

Media Release

Let MSDP Be Block-based Rather Than Distric-Centric : Nathwani

March 22, 2011: Mr Parimal Nathwani, a rajya sabha member from the State, echoed woes of minorities of Jharkhand before a special meeting convened by Mr Salman Khurshid, the union minister of minority affairs at New Delhi yesterday. He said the Multi Sectoral Development Program (MSDP) should be made more broad-based and instead of it becoming a distric-centric program; it should be brought to the block-level for its effective implementation and utilization of funds.

The meeting was called for discussion on the issues of minorities in the light of recommendations and observations of Sachar Committee.

Mr. Nathwani, while speaking in the meeting which was later on attended by the prime minister Mr. Manmohan Singh and the planning commission vice chairman Mr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, told that since the district collectors were over-burdened, the decentralization and sub-delegation to block level or to some nodal agency was essential for success of the development programme. This would cover 44 blocks in 13 districts in the State rather than only six districts.

He said the minority concentration districts (MCDs) in the State lacked educational infrastructure and other civic amenities, which needed utmost attention and improvement. Urdu Schools and madarasas had teachers with meager salaries of Rs. 900 per month and students of two classes were accommodated in one class-room; he added.

Mr Nathwani also said that Jharkhand was still a nascent state and the utilization of funds for MSDP was to the tune of 38.51 per cent only. By extending the programme to block-level, the utilization of funds would also increase besides covering larger population; he added.

Sachar Committee in its report has listed 90 districts in the country which are named as minority concentration districts (MCDs) under category A and B. The category A includes the districts where both the socio-economic and basic amenities' indicators are below national average. In Jharkhand, Sahibganj and Pakaur fall under this category. The category B is for MCDs having either socio-economic or basic amenities with below national average. Ranchi (including Khunti) and Gumla (including Simdega) are covered under this category.

Further, Jharkhand's seven towns Hazaribag, Ranchi, Mango, Giridih, Bhuli, Jharia and Jorapkar also fall in the list of Class-I towns where minority population is 25 per cent or more.

Mr Montek Singh Ahluwalia in his response noted the points raised by Mr. Nathwani and other participants during the meeting. Mr. Nathwani also submitted an elaborate letter to the central minister echoing minorities' woes in Jharkhand emphasizing need for better educational infrastructure and civic amenities. He also quoted Prophet Hazarat Mohmmad Saheb who said: 'If you need to go to China for education, do go.'

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