Approaches towards Education Upliftment of Religious Minority: An Analysis of Central Government Schemes

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Approaches towards Education Upliftment of Religious Minority: An Analysis of Central Government Schemes

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ABSTRACT

Purpose*: Education is the important device for overall growth of any nation. India is multilingual and multi religious country, people of different communities and religions are living together. It is the duty of Indian Government to provide and safeguard the educational rights of the minorities. Minorities in India are not equal with others. The end result of education in some religion and communities are not same. Government came up with various educational schemes to support education of religious minorities. The main motto of this study is to analyze the central government schemes which supports education upliftment of minorities.*

Methodology: *This study was made out of secondary resources and required data was gathered from various Sachar, Post Sachar, Ministry of Minority Affairs report, Google Scholar, Web of sciences publications, journals, books, websites and financial report of state and central Government of India.*

Findings/Results: *The Government of India initiated with various educational schemes to minority education. The budget allocated for various educational schemes showed upward trend and number of beneficiaries of various educational schemes are in high.*

Practical Implication: *This paper will help students learn about the many government-sponsored educational programs in India that support the education of students from religious minorities. It will also help government officials learn more about the amount of funding allotted by the government and the total number of people who would benefit from the numerous programmes that improve minorities' educational standing.*

Paper Type: *Case study.*

Keywords: Minorities, Education, Empowerment, Government schemes, ABCD Analysis.

1. INTRODUCTION :

The Indian Constitution guarantees all members of society equal opportunities regardless of race, caste, creed, religion, or language. [1]. The word "Minority" has been originated from the Latin word 'minor' and with 'ity' as suffix which means 'lesser in number' [2]**.** India is the birth place of different religion. Among them Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Jains, Buddhists, and Parsis are considered as minorities'. These communities are socially impoverished, economically disadvantaged, educationally deprived. In spite of lot of exertion in the field of development of education, their involvement is very less and not sufficient [3]. The act of 1992 National Commission for Minorities (NCM) recorded five religious cults Christian, Sikh, Muslim, Parsis, and Buddhist as minority population [4]. As per census 2011, a minority of our country is 19.3% of the total population; in which Muslims are 14.2%; Christians 2.3%; Sikhs1.7%; Buddhists 0.7%; Jains 0.4%, and Parsis 0.006% [5]. Constitution of India, under Article 29 and 30, acknowledged minorities on the basis of language and religion and does not cover norms of culture, race, or nationality. National commission for Minorities Act 1992 notified that, in India, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Zoroastrians and Jains are minorities [6]. As per National Policy of Education (NPE) 1996 "Some minority communities are impoverished or backward in education. Greater concentration should be focused on the education of these communities in the interests of

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impartiality and equity [7]. To amend the educational level of minorities numerous long term and short term programmes were commenced in the form of equal opportunities like: Prime Minister's 15 Point Programme for the Welfare of the Minorities (1983), Area Intensive Programme for Educationally Backward Minorities, Modernization of Madrasa, Maulana Azad Education Foundation Scheme (1989), Free Supply of Books and Stationery and Merit Scholarship, and Pre-examination Coaching scheme for the weakened section [8]. To elevate the minorities, cultural and educational rights of minorities are essential. For the cordial development of children of minority communities culture is very important. With the absence of education, development of community is impossible and modification of society relies on education [9]. Since minorities are in little portion in comparison to the whole population, it is essential to initiate with additional steps to safeguard their interest and encourage a feeling of harmony with the rest of the majority in India [10]. The prime minister's 15 point programme was refurbished and modified in the year 2006, and aspired 15% of the amount should be utilised in minority concentrated area or recipients from the minority communities (Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Zoroastrians, and Buddhists [11]. Budget allotment for minority affairs ministry has been increased, as a result, it received Rs 5,021crore in 2022-23 and it was Rs. 4,811 crores in 2021-2022. Of the planned allotment of Rs 5,021crore, Rs 1,425 crore is for pre - matric scholarships and Rs 515 crores is for post – matric scholarships [12]. Education is the most important tool for the growth of nation. Education enhances ones understanding of themselves and world. As per article 30(1) of the Indian constitution all minorities will have right to establish and administer educational institution. Literacy rate of minorities are considerably low. Their economic and educational progress is very necessary for a progress of a country. Therefore both central and state government by initiating various schemes have come forward to empower the minorities. This paper aims to know about different educational schemes for minorities as well as fund provided for different schemes by Government.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE :

