.44% of the total expenditure through Budget (Statement No. 10A of Expenditure Profile). The total amount of allocations for SCs in BE 2016-17 was Rs. 38832.63 crores. This worked out to 1.96% of the total Budget expenditure of Rs 1978060.45 crores in BE 2016-17.

Similarly, the total Allocation for the Welfare of STs in the present Budget is Rs. 31919.51 crores. This works out to be 1.49 % of the total expenditure through Budget of Rs. 2146734.78 crores. The total amount of allocations for STs in BE 2016-17 was Rs.24005 crores, which was 1.21% of the total Budget expenditure of Rs. 1978060.45 crores in BE 2016-17.

A comparative picture for this year's BE and the last year's BE as well as the BEs of previous two years and the BE for 2013-14, which was the last Budget of the UPA Government, is given in the following Table-1:-

Table-1

	BE 2013-14 <i>(in Crore Rs)</i> <i>[Last Budget of the UPA Government]</i>	<i>BE 2014-15</i> <i>(In Crore Rs</i> <i>[First Budget of the NDA]</i>	BE 2015-16 <i>(In Crore Rs)</i>	BE 2016-17 <i>(In Crore Rs)</i>	BE 2017-18 <i>(In Crore Rs)</i>
Total Expenditure through Budget	1665297.32	1794891.96	1790782.69	1978060.45	2146734.78
Outlay for SCs	41561 (2.49%)	50548 (2.82)	30851 (1.72%)	38832.63 (1.96%)	52392.55 (2.44%)
Outlay for STs	24598 (1.47%)	32387 (1.80)	19980 (1.12%)	24005 (1.21%)	31919.51 (1.49%)

Proportionately speaking, there is an improvement of 0.48% in this year's BE in respect of SCP compared to the previous year's BE, but the proportion is less than the last Budget of the UPA and the first Budget of the NDA in the case of SCP. There is proportionate quantitative improvement in respect of the TsP in the present BE, but this is less than the proportion of allocation in the first Budget of the NDA in 2014-15.

In absolute rupee terms, the Allocations for Welfare of SCs (SCP) in the BE 2017-18 of Rs 52392.55 crores is only marginally better than the allocation of Rs. 50,548 crores in the first Budget of the NDA in 2014-15. In absolute rupee terms, the Allocations in the BE 2017-18 for the Welfare of STs (TsP) of Rs 31919.51 crores is less than the allocation of Rs. 32387 crores in the NDA's first Budget in 2014-15. The statement in the Finance Minister's Budget speech (para 69) that the Allocations for the Welfare of SCs of Rs. 52393 crores in this BE represents an increase of about 35% over the allocations of Rs 38,833 crores in BE 2016-17 has been literally and uncritically swallowed

by the print and electronic media. This is because of their casual attitude towards SCs and STs and their developmental needs and rights, in contrast with their hair-splitting precision about aspects of personal taxes, infrastructure, fiscal deficit etc. Accepting the Finance Minister's Budget speech in this regard at its face value, the media have gone on to portray this as a great sop for the SCs as part of vote-bank politics in the context of the current series of elections to the State Assemblies of Uttar Pradesh, Punjab etc. That this is no largesse for the SCs and STs will be clear from the fact that in none of these years has the SCP/Allocations for Welfare of SCs and the TsP/ Allocations for Welfare of STs quantitatively reached anywhere near the minimum quantitative norm.

Thus, while there is a quantitative improvement in this year's allocations for SCs and STs, the allocations in this year as well as the last year are far short of the minimal norm, as worked out below.

This minimal quantitative norm for allocations, computed on the basis of proportionality of the Plan outlay of the last Budget (2016-17), works out to 4.62% of the total expenditure through Budget of 2017-18 for SCs and 2.39% for STs. This norm is arrived at as follows in Table-2:-

Table-2

(a)	Total Budgetary expenditure in BE 2016-17	Rs 1978060.45 crores
(b)	Total Plan outlay in BE 2016-17	Rs 550010 crores
(c)	Total SCP outlay for SCs @16.6% of Plan outlay should have been	Rs 91301.66 crores
(d)	The figure at (c) as percentage of figure at (a)	4.62%
(e)	Total TsP outlay for STs @ 8.6% of Plan outlay should have been	47300.86
(f)	The figure at (e) as percentage of figure at (a)	2.39%

In the BE of 2016-17, the total Plan Budget was Rs. 550010 crores. The minimum SCP outlay that should have been allocated to SCs at 16.6% of Plan Budget is Rs. 91301.66 crores. This figure is 4.62% of the total Budget expenditure of Rs. 1978060.45 crores in BE 2016-17.

By the same yardstick, the SCP/Allocations for Welfare of SCs in BE 2017-18 ought to be Rs.99179.14 crores (which is 4.62% of the total expenditure through Budget of Rs. 2146734.78).

Similarly calculated, the TsP/Allocations for Welfare of STs in BE 2017-18 ought to be Rs.51307 crores (which is 2.39% of the total expenditure through Budget).

On this basis, the quantitative shortfall, calculated by deducting the amounts of allocations made for SCP and TsP from the amounts of allocations which ought to have been made for SCP (@16.6%) and TsP (@8.6%) out of the total expenditure through Budget, is as follows in Table-3:-

Table-3

	Allocations ought to have been made (Rs Crores)	Allocations made (Rs Crores)	Shortfall (Rs crores)
BE 2017-18			
Shortfall for SCP/allocations for SC	99179.14	52392.55	46786.59
Shortfall for TsP/allocations for STs	51307.00	31919.51	19387.49
BE 2016-17			
Shortfall for SCP/allocations for SC	91301.66	38832.63	52469.03
Shortfall for SCP/allocations for SC	47300.86	24005	23295.86

For 2016-17, the shortfall worked out on the basis of the total Plan outlay and with the bases as the total Budget expenditure is the same.

While the quantitative shortfalls in Table-3 above have been calculated on the basis of proportionality out of the Plan outlay of the last Budget converted into proportionality out of the total Budget expenditure, the present Budget innovation of doing away with the distinction between Plan Budget and non-Plan Budget provides scope and opportunity for taking another look at the minimum quantitative entitlements of SCs and STs. The present Budget summarises "Central Expenditure" into three categories and "Transfers" into three other categories. Of the former, one category consists of "Central Sector Schemes". Of the latter, one category consists of "Centrally Sponsored Schemes". Both these pertain to development and outlays for them are developmental outlays. Out of the outlays of the "Central Sector Schemes" and "Centrally Sponsored Schemes", the SCs and STs are entitled to a minimum, i.e., not less than their population proportion, which at present, on the basis of the Census of 2011, is 16.6% in the case of SCs and 8.6% in the case of STs. On the basis of this, the SCP/Allocation for Welfare of SCs and TsP/Allocation for Welfare of STs ought to be not less than Rs. 156883.00 crores and Rs 81277 crores respectively, worked out as follows in the following Table-4:-

Table-4

		In Rs Crores
(a)	Total outlay for Central Sector Schemes	666644.02
(b)	Total outlay for Centrally Sponsored Schemes	278433.23
(c)	Total of (a) and (b)	945077.25
(d)	SCP/Outlay for Welfare of SCs @ 16.6% ought to be	156883.00
(e)	TsP/Outlay for Welfare of STs & 8.6% ought to be	81277.00

On this development-relevant basis, for which scope and opportunity, has become available through this Budget's innovation, the quantitative shortfall for SCP/Allocations for Welfare of SCs and TsP/Allocations Welfare of STs are as follows in Table 5:-

Table-5

Shortfall in SCP/Allocation for SCs and TsP/Allocation for STs in Central Sector Schemes + Centrally Sponsored Schemes

	Allocations ought to have been made at 16.6% for SCP and 8.6% for TsP (Rs Crores)	Allocations made (Rs Crores) & %age	Shortfall (Rs crores)
SCP/Allocations for SCs	156883.00	52392.55 (5.54%)	104490.45
TsP/Allocations for STs	81277.00	31919.51 (3.38%)	49357.49

Apart from "Central Sector Schemes", the "Central Expenditure" in the Budget also includes "Other Central Expenditure". Many of the items of the "Other Central Expenditure" consist of outlays of various Central institutions and agencies, like the IITs, UGC, etc. Under some of these, SCP/Allocations for Welfare of SCs and TsP/Allocations for Welfare of STs have been shown in an apparently mechanical way. I have made specific comments about some of them lower down under the head "**(3) Components earmarked for SCs and for STs out of the outlays for schemes and programmes of different other Ministries**". The meaningful and SC-and-ST-relevant way would be to require each of these institutions and agencies to have programmes and schemes based on the needs and priorities of SCs and STs, of which the benefits will go directly and exclusively to SCs and STs, and show the outlays on such schemes and programmes as the SCP/Allocations for Welfare of SCs and TsP/Allocations for Welfare of STs of each of these institutions. Such schemes and programmes will have to be devised and designed afresh as their existing schemes and programmes have not been formulated keeping in view the SCs and STs. In fact, the existing schemes and programmes have been formulated as though SCs and STs do not exist. It is such outlays that rationally should be exhibited as SCP/Allocations for Welfare of SCs and TsP/Allocations for Welfare

of STs in the Budget Statements instead of what has been mechanically shown now in Statements No. 10A and 10B.

In the Budget, “Transfers” other than “Centrally Sponsored Schemes” include “Finance Commission Transfers” and “Other Transfers”. On these transfers, the share of the SCs and STs should be earmarked. This will ensure that the transferred amounts and matching State additionalities, on the basis of the State-specific population-proportion of SCs and STs, will be required to be channelized to SCs and STs.

If this procedure is adopted, the entitled share of SCP/Allocations for Welfare of SCs and the entitled share of TsP/Allocations for Welfare of STs will be Rs 283727 crores [i.e, 16.6% of Total Expenditure through Budget (Rs 2146734.78 crores) minus Establishment Expenditure (Rs 437537.60 crores)] and Rs 146991 crores [i.e, 8.6% of Total Expenditure through Budget minus Establishment Expenditure] respectively. At any rate, they cannot be less than Rs 156883 crores and Rs 81277 crores at present as shown in Table-4 above and the shortfalls in Table-5 need to be made good now itself. The issue regarding “Other Central Expenditure” and Transfers other than Centrally Sponsored Schemes needs to be addressed and settled as early as possible, in any case before the next Budget is due.

In all the years, including the present year, the proportion of the outlay for SCP/Allocations for Welfare of SCs and the proportion of the outlay for TsP/Allocations for Welfare of STs have been within the same range of gross inadequacy and deficit. We are familiar with the terms “fiscal deficit” and “current account deficit”. We should now add two more terms to this dictionary, viz., “SCP Deficit/SC Allocations Deficit” and “TsP Deficit/ST Allocations Deficit”

B. Qualitative Angle

No less important is the qualitative angle. This pertains to the following questions:

- (a) *What sort of schemes is included in the SCP/Allocations for Welfare of SCs and TsP/Allocations for Welfare of STs ?*
- (b) *How far do these schemes meet the basic objectives of SC and ST development?*
- (c) *What are the new schemes and how far they meet the basic objectives of SC and ST development?*
- (d) *What is the qualitative lacuna – i.e., what are the schemes which are necessary for achieving the basic objectives of SC and ST development, but which are not included in the SCP/Allocations for Welfare of SCs and TsP/Allocations for Welfare of STs?*

As I have mentioned in my writings in the past, the basic objectives of SC and ST development are the following:-

- economic liberation from agricultural and other servitude,
 - educational parity at all levels,
 - equality with Socially Advanced Castes (SACs) or the non-SC, non-ST, non-Socially and Educationally Backward castes (NSCTBCs) in every parameter – economic, occupational, educational at all levels, residence-cum-habitation-related, health-and-nutrition-related, etc,
 - protection of social dignity and security,
- and in the case specifically of STs,
- protection of the distinct cultures and ways of life of STs, including their traditional local and territorial autonomy.

