

Housing

55. The National Housing Policy 1994 recognises the importance of both rural and urban housing in the overall development of rural people and urban poor. The existing central sector housing schemes aimed at benefiting the urban poor are proposed to be continued. A National Network of Nirman or Nirmithi Kendras (Building Centers) has been established with central assistance through the Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO). As on 31.12.97, 500 centres have been given administrative approval out of which 270 centres had become functional. The on going social housing schemes viz. Housing scheme for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS), Lower Income Groups (LIG), Middle Income Groups/Higher Income Groups (MIG/HIG) and rental housing scheme for State Government employees continue to be implemented by State Governments.

56. The objective of the Indira Awas Yojana is to provide dwelling units to the members of SC/ST and free bonded labour below the poverty line free of cost. The scheme has been extended to non-SC/ST rural poor subject to the condition that the benefits to non-SC/ST should not exceed 40 per cent of the total allocations. The permissible assistance per house is Rs.20,000 in plain areas and Rs.22,000 in hilly or difficult areas. A sum of Rs.1144 crore has been provided during 1997-98 (RE). It is proposed to construct 7,18,550 housing units in 1997-98 against which 2,85,528 houses have been constructed and 2,93,011 houses are under various stages of construction with an expenditure of about Rs.463.43 crore up to October 1997.

57. The issue of amending/repealing of the Urban Land Ceiling Act has been discussed at various high level meetings/conferences held from time to

time. After detailed examination of the matter, the Government has decided to repeal the Act, provided necessary resolutions are passed by the Legislature(s) of requisite number of States requesting for repealing the Act by the Parliament, as required under Article 252(2) of the Constitution. Central Government requested the concerned State Governments in November/December 1997 to give their views whether they would like the Act to be repealed and also to forward necessary resolution duly passed by the Legislature of their State, if it is desired to repeal the Act. Two States namely Haryana and Punjab have since sent such resolutions. The Government has now decided to introduce a bill in the Budget Session of Parliament beginning May 27, 1998 to repeal the existing Act.

58. The Delhi Rent Act, 1995, was enacted for overcoming the shortcomings noted in the existing Rent Act. The objectives of this Act, inter-alia, are to increase investment in housing, particularly rental housing and also to balance the interests of both the landlords and the tenants. The provisions of the Act include exemption of certain categories of premises and tenancies from the purview of the Act, creation of tenancy to be compulsorily by written agreement, periodical increase in rent, eviction of tenants on specified grounds and limiting the inheritable tenancies. After taking into consideration various representations, the Government decided to amend the Act to make it more acceptable to all concerned and at the same time encourage increased investments in the housing sector. Accordingly, the Delhi Rent (Amendment) Bill was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on 28.7.1997. The amendment of Bill was under examination of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Urban and Rural Development.