In India's current circumstances, educational opportunity inequality has grown to be a major worry. It's especially important now because globalization's expanding influence is endangering the educational opportunities of those who live in poverty [13]. The world's largest democracy is found in India. Its constitution provides equal rights to all citizens, regardless of caste, religion, sex, culture, or place of birth, and it frequently enacts laws, programmes, and other initiatives to promote equality among its people. Additionally, it has made sure that there is affirmative action in the form of reservations, which equalises the socioeconomically underprivileged segment of society with the rest of society. Despite continual efforts to promote equality among its citizens, some areas, particularly Muslim ones, continue to lag behind in nearly all aspects of socioeconomic growth. Both educationally and economically, they remain behind. Minority populations lack access to education, which contributes to their low economic conditions [14].

A systematic review of the available literature is conducted using keywords such as 'scholarship,' 'education,' 'empowerment of minorities,' 'government schemes for minorities,' 'utilisation of government scheme,' 'importance of government scheme,' and 'awareness level on government scheme' from the Google Scholar search engine between 2011 and 2021. Table 1 summarises the results of the literature review analysis.

Table 1: This table reviews the various literature on scholarship, education and government schemes

S. No	Field of Research	Contribution	Authors
1	Scholarship	The scholarship provided by the central government failed to confess that the students spend highest amount for the course fee and the scholarship amount provided by government is insufficient to cover the expenditure on maintenance in their higher studies. So it is vital necessity of the government to reform the amount and scope of the scheme.	Sharma, S. et al., (2020). [15]
2	Education	Significance must be given to school education by setting up qualitative	Waheed, A., et al., (2011).

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		government schools with hostel as well as schools meant for only girls especially for 9th to 12th standard in every minority concentrated village and area.	[16]
3	Empowerment of minorities	The policy was formulated in 2009 and it gives marked attention on minorities and women to take part in tutoring in skilfulness and gender equality among SCs, STs, OBCs, and physically challenged persons. Government of India implemented various welfare schemes to empower the minorities, The various schemes rolled out by the Government of India for the welfare of minorities mainly Muslim women.	Binish Parveen, et al., (2020). [17]
4	Government schemes for minorities	Schemes like, Pre-matric Scholarship, Post-matric scholarship, Merit-cum-means scholarship and Maulana Azad National Fellowship scheme were implemented by Government for women's education. Government is also providing fellowship to the students from minority community for their higher studies such as Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy. Free Coaching and Allied Schemes also provided for students belonging to minority communities. Education assists in reducing the dissimilarities and enriches social-economic status.	Bhat, R. A. (2015). [18]
5	Utilization of Government Schemes	Both Central and State government came up with abundant schemes for the welfare of women. As at minority women are taking benefit from selected schemes only, due to insufficient awareness minority women are utilizing only selected schemes promoted by the Government.	Bandiera, et al., (2014). [19]
6	Importance of Government schemes	When compared to women from other communities of society women from minority community are facing crucial difficulties. In order to beat these difficulties and issues overcome these difficulties and problems Government has started enormous scheme to empower women of minority community. However due to negligence and illiteracy women are not utilizing the schemes according to the most of the articles. Simultaneously, the above articles suggested several measures to educate minority women with respect to the schemes provided by Government.	Niyaz, et al., (2021). [20]
7	Awareness level on government scheme	Minority women are least benefited in India from all government facilities and schemes. This is due to limited knowledge about schemes provided by the government and the incapability to use available schemes. The	Narayana, et al., (2016). [21]

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		effect of Media is important in stimulating women empowerment and gender equality.	

3. RESEARCH GAP :

Many scholars examined educational remedies for religious minority groups. However, the studies of different educational schemes of Central and State government is not yet conducted. As a result, the current research focused on analysis of central government scheme.