We may examine these qualitative issues under three heads, namely,

(1) Outlays for SCs under Demand No. 89 in the Budget 2017-18 (corresponding to Demand No. 82 in the Budget 2016-17) pertaining to Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (MSJE) and outlays for STs under Demand No. 96 in the Budget 2017-18 (corresponding to Demand No. 89 in the Budget 2016-17) pertaining to Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MTA)

(2) New initiatives for SCs and STs of this year or recent years

(3) Components earmarked for SCs and for STs out of the outlays for schemes and programmes of different other Ministries

(1) Outlays for SCs and STs under Demand No. 89 of MSJE and Demand No. 96 of MTA in Expenditure Budget (corresponding to Demand No. 82 of MSJE and Demand No. 89 of MTA in the Expenditure Budget Vol 2 in the Budget 2016-17)

The SCP/Allocations for Welfare of SCs and the TsP/Allocations for Welfare of STs as given in Statement No.10A and Statement No. 10B in the Expenditure Profile volume of Budget 2017-18 (corresponding to Statement Nos. 21 and 21A in the Expenditure Budget Volume-1 of Budget 2016-17) consists of two parts:-

(a) Outlays provided for schemes for SCs and STs under Demand No. 89 of the MSJE and under the Demand No. 96 of the MTA respectively

Most of these schemes predate the origin of SCP and TsP including the two crucial schemes of Baba Saheb Ambedkar-vintage, one of which, viz., Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme, was sought to be sabotaged in the Planning Commission in 1982, which move I was able to thwart as Joint Secretary, Government of India dealing with SCs, securing the crucial help of the then Home Minister and later President of India Giani Zail Singh ji; and there was an ill-advised move within the then Ministry of Welfare itself to dilute the other, viz., the Overseas Scholarship Scheme for SCs and STs in 1990, which was checked by the then Minister Shri B. S. Ramoowalia and his then PS (subsequently a Member of Parliament, whose term was completed recently) Shri J. D. Seelam in consultation with me. I shall give full details of these events in my forthcoming book on the Saga of the Special Component Plan for SCs (SCP).

(b) Components earmarked for SCs and for STs of the outlays for schemes of different Ministries

(i) Schemes and Programmes under Demand No. 89 of the MSJE

Here, I shall deal with schemes for which outlays have been reduced as well as schemes for which outlays have been increased or maintained at the same level as in the past year.

Schemes for which Outlays in the present Budget have been reduced

Some of the schemes have suffered cuts and severe cuts. The following Tables give the figures for these schemes and programmes:-

Table-6
Reduced Outlay for Self-employment Scheme of Liberation and Rehabilitation of Safai Karmacharis
(in Rs Crores)

	2013-14 BE	2014-15 BE	2014-15 Actual	2015-16 BE	2015-16 RE	2016-17 BE	2016-17 RE	2017-18 BE
Self-Employment Scheme of Liberation and Rehabilitation of Scavengers	557.00	439.04	47.00	470.19	10.01	10.00	1.00	5.00

This is one of the schemes which is specifically implemented for one category of SCs (and a small proportion of STs and SEEdBCs of Muslims who would have been in the list of SCs but for Clause(3) of the Presidential Orders specifying SCs). Safai Karmacharis/"Scavengers" are drawn from castes which account for about 10% of the total SC population (the entire population of these castes are not subjected to scavenging work, but all those who are forced to do scavenging belong to these castes). Successive Governments have accepted the Liberation and Rehabilitation of Safai Karmacharis as a priority programme. An Act was passed in 1993, namely, the Employment of Manual Scavengers & Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, which was substituted by another and stronger Act, namely, Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013. The latter is the only legislation for SCs enacted by the UPA Government in its 10 years among the many legislations required for SCs and STs which were pointed out to the previous PM and his Government through my Road-Map and various official reports, presentations in meetings and conferences, personal discussions and letters. Its sincere and effective implementation requires adequate finance and many administrative and organizational measures.

But the outlay for this scheme is at variance with the national policy accepted by successive Governments of the past and present and the purpose of the important legislation of 2013 and the sympathy for "scavengers" expressed from time to time by successive ruling Parties and their leaders. The BE for 2013-14 was as high as Rs 557 crores. The present Budget provides less than 1% of it. The neglect of the Safai Karmacharis can be seen from the fact that the Actuals of 2014-15 at Rs47 crores was just about 10% of the 2014-15 BE provision of Rs. 439.04r crores. This neglect worsened in 2015-16 when the RE was only 10.01 crores compared to the BE 2015-16 of Rs. 470.19 crores. The gross under-utilization in 2015-16 RE was taken as the base for 2016-17 BE and a mere Rs10 crores was provided. Even this has been grossly under-utilized as seen from the 2016-17 RE of Rs 1.00 crore and in 2017-18 the BE has been further halved with a paltry provision of Rs 5.00 crores.

Table-7
Reduced Outlay for Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for SCs (in Rs Crores)

	2013-14 BE	2014-15 BE	2014-15 Actuals	2015-16 BE	2015-16 RE	2016-17 BE	2016-17 RE	2017-18 BE
Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme	882.00	834.00	499.00	663.00	370.45	467.00	510.00	50.00

The strengthening of school education is essential for the promotion of higher education among SCs. But, the approach in the Budget 2017-18 to the Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme, which is important for the school education stage, is highly negative. The provision for this scheme is a historical low of Rs 50 crores. This is less than 1/10th of the RE of 2016-17 of Rs 510.00 crores, which exceeds the 2016-17 BE outlay of Rs 467.00 crores. The outlay for this scheme has been reduced from year to year from the level of Rs 882.00 crores in the 2013-14 BE. Even the provision in 2013-14 was inadequate. To reduce it from that inadequate level now to a paltry Rs 50 crores is harmful for

the school level education of SCs. This requires a re-look by the Government. Apart from this, there is also need to make the pre-Matric scholarship scheme for SCs (and for STs) universal, if the Government is serious about the educational advancement of the SCs (and the STs) to the level of parity with the SACs/NSCTBCs, and this will require much larger outlays.

Table-8
Reduced Outlay for Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana for Infrastructure Development in Villages with a large percentage of SC population (in Rs Crores)

	2013-14 BE	2014-15 BE	2014-15 Actual	2015-16 BE	2015-16 RE	2016-17 BE	2016-17 Revised	2017-18
Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana	100.00	100.00	30.00	200.00	200.00	90.00	50	40

In my Paper on SCP and TsP in the Budget 2016-17, I had deplored the reduction of the outlay in the BE 2016-17 to the lowest level of the previous three years, though the full utilization of the outlay of Rs 200 crores in the 2015-16 BE as seen from the RE of 2015-16 warranted higher outlay for this scheme. The reduction in the BE 2016-17 has been compounded by under-utilization of the reduced outlay as seen from the 2016-17 RE of Rs 50 crores and by the further reduction of the BE this year to Rs 40 crores. It is well-known that living conditions in the habitations of SC are the worst. Improvement of living conditions in the Dalit habitations by provision of good humanly-habitable housing, safe drinking-water, drainage and prevention of water-stagnation, domestic and street electrification, pavement of internal roads, and connectivities to various destinations like the school, the health centre, the local market, the bus-stand and the funeral ground (including the provision of new funeral grounds in the many villages where Dalits do not have the luxury of a funeral ground for the peaceful and dignified end of life) is most essential. This scheme takes up a limited proportion of villages selected on the basis of the criteria of large percentage of SC population. But even this is receiving less attention and outlay than before.

As I pointed out in my Paper on SCP and TsP in the Budget 2016-17, there is a tendency for utilizing the funds for this scheme for infrastructures in the non-SC part of the villages. It has to be ensured that the infrastructure development created through this scheme, in the name of high percentage of Dalit population, is only in and only for the Dalit habitations of the village. It is appropriate for the Government to publicize whether the entire amounts of the previous years have been utilized according to this principle or any part of these amounts has been utilized for works in the rest of the village, and whether corrective measures are being taken against such diversions from the SCP.

Table-9
Reduced Outlay for National Scheduled Castes Finance Development Corporation (in Rs Crores)

	2015-16 RE/Actual	2016-17 BE	2016-17 Revised	2017-18 BE
National Scheduled Castes Finance Development Corporation	100.00 (Actual)	139.00	138.0	128.21

The outlay for the National Scheduled Castes Finance Development Corporation was increased in BE 2016-17 to Rs 139 crores from the Actuals of Rs 100 crores in 2015-16. But the outlay in this year has been reduced to Rs 128.21 crores. Considering the importance of this Corporation in

the scheme of promotion of Dalit entrepreneurship, this reduction is not justified. In the case of Corporations, full utilization of the budgetary provision means only release to the Corporation of the outlay provided. But information on the actual outcome in terms of sustainable and irreversibly viable Dalit enterprises established should be collected and transparently publicized.

Table-10
Reduced Outlay for Dr B.R. Ambedkar International Centre (in Rs Crores)

	2014-15 Actuals	2015-16 BE	2015-16 Actual	2016-17 BE	2016-17 RE	2017-18 BE
Dr. B.R. Ambedkar International Centre	44.59	48.00	0.01	100.00	100.00	40.00

In my last year's Paper on the SCP and TsP in the Budget 2016-17, I had noticed the welcome increase in the outlay for Dr Dr.B.R. Ambedkar International Centre in the BE 2016-17. It is also welcome that this outlay has been fully utilized as seen from the RE of 2016-17 unlike in 2015-16 when the entire outlay of Rs 48.00 crores was left unutilized. But the outlay for 2017-18 has been sharply reduced to the lowest level of the recent three Budget years. If the reduction is on account of the completion of the building work/progress of work on the building and, therefore, lesser fund requirement this year for remaining work, that should be clarified.

Schemes for which Outlays in the present Budget have been increased or maintained at more or less the same level as in the past year

Table-11
Outlays for Special Central Assistance (SCA) to State SCPs (in Rs Crores)

	2013-14 BE	2014-15 BE	2014-15 Actual	2015-16 BE	2015-16 RE	2016-17 BE	2016-17 Revised	2017-18
Special Central Assistance to State SCPs (SCA)	1030.00	1038.80	700.00	1090.744	783.30	784.00	800.00	800.00

This is not exactly a scheme but a comprehensive Plan/developmental instrumentality intended to incentivize and encourage State Governments to increase their SCP outlays, conceived by me in 1978 as Joint Secretary. This was secured in dramatic circumstances by the joint effort of Dr. Yogendra Makwana, Minister of State for Home, and myself in 1980 March-end from Smt. Indira Gandhi, after my earlier effort in 1978-79 was torpedoed at the final stage by the Ministry of Finance. I shall give full details of this in my forthcoming book on the Saga of the Special Component Plan for SCs (SCP).

Though the BE of 2017-18 maintains this outlay at the same level as the RE of 2016-17 and is a marginal improvement over the BE of 2016-17, the figures bring out the following disconcerting facts:-

- The outlays provided in the BEs of 2014-15 and 2015-16 were grossly under-utilized.
- The BE 2016-17 was sharply reduced compared to the previous three Budgets, apparently based on the under-utilized figures of RE 2015-16.

- (c) The full utilization with a nominal excess of the BE outlay of 2016-17 is no comfort since the 2016-17 BE outlay itself is a grossly truncated provision.
- (d) The outlay for 2017-18 is a marginal step-up over the truncated outlay of BE 2016-17 and is equal to the revised figures of 2016-17.
- (e) Compared to the BE of 2013-14 (the last Budget of the UPA Government) and BE of 2014-15 (the first Budget of the present NDA Government), the outlay in BE 2017-18 is 20% less.

The deficit will be seen to be even greater than this when we take into account the total Plan outlay/total Budget expenditure of the two earlier years and the present year. The present year's total Budget expenditure is 28.91% more than the total Budget expenditure in the BE 2013-14 and 19.6% more than the total Budget expenditure in BE 2014-15. Thus, while the total Budget expenditure has substantially gone up, the outlay for the SCA to SCP has taken a nose-dive. This weakens the SCP. I have pointed out this in the last year itself. But no attention has been given to it. The learned media anchors, editors and columnists have no time and patience for such matters pertaining to SCs and STs. The weighty concerns of SCs and STs are trivialities for the media and the elite.

