

Year End Review - Ministry of Minority Affairs

Ministry of Minority Affairs

- The Ministry of Minority Affairs was carved out of **Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment** in 2006.
- **Objective** - To ensure a more focused approach towards issues relating to the notified minority communities namely Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Sikhs, Parsis and Jain.



Constitutional Safeguards for Linguistic Minorities

*The term "minority" is **not defined in the Indian Constitution**. However, the Constitution recognises religious and linguistic minorities.*

- The Central Government notifies minority communities at the national level under the National Commission for Minorities (NCM) Act, 1992.
- Six communities notified as minorities under the Section 2 (c) of NCM Act are Christians, Sikhs, Muslims, Buddhists, Parsis and Jains.
- **Article 29** - Right of any section of the citizens residing in India with a distinct language, script or culture of its own to conserve it.
- It grants protection to both religious minorities as well as linguistic minorities.
- The Supreme Court held that the scope of this article includes minorities as well as the majority.
- **Article 30** - All minorities shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.
- The protection under Article 30 is confined **only to minorities** and does not extend to any section of citizens.
- **Article 347** - If the President is satisfied that a substantial proportion of the population of a State desire the use of any language spoken by them to be recognised by that state, he may direct such language to be officially recognised.
- **Article 350** - It gives the right to submit representation for redressal of grievances to any authority of the union or a state in any of the languages used in the Union/States.
- **Article 350A** - It provides for instruction in the mother tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups.
- **Article 350B** - It provides for a special Officer designated as Commissioner for Linguistic minorities to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards provided for linguistic minorities.

Key activities undertaken in the scheme

1. Scholarship Schemes

- Three scholarship schemes are implemented for the educational empowerment of students belonging to notified minority communities.
 - Pre-matric scholarship
 - Post-matric scholarship
 - Merit-cum-means based scholarship
- To improve transparency in scholarship schemes, a new and revamped version of **National scholarship Portal 2.0** was launched.

2. PM Virasat Ka Samvardhan (PM VIKAS)

- The Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Ko Kaam Karyakram (PMKKK) has been named as Pradhan Mantri Virasat Ka Samvardhan (PM VIKAS).
- PM VIKAS is a central-sector scheme that focusses on skilling, entrepreneurship and leadership training requirements of the minority and artisan communities across the country.
- It is an integrated scheme that converges 5 erstwhile schemes of the Ministry of Minority Affairs - Seekho aur Kamao (Learn and Earn), USTTAD, Hamari Dharohar, Nai Roshni and Nai Manzil.
- **Components of the Scheme**
 1. Skilling and Training Component
 - Traditional Training (earlier Hamari Dharohar and USTTAD)
 - Non-traditional Skilling (earlier Seekho aur Kamao)
 2. Leadership and Entrepreneurship Component (earlier Nai Roshni)
 3. Education Component (earlier Nai Manzil)
 4. Infrastructure Development Component (through Hub and Spoke Villages)

Seekho Aur Kamao (Learn and Earn) Scheme

- It is a placement-linked [skill development scheme for minorities](#) that was launched by the Ministry of Minority Affairs in 2013.
- It aims to upgrade the skills of minority youth (in the age group of 14-45 years) in various modern/ traditional skills.

USTTAD (Upgrading the Skills and Training in Traditional Arts/ Crafts for Development) Scheme

- It was launched in 2015 to preserve the rich heritage of traditional arts/crafts of minorities.
- **Hunar Haat** has been implemented as a component of the scheme since 2016-17.
- Hunar Haat is an effective platform for minority artisans, craftspersons and culinary experts to showcase and market their finest handicraft and exquisitely crafted indigenous products.

Nai Manzil Scheme

- Nai Manzil aims to benefit the youth belonging to 6 notified minority communities of

17-35 years of age, who do not have formal school leaving certificate.

- The scheme provides a combination of formal education (Class VIII or X) and skills to enable beneficiaries seek better employment and livelihood.

Nai Roshni Scheme

- It is a training programme conducted for women belonging to minority community between the age group of 18 years to 65 years.
- It covers areas related to programmes for women, health and hygiene, legal rights of women, financial literacy, digital literacy, swachh bharat, life skills, and advocacy for social and behavioural change.

ARTICLE	CLUSTER
Black Pottery	Manipur
Soft Stone	Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh
Chikankari	Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
Wooden cutlery	Udayagiri, Andhra Pradesh
Tilla embroidery	Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir
Bidriware	Bidar, Karnataka
Chanapatna toys	Chanapatna, Karnataka

3. Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK)

- The erstwhile Multi-sectoral Development Programme (MsDP) has been restructured as Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK).
- It is a centrally sponsored scheme that seeks to provide better socio-economic infrastructure assets and basic amenities to the notified minorities mainly in the field of education, health & skill development.
- 33 to 40% of resources under the PMJVK would be specifically allocated for women centric projects.

4. National Commission for Minorities

- The Minorities Commission which was set up in 1978 became a statutory body with the enactment of the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992, after which it was renamed as the [National Commission for Minorities](#).
- The first statutory National Commission was set up in 1993.
- It is a forum for appeal, set up by the Government to safeguard the rights and interests of India's minority communities.

5. Central Waqf Council

- It is a statutory body that was setup in 1964 as per the provision given in the Waqf Act, 1954.
- It acts as an advisory body to the Central Government on matters concerning the working of the Waqf Boards and Auqaf.
- The council consists of chairman and members not exceeding 20 in number.
- Union Minister in charge of Waqf is the ex-officio chairman of the council.

6. Durgah Khawaja Saheb Act, 1955

- It is an act to make provision for the proper administration of the Dargah and the Endowment of the Dargah of Khwaja Moin-ud-din Chishty (Dargah Khwaja Saheb, Ajmer).
- **Mandate of the Dargah Committee** - To provide service to the public through development of infrastructure as per the provisions of Dargah Khwaja Saheb Act, 1955 and its Bye Laws of 1958.

7. Haj Pilgrimage

- Hajj refers to the pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia, which every adult Muslim must make at least once in his/her lifetime.
- The hajj is the 5th of the fundamental Muslim practices and institutions known as the Five Pillars of Islam.
- Haj pilgrimage for the Indian Pilgrims is conducted either through
 - Haj Committee of India (HCoI), a statutory organization under the Ministry of Minority Affairs or through
 - Haj Group Organisers (HGOs)
- **e-MASIHA** (Medical Assistance System for Indian Hajis Abroad) is an online OPD System enabled to create and maintain health database of all Indian pilgrims who availed medical facilities during the Haj.

8. National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation (NMDFC)

- The National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation (NMDFC) was incorporated in 1994, as a company not for profit, the Companies Act.
- It is a national level apex body for the benefit of minorities as defined under the National Commission for Minorities Act 1992.
- **Mandate** - To provide concessional finance to minorities for self employment/ income generation activities.

Reference

1. [PIB | Ministry of Minority Affairs](#)