4. RESEARCH AGENDA :

1. What are the different Educational empowerment schemes for the minorities initiated by Central Government of India?
2. What is the amount allocated by the Government of India for different Educational scholarship schemes?
3. What is the number of beneficiaries of various Educational scholarship schemes?

5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY :

1. To analyse the various Educational empowerment schemes for minorities by central government.
2. To assess the details of fund released for different Educational schemes of minorities.
3. To identify the number of beneficiaries of various Educational schemes of minorities.
4. To assess the advantages, benefits, constraints, and disadvantages of Educational schemes of central government.

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY :

The study is based on secondary data, gathered from Sachar, Post Sachar, Ministry of Minority Affairs report, several publications, journals, books, websites and financial report of state and central GOI have been referred in this study.

7. SCHEMES FOR EDUCATIONAL EMPOWERMENT OF MINORITIES :

Scholarship programmes are very important for the students of minority communities and it helps in the following ways:
- Improves literacy rate.
- Enhances self – confidence.
- Support for higher education.
- Increase in rate of employment.

7.1 Pre-matric scholarship:

This Pre-matric scholarship is central sector scheme. It is provided for deserving students from religious minority communities. This scholarship at pre-metric level motivates the parents from notified minority groups to send their children to school and also reduces the financial hardships on school education. The central objective of this scheme is to bridging progress of the socio-economic status of the religious minority groups through education. The students pursuing their education in government/recognised private school in India, with not less than 50% scores in preceding exam and with parents/guardian yearly income not exceeding Rs. 1.00 lakh are entitled for this scholarship [22].

Table 2: Progress made under the pre-matric scheme

Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme			
Year	**Physical**		**Financial**
	Target	**Attainment**	**Disbursement of funds (in crores)**
2014-15	30,00,000	74,96,593	1128.81
2015-16	30,00,000	51,78,779	1015.72
2016-17	30,00,000	41,53,524	585.94
2017-18	30,00,000	48,74,220	1108.13
2018-19*	30,00,000	56,91,854	1176.19

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| 2019-20* | 30,00,000 | 55,65,691 | 1324.84 |

*Out flow of scholarship of 2018-19 and 2019-20, if remaining, is done in 2020-21.

Source: United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. [23]

The above table highlights progress in pre-matric scheme, where the target for every year was Rs. 30,00,000. Highest achievement of scholarship was reflected in the year 2014-15 i.e. 7496593, and then there was constant decrease in the achievement. Again, upliftment in the year 2018-19 was witnessed i.e. 5691854. When it comes to amount released, 2019-20 has recorded the release of highest amount for the pre-metric scholarship scheme.

7.2 Post-matric scholarship:

It is a central sector scheme. The main motto of this programme is to come up with post-matric scholarship for excellent pupils from religious minority groups who are economically backward to afford ground for higher education and to enlarge the rate of accomplishment in higher education and inflate their employment. Minority students studying in government/recognized private higher secondary schools/colleges of India with at least 50% marks in preceding exam with parents/guardian yearly income not exceeding Rs 2.00 lakh are entitled for this scholarship [24].

Table 3: Progress made under the Post-Matric scheme

Year	Physical		Financial
	Target	Attainment	Disbursement of fund (in crores)
2014-15	500000	905620	501.32
2015-16	500000	666840	552.83
2016-17	500000	624990	287.11
2017-18	500000	621321	479.72
2018-19*	500000	684265	354.89
2019-20*	500000	743573	428.77

*Outflow of scholarship of 2018-19 and 2019-20, is done in 2020-21.

Source: United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights [23].