In the first full year of this scheme, i.e, 1980-81, Rs. 100 Crores were provided, when the total Central Plan outlay was Rs.7,340 Crores. This works out to 1.4% of the total Plan size for 1980-81. In that year the SCA to the State TsPs was Rs. 67.69 Crores, which works out to be 0.92% of the total Plan size for 1980-81. As the years and Plan periods have passed, the SCP has not been growing according to the needs of the SCs and SCP, and not even in proportion to the growth of the Central Plan size. The outlay provided last year is only 0.14% of the total Plan outlay of the Central Budget. The sharp reduction of the outlay in this year and the last year sharply reduces the pulling power of the SCA and to that extent the State SCPs are weakened. The fate of the SCA to the TsPs of the States has been slightly better, but it too suffers from stunted growth. The Government needs to give full attention to the implementation of the SCA to the State SCPs and the SCA to the State TsPs. The Government also needs to raise the outlay for the SCAs at least in proportion to the total Plan size, taking the outlay of 1980-81 as the base year, and improve upon it. The neglect of the SCA to the State SCPs can also be seen from the SCA to the TsPs in this year which is Rs. 1350 crores, which is 0.06% of the total Budget expenditure, compared to Rs 800 crores provided for the SCA to the State SCPs, which is 0.04% of the total Budget expenditure. The SCA to State TsPs is also inadequate, but the SCA to the State SCPs has suffered even greater neglect than the SCA to State TsPs.

Table-12

Outlays for Pre-Matric Scholarship for children of those engaged in "unclean" occupations and National Safai Karmachari Finance Development Corporation (in Rs Crores)

	2013-14 BE	2014-15 BE	2014-15 Actual	2015-16 BE	2015-16 RE	2016-17 BE	2016-17 RE	2017-18 BE
Pre-Matric Scholarship for children of those engaged in "unclean" occupations	9.50	10.00	10.00	10.00	2.50	2.00	1.00	2.70
National Safai Karmachari Fin. Dev. Corpn.					50.00 (Actuals)	50.00	50.00	50.00

The above Pre-Matric Scholarship scheme is an important scheme devised for channelizing the children of those engaged in “unclean” occupations, mainly scavenging, to other occupations, which are socially considered dignified. This has also been poorly utilized in the Budget year 2015-16. The Budget for 2016-17 settled at less than the level of the poor utilization in RE 2015-16. Even the reduced provision of Rs 2.00 crores in 2016-17 BE has not been utilized as seen from the 2016-17 RE of Rs 1.00 crore. This year’s BE outlay of Rs 2.70 crores is a step-up over the previous year’s BE, but is only a fraction of the outlays in the BEs of 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 and in the 2014-15 Actuals. This is the Budgetary fate (the fate on ground is even worse) of a section of SCs to whom a lot of lip-service is paid by different Governments, Parties, and sporadically even by electronic media anchors like Ms Barkha Dutt (for the media, especially the electronic media, the subject of SCs is not merely “untouchable” but usually also “un-mentionable”).

The National Safai Karmachari Finance Development Corporation is an important instrument of the Government for the rehabilitation of those liberated from scavenging/members of their families. But the outlay for it has remained at Rs 50 crores in this year and the previous two years. Taking this also with the Self-employment scheme of Liberation and Rehabilitation of “scavengers” (see Table-6), the outlay is far from adequate for the purpose and much less than the inadequate outlays of 2013-14 to 2015-16. In the past years, the utilization is shown as full. In the case of Corporations, utilization of budgetary provisions means only the release of the budgeted funds to the Corporations. The objectives will be fulfilled only if the Corporation in turn utilizes the funds made available to it fully and effectively. Government needs to provide full information about actual utilization by the Corporation of the funds released to it and additional funds generated by it and the number of liberated manual scavengers / members of their families who have been sustainably and irreversibly rehabilitated in dignified occupations not in any way connected with sanitation or safai, with effective administrative structures, systems and arrangements for continuous monitoring of their sustainable and irreversible rehabilitation and for mentoring and hand-holding as long as necessary.

Table-13
Outlays for Education-related Schemes (in Rs Crores)

	2013-14 BE	2014-15 BE	2014-15 Actuals	2015-16 BE	2015-16 RE	2016-17 BE	2016-17 RE	2017-18 BE
National Overseas Scholarship for SCs			8.78	6.12	16.12	14.70	15.00	15.00
Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme	1470.00	1500.00	1960.42	1599.00	2216.05	2791.00	2820.00	3347.99
National Fellowship for SCs	27.50	191.00	148.85	200.55	200.55	200.00	200.00	230.00
Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs (Grants to Non-Government Institutions for Running Pre-examination Training Centres for SCs and BCs)			8.14	12.14	12.14	24.50	2.00	25.00
Top Class Education for SCs	20.00	20.58	20.58	21.42	31.42	20.58	31	35

The National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for SCs is another scheme of Ambedkar-vintage which, before Independence, Dr. Ambedkar as Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council secured from the Viceroy in the teeth of opposition of some other members of the Council. The outlay in the present Budget is the same as in the RE of 2016-17, but less than the RE of 2015-16 though better than the Actuals of 2014-15 and BE of 2016-17. Considering the rising demand for this scholarship, as seen from the RE 2015-16, the outlay in this year's Budget ought to have been significantly enhanced. Further, it is necessary to ensure that among Indian students who go abroad for education, due proportion of SCs (and also STs) is maintained. This is because there is a premium for those who have foreign education in the employment market back in India. For maintaining the due proportionality of the SCs, the outlay for the National Overseas Scholarship Scheme will have to be stepped up to a much larger extent.

The trend of increase in outlays for the PMS from year to year and full utilization in the last two years is one of the welcome features of the Budget. This satisfaction has to be seen against the fact that the PMS scheme was introduced with foresight by Dr Ambedkar in 1943 as an "open-ended" scheme. It is to the credit of the Indian governance that this scheme for SCs commenced in 1943 and its extension in 1947 to the STs has been continued till now, though there was an attempt to sabotage and undermine it in the Planning Commission as I have mentioned earlier. The increase in the outlay for Post-Matric Scholarship scheme is an automatic function of its nature as an open-ended scheme. Further, the satisfaction has to be tempered by the fact that the provisions in the BEs and REs have not kept pace with the concept and condition of "open-endedness" laid down by Dr Ambedkar. This is seen from the fact that over the recent years the arrears of a few thousand crores of rupees have been accumulated. The principle and condition of "open-endedness" mandates that every year the full amount of Post-Matric scholarships required should be provided in the BE itself and any shortfall that is noticed subsequently should be made up fully and promptly and formalised in the RE of that year itself. Obviously, this has not been done. In my letter to Shri Arun Jaitley, Finance Minister on 09.09.2016, this was one of the important points that I brought to his notice. In that letter, I pointed out to him that delay in timely disbursement of PMS to SC and ST students hampers the full achievement of the purpose for which this scholarship is intended and, therefore, there is need to ensure the present arrears are immediately released and in future adequate provision is made to ensure that the PMS does not fall into arrears.

But this has not been done as the increase in the 2017-18 BE over the BE and RE of 2016-17 is only a fraction of the arrears. This needs to be corrected. The accumulation of arrears over the recent years has hampered the progress of higher education of SCs, leading even to some drop-outs at the advanced stage of higher education. Failure to resolve the arrears immediately will inflict continuing harm to the higher education of SCs. I have again written to the Finance Minister about this vide my e-DO letter dated 16.02.2017 and requested him to enhance the provision for PMS to Rs 15,000 crores in this year's Budget to cover the entire arrears of the past, amounting to about Rs 10,000 crores to Rs 11,000 crores, and to ensure that no arrears accumulate in this year. I have also pointed out to him that the increase of the additional Rs 11653 crores required in the outlay for PMS provided in the BE (Rs 3347.99 crores) will have only negligible impact on the fiscal deficit, which will be increased only by 0.07% over the existing fiscal deficit of 3.2%. Further, I suggested to him that if it is necessary to retain the fiscal deficit at 3.2%, then the cut, to the extent of realistic and essential increase in the outlay for PMS, may be made in some other outlay not pertaining to the SCs, STs and other deprived classes and categories.

I understand the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has been able this year to clear the PMS arrears for STs of the past recent years and the Budget provision in 2017-18 is likely to be adequate to clear the arrears of 2016-17 and to meet in full the requirements of 2017-18 without fresh accrual of arrears. The position regarding PMS for SCs has also to be brought to this level and my request to the Finance Minister, on acceptance and implementation, will secure that result.

In my letter to Finance Minister dated 09.09.2016, I have also requested that a system be introduced whereby PMS instalments are released in advance so that the money becomes available to SC and ST students at the beginning of each month /quarter. I had introduced such a system during my service as Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs in charge of SC and BC Development and Welfare in 1978 to 1982 and later when I was Secretary, Ministry of Welfare in 1990. This is in keeping with what parents do for their school-going and college-going children.

The Scheme of Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs through non-Government institutions has received approximately the same outlay of about Rs 25 crores as in the BE of 2016-17, but the utilization was very poor in 2016-17 as seen from the 20-16-17 RE of Rs 2 crores as against the 2016-17 BE outlay of Rs. 24.50 crores. Obviously closer monitoring is required to ensure full utilization of the outlay and prevention of under-utilization this year. Further, as I pointed out in my Paper on SCP and TsP in the Budget 2016-17, the quality of coaching and outcome needs close watching. The coaching needs not only to be free but also of the standard, not below that of successful private coaching institutions. For this, the Government will have to provide teachers and guest faculty salary/remuneration/honorarium at levels at which teachers and guest faculty of standard comparable to those who teach in successful private coaching institutions become available. The Government will have to come out of the syndrome of offering unrealistically low salaries/remunerations/honorariums. There is no doubt that pre-examination coaching is required for SCs. Their need is greater than the need of candidates who go to private high-quality coaching institutions and who can afford the heavy fees such institutions charge. There is no justification for the Government either for not utilizing the full amount or for providing sub-standard coaching. The Government should obtain and publicize information regarding outcomes and compare them with the outcomes produced by successful private coaching institutions.

This scheme is not wholly for SCs. It is also for SEEdBCs. It will be appropriate to show the share of the SCs and SEEdBCs separately. In the case of SEEdBCs also, remarks above regarding quality are applicable. In the case of SEEdBCs, particular care has to be taken to ensure that the Most and Extremely Backward castes of SEEdBCs find place and receive proper attention in the coaching centers.

Based on the fact that in the RE of 2015-16, the expenditure for Top Class Education for SCs as 50% more than the 2015-16 BE, I had observed in my Paper on the SCP and TsP in the 2016-17 Budget that there is need for increasing the outlay. But, the 2016-17 BE was at approximately the same level as the BE of 2013-14 to 2015-16. The 2016-17 RE shows increased expenditure of about 50% more than the 2016-17 BE as happened in the 2015-16 RE also. It is welcome that this trend of higher demand and need has been taken note of in the BE of 2017-18 with an outlay of Rs 35 crores. This is one of the positive aspects of this Budget.

