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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND
EMPOWERMENT (2022-23)**

(SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA)

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT
(DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT)**

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS
(2023-24)**

FORTY SIXTH REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

March, 2023/ Chaitra, 1945 (Saka)

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(2023-24)**

Presented to Lok Sabha on 23.3.2023

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 23.3.2023



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

March, 2023/ Chaitra, 1945 (Saka)

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**COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2022-23)**

SMT. RAMA DEVI - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Deepak (Dev) Adhikari
3. Smt. Sangeeta Azad
4. Shri Bholanath (B.P. Saroj)
5. Smt. Pramila Bisoyi
6. Shri Thomas Chazhikadan
7. Shri Chhatar Singh Darbar
8. Smt. Maneka Sanjay Gandhi
9. Shri Hans Raj Hans
10. Shri Abdul Khaleque
11. Smt. Ranjeeta Koli
12. Smt. Geeta Kora
13. Shri Vijay Kumar
14. Shri Akshaibar Lal
15. Sardar Simranjit Singh Mann
16. Shri V. Sreenivasa Prasad
17. Smt. Supriya Sadanand Sule
18. Shri K. Shanmuga Sundaram
19. Smt. Rekha Arun Verma
20. Shri Devendrappa Y.
21. Shri Tokheho Yephthomi

Rajya Sabha

22. Smt. Sumitra Balmik
23. Smt. Ramilaben Becharbhai Bara
24. Shri Abir Ranjan Biswas
25. Smt. Geeta *alias* Chandraprabha
26. Shri N.Chandrasegharan
27. Shri Naryana Koragappa
28. Smt. Mamata Mohanta
29. Shri Ramji
30. Shri Anthiyur P. Selvarasu
31. Shri Mukul Balkrishna Wasnik

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

1. Smt. Anita Bhatt Panda Additional Secretary
2. Shri Ved Prakash Nauriyal Joint Secretary
3. Smt. Mamta Kemwal Director
4. Shri Krishendra Kumar Deputy Secretary

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment (2022-23) having been authorized by the Committee do present on their behalf this Forty-Sixth Report on 'Demands for Grants for the year 2023-24' pertaining to the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment).

2. The Committee considered the 'Demands for Grants (2023-24)' of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment) which were laid on the Table of the House on 10th February, 2023. After obtaining the Budget Documents, Explanatory Notes, etc., the Committee took evidence of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment) on 16th February, 2023. The Committee considered and adopted the Report at the sitting held on 22nd March, 2023.

3. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the Officers of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment) for tendering oral evidence and placing before them the detailed written notes and post evidence information as desired by the Committee in connection with the examination of the 'Demands for Grants (2023-24)'.

4. For ease of reference observations/ recommendations/ comments of the Committee have been printed in bold in the body of the Report.

New Delhi
22nd March, 2023
1 Chaitra, 1945 (Saka)

SMT. RAMA DEVI
Chairperson
Standing Committee on Social Justice
and Empowerment

CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTORY

The Department of Social Justice & Empowerment (SJ&E) is mandated to empower socially, educationally and economically marginalized sections of the society including (i) Scheduled Castes, (ii) Other Backward Classes, (iii) Senior Citizens, (iv) Victims of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, (v) Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 (vi) Beggars (vii) Denotified and Nomadic Tribes (DNTs), (viii) Economically Backward Classes (EBCs) and (ix) Economically Weaker Section (EWS). The Department through its various Programmes and Schemes strives to build an inclusive society wherein members of the target groups are provided adequate support for their growth and development.

1.2 The Programmes and Schemes of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment are categorized into Central Sector Schemes and the Centrally Sponsored Schemes. The Central Sector Schemes are 100% supported by Central Government. Some of the Centrally sponsored Schemes are 100% Supported by Central Government whereas others are funded on sharing basis with States and Union Territories. The Central Sector Schemes and Centrally sponsored Schemes of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment are as follows:

CENTRAL SECTOR SCHEMES

I. Scheduled Castes Welfare Schemes

1. Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for SCs
 - a. National Fellowship for SCs
 - b. National Overseas Scholarship for SCs
 - c. Top Class Education for SCs
 - d. Free Coaching for SCs
2. Scheme of Residential Education for Students in High School in Targeted Area (SRESHTA)
3. National Action Plan for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE)
4. Venture Capital Funds (VCF) for SCs
5. Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi Yojana for SCs (PM DAKSH)