The above table highlights progress in Post-Matric scheme, where the target for every year was Rs. 5000000. Highest achievement of scholarship was reflected in the year 2014-15 i.e. 905620, and then there was continuous decrease in the achievement. Again increase in the year 2019-20 was witnessed i.e. 743573. When it comes to amount released 2015-16 has recorded highest amount release for the post-metric scholarship scheme

7.3 Merit-cum-Means Based scholarship:

The main purpose of this scheme is to come up with monetary aid to needy and commendable pupil of minority groups to in for vocational and practical education at UG and PG level. This scholarship will be given for those meritorious students studying in Government/Private institution notified and recognised by the State Government/Union territory. Pupil must not have scored below 50% in previous qualifying prelims and family income of parents/guardian should not exceed Rs.2.50 lakh [25].

Table 4: Progress made under Merit-cum-based Scholarship scheme

Year	Physical		Financial
	Target	Attainment	Disbursement of funds (in crores)
2014-15	60000	138770	381.8
2015-16	60000	133582	315.00
2016-17	60000	121937	220.54
2017-18	60000	119472	388.79
2018-19	60000	117771	261.17
2019-20	60000	110196	285.63

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Source: United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights [23]

The above table shows the progress in Merit-cum-based Scholarship scheme, where the target for every year was 60000. Highest achievement of scholarship was reflected in the year 2014-15 i.e. 138770, and then there was continuous decrease in the achievement. When it comes to amount released 2014-15 has recorded highest amount release for the post-metric scholarship scheme.

7.4 Maulana Azad National Fellowship Scheme (MANF):

MANF was started on 11th April, 2009 as a central government scheme. The main motto of the Maulana Azad National Fellowship Scheme (MANF) is to come up with '5' years contribution in the form of monetary aid to pupils of minority group to pursue Master of Philosophy and Doctor of philosophy. This fellowship covers all Universities and Institutions approved by UGC. This scheme will make them eligible for various employment where Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy are required, as well as position of Assistant Professors in abundant academic institutions [26].

Table 5: Physical and financial Achievements under MANF Scheme

Year	Number of fresh fellowship granted	Disbursement of fund (in crores)
2014-15	756	0.12
2015-16	756	55.52
2016-17	756	119.92
2017-18	756	124.87
2018-19	1000	97.85
2019-20	1251	100.00

Source: United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights [23]

The above table highlights progress in Physical and financial Achievements under MANF Scheme, where the Number of fresh fellowship awarded from 2014 to 2018 were 756. The Number of fresh fellowship awarded in the year 2018-19 and 2019-20 increased to 1000 and 1251 respectively. When it comes to fund released, 2017-18 has recorded highest amount Rs.124.87 crores.

7.5 Free coaching and Allied scheme (Naya Savera):

The purpose of this scheme is to equip the students of minority group and prepare them for competitive tests. This scheme provides monetary aid for free coaching to the pupils of minority groups. The free coaching for courses like Competitive examinations under UPSC, State PSC, SSC including public sector undertakings, banks, railways, etc. The yearly income of applicant's parents/ guardian should not exceed Rs.6.00 lakh per annum [27].

Table 6: Progress made under Free Coaching and allied scheme:

Year	Physical	Financial (Rupees in crore)
2014-15	8168	31.49
2015-16	16427	44.87
2016-17	8110	40.00
2017-18	11862	45.59
2018-19	10097	44.61
2019-20*	1782	13.97

Source: United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights [23].

The above table shows Progress made under Free Coaching and allied scheme, where the physical detail shows that, in the year 2015-16 it was more i.e., 16427. Then there was fluctuation in the physical details. When it comes to financial details, 2017-18 has recorded highest amount release for the Free Coaching and allied scheme i.e. R s. 45.59 crores.

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7.6 Nai Udaan Scheme:

The main intention of this scheme is make available monetary aid to the minority applicant who passed the prelims directed by UPSC, SSC, State PSC to compete for appointment in Civil Services in the Union and state government and to expand their participation in the civil services. The total family income of candidates should not exceed than Rupees 8,00,000.

Monetary aid:

For Union public service commission Exams: Rs1.00 lakh.

For State Public service commission (Gazetted post): Rs 50,000.

For Staff selection commission / State public service commission (Non-Gazetted post): Rs 25,000 [28].