Table-14
Outlays for Hostels and Assistance to Voluntary Organisations Working for SCs
(in Rs Crores)

	2013-14 BE	2014-15 BE	2014-15 Actuals	2015-16 BE	2015-16 RE	2016-17 BE	2016-17 RE	2017-18 BE
Girls Hostels	49.00	50.00	10.44	50.00	10.69	40.00	35	155
Boys Hostels	24.50	25.00	3.51	25.00	2.60	5.00		
Assistance to Voluntary Organisations for SCs	27.50	49.00	19.02	50.00	50.00	50.00	70	70

Hostels for SC girls and SC boys have been serving an important role in the education of SC and ST children. In the above Table-14, the figures for BE 2015-16 is as given in the Budget document of 2015-16. In the Budget document of 2016-17 (Expenditure Volume 2, Demand No. 82 for Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, page 379-380) the figures for BE 2015-16 are given as Rs. 6.00 crores for Girls hostels and Rs. 5.00 crores for Boys hostels. Such contradictions and wide discrepancies are unnerving and raise the question whether the Budget figures for SCs are put in Budget documents with careful and serious thought or not. The provisions for these schemes were grossly under-utilized in 2015-16 and they were further reduced in the BE 2016-17 (Rs 40 crores for girls hostels and Rs 5 crores for boys hostels). The RE 2016-17 again shows under-utilization though not to the same extent as in 2015-16 RE. It is welcome that the BE 2017-18 provides a substantial step-up to Rs 155 crores. This is one of the positive aspects of this Budget and is in keeping with Dr Ambedkar's, Shri Narayana Guru's and Shri Mahatma Phule's emphasis on education for deprived classes. Education ranks first in Dr. Ambedkar's three-fold mantra (*Educate, Agitate and Organise*).

But, there is one disquieting failure in the RE of 2016-17 and in the BE of 2017-18. The allocations for girls' hostels and boys' hostels have not been shown separately. This may adversely affect the progress of girls' education for whom hostels are even more necessary than for boys, for whom also hostels are necessary. It should be noted that originally this Centrally-sponsored scheme was only for girls' hostels and later on it was realized that while girls' hostels should be given primacy, boys' hostels also should be given attention and thereafter the allocations for girls' hostels have been substantially more than for boys' hostels. The abolition of separate allocations for the two may result in less flow of funds and poor implementation in the case of girls' hostels for obvious reasons such as the prevailing gender bias in our system.

It is a reality that the living conditions in most SC hostels are deplorable. There are a few exceptions like a hostel in Lucknow for SC students of Post-Graduate level and students preparing for competitive examinations in Lucknow, established when Kum. Mayawati was the Chief Minister. I was happy to visit this hostel a few years back. SCs everywhere deserve hostels of this standard. Many SC girls' hostels do not have the required privacy and protective walls. This must be ensured.

The Government must give serious attention to upgrading the quality of all hostels in the country and provide adequate funds for this purpose. This is essential for the progress of education of SCs (and of STs). Management and supervision is not adequate in the hostels. The Government should provide a small percentage of the outlay for hostels, additionally and separately, for meeting the cost of management and supervision of the requisite level. When I was in Government, I made a proposal to this effect, which, not unsurprisingly, was turned down by the Finance Ministry. The Finance Ministry must come out of its traditional attitude of negativism in matters pertaining to SCs and other deprived classes and in ensuring that services provided for them are at requisite quality and the Ministry needs to persuade itself to provide expenditure, without hesitation and without raising queries and objections, for such purposes as I mentioned above.

While hostels have been of great help for the progress of education of SCs and STs in the past decades, it must be remembered that the quality of these hostels has been a handicap. If this is rectified, the educational progress of SCs and STs will be improved.

The outlay for the scheme of Assistance to Voluntary Organisations working for the SCs has been substantially increased over the previous years. This is welcome. In fact, it would be desirable for the Government to identify all the Voluntary Organisations working for SCs in the country sincerely and honestly and provide them full financial and other support so that they do not need to seek funds from abroad. While doing so, the Government should resist the temptation to control

them or select “convenient” organizations, but proceed on objective basis and require only the norms of integrity and concrete and transparent delivery of benefits. Instead of releasing funds from the Ministry as is being done till now, which is not the optimal utilization of the time and energy of the Government, which should concentrated on policy, formulation of meaningful and relevant developmental and welfare programmes, pushing important legislative work, higher direction and transparent monitoring of actual outcomes, which are among the tasks of the Government and which no one else can do, the Government should entrust the work of assistance to Voluntary Organizations to an independent autonomous organization like the Baba Saheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Foundation. Of course, this also requires provision of full functional autonomy for the Foundation, release of bulk funds at the beginning of the Budget year to the Foundation and appointing Directors who can function with objectivity and understanding and commitment to the cause of advancement of SCs.

Table-15
(Amounts in Rs Crores)

	2013-14 BE	2014-15 BE	2014-15 Actual	2015-16 BE	2015-16 RE/Actual	2016-17 BE	2016-17 Revised	2017-18 BE
Other Programmes for Welfare of SCs*		23.00	23.16 (RE)	23.00	24.00 RE			
Upgradation of Merit of SC students”					2.75 (Actuals)	3.00	1.00	2.00
State SC Development Corporations					20.00 (Actual)	20.00	20.00	20.00

* In the BE 2015-16, the “Other Programmes for Welfare of SCs” covered (i) “Upgradation of Merit of SC students” and (ii) “State SC Development Corporations”, which are shown separately in the present year’s Budget – this is a welcome improvement.

The “Upgradation of Merit of SC Students” is a relatively new scheme. Promotion of merit of SC students is of obvious importance. But the outlay of Rs 2.00 crores in this Budget is less than the Actuals of 2015-16 and the BE of 2016-17. Even the small amount provided in the BE 2016-17 was grossly under-utilized as can be seen from the RE 2016-17. This indicates the need for closer attention to implementation and monitoring.

The State SC Development Corporations [The full name of this scheme is Central Assistance to States for Investment in their SC Development Corporations] are an important instrument to promote entrepreneurship among SCs. The scheme for Central Assistance was introduced in 1978-79 through my efforts. I am writing about the story of the introduction of this scheme in my forthcoming book on the Saga of Special Component Plan (SCP) for SCs. In view of the present PM’s emphasis on Dalit entrepreneurship, this scheme needs larger outlays; and its reform to accommodate Dalit enterprises of larger size, as recommended by the Sub-Group on Empowerment of SCs in the XII Plan in its Report (2011), needs to be implemented. But contrary to the PM’s and Government’s emphasis on Dalit entrepreneurship, the outlay for this scheme has been flat from year to year at only Rs 20 crores. The RE shows full utilization. As mentioned in the case of National Safai Karmachari Finance Development Corporation, full utilization in the case of such schemes only means release of funds to the State Governments for investment in their State SC Development Corporations. Information regarding actual outcomes needs to be secured and publicized transparently.

Table-16
(Amounts in Rs Crores)

	2013-14 BE	2014-15 BE	2014-15 Actuals	2015-16 BE	2015-16 RE	2016-17 BE	2016- 17 RE	2017-18 BE
Strengthening of machinery for Enforcement of Protection for Civil Rights Act, 1955 and Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989	88.00	90.00	150.00	90.75	120.75	150.00	228.49	300.00

This is another scheme which has received a welcome positive attention and increase in outlays from year to year, reaching Rs 300 crores in the present Budget. The REs for successive years shows satisfactory utilization even in excess of the original BE of each year.

The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989 has been replaced by the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Act 2015, which is the only legislative measure of direct relevance to SCs and STs enacted by the present Government in its nearly three years of existence, out of a number of legislative measures necessary for the SCs and STs and also SEdBCs which I had brought to the notice of the present Prime Minister during the 2014 election campaign when he was the PM-candidate and also after he became Prime Minister and to other leaders of the Government, as I did in the case of the previous Government and its leaders. It is a matter for appreciation that the present Government did enact this Amendment Act, which the previous Government failed to do even though the Bill was ready and was placed on the Table of the Lok Sabha by the then Minister, who was dropped before she could move it for discussion and passing; and the best we could get after lot of efforts by me and various social workers and organizations was an Ordinance. But, as in the last year, the Budget refers only to the Act of 1989. The Budget-makers and the Finance wing of the Government are oblivious of the important Amendment Act of 2015, steered by the Social Justice wing of the same Government. I had pointed this out in my Paper on the SCP and TsP in the last year's Budget. It is not known whether the MSJE has moved to correct this in the Budget document. This is another instance which is unnerving and raises the question of the level of seriousness with which Budget documents to the extent they relate to the SCs are prepared.

As I pointed out in my Paper on the SCP and TsP in the Budget 2016-17, the Amendment Act 2015 entails considerable expenditure for measures like setting up Exclusive Special Courts. It will be appropriate if the Government publicize for the enlightenment of the Dalit public, how the present increase has been calculated, what is the provision needed for effectively implementing the new Act item-wise, and whether the present increased outlay matches the need and if there is any gap, how it will be met. It will also be useful for the Government to exhibit the amount spent on the machinery for enforcement of the PCR Act and the amount spent for the SC and ST (POA) Amendment Act 2015 separately. Outcomes in terms of number of cases, speed of investigation, speed of trials, proportion of convictions etc. should be secured and transparently publicized. The Annual Reports to the Parliament which the two Acts mandate on the Government can be used for this purpose if their analysis is made more specific, in-depth and critical. At present the implementation of these Acts is desultory and casual. The result is continued widespread prevalence of "Untouchability" and Atrocities, long-delayed investigations, poor quality of investigations, long-delayed trials, massive acquittals, poor convictions, lack of protection for victims, survivors and witnesses, with obvious adverse consequences. All these add up, in practice and result, to a virtual invitation for the practitioners of "Untouchability" and Atrocities on SCs with near-total impunity. All these can and must be reversed through pro-active pursuit by the Ministry and enforcing the provisions of the PCR Act (amended in 1976, but needs further amendments to provide it more teeth as done in the case

of the SC and ST (POA) Amendment Act 2015) and the SC and ST (POA) Amendment Act 2015 in close collaboration with the State Governments.

Table-17
Outlay for Baba Saheb Dr B. R. Ambedkar Foundation (in Rs Crores)

	2014-15 Actual	2015-16 BE	2015-16 Actual	2016-17 BE	2016-17 Revised	2017-18 BE
Baba Saheb Dr B.R. Ambedkar Foundation			63.75	1.00	1.00	1.00

It was in my time of service in the Government that the Baba Saheb Dr B.R. Ambedkar Foundation was envisaged. I was closely associated with it in its early years. It was envisaged that it should be a high-level autonomous institution of the standard of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library and the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation. Instead, it has been treated like a Department or Section of the Ministry of MSJE. In fact, it was one of the outcomes of the churning that took place in the Seminars conducted as part of the Baba Saheb Ambedkar's Centenary Year Celebrations commencing from 14.4.1990, which was carefully organized by the then Minister for Welfare Shri Ram Vilas Paswan and myself as the then Secretary, Ministry of Welfare. The scant understanding of its potential is seen from its near-obliteration from the Budget scheme in this year as well as in the last year by providing in the Budgets of this and last year an outlay of merely Rs 1.00 crore as against the Actual of Rs. 63.75 crores in 2015-16. The Government and the Prime Minister personally have repeatedly expressed their greatest respect of Dr B.R. Ambedkar. The Foundation that bears his name should be upgraded to the level originally envisaged in keeping with the stature of the great man after whom it has been named.

Table-18
Outlay Dr Ambedkar National Memorial (in Rs Crores)

	2014-15 Actual	2015-16 BE	2015-16 Actual	2016-17 BE	2016-17 Revised	2017-18 BE
Dr. Ambedkar National Memorial	3.10	10.00	10.00	16.99	16.99	62.00

The increase in the outlay for Dr Ambedkar National Memorial is welcome.

Promotion of Entrepreneurship among SCs

I shall deal with this under the sub-head “(2) New initiatives for SCs and STs of this year or recent years”

Overall Outlay for SC Development in the Demand for MSJE

Overall, for all schemes for SCs under the MSJE is Rs. 5418.91 Crores, which is only an increase of 10.57% over the BE 2016-17 of Rs. 5128.90. This is only a little more than the proportion of increase in the total Budget expenditure, which is 8.53% in the Budget 2017-18 over the BE 2016-17.

(ii) Budget Outlays for Important Schemes and Programmes for STs in Demand No. 96 Relating to Ministry of Tribal Affairs

(a) Special Central Assistance to Tribal sub-Plans of States (now shown in the present Budget as Special Central Assistance to ST sub-schemes)

This is not exactly a scheme but a comprehensive Plan/developmental instrumentality intended to incentivize and encourage State Governments to increase their TsP outlays. There has been a welcome increase in the provision for this in the BE 2017-18 over the BE 2016-17.

