

CHAPTER 17

SOCIAL WELFARE

The Social Welfare Department is actively engaged in the implementation of various schemes for the welfare of women in need and distress, social security cover for the aged and destitute, programmes for the care and protection of the children through a network of residential care homes and non-institutional services, a programme for the handicapped, financial assistance for physically and socially handicapped and measures for economic empowerment of women, children, handicapped, and aged persons, to supplement the ongoing programmes.

I. Welfare of the Disabled

On March 31, 2001, Delhi had 4 schools for the physically disabled with 906 students, 3 training-cum-production centres and 2 sheltered workshops for the physically handicapped, 1 hostel for college level blind boys, 1 school for the visually handicapped with 197 students, and one school for mentally retarded children with 36 students. One home has been established for mentally retarded adult persons that provides free boarding and lodging; there are 146 inmates in this home.

Apart from providing free education to disabled persons, the Delhi Government also provides stipends and scholarships ranging from Rs. 125 to Rs. 500 per month to all categories of the disabled depending upon the level of the course. 1024 physically handicapped students benefitted under this programme during 2000-2001.

II. Welfare of Juveniles/Beggars

To take care of young juveniles and beggars, the Social Welfare Department has set up 14 Juvenile Homes which housed 1,315 juveniles at the end of March 2001. 538 children have been provided care, protection and educational facilities through 11 non-statutory institutions. In addition to these, there are 12 homes for beggars in various parts of the city, which have a total of 1,162 persons.

III. Welfare of Women

The Social Welfare Department provides assistance, training, shelter and counselling to women. At the end of March 2001, 4 shelter homes housing 184 women had

been set up. To provide accommodation for working women, 3 working women's hostels have been set up by NDMC, and 1 more hostel has been constructed by the Social Welfare Deptt. at Vishwas Nagar in the trans Yamuna area with a sanctioned capacity to house 138 working women, 15 more hostels are planned to be constructed in different districts of Delhi during the 10th Plan. 3 hostels are proposed to be constructed during 2002-03. The Social Welfare Department has already purchased land from the DDA in the financial year 2001-02 for construction of 4 working women's hostels. In 2000-01, vocational training was provided to 1,312 women through 25 training centres. Under the Scheme "Financial Assistance to Widows for Self-employment", the Social Welfare Department provides a one time financial assistance of Rs. 15000 to widows aged 18 to 45 years and Rs. 7,500 to widows aged 46 to 59 years. As of the end of March 2001, 2,456 widows had benefitted under this scheme. In the current financial year 2001-2002 up to January, 2002, 1668 widows have benefitted from this scheme.

To safeguard and promote the interest of women, the Delhi Commission for Women was set up in 1996. Crisis Intervention Centres (SAHARA) have been set up by the Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) in 8 police station districts in Delhi. Delhi Commission for Women, Delhi Police and a net work of NGOs work in an integrated partnership to run these centres.

The Delhi Commission for Women has introduced a new concept of Self Help Groups in Urban Slums with a view to create robust community-based institutions for assisting women in economic empowerment. A total number of 20 NGOs are participating in this programme and 605 self help groups are targeted to be set up upto March 2002. Up till December, 2001, 533 have already been set up covering approximately 10600 women. Legal awareness and formation of Mahila Panchayats is another initiative taken for empowerment of women. This programme was also designed in collaboration with NGOs. At present 13 NGOs are participating in this programme and 43 Mahila Panchayats have been established till December, 2001. In addition, the Commission is running Family Counselling Units called Sahyogini. Through Sahyogini the Commission has created space where sensitive family issues can be discussed, counselling taken and reconciliation attempted at the pre-litigation stage. Since its inception in 1997, the unit has handled around 1122 cases upto December 2001. 671 cases have been settled through counselling. Delhi Commission for Women has also set up a Helpline in March 2000. Helpline provides counselling through telephone to help women in distress. Up to March 2001, the helpline handled around 4280 cases.

The Social Welfare Department has framed the Dowry Prohibition Rules for effective implementation of the Dowry Prohibition Act and nominated all 10 District Social Welfare officers as Dowry Prohibition Officers.

IV. Integrated Child Development Scheme

Under the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), 28 ICDS centres are functioning in various parts of Delhi covering a targeted population of 4.61 lakh children up to the age of 6 years, as well as pregnant and nursing mothers who are economically deprived. Under the ICDS, supplementary nutrition was provided to 4.66 lakh children and women through 3842 anganwaris in 2000-01. At present Supplementary Nutrition is provided at the rate of Rs. 2/- per beneficiary per day for about 300 days in a year.

V. Welfare of Senior Citizens

According to the 1991 Census, about 4,39,520 person were above the age of 60 (4.7% of population). The Delhi Government has enhanced the financial assistance in the form of pension from Rs. 200 per month to Rs. 300 per month per beneficiary to senior citizens in indigent circumstances. At present, about 1,00,000 people are beneficiaries under this scheme. Apart from financial assistance, residential facilities in the form of old-age homes and recreational facilities at recreation centres are being provided. Three old-age homes (one of which is under NDMC) with 102 inmates and 33 recreation centres have been set up by the government through MCD & NDMC. For construction of more old age homes, land has been acquired at Alipur, Rohini, Dwarka and Shakurbasti. The cost of the land allotted by the DDA has been paid.

VI. Welfare of Minorities

As per the 1991 Census, 16.33% of Delhi's population belongs to minority communities. The Delhi Scheduled Castes Financial and Development Corporation has been given the responsibility of providing financial assistance for economic development of members of minorities communities and declared a channelising agency to obtain funds from the National Minorities Financial Development Corporation, an undertaking of the Govt. of India.

VII. Other Welfare Measures

The number of persons who suffer from tuberculosis (TB) in Delhi has increased. Most people who suffer from TB do not get adequate medical attention either due to negligence or financial constraints. The Social Welfare Department provides Rs. 1,200 in a year to each TB patient. In 2000-01, 2,609 persons were benefitted under the scheme of financial assistance to socially & physically handicapped. For the welfare of children, 5 creches have been set up by the Social Welfare Department.

The Rehabilitation Centre for Leprosy treated 1,796 leprosy patients during 2000-01.