II. SOCIAL DEFENCE SCHEMES

6. Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood & Enterprize (SMILE)
 - a. Comprehensive Rehabilitation of Persons Engaged in the Act of Begging

b. Comprehensive Rehabilitation for Welfare of Transgender Persons

III. OTHER BACKWARD CLASSES WELFARE SCHEMES

7. Venture Capital Fund (VCF) for Backward Classes
8. PM DAKSH Yojana for OBCs
9. Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (Shreyas) for OBCs and EBCs
 - a. National Fellowship for OBCs
 - b. Interest Subsidy on Overseas Studies of OBCs
10. Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNT/NT/SNTs (SEED)

IV. OTHERS

11. Information, Monitoring, Evaluation and Social Audit

CENTRALLY SPONSORED SCHEMES

Scheduled Castes Welfare Schemes

1. Post Matric Scholarship for SCs **
2. Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM AJAY) *
3. Strengthening of machinery for Enforcement of Protection of Civil Right Act 1955 and Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989 **
4. Pre Matric Scholarship for SCs and Others **

Social Defence Schemes

5. Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY)**
6. National Action Plan on Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR) *

Other Backward Classes Welfare Schemes

7. PM Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme for Vibrant India (PM YASASVI) for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs *
 - a. Post Matric Scholarship for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs
 - b. Pre Matric Scholarship for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs
 - c. Boys and Girls Hostel for OBCs
 - d. Top Class Schools
 - e. Top Class Colleges

*** These schemes are 100% Supported By Central Government**

**** These Schemes are funded on sharing basis with States and Union Territories.**

1.3 In addition the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment engages in the development/updation of legislation, policies and guidelines at the national level for effective implementation of the Department's objectives. It oversees the implementation of the various existing laws including (i) Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 (ii) The Scheduled Castes and

Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 (iii) Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 (iv) The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 and (v) Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019. The National Policy for Older Persons, 1999 is also administered by the Department.

1.4 The Department of Social Justice and Empowerment also supports the following autonomous Corporations:-

- (i) National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSCFDC);
- (ii) National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation;
- (iii) National Backwards Class Finance & Development Corporation

1.5 During the year 2023-24, the Ministry of Finance have allocated ₹12,847.02 crore against the projected requirement of ₹13,872.75. The Department have allocated ₹11,603.11 crore for centrally sponsored Schemes, ₹976.86 crore on Central Sector Schemes. The details of the allocations made under each scheme for 2023-24 and Budgetary Estimate, Revised Estimate and Actual Expenditure for 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 is as follows:

(₹ in crores)

Year	Budget Estimates	Revised Estimates	Expenditure	% in Variation
2020-21	10103.57	8207.56	8236.84	-5.74
2021-22	10517.62	10180.00	7459.99	-9.43
2022-23	11922.51	10709.94	3488.43 (as on 15.2.2023)	-53.23

1.6 In accordance with the experience gained in the implementation of Programmes/ Schemes during previous year, the Department have made modifications for the better performance of Programme/ Schemes. The major modifications that have been introduced in certain Schemes/ Programmes are as follows:

(i) Post Matric Scholarship for SCs

With effect from 2020-21, the funding pattern has been changed to 60:40 sharing between Centre and States (90:10 in case of North-Eastern states). Since 2021-22, Central Share is being released by DBT only into the bank account of

beneficiaries and Aadhaar-based Payment System is to be used for disbursements from 2022-23.

(ii) Pre Matric Scholarship for SCs and Others

Funding pattern is based on fixed ratio of sharing between Centre & States in the ratio of 60:40. Since 2021-22, (90:10 in case of NE states, Uttarakhand & Himachal Pradesh. For UTs without legislatures, 100% funds shall be provided by Centre). Central share to be released directly to the students through DBT from 2022-23 onwards and Aadhaar-based Payment System is to be used for disbursements with effect from 2022-23.

(iii) Pradhan Mantri-Anusuchit Jati Abhyuday Yojana (PM-AJAY)

The selection criteria for identification of villages under 'Adarsh Gram' component has been reduced from 50% to 40% SC population from 2022-23. Accordingly, 11500 new villages selected during 2022-23 with 40% SC population. Since 2014-15, 31,000 villages selected and 35.58 lakhs are benefited. Under SCA to SCSP, Financial assistance for Income Generation Activities increased from ₹10,000/- to ₹50,000/-. Since 2014-15, ₹6,400.32 crore sanctioned to help 30.03 lakhs beneficiaries.

(iv) SHREYAS for SCs

- (a) Under National Overseas Scheme (NOS), no. of annual slots have been increased from 100 to 125. Police verification is done away with.
- (b) Under Top class scheme for SC students, (TCS), both fees and academic allowance are being paid directly into the bank account through DBT, obviating need of procurement of UCs from institutes.
- (c) Uniform academic allowance of ₹86,000/- for fresh students and ₹ 41,000/- for renewal students under TCS. Requirement of vouchers etc. discontinued.
- (d) Under Free Coaching Scheme for SC & OBC student (FCS). Students have been allowed to select their preferred Institute.
- (e) Under National Fellowship for SC students (NFSC), processes are streamlined to ensure expeditious release and requirement of monthly confirmation done away with.