**Table-19
(Amounts in Rs Crores)**

	2013-14 BE	2014-15 BE	2014-15 RE	2015-16 BE	2015-16 RE	2016-17 BE	2016-17 RE	2017-18 BE
Special Central Assistance to Tribal sub-Plan of States	1200.00	1200.00	1040.03	1250.00	1132.00	1250.00	1200.00	1350.00

(b) Outlay under Proviso to Article 275(1) of the Constitution

This outlay has also been augmented.

**Table-20
(Amount in Rs Crores)**

	2013-14 BE	2014-15 BE	2015-16 BE	2015-16 RE	2016-17 BE	2016-17 RE	2017-18 BE
Scheme under Proviso to Article 275(1) of the Constitution	1317.00	1317.00	1367.0	1392.00	1248.00	1260.00	1500.00

This is an important provision specified in the Constitution itself, for promoting the welfare of the STs and raising the level of administration of the Scheduled Areas within a State to that of the administration of the rest of the areas of that State. The RE 2016-17 shows that there is demand and capacity to fully utilize the outlay and more. Hence the increase in BE 2017-18 is justified and welcome.

(c) Schemes and Programmes for which the outlays have been reduced

Table-21
(Amount in Rs Crores)

	2014-15 RE/Actuals	BE 2015-16	RE 2015-16	BE 2016-17	2016-17 RE	2017-18 BE
World Bank Project – Improving Development Programmes in the Tribal Areas		2.00	1.00	0.39	Nil	Nil
Minimum Support Price for Forest Produce	100.00	307.00	143.00	158.00	3.00	100.00
Tribal Festivals, Research Information and Mass Education	4.34	45.00	10.20	17.39	6.39	12.04
Van Bandhu Kalyan Yojana – State Plan	100.00	200.00	200.00	1.00	1.00	0.01
Support to National and States ST Finance and Development Corporations	70	70	63.00	70.0	60.00	60.00

For the World Bank Project scheme, the small provision of Rs 2.00 crores in 2015-16 was under-utilized and the reduced to Rs 0.39 crores in the BE 2016-17, which was not utilized at all, and this scheme has not been omitted from the Budget 2017-18. The World Bank Project scheme could have been made very useful for the advancement of STs by expanding and implementing it properly. The Government needs to explain to STs why this scheme has been omitted now.

Forest produce are a major source of livelihood for many tribes. In my last year's Paper on SCP and TsP in the Budget 2016-17, I had pointed out the poor utilization of the outlay provided in the 2015-16 BE, as seen from RE 2015-16, and deplored its reduction by half in the BE 2016-17 compared to the 2015-16 BE. But the utilization of the reduced outlay of 2016-17 has been disastrous at a paltry Rs 3.00 crores as seen from the RE 2016-17. It is near-total non-utilization. The outlay in the BE 2017-18 has been reduced to Rs 100.00 crores which is 2/3rd of the BE 2016-17 and less than 1/3rd of the BE of 2015-16. This important scheme, provision of outlay for it and implementation need serious attention of the Government.

The scheme for "Tribal Festivals, Research Information and Mass Education" is implemented for the preservation and promotion of the tribal culture. It is also implemented for more information about STs to facilitate improvement in developmental planning and build up awareness among them. Yet, the outlay for this scheme has been only partly utilized and has been sharply cut from year to year.

The Van Bandhu Kalyan Yojana has been introduced by the present Government. The outlay for it has been utilized. Yet, the outlay has been sharply reduced in the BE 2016-17 and virtually obliterated in the BE 2017-18 with a mere Rs 0.01 crores as though the Government is having second thoughts on its own scheme and wants to exit from it.

Promotion of entrepreneurship of Adivasis has the same importance as in the case of the promotion of Dalit entrepreneurship. Against this background, the reduction of the outlay for the

National and States ST Finance and Development Corporations is not justified. My comments regarding information on outcomes made in the context of the National SC Development and Finance Corporation and the State SC Development Corporations and the National Safai Karmachari Development and Finance Corporation apply here also.

(d) Schemes and Programmes for which the outlays have been either enhanced or maintained at the same level as for the last year

**Table-22
(Amounts in Rs Crores)**

	2014-15 RE/Actuals	2015-16 BE	2015-16 RE	2016-17 BE	2016-17 RE	2017-18 BE
Umbrella Scheme for Education of ST Children (renamed in the present budget as "Tribal education"*)	1058.55	929.32	1210.64	1454.22	1659.84	1635.0-7
Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PTGs) [included in Other Programmes for Welfare of STs in the last year's Budget]	180.00	213.35	217.35	200.00	340.00	270.00
Aid to Voluntary Organisations working for the welfare of STs	82.32		75.65	120.00	120	120
National Fellowship and Scholarship for Higher Education of ST Children		50.00	48.81	50.00	80.00	120.00
Scholarship to ST students for Studies Abroad	0.99	1.00	0.72	1.00	0.39	1.00
Institutional support for Development and Marketing of Tribal Products	41.91	35.0	40.00	49.00	49.00	49.00

Components of "Tribal Education" given in the present Budget are

1	Pre-Matric scholarship scheme	265.00 crores
2	Post-Matric scholarship scheme	1347.07
3.	Ashram School	10.00
4	Boys and girls hostel	10.0
5	Vocational training	3.00
Total tribal education		1635.07

The increase or maintenance of the BE outlays of these schemes is welcome.

The PTGs, identified on the basis of maximum vulnerability among STs, who, as a whole, are the most vulnerable segment of our population, need increasing outlays. The capacity for utilization of the outlay provided is evident from the RE 2015-16 and RE 2016-17. The BE 2017-18 provides a welcome increase over the BE 2016-17, but falls short of RE 2016-17.

The scheme of Scholarship to ST students for Studies Abroad was originally part of the Overseas Scholarship Scheme for SCs and STs, in the ratio of 2 : 1 in accordance with their population proportion. When the Ministry of Tribal Affairs was created by the Vajpayee Government, this scheme was also bifurcated. A look at the provision for SCs will show the meagerness and gross inadequacy of the outlay for ST students year to year.

(2) New initiatives for SCs and STs of this year or recent years

Two very recent schemes under this category are Venture Capital Fund for SCs and Credit Guarantee Fund for SCs. Promotion of entrepreneurship among SCs and STs has been given great importance in the strategy of development of SCs and STs by the present Government and the PM Shri Modi ji personally, who addressed a Conference of Dalit entrepreneurs on 29 December 2015. This is welcome and one of the programmatic /schematic measures required for the SCs and STs which have been listed in my Road-Map, and which I have sent to Shri Narendra Modi ji and other leaders of the Government and to the leaders of the previous Government and to a number of Opposition leaders – but, it must be remembered that this is only one item of the measures required and there are many other measures required for securing Equality for the SCs, STs, which have been listed in my Road-Map. The Table below shows what has happened in the last three years to the strategy undertaken for this purpose.

Table-23
Outlay for Venture Capital Fund and Credit Guarantee Fund for SCs (in Rs Crores)

	2014-2015 Actuals	2015-16 BE	2015-16 RE	2016-17 BE	2016-17 RE	2017-18 BE
Venture Capital Fund for SCs	200.00	102.00	0.01	40.00	40.0	40.0
Credit Guarantee Fund for SCs	200.00	98.24	0.01	10.00	0.1	0.1

Source: Statement 21 in Expenditure Budget Vol 1, Budget 2016-2017 (page 120) relating to Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment and Statement 10A in Expenditure Profile volume, Budget 2017-18.

These two schemes had a brave start with a provision of outlays of Rs 200 crores each in 2014-15. But thereafter, their history has been rather shaky. The outlays for these schemes were halved in BE 2015-16. But almost the entire amount was unutilized. In 2016-17 BE the outlays were further sharply reduced to Rs 40.00 crores and Rs 10.00 crores respectively. Even the reduced outlay of Credit Guarantee Fund was almost totally unutilized. As I mentioned in my Paper on the SCP and TsP in the Budget 2016-17, no meaningful effort seems to have been made to utilize these two provisions for SC entrepreneurship development. The Government needs to do some serious soul-searching why the provisions originally made could not be utilized and why the outlays have been sharply reduced. It is proper for the Government to explain to the Dalits what arrangements and efforts, if any, were made to utilize these outlays till now and what remedial administrative and other measures have been and will be made to make a success of these schemes and the Dalit entrepreneurship-promotion movement.

As mentioned by me in my Paper on SCP and TsP in the Budget 2016-17, I had, immediately after the presentation of the Budget of 2014-15, suggested to the Government, that as the IFCI, through which the Venture Capital Fund for SCs is operationalised, has no background of SCs and, therefore, "in working out the details of the scheme and its operation, knowledgeable and experienced persons of the SCs and knowledgeable and experienced persons working for SCs should be actively associated and they should have adequate voice in the formulation, operationalisation and monitoring of the scheme. The scheme will have to provide not only credit, but there will have

to be a system of guidance, training and initial hand-holding until sustainable take-off. The IFCI should tie up with banks so that the start-up capital credit will be supported by a system for the smooth, timely and adequate flow of working capital through a tripartite agreement recommended by the Report (dated 1.8.2011) of the Sub-Group-I on Perspective Planning for Empowerment of Scheduled Castes in XII Plan set up by the Planning Commission and the MSJ&E under my Chairmanship. Further, this should be tied with the 4% reservation provided for SC and ST entrepreneurs in Central Government purchases under Ministry of Micro, Medium and Small Industries. Another useful linkage will be with corporates, utilizing the statutorily prescribed 2% expenditure under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). An efficient single window system, manned by empowered knowledgeable and sympathetic persons, which these entrepreneurs can approach for promptly solving problems should be set up." I had forewarned that unless all these are done, this potential provision may remain on paper.

Now that my prophesy of 2014-15 has come true and remains true over the last two years, the Government needs to heed my suggestions at least now.

(3) Components earmarked for SCs and for STs out of the outlays for schemes and programmes of different other Ministries

These components total Rs 46974.00 for ACP/Allocations for SCs and Rs. 26619 crores for TsP/Allocations for STs. I list in Table-24 some of these components, which account for the major part of these components, and gives the percentage out of the total outlay for each scheme.

The list in Table-24 above includes certain items like the UGC under which SCP/Allocations for SCs is shown. It is not clear whether this is a mechanical allocation or whether the UGC is required to provide assistance to Universities and Deemed Universities to provide direct and tangible support to SC students in these universities. If so, this must be spelt out along with clear-cut instructions how and logistics by which this objective will be achieved, monitored and reported transparently. SCP/Allocations for SCs and TsP/Allocations for STs under the scheme "Support to IITs also need to be similarly clarified and direct and tangible benefits to the SCs and STs ensured.

There is apprehension that these may be mechanical allocations of SCP/TsP based on the percentage of SC and ST students out of the total scheme outlays. If so, this is only padding up, and is not the way in which SCP / TsP is to be prepared and allocations for SCs and STs to be made with the goal of Equality. This apprehension is strengthened by an allocation shown for SCP / TsP in the scheme of "Improvement in Salary Scale of University and College Teachers" under the Department of Higher Education. Obviously, such establishment expenditures are not appropriate for SCP and TsP. There are a number of examples of this type, which amount only to arithmetical padding up with no real contribution to the advancement of SCs and STs to the goal of Equality.

There are some other schemes, which can be made tangibly beneficial to SCs and STs, of which I may mention, as an example, "Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY) – Per Drop More Crops" (item no. 3 under the Department of Agriculture, cooperation and farmers' welfare). Amounts approximately equal to the population-proportion of SCs and STs are shown under SCP/Allocations for SCs and TsP/Allocations for STs. If this is not to remain a mechanical arithmetical figure on paper, there should be instructions, guidelines and systems to identify lands of SCs and STs and to group them into blocks and provide irrigation for them.