Table 7: Progress made under Nai Udaan Scheme:

Year	No. of candidates	Amount Released (Rs in lakhs)
2014-15	786	2.97
2015-16	1071	3.97
2016-17	858	4.00
2017-18	1427	6.21
2018-19	1182	6.72
2019-20	1539	8.01

Source: United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights [23]

The above table highlights Progress made under Nai Udaan Scheme, where the highest No. of candidates availed the benefit of scheme is in the year 2019-20. The no. of candidates availing the benefit of this scheme has increased except in few cases. When it comes to fund released, 2019-20 has recorded highest amount release for the Progress made under Nai Udaan Scheme i.e. Rs. 8.01 lakh.

7.7 Padho Pradesh Scheme:

The main motto of this scheme is to grant educational loan with subsidy interest to commendable students of minority groups who are economically weaker for continuing their studies on approved courses at Masters, Master of Philosophy or Doctor of Philosophy in abroad so as to give them better openings for higher studies in out of country and boost employability. Yearly income of parents/guardian of the candidate should not be more than Rupees six lakhs. 35% of grants are reserved for females [29].

Table 8: Progress made under Padho Pradesh :

Year	Disbursement (Rs. in Crore)	Plan (number of recipients)	Attainment (number of recipients)
2014-15	3.50	400	1090
2015-16	4.15	400	1737
2016-17	4.00	400	1673
2017-18	17.00	400	1580
2018-19	45.00	400	2570
2019-20	14.42	400	2302 till 31.12.2019

Source: United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights [23].

The above table highlights Progress made under Padho Pradesh, the expenditure incurred for this scheme is more in the year 2018-19 i.e. 45 crore. Every year 400 beneficiaries were the target for this scheme. Highest achievement of Padho Pradesh was reflected in the year 2018-19 i.e., 2570 comparing to other years. The achievement in the form of no. of beneficiaries has seen upward movement in the given time period except few cases

Literacy status of the population and religious composition according to census 2011 are shown in the following table:

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Table 9: India's population group (Census, 2011)

Community	All India	Hindus	Muslims	Christians	Sikhs	Buddhists	Jain	Others
Population (crores)	121	96.63	17.22	02.78	02.08	00.84	00.45	00.79
% of total Population	100	79.80	14.23	2.30	1.72	0.70	0.40	0.70
Literacy (Male)	75.3	76.2	67.6	84.4	75.2	83.1	97.4	60.8
Literacy (Female)	53.7	53.2	50.1	76.2	63.1	61.7	90.6	33.2
Total Literacy	64.8	65.1	59.1	80.3	69.4	72.7	94.1	47.0

Source: Census 2011, Yadav, N. K., & Gupta, M. P. (2018). [30]

As per the Census of India 2011 report a social -demographic profile of minorities in India Jains have the highest literacy rates for both males 97.4 per cent and females 90.6 per cent. In the second place Christians have 84.4 per cent for males and 76.2 per cent for females. While for males, Buddhists 83.1 percent and females 61.7 percent occupy the third position. In fourth place Sikhs have 75.35 percent and for females the position is 63.1 percent. In the case of the Hindus, the male literacy rate 76.2 per cent and the female literacy rate 53.2 percent. The gap of male female literacy rates is the lowest among Jains which is only 6.8 percent points. Among Christians also the gap is as low as 8.2 per cent points. The biggest gap is found against other religions (27.6 per cent points) followed by Hindus (23 per cent points) and Buddhists (21.4 per cent points). It reveals further that Literacy rates among Muslims, both for men and women, have been the lowest among all the religious Minorities. It is found that in all the religion, literacy rate of female is not equal to literacy rate of male.

8. ABCD LISTING OF SCHOLARSHIP SCHMES :

Advantages, Benefits, Constraints, and Disadvantages are abbreviated as ABCD. Application of ABCD analysis yields a systematic matrix with a listed list of a business's advantages, benefits, limitations, and disadvantages [31]. The following section go through some Advantages, Benefits, Constraints and Disadvantages of scholarships.