(v) Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers

Under SRMS from 2021-22, Project cost for self employment project has been increased from ₹10.00 lakh to ₹15.00 lakh, amount of admissible capital subsidy has been enhanced from ₹3.25 lakh to ₹5.00 lakh. Further, Group of beneficiaries also made eligible for assistance for projects. SRMS is to be implemented as National Action For Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE) from 2023-24 with allocation ₹97.41 crore. 4800+ ULBs are to be covered to benefit about 1.00 lakh sewers and septic tank workers

(vi) PM Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme For Vibrant (PM YASASVI)

The following five Schemes have been made sub-scheme under umbrella scheme PM-YASASVI:

- (i) Pre-Matric Scholarship for OBC, EBC and DNT students ,
- (ii) Post-Matric Scholarship for OBC, EBC and DNT students,
- (iii) Top Class School Education for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs (New Intervention),
- (iv) Top Class College Education for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs (New Intervention)
- (v) Construction of Hostels for OBC Boys and Girls

1.7 The Implementation of the Schemes of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment alongwith the utilisation of the funds allocated under each of the Schemes have been dealt in the succeeding chapters of this Report.

CHAPTER-II

BUDGETARY ALLOCATION

2.1 The Demands for Grants of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment for the year 2023-24 are given under Demand No. 93. The Detailed Demands for Grants with regard to the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment were laid on the House on 10 February, 2023.

2.2 The Ministry of Finance have allocated ₹12,847.02 crore for the year 2023-24 against the projected requirement of ₹13,872.25 made by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment. The details of the Budget Estimates, Revised Estimates and the Actual Expenditure of the Department on each Schemes / Programmes for the last three years along with the Budgetary Estimates for each Programme/ Scheme of the Department for 2023-24 is as follows:-

(₹. in crore)

Programme/Scheme	2020-21			2021-22			2022-23			BE 2023-24
	BE	RE	Actual Exp.	BE	RE	Actual Exp.	BE	RE	Actual Exp. (Till 31.12.202 2)	
Schemes										
SCD Division										
Post Matric Scholarship for SCs	2987.3 3	3815.8 7	4010.1 6	3415.6 2	4196.5 9	1978.56	5660.0 0	5660.0 0	2500.22	6359.14
Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM AJAY)				1800.0 0	1800.0 0	1820.32	1950.0 0	1062.3 9	29.34	2050.00
Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan	1200.0 0	300.00	387.00	Merged with PM AJAY						
Pradhan Mantri Adharsh Gram Yojana	700.00	300.00	216.52							
Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana	30.00	30.00	56.40							
Pre Matric Scholarship for SCs and Others	700.00	600.00	569.52	725.00	725.00	570.39	500.00	500.00	0.56	500.00
Pre-matric Scholarships for the children of those engaged in unclean occupation	25.00	27.00	26.81	Merged with Pre Matric Scholarship for SCs and Others						
Development Action plan for SCs (DAPSC)								950.00		
Strengthening of machinery for Enforcement of Protection of Civil Right Act 1955 and Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989	550.00	600.00	593.39	600.00	600.00	610.11	600.00	500.00	75.54	500.00
Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers	110.00	30.00	16.60	100.00	43.31	39.00	70.00	70.00	5.00	0.00
National Action Plan For Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem										