Table-24

	Scheme	Total Outlay 2017-18 BE	SCP/Allocations for SCs 2017-18 BE (Rs Crores)		TsP/Allocations for STs 2017-18 BE (Rs Crores)	
			Outlay	%age to Total	Outlay	% to total
<i>Dept. of Agriculture, cooperation and farmers' welfare</i>						
1	Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana	9000.00	1484.87	16.50	719.04	7.10
2	Interest subsidy on short-term credit to farmers	15000.00	2430.00	16.2	1200.00	8
3	Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY) – Per Drop More Crops	3400.00	550.00	16.18	272.00	8
4	Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana	4750.00	769.10	16.19	380.00	8
5	National Food Security Mission	1720.00	298.44	17.35	137.60	8
6	National Mission on Horticulture	2320.00	367.74	15.85	208.90	9
<i>Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries</i>						
7	Integrated Development and Management of fisheries	400.73	64.92	16.20	Nil	Nil
<i>Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation</i>						
8	SBM-Rural Programme Component	11872.27	3068.62	25.85	1394.83	11.75
9	Nation Rural Drinking Water Programme - Normal Programme	5105.50	1331.00	26.07	605.00	11.85
<i>Department of Health and Family Welfare</i>						
10	National Rural Health Mission	21188.65	4272.93	20.17	2332.28	11
11	National Urban Health Mission	752.05	93.27	12.40	24.15	3.21
12	Strengthening Government Medical Colleges (UG Seats) and Central Government Health Institutions	480.00	95.52	19.9	51.55	10.73
13	Establishing New Medical Colleges (upgrading District Hospitals)	3300.00	734.00	22.24	398.90	12.09
<i>Department of School Education and Literacy</i>						
14	National Means cum Merit Scholarship Scheme	282.00	56.40	20	30.18	10.72
15	National Scheme for Incentive to Girl Child for Secondary Education	320.00	147.00	45.94	64.00	20
16	Strengthening of Teachers Training Institutions	480.00	96.36	20.8	51.36	10.7
17	National Programme of Mid-Day Meal in Schools (Amount met from Gross Budgetary Support)	10000.00	1942.00	19.42	1054.00	10.54
18	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan	23500.00	4700	20	2849.17	12.12
<i>Department of Higher Education</i>						
19	UGC	4691.94	300.00	6.39	Nil	Nil
20	Support to IITs	7171.00	590.00	8.23	60.00	0.84
21	Improvement in Salary Scale of University and College Teachers	7171.00	105.00	1.46	52.50	0.73
<i>Ministry of Labour and Employment</i>						
22	Employees Pension Scheme, 1995	4771.18	767.26	16.08	387.78	8.13
23	Employment generation programmes	1164.90	194.12	16.66	99.49	8.54
<i>Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises</i>						
24	Credit Support Programme	3002.00	360.24	12	246.16	8.20
25	National Schedule Caste/Schedule Tribe Hub Centre	60.00	30.00	50	20.00	33.3
<i>Ministry of Power</i>						
26	Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojna	4814.00	546.10	11.34	Nil	Nil
<i>Deptt. of Rural Development</i>						
27	Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna (PMAY) - Rural (Programme Component)	22616.00	7652.72	33.84	5318.28	23.52
<i>Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship</i>						
28	PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana	2924.26	470.49	16.09	238.15	4.39
<i>Ministry of Women and Child Development</i>						
29	Anganwadi Services (Erstwhile Core ICDS)	15245.19	3320.00	21.78	1420.00	9.31

Land-ownership of SCs is disproportionately very low and irrigated land-ownership of SCs and STs is proportionately extremely low. A scheme for providing irrigation for them is essential. This was committed in the Common Minimum Programme (CMP), 2004 of the UPA Government and the Presidential Address to the Joint Session of Parliament in 2004. But, nothing tangible has happened, despite my having pointed this out repeatedly to the leaders of the previous Government. If the present Government intends to break away from that past, there must be clear channelization, implementation, monitoring, social audit and transparent reporting along the lines I have mentioned. This is relevant to a number of schemes of this type.

There are schemes in which allocations for SCP and TsP in justifiable excess of their population-proportion have been shown. An example is the scheme of "Nation Rural Drinking Water Programme - Normal Programme" of the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation. In the case of SCs particularly, it must be made clear whether the SCP/Allocation for SCs represents the cost of creation of safe drinking-water in their own habitations. If the allocation pertains to creation of drinking-water sources located in general localities and a portion of it is shown against SCs, it will not be proper because SCs have no access or have only restricted access or conditional access, based on "Untouchability", to such sources. Drinking-water sources to the extent of the outlays for SCs and STs shown must be provided in their own habitations.

Another important example is the "National Programme of Mid-Day Meal in Schools" of the Department of School Education and Literacy. Justification of this allocation requires that the cook or server of food in each school belongs to the SCs and STs, and SC and non-SC children and ST and non-ST children are interspersed and there are no discriminatory conditions and conditionalities like separate plates, etc.

Another example I may mention pertains to the "Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojna" of the Ministry of Power. Typically, even when a village is electrified or declared as electrified, electricity does not reach the Dalit habitations. Therefore, the question arises whether the allocation shown for SCP under this scheme pertains to the actual cost of electrification of SC homes and street-lighting in SC habitations. It must be ensured that under this scheme the Dalit habitations and their homes and streets are fully electrified and only the cost incurred for extension of the services between the "main" village and the Dalit habitations is shown as SCP.

Another similar question is whether the amount earmarked for SCP/Allocations for SCs and TsP/Allocations for STs under the scheme "Anganwadi Services (Erstwhile Core ICDS)" of the Ministry of Women and Child Development pertains to Anganwadis actually located in SC and ST habitations, so that the SC and ST children and mothers are not exposed to "Untouchability"-based discriminations to which they are routinely subjected in many Anganwadis located in the so-called general localities.

Schemes under which SCP/Allocations for SCs and TsP/Allocations for STs are relatively small are not shown in the Table 24 above. But I must make a general statement covering them. Some examples of these schemes under which SCP/Allocations for SCs and TsP/Allocations for STs have been shown are:-

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| (i) Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences | (SCP Rs. 12 Cr; TsP Rs 2 Cr) |
| (ii) Central Council for Research in Homeopathy | (SCP Rs 4 Cr; TsP Rs 0.75 Cr) |
| (iii) Central Council for Research in Unani Medicines | (SCP Rs. 7 Cr; TsP Rs 1.00 Cr) |
| (iv) National Medicinal Plants Board | (SCP Rs 5 Cr ; TsP Rs 2.00 Cr) |
| (v) Tea Board | (SCP Rs. 8.50 Cr) |
| (vi) Coffee Board | (SCP Rs 8.50 Cr) |
| (vii) Rubber Board | (SCP Rs 8.50 Cr) |

These come under the Budget category of “Other Central Expenditure”. It is not clear on what basis SCP/Allocations for SCs have been worked out in these and similar schemes. If it is only a mechanical display of some amounts, it goes against the principles of SCP and TsP and SC and ST development to reach the goal of Equality. In the case of organisations like the Tea Board, Coffee Board and Rubber Board, it is possible to provide plantation lands to SCs and provide technical, managerial, financial, marketing and other support for them. Such services to the extent of the SCP/Allocations for SCs shown must be provided for them. I have personally seen in Kerala and Karnataka, the scope for such plantation-land allocations and development. No TsP has been shown under the Tea Board, Coffee Board and Rubber Board allocations. By adopting the same process as I mentioned for SCs, it is possible to provide developmental support for STs and indicate TsP allocations to the extent of support and services for STs.

There are no schemes for matters which are most important for SCs and STs. For example, for the masses of rural-resident SCs, assignments/allocations of viable extents of agricultural lands with pattas and actual peaceful occupation without interference by powerful individuals of dominant land-owning castes is of foremost importance. For STs, restoration of lands originally belonging to them, which have been grabbed by others, often in breach of legislative Regulations/Acts, sometimes in connivance with highest political authorities, is of foremost importance. There is no scheme for these. The Department of Land Resources ought to have such schemes. These and similar continuing serious lacuna, on account of which the SCs and STs continue to be the most deprived parts of our people and on account of which there is continuing wide gap between SCs and STs at one end and the SACs/NSCTBCs at the other end in every parameter of development, welfare and life, as also candidly admitted by Shri Rao Inderjit Singh, Minister of State for Planning, in his reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha on 6.2.2017, can be resolved by institution of SCP and TsP on a rational and relevant basis.

Showing certain amounts as outlays for SCP/Allocations for Welfare of SCs and TsP/Allocations for Welfare of STs should not be treated as the end of the matter. The powerful Finance Ministry, in close collaboration with the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment and the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, has to ensure that every Ministry works out instructions, guidelines and systems whereby direct and tangible benefits directly and exclusively go to the SCs and STs at least to the extent of the earmarked amounts without any padding up and provide for monitoring, auditing and transparent reporting. The outlays for SCP/Allocations for Welfare of SCs and TsP/Allocations for Welfare of STs under the Centrally-Sponsored Schemes should be released to the State Governments with such instructions, guidelines and systems. The Finance Ministry, which is crucial, should not maintain an attitude of aloofness towards these important exercises, which logically follow from the Budget prepared by it.

It is also necessary that the Finance Ministry brings out a separate volume or two separate volumes to show the actual direct, tangible and relevant inputs to and outcomes from the earmarked allocations of SCP and TsP under these schemes. A clear solution will be the formulation of SCP and TsP in a manner relevant to the SCs and STs based on their needs and priorities, in order to reach the goal of Equality, and provide a statutory base for them through the enactment of the “Special Component Plan for Scheduled Castes (SCP) and Tribal sub-Plan (TsP) and Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Development Authorities” legislation, which I have been urging in the public domain in the last two decades and even longer through reports, official meetings, personal meetings and discussions, letters, etc. I will come to this in the last part of this Paper.

C. Basic Qualitative Lacuna — Continuing Absence of Meaningful and Relevant Planning for SCs and STs

The present Budget seamlessly continues the old practice of mechanically showing, under different Ministries, certain amounts as SCP and TsP which have no bearing or little bearing on the goal of eliminating the gap between the SCs and STs, on one side, and the Socially Advanced Classes (Non-SC, Non-ST, Non-BC Classes), on the other, in every parameter of development through schemes which are designed to achieve this goal and the benefit of which goes directly and exclusively to SC and ST individuals, families, groups, habitations and institutions in order to achieve this goal. Thus, it has now become, as it has always been, an exercise in arithmetical-statistical jugglery instead of serious and relevant developmental planning for SCs and STs. Under this old practice, continuing this year, a percentage of the outlay for the whole schemes of different Ministries/Departments is shown as earmarked for the SCs (SCP) and STs (TsP).

Even within the framework-less and vision-less exercise, there is no indication of how the SCP and TsP outlays so displayed will actually reach the SCs and STs. There is also no mention of any mechanism to monitor and report whether and to what extent these SCP and TsP outlays actually reach the SCs and STs. The Finance Ministry and the NITI Ayog (which is yet to attend to SC and ST development, though the Government Resolution setting it up contained “inclusion” of SCs, STs and BCs as one of the “seven pillars on which effective governance in India will rest”, which I pointed out to the Deputy Chairman of NITI Ayog by my letter dated 10.02.2015, for which I am yet to get a reply -- copy enclosed), need to set up a mechanism to monitor and secure information regarding actual benefits that have reached the SCs and STs. Otherwise, even the outlays provided without a holistic framework will remain only on paper. Some social workers who, under my guidance, have tried to trace the money and developmental trail of SCP outlays provided in the Central Budget and State Budgets, have found that they could at best only get information on district-wise allocations by the State Departments. At the district departmental-level, there is no knowledge about the provisions under the SCP and TsP, and usually no effort is made to identify the beneficiary individuals/families, their villages, etc. intended to be covered by the Departmental SCP and TsP schemes, which is necessary to reach the benefits and monitor the results. It also facilitates checking of diversions of SCP funds which, according to the then FM Thiru Chidambaram’s statement in Parliament on 30 August 2010, while replying to criticism of large-scale diversion of SCP funds to Commonwealth Games infrastructure, is widely prevalent in the Centre and every State. No remedial measures were taken by him while making this candid admission as though this is business as usual, nor any lesson seems to have been drawn by the present Government.