Advantages:
- Reduces school dropout rates.
- Obtaining a scholarship can provide genuine aspirants with access to a variety of educational institutions as well as employment opportunities.
- Low-cost educational tool.
- Students can concentrate completely on their studies without feeling rushed.
- Students who receive scholarships are thought to be smarter than their peers and are more respected by society.
- Scholarships are far superior to loans.
- Professional development opportunities

Benefits:
- By reducing financial obstacles, it assists students in achieving their academic and vocational goals.
- Enhances kids' academic achievement.
- Scholarships make access to school easier.
- The need to work is gone
- Keeps the pupil debt-free.
- Encourages overseas study for students.

Challenges:
- Students' lack of knowledge about scholarships and fellowships.
- Many students who are eligible for scholarships are disqualified during the examination process due to a lack of guidance and preparation.

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➢ There is a lot of paperwork involved.
➢ Students encounter network issues when applying.

Disadvantages:
➢ Scholarships may not be given to deserving students.
➢ The scholarship's renewal is uncertain.
➢ Since academic excellence is a criterion for receiving a scholarship, it can be difficult for more students to achieve the standards and receive financing.
➢ Students accept scholarships as a given.
➢ Some students from the reserved category who have a strong financial background are taking advantage of the government scholarship scheme.

9. FINDINGS :

(1) The highest achievement of pre-matric scholarship scheme was reflected in the year 2014 -15 that is 74,96,593.
(2) In the year 2016-17, Government released lowest amount of fund for the post-matric scholarship that is 261.17 crores.
(3) Highest achievement of Merit-cum means scholarship was reflected in the year 2014-15 i.e., 138770, and then there was continuous decrease in the achievement.
(4) Number of fresh fellowships awarded in the year 2018-19 and 2019-20 increased to 1000 to 1251 respectively.
(5) In the year 2019-20 highest numbers of candidates have availed the benefit of Nai Udaan scheme.
(6) Highest achievement of Padho Pradesh scheme was reflected in the year 2018-19 that is 2570 and expenditure was Rs. 45 crore.
(7) Number of registered candidates for the Naya savera scheme is decreased in the year 2019-20 compared to 2018-19.
(8) According to census 2011, Jains have highest literacy rate for both males and females.
(9) Literacy rate among Muslims, for both males and females have been lowest compared to all the religions.
(10) Literacy rate of female is less compared to literacy rate of men.
(11) Women's Education of women has two prospects – personal prospect and public prospect. Education increases women's potential to tackle the issues of her life, family, society and nation [32].
(12) Education takes dominant part in economic inadequacy by creating different job opportunities for her; therefore she can jointly work with man and contribute to the family. Education encourages collaboration in lieu of making women lone hand [33].
(13) Literacy rate of Muslims in both female and Male is less when compared with other religion. Muslims at large lag behind in availing education facilities; moreover, rate of educational growth is also lethargic. This makes to examine and manage the formation, application and tracking the government strategies and methods oriented towards the welfare of the community. In lieu of genuine effort in establishing base for education of Muslim by starting up with good elementary and secondary schools, more importance is given on expanding the number of schools and rendering higher and professional education to Muslims, which has been less productive for the educational development of the community. Practically weak planning and implementation resulted in weak educational result for Muslims, especially Muslim girls [34].

10. SUGGESTIONS :

Indian government is working hard to uplift religious minority groups and came forward with numerous schemes for their educational support. There is necessity to create awareness about different Educational schemes for religious minorities, especially in rural areas. Government should make sure that scholarship should be allocated to eligible candidates only. Some candidates face difficulty in verification of application form so the procedures should be less complicated. Survey and research should be conducted to find out success rate of scholarship schemes.

11. CONCLUSION :

The Scholarships for meritorious students of economically weaker sections of minority community reduces the financial burden on school education, reduces school dropout rate and assist in getting

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higher education. The Sachar committee report (2006) described about the status of Muslim community and recommended three scholarship schemes only for minorities, merit-cum-means scholarship for the pupils of the minority studying technical and professional courses, the other two are post-matric and pre-matric scholarships [35]. A Ministry of minority affairs has initiated multiple strategies by execution of many schemes for the development of the notified minorities across the country.

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