

Minorities should be aware of schemes

By Our Special Correspondent

Bangalore, Sept. 15: Minority commission secretary, Tausheel Ahmed has advised those belonging to the minorities to be aware of the schemes the Centre and various state governments have formulated for their benefit.

Speaking at an awareness conference for the welfare of minorities, organised by the Karnataka Christian Social Welfare Association here on Saturday, Mr Ahmed said the biggest problem minorities are facing is their illiteracy level which is as high as 44 per cent in the state. Among those who join school, 20 per cent drop out in the fourth standard. Only 1.67 per cent become graduates.

The state government in its Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan scheme, has allotted 15 per cent of the budget for the education of the minorities.

The Union government has classified Sikhs, Parsis, Buddhists, Christians and Muslims as minorities while the state government have added one more group, the Jains, he revealed. Minorities constitute 15.67 per cent of the total population of the country with Muslims forming 12 per cent and Christians two per cent.

Mr Ahmed also referred to the problems some Christian groups were facing in holding prayer meetings. He alleged that anti-social elements were disrupting these prayer meetings alleging that they were being used as a ploy for conversion. Following a complaint from the commission to the police, these prayer meetings are now being conducted peacefully with police security, he said.

Former bureaucrat, Dorai Raj felt the benefits and schemes provided by the government, would not come to the rescue of the minorities unless a concerted effort is made in this regard.

The organisers suggested that NGOs and social activists check the newly designed website "www.karmin.in" to know about the schemes the government has launched for the welfare of the minorities and make use of them better.

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