In short, over the years, there is no qualitative improvement. In respect of the SCs and STs, the present Budget is old wine in old bottle with a new label.

D. Remedial Measures

As I mentioned last year in my Paper on the SCP and TsP in the Budget 2016-17, it is a poor doctor who provides the diagnosis of the disease but stops short of prescribing treatment for the disease. It has been my practice all along while pointing out deficiencies, to constructively point out how deficiencies can be rectified. Remedy for the quantitative and, more importantly, qualitative deficiencies of the Budget in respect of SCs and STs, which is the continuation of the deficiencies which have been happening all along, except at particular periods when a dedicated Secretary or Joint Secretary or District Collector / Dy Commissioner, or Minister was or is in position, is possible if there is sincerity towards SCs and STs and if there is recognition of the national importance of enabling SCs and STs to become equal to the SACs / NSCTBCs in all parameters both as a measure of upholding their human and Constitutional right and as a measure of integrating Society and

strengthening the Nation and the national economy, and willingness to translate into action the Resolution of the Parliament after discussions on the Constitution Day and subsequent days, as part of the 125th Birth Anniversary of Dr. Ambedkar, passed unanimously in both the Houses. In this period, we have also seen homages paid rightly to Dr. Ambedkar. This entails a responsibility to shape the Plan and design the strategy for SCP and TsP, along the line envisaged by Dr. Ambedkar, viz., enabling the SCs and STs achieve Social Equality in each and every parameter of development, welfare and life through the path of comprehensive Social Justice.

(1) One Axis of Remedial Measures – Quantitative Improvement

The SCP and TsP outlays / Allocations for Welfare of SCs and STs need to be enhanced to the population-equivalent level of 16.6% and 8.6% respectively which, calculated on the basis of the proportion of the total of Budgetary Expenditure for Central Sector Schemes and Centrally-Sponsored Schemes in the Budget 2016-17, translates to Rs. 156883.00 crores and Rs. 81277.00 crores respectively. The increases should be in Ministries/Departments most relevant to SCs and STs such as Ministry of HRD; Ministry of Agriculture (including particularly Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana); Department of Land Resources (by providing schemes for distribution of viable extents of agricultural lands to every rural SC and ST family as committed by the President in his Address to the joint session of Parliament in 2004); Department of Rural Development; Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (including Kaushal Vikas Yojana),; Ministry of Power (including Deen Dayal Upadhyay Gramin-Jyoti Yojana); and MSME (including Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme). Increase can also be made by providing for schemes such as high-quality residential schools for SC girls and boys and for ST girls and boys up to Class XII in every district, and subsequently in every Block of the country, a long-standing advice of mine, which has also been recommended by the Group of Ministers on Dalit Affairs (2005-2008), chaired by the then FM and the present President Shri Pranab Mukherjee, and by the Task Force on Educational Development of SCs, set up by the National Monitoring Committee of the Ministry of Human Resources Development, in the Task Force Report dated 21. 09. 2012. Another important area in which enhancement can be made and must be made is to additionally provide Rs 11653 crores for Post-Matric Scholarship for SCs in this year's Budget so as to meet the dues in arrears of the past and to ensure that no fresh arrears occur in this year.

(2) Second Axis of Remedial Measures – Qualitative Improvement

(a) Pending the introduction of the measures for qualitative improvement suggested at (b) below (which I hope the Government will do without delay) and until the total permanent solution mentioned at (3) below is accepted and implemented, within the framework of the present Budget, which like the previous Budgets of different Governments, is non-holistic and visionless, the Government needs to lay down clear-cut guidelines for each Ministry and for each State Government and its Departments, incorporating the following steps:-

(i) A plan of action to reach the budgeted SCP and TsP outlays/Outlays for welfare of SCs and STs of the Centre and of the States down up to the village and town level, and to reach the benefits to identified SC and ST individuals / families / groups / organizations / institutions in identified villages and Mohallas and wide publicity for this.

(ii) Similarly lay down systems for monitoring, associating with the Governmental systems, social workers, experts and general society members who are genuinely interested in the advancement of SCs and STs and who have won the confidence of SCs and STs;

The responsibility for this should not be cast only on the Ministries of Social Justice and Empowerment (MSJE) and Tribal Affairs (MoTA). A powerful Ministry like the Ministry of Finance needs to be associated in this effort and also bring in the NITI Ayog. The Ministry of Finance will have to provide the leadership continuously. Having provided the SCP and TsP/Allocation for Welfare of SCs and STs in the Budget, the Ministry of Finance should also take upon itself the subsequent responsibility of leading the Government's efforts to ensure the reaching of the benefits to SCs and ST and monitoring it.

(iii) Reform the method of displaying the SCP and TsP/Allocations for Welfare of SCs and STs. The present format is of Thiru P.Chidambaram-vintage, except for the change in the title of the Statements from "Schemes under Scheduled Castes Sub-Plan" and "Schemes under Tribal Sub-Plan" to, in the present Budget 2017-18, "Allocation for Welfare of Scheduled Castes" and "Allocation for Welfare of Scheduled Tribes", and has continued without improvement. This format should be improved by providing notes, under each scheme out of which outlays are earmarked for SCP and TsP/Welfare of SCs and STs, giving details of the nature of the benefits intended for SC and ST individuals / families / organizations / Institutions, etc., and the road laid for reaching the benefits to SCs and STs and particulars of the extent to which actual benefits were reached to them out of each scheme in the previous year's SCP and TsP. The two Statements in the Expenditure Budget volume will be inadequate for this. There will have to be a separate volume for SCP and TsP – the SCs and STs need this and deserve this from the Ministry of Finance.

(iv) A further step in qualitative improvement will be to pool together the amounts earmarked for the SCP and TsP/Welfare of SCs and STs of each Ministry, preferably enhanced as suggested at B (1) above, and allocate the pooled amounts to schemes of greater relevance and benefit to SCs and STs. Here too the Ministry of Finance can associate the NITI Ayog and the Ministries of MSJE and MoTA.

(b) A still better step would be that the entire outlay of SCP and TsP/Allocation for SCs and STs, enhanced to Rs. 156883.00 crores and Rs. 81277.00 crores respectively, be made into two corpuses untied with any Ministry, making both free for relevant, serious and systematic planning for the development of SCs and STs with the goal of bringing about Equality for them with Socially Advanced Classes (Non-SC, Non-ST and Non-BC castes) in all parameters, namely, economic, occupational, educational at all levels, housing-and-residential-facilities-related, health-and-nutritional, etc.

Under both the improved patterns as at (a) and (b) above, there should be separate displays of the outlays and physical benefits to Specially Vulnerable Groups of the SCs, such as Safai Karmacharis ("scavengers"), Nomadic, Semi-Nomadic and Vimukta Jati communities among SCs, Devadasis, children, women, Bonded Labourers, physically handicapped/"Divyang" etc., in the case of SCP/Allocation for Welfare of SCs and among STs, the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PTGs), Nomadic, Semi-Nomadic and Vimukta Jati communities among STs, children, women, Bonded Labourers, physically handicapped/"Divyang", etc., in the case of TsP/Allocation for Welfare of STs.

(3) Need to Move the National Special Component Plan for Scheduled Castes and Tribal sub-Plan Bill in the Parliament and Getting it Passed in Both the Houses as early as possible in this Budget Session

The qualitative improvements suggested above are half way houses. The best way to fulfill the Constitutional mandate of Social Equality through comprehensive Social Justice measures, is to move the National Special Component Plan for Scheduled Castes (SCP and Tribal sub-Plan (TsP) and Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Authorities Bill in the Parliament and getting it passed in

both the Houses of the Parliament as early as possible, preferably in this Budget Session. This can help to ensure that all States as well as the Centre fulfill and efficiently implement the SCP and TsP without scope for quantitative shortfall or qualitative deficit in order to ensure fairness to SCs and STs in development.

The essential features of a meaningful, relevant, effective and objective-oriented SCP and TsP should be the following:-

- Setting apart, as two separate corpuses, the total share of the SCs and STs out of Plan/Development funds, at least in proportion to their population percentage – this should be done before Plan / Development funds are sectorally distributed/allocated.
- These two will be the corpuses of the SCP and TsP.
- These two corpuses will not have any prior sectoral allocations or commitments.
- Within these corpuses, Plans for the development, advancement and empowerment of the SCs and STs, based solely on their needs and priorities, should be formulated.
- This task ideally should be entrusted to SC Development Authorities and ST Development Authorities at the National level and State level, and implementation should be entrusted to District-level SC Developmental Authorities and ST Development Authorities.

The National and State Authorities will issue sanctions in favour of implementing Ministries/Department/Institutions based on schemes and plans formulated / approved by the Authorities for the SCs and STs and they should have powers of monitoring, course-correction and re-appropriation of sanctioned amounts.

- The SC and ST Development Authorities should have major representation of service-minded persons, who have been and who continue to be closely associated with SC and ST development, along with official representatives.
- The Development Authorities should be vested with functional, financial and administrative autonomy.
- The schemes and programmes so formulated should be such as to enable the SCs and STs to reach the level of the SACs / NSCTBCs of the State and the country, in all parameters of development, welfare and life.
- The schemes and programmes, formulated under the SCP and TsP, should include only such schemes and programmes, of which the outlays and benefits go directly and exclusively to SC and ST individuals, families, groups, institutions and habitations. Arithmetical and statistical jugglery showing a share for the SCs and STs in schemes and outlays available for all or in general schemes, and showing such share as SCP and TsP will not help reach the goal of Equality – this has given and will give scope for presenting an unrealistic and exaggerated figure of outlays for the SCP and TsP without really benefitting SCs and STs or giving them only marginal/non-significant benefit.
- In the process of formulation of Plans and supervision and monitoring of their implementation, the SCs and STs and those working for them should have the decisive say, and there should be a mechanism of consultation with the masses of Dalits and Adivasis at District and sub-District levels. There should be complete transparency and detailed and specific information of schemes/programmes and outlays, so that Dalits and Adivasis and those working for them – in addition to the

official functionaries – can track the sanctioned schemes/programmes and outlays up to the end-point.

I have been urging for the adoption and implementation of SCP and TsP with these essential features and legislation along these lines in Governmental forums from 1983 and in the public domain since 1996 with the Dalit Manifesto, Incorporating the Rights and Entitlements of SCs, STs and SEEdBCs, formulated by me under the auspices of the National Action Forum for Social Justice.

A draft Bill prepared by me was approved by the Sub-Group, under my Chairmanship, on Perspective Planning on Empowerment of Scheduled Castes in the XII Five Year Plan, whose Report was furnished to the Government and Planning Commission in August 2011. I have written about this from then onwards in my letters to the past and present Prime Ministers, the past and present Finance Ministers and other past and present concerned Ministers and leaders. A National Coalition on SCP and TsP Legislation, of which I am the Advisor, has also actively moved in this matter. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment of the previous Government prepared the Government's Bill after the widest consultations within Government and with Dalit and Adivasi civil society representatives, which contained a number of though not all features of the Bill I had furnished to the Government. Unfortunately, that Bill of the Government was not enacted because the Ministry of MSJE was forbidden from bringing the subject to the Cabinet by the then PM (who in my view owes a clarification to the SCs and STs why the MSJE was forbidden from bringing that Bill to the Cabinet). I have suggested this approach to the present Finance Minister vide my e-letters dated 02-06-2014 and 04-12-2014 and to the Prime Minister vide my e-letters to him dated 12. 07. 2013, 19. 7. 2013, 11. 01. 2014, 10. 02. 2014 and 02. 07. 2014. I also mentioned this approach to the Finance Minister and handed over hard copies of my e-letters to him when a delegation of the Centre for Dalit Studies, Hyderabad including me met him on 02 January 2015.

