

PRESS RELEASE / BUDGET 2008-09

80 Departments/Ministries deny Dalits-Adivasis-OBCs-Minorities share in the Budget.

Dalit Leaders Paswan, Shailja betray Dalits in Budget Proposals.

In 2004, when UPA form government, India stood at rank 126 in the Human Development Index. Governance and priorities of the UPA government has pushed India to a lower Human Development Index at 128. Government's recognition of this fact in the Economic Survey 2007-08 indicated that the budget for 2008-09 will address these issues by ensuring proportionate allocations of resources to the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, socially and educationally backward classes and minorities, especially the Muslims, who have remained not only at the bottom of the Human Development in India, but were denied adequate resources for Development since freedom. But Finance Minister has belied all hopes of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled tribes, OBCs, Minorities and Muslims.

Despite tall claims of the Finance Minister about the financial inclusion, resource allocation to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, OBCs and Minorities, specially the Muslims remain paltry. Poorest of the poor, socially and geographically excluded Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes who form 24.4% (SC 16.2% and ST 8.2%) population have been given only 3.05% of the total allocation in the budget. Socially and Educationally Backward Classes or the Other Backward Classes forming about 52% have received almost nothing in the budget. Minorities forming 18.42% of country's population received only 0.13%. These allocations make mockery of the development of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and Minorities.

It is shocking that out of the 105 Departments and Ministries, 80 departments and Ministries have not allocated even a single rupee to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, other backward classes and Minorities, especially the Muslims. Ministries headed by Dalit Leaders Ram Vilas Paswan (heading two Ministries - Ministry of Chemical and Fertiliser and Ministry of Steel) and Ms. Shailja Kumari (holding independent charge of Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation) have not bother to provide even a rupee for the sections they boast to represent in the UPA government. Ms. Shailja Kumari who holds independent charge of Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation has deliberately ignored the claims of SC/ST/OBCs and Minorities struggling to overcome their poverty and getting a house for them becoming a Herculean task in the urban areas.

It is revealing to note that the Ministry of Labour and Employment has provided only 0.17% (Rs. 4.42 crores) of its budget to the toiling and labouring classes of SCs and STs and has made no provision for the OBCs or Minorities. Interestingly Department of Science and Technology and Department of Biotechnology have provided 0.18% (9 Crore) and 0.33% (3 crore) as Special Component Plan and Tribal Sub Plan, clearly violating the norms of allocations under SCP and TSP, which require proportionate allocation by the Ministries. Mr. Sharad Pawar's Ministry of Agriculture has provided

only 2.52% of its budget to SCs and STs and nothing to OBCs or Minorities. Ministry of Culture has provided only 0.55% (Rs. 3.07 Cr), Ministry of Panchayati Raj 0.62%, and Ministry of Youth Affairs only 1% of their resources to SCs and STs and nothing to OBCs and Minorities or Muslims.

Department of Rural Development provides 6.96% of its resources to SCs and STs, whereas Ministry of Health and Family Welfare provides 14% of its budget to them. Similarly Ministry of HRD has a provision of 16.15% in Department of School and Education and Literacy and 21.17% in the Department of Higher Education.

National Conference of Dalit Organisations (NACDOR) considers budgetary allocations inadequate and paltry to the needs of the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, other backwards classes and minorities and Muslims. In a statement issued, Mr. Ashok Bharti, Chairman of the National Conference of Dalit Organisations (NACDOR), which is the national confederation of Dalit Organisations across the country, condemned the budget. "Budget provisions are mockery of the Dalits, Adivasis and the Other Backward Classes. Despite knowing the fact that more than 50% of the Dalits, Adivasis live below poverty line, this budget makes no effort to tackle their poverty, needs and development aspirations. Mere three percent resources to more than 22.5 Dalits and Adivasis, 52% backward classes and 18.4% Minorities clearly indicate that the government is hardly bothered about them. National Conference of Dalit Organisations (NACDOR) can not be a silent spectator while this government continues to dole out national resources to the mighty and rich."

"National Conference of Dalit Organisations (NACDOR) has been watching this government patiently and our patience has run out. We have decided to launch a mass campaign through out the country and we will ensure that the injustice meted to us is echoed in the forthcoming assembly elections in different states as well as in the general elections."

National Conference of Dalit Organisations (NACDOR) appeals to all the Members of Parliament belonging to the Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and Other Backward Classes to oppose and get this anti-Dalit, anti-Adivasi and anti-OBC budget modified in the Parliament and ensure justice to their community. We also appeal to all the constituent of UPA to exercise their influence to ensure justice to these sections.

Ashok Bharti
Chairman