Recently, a National Forum for SCP and TsP was formed by a number of retired IAS and other officers, professionals and social workers, who have been sincerely working for the SCs and STs, with me as its Chief Advisor. A National Workshop of this Forum was held on 18.8.2016 in Delhi and on that day a delegation led by me called on Shri Rajnath Singh, Hon'ble Home Minister, and I presented a Memorandum to him on behalf of the delegation and the Forum and also on behalf of the Dalits and Adivasis of the country and requested him to help in expeditiously securing the enactment of the legislation for SCP and TsP and SC and ST Development Authorities. I reminded him of the statement he had made in Hyderabad in 2013 that the national legislation for SCP and TsP would be enacted when his Party would come to power at the Centre. He remembered his statement and promised his full support for the enactment of the national legislation.

The Gujarat Chapter of the Forum held a Workshop on 3.10.2016 at Ahmedabad at the conclusion of which I led a delegation of representatives of SCs, ST and Nomadic and Vimukta Jati communities to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat and presented to him a similar Memorandum requesting him to secure the enactment of a Gujarat-specific State legislation for SCP and TsP and SC and ST Development Authorities in the ensuing session of the State legislature. He also responded positively. Similar Workshops have been and are being held in other States and Memoranda are being presented to respective Chief Ministers. In Kerala, I led a delegation of members of the Forum of Kerala and representatives of a number of Dalit and Adivasi organizations and called on the Minister in charge of Welfare of SCs, STs and BCs; Law; Culture and Parliamentary Affairs on the 24th November 2016; the Vice-Chairman of the Kerala State Planning Board and the State Finance Minister on the 25th November 2016 and the Chief Minister of Kerala on the 26th November 2016; and after detailed presentations presented a Memorandum to requesting to secure the enactment of the Kerala-specific legislation for the SCP and TsP and SC and ST Development Authorities in the ensuing session of the State legislature. Their response was positive. On 13.1.2017, a large number of Dalits and Adivasis from Kerala held a Rally in Delhi, took my guidance and presented a

Memorandum to the PM's office expressing the unhappiness of SCs and STs with the contents of the Budget Circular of 21.9.2016 in respect of SCs and STs and requesting for the enactment of the legislation for the SCP and TsP and SC and ST Development Authorities.

Like the previous Governments, the present Government has also failed in this regard till now. Here is an opportunity for the present Government to do in a matter vital for SC and ST development what the previous Government failed to do in all its 10 years and rectify the approach for the development and advancement of SCs and STs towards Equality, compared to the SACs/NSCTBCs in all respects. For this, the Bill which is available in the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment should be brought to and cleared by the Cabinet and brought to the Parliament and got passed in both the Houses as early as possible, preferably in this Budget session itself. It will be better if the Government's Bill prepared in 2013 is upgraded in line with the draft Bill which I had sent to the Ministry of MSJE as mentioned above.

Issue of Nomenclature

While moving the Bill, the original name of "Special Component Plan for Scheduled Castes (SCP)" should be restored instead of the downgraded name of "Scheduled Castes sub-Plan (SCSP)" which was introduced in the latter part of Dr. Manmohan Singh's tenure. Originally the name was coined after careful thought at the time of the inception of the Special Component Plan for Scheduled Castes (SCP). The acronym SCP can be read also as "Scheduled Castes Plan". This was the name which remained till 2006 and by which it was known and referred to by successive Prime Ministers, starting with Shri Morarji Desai and continued by Smt. Indira Gandhi (on her return to power in 1980), Shri Rajiv Gandhi, Shri V.P.Singh (not only when he was PM but earlier when he was CM of UP), Shri Narasimha Rao, Shri Deve Gowda, Shri I.K. Gujral, Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee and Shri Manmohan Singh himself in the early part of his tenure (and also when he was in the Planning Commission). Successive Ministers and Chief Ministers have also referred to it by the same name. In 2006, the then Government took the first step in miscalling this Plan by renaming it as "Scheduled Castes sub-Plan (SCSP)". The downgradation of "Plan" to a "sub-Plan" is obvious. After I pointed out this and its implication to the then Member in the Planning Commission, Dr B.L. Mungekar, he, on the last day of his tenure in the Planning Commission in 2009, personally handed over a letter, for which he had secured the approval of the then Dy. Chairman of the Planning Commission Shri Ahluwalia, to the then Minister for SJE Shri Mukul Wasnik, proposing the restoration of the original name. The Ministry wrote to the Planning Commission asking for the reasons for this restoration of name, though it was evident in Dr Mungekar's letter and though in 2006 when a negative change was made in the name, the Ministry did not ask such a question. This retrogression has been compounded in the latest Budget by the present Government by the abolition altogether of the word "Plan" itself. This aversion to the term "Plan" has been carried to a ridiculous extent such as referring to the "Special Central Assistance to the State Special Component Plans (SCA to State SCPs)" (which had been renamed by the previous Government to "SCA to State Scheduled Caste Sub-Plans") as "Special Central Assistance to SC sub-Scheme". The terms "Special component Plan (SCP)", and the previous Government's "Schedule Castes sub-Plan (SCSP)" and "Tribal sub-Plan (TsP)" have been changed into "Allocation for Welfare of Scheduled Castes" and "Allocation for Welfare of Scheduled Tribes".

It is known that the present Government has abolished the term "Plan" apparently because of its Socialist-related connotation. This has been substituted by terms like "15-Year Vision", "7-Year National Development Agenda" and "3-Year Mid-Term Review". It is not correct to associate the term "Plan" with Socialism or Socialist regime of the erstwhile Soviet Union and other erstwhile Communist countries. No development is possible without a Plan. Even Corporates formulate Plans.

Speaking for the SCs and STs, a Plan is necessary for their advancement to Equality. Without a Plan, we will have only disjointed programmes and schemes. Therefore, irrespective of other aspects, the present Government should without hesitation adopt the original name the “Special Component Plan for Scheduled Castes (SCP) and the “Tribal sub-Plan (TsP)”. Those working for the SCs and STs should insist on referring to these developmental instrumentalities by the original names, irrespective of when the Government takes this corrective action. I was happy to note on the Television that the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji in his Address in the Rajya Sabha on 8.2.2017 on the motion of thanks to the President for his Address to the Parliament used the term “Tribal sub-Plan”.

II. Budget 2017-18 and Socially and Educationally Backward Classes

The Central Government was extremely tardy in recognizing the reality of the existence of the Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEdBCs) – also referred to as Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Backward Classes (BCs) – in our society. There is a misunderstanding among the educated classes in general, including the learned anchors of the electronic media and the print media editors and columnists that this recognition and provision of reservation for them started with the implementation of the Mandal Commission’s Report. In fact, reservation for BCs (including SCs and STs), started at the turn of the 20th century and covered the whole of the Peninsula well before Independence. Later, the Constitution of India recognized the SEdBCs and required that they be provided all necessary measures for their advancement. The Constitutionally-mandated process was deliberately delayed by the Central Government and most State Governments north of the Vindhyas. The Report of the First Backward Classes (Kaka Kalelkar) Commission (1953-55) was rejected in 1961 for patently illogical reasons. The Second Backward Classes (Mandal) Commission’s Report was delayed from 1980 to 1990 on various pretexts. The implementation of the Mandal Commission’s Report in a meaningful manner started only with Shri V.P. Singh becoming the Prime Minister in 1989, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan becoming the Minister for Labour and Welfare, and myself becoming the Secretary, Ministry of Welfare on 2.1.1990. The Order issued by this regime in 1990, on the basis of my Note, became operational in 1993 after the Supreme Court upheld this Order in its land-mark 9-Member Bench Mandal case judgment of 16.11.1992 in *Indra Sawhney vs Union of India* and after implementation of its directions under my guidance.

This gross and unconscionable delay has been compounded by neglect in taking concrete measures for the development of the SEdBCs. The bulk of the SEdBCs consist of castes of artisans (e.g., weavers, potters); artisanal castes (e.g., stone-cutters, fisher-folk); service-providers (e.g., hair-cutters, washer-people); and Nomadic, Semi-Nomadic and Vimukta Jati communities which are indigent and who include mendicant communities. The Road-Map to rationally plan for their advancement to Equality has been prepared by the Report of the Working Group for the Empowerment of Backward Classes in the X Plan (2001) under my Chairmanship. I went for the last meeting of this Working Group in which this Report was finalized after taking permission and going from the hospital, where I had been admitted for observation and tests leading to my by-pass surgery a few days later. This Report has not received the attention of the Planning Commission or the Government. Instead, a few small disjointed schemes have only been provided for the SEdBCs as seen from the Table-25 below. I had also raised these issues on a number of subsequent occasions including at the Meeting of the Planning Commission’s Steering Committee in 2011.

Table 25
Outlays for Programmes/Schemes for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (Rs Crores)

	2015-16 Actual	2016-17 BE	2016-17 RE	2017-18 BE
Pre-Matric Scholarship	120.78	142.00	142.00	142.00
Post-Matric Scholarship	822.75	885.00	885.00	885.00
Boys and Girls Hostel	40.30	40.00	40.00	40.00
National Overseas Scholarships for OBCs	1.00	2.00	3.00	4.30
Assistance to Voluntary Organisations for OBCs	5.02	4.00	9.00	10.00
Scheme for Development of Denotified Nomadic tribes	4.50	5.00	4.50	6.00
National BC Finance Development Corporation	112.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
National Commission for Backward Classes	3.99	4.80	4.90	5.50
National Commission for Denotified Tribes	0.91	1.76	2.29	2.50
Free Coaching for SC and OBC Students	6.80	25.00	2.00	25.00
National Fellowship for Other Backward Classes and Economically Backward Classes	18.30	27.00	27.00	40.0

Apart from the few schemes which are exclusively for SEBCs, in one scheme, viz., “Free Coaching” for SCs, BCs have also been added. National Fellowship scheme has been provided for SEBCs along with “Economically Backward Classes”. To avoid confusion and for clarity, it is better that the share of the SEBCs is shown separately.

All the outlays for SEBCs in Table 25 above add up to a pittance. The present Government has opportunity to break away from the negative attitude of the Governments at the Centre from the promulgation of our Constitution till 1990 and the casual attitude to the development and advancement of SEBCs till now.

Whether this challenge will be taken up or not will, along with what needs to be done for SCs and STs as I mentioned above, has a major bearing on the prospects for the integration of the Indian society, fractured over the centuries till now by the caste-system-with-“Untouchability”-based discriminations and deprivations and on the prospects for the optimal growth of the Indian economy by securing the potential contribution of the fully developed human resources of SCs, STs and SEBCs and on the prospects for the long-term stability of Indian governance.

III. Conclusion

The leaders of the present and past Governments, the leaders of all political parties know my deep knowledge and country-wide experience, stretching nearly decades, and sincere commitment to the legitimate needs, entitlements and rights of the SCs, STs, and also SEdBCs. I had pointed out the pluses and minuses in the previous Budgets, as I have done in respect of the present Budget, and urged upon the past and present Governments the same remedial measures as I mentioned here. The remedial measures I have suggested now and earlier need to be heeded seriously.

I am prepared to provide any assistance that the Government wants to give effect to the quantitative and qualitative improvement in the Budget and SC, ST and SEdBC development without seeking anything in return.

The problems faced by the SCs, STs and SEdBCs are well-known. The solutions are known. The Road-Map I have worked out is with the PM, Ministers and other concerned leaders. There is no excuse or alibi for not implementing them holistically. Previous Governments, particularly during Smt. Indira Gandhi's time and Shri V.P. Singh's time and, to some extent, the UF Government's time, have done something, but not holistically and have not tried to tackle the problem at its roots. The present Government too in its nearly three years has followed the path of the previous Governments. I would appeal to the PM and FM, and other concerned Ministers, to accomplish what has not been done for the SCs, STs and SEdBCs, especially the More, the Most and Extremely Backward castes of the SEdBCs in all these decades after Independence. This is necessary not only as a matter of Justice for them, but also in the interest of social integration and strengthening of national unity and optimal development.

24. 02. 2017

■ P. S. Krishnan