(NAMASTE)										97.41
Scheme of Residential Education for Students in High School in Targeted Area (SRESHTA) for SCs (Earlier Assistance to Voluntary Organisations for SCs)	100.00	125.00	55.81	200.00	63.21	38.04	89.00	89.00	31.61	104.65
Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for SCs										
1 National Fellowship for SCs	300.00	125.00	119.00	300.00	125.00	122.44	173.00	159.00	85.00	163.00
2 Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs	30.00	30.00	11.97	50.00	30.00	14.98	47.00	27.00	13.03	47.00
3 Top Class Education for SCs	40.00	50.00	52.88	70.00	70.00	84.72	108.00	108.00	7.44	111.00
4 National Overseas Scholarship for SCs	20.00	30.00	33.09	30.00	35.00	49.07	36.00	50.00	23.67	50.00
Total: Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for SCs	390.00	235.00	216.93	450.00	260.00	271.21	364.00	344.00	129.14	371.00
Assistance to State Scheduled Castes Development Corporations	50.00	20.00	15.86	25.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	
Vanchit Ikai Samooh aur Vargon ki Arthik Sahayata (VISVAS) Yojana (Allocation for SCs)	0.00	32.13	10.00	100.00	10.00	0.00	50.00	0.01	0.00	0.01
Venture Capital Fund for SCs and OBCs (Allocation for SCs)	65.00	40.00	30.00	100.00	70.00	70.00	70.00	70.00	0.00	70.00
Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi (PM DAKSH) Yojana (Allocation for SCs)				60.00	38.94	33.21	40.00	40.00	0.00	43.73
Credit Gurantee fund for SCs	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00				
Upgradation of Merit of SC Students	Scheme discontinued									
Total SCD Division	6908.33	6155.00	6204.98	7575.62	7807.06	5430.84	9393.01	9285.40	2771.41	10095.94
Social Defence, Media and Research										
Information, Monitoring, Evaluation and Social Audit	20.00	5.00	2.78	25.00	25.00	17.82	19.50	19.50	9.52	20.00
Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY) (Earlier National Action Plan for Senior Citizens)	204.00	153.00	133.31	300.00	150.00	96.54	150.00	140.00	42.98	294.97
National Action Plan on Drug Demand Reduction	260.00	180.00	149.43	260.00	200.00	90.93	200.00	200.00	51.53	311.00
Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood & Enterprise (SMILE)										
Integrated Programme for Rehabilitation of Beggars	100.00	0.00	0.00	50.00	10.00	0.05	15.00	15.00	0.26	20.00
Scheme for Tansgender Persons	10.00	0.00	0.00	20.00	25.00	1.91	30.00	30.00	0.03	52.91

Total: Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood & Enterprise (SMILE)	110.00	0.00	0.00	70.00	35.00	1.96	45.00	45.00	0.29	72.91
Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana	1.00	0.00	26.50	Scheme merged with AVYAY Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY)						
Total Social Defence	595.00	338.00	312.02	655.00	410.00	207.25	414.50	404.50	104.32	698.88
Backward Classes Division										
PM Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme for Vibrant India (PM YASASVI) for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs										
Post-Matric Scholarship for OBCs	1415.00	1100.00	1159.59	1300.00	1300.00	1319.96	1083.00	1083.00	35.20	1087.00
Pre-matric Scholarship to OBCs	250.00	175.00	165.85	250.00	250.00	218.46	478.00	394.61	0.00	281.00
Top Class School								83.39		100.00
Top Class College										90.00
Boys & Girls Hostels for OBCs	50.00	35.00	31.59	30.00	30.00	18.76	20.00	20.00	6.59	30.00
Total: PM Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme for Vibrant India (PM YASASVI) for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs	1715.00	1310.00	1357.02	1580.00	1580.00	1557.18	1581.00	1581.00	41.79	1588.00
Assistance for Skill Development of OBCs, DNTs and EBCs	50.00	50.00	47.29	Scheme merged with PM DAKSH						
Scheme for Educational and Economical Development of De-notified and Nomadic Tribes	10.00	10.00	9.00	Schemes merged with components of PM YASASVI						
Post Matric Scholarship for Economically Backward Classes	25.00	25.00	25.00							
Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for OBCs and EBCs										
National Fellowship for OBCs and EBCs	120.00	45.00	33.00	100.00	60.00	55.55	53.00	53.00	45.84	57.00
Interest Subsidy on Overseas Studies of OBCs	35.00	35.00	32.61	30.00	30.00	26.70	27.00	27.00	23.80	29.00
Total: Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for OBCs and EBCs	155.00	80.00	65.61	130.00	90.00	82.25	80.00	80.00	69.64	86.00
Vanchit Ikai Samooh aur Vargon ki Arthik Sahayata (VISVAS) Yojana (Allocation for OBCs)	0.00	32.00	10.00	50.00	10.00	0.00	30.00	0.01	0.00	0.01
Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi (PM DAKSH) Yojana (Allocation for OBCs)				40.00	40.54	35.02	44.00	44.00	0.00	48.74
Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNT/NT/SNTs (SEED)				50.00	40.40	0.21	28.00	28.00	2.13	40.40
Venture Capital Fund	60.00	10.00	0.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	40.00	40.00	0.00	22.00

for SCs and OBCs (Allocation for OBCs)				0							
Total Backward Classes Division	2015.0 0	1517.0 0	1513.9 2	187 0.00	1780.9 4	1694.6 6	1803.00	1773.0 1	113.56	1785.15	
Grand Total of all schemes of the Department	9518.3 3	8010.0 0	8030.9 2	101 00.6 2	9998.0 0	7332.7 5	11610.5 1	11462. 91	2989.29	12579.9 7	
Non Schemes											
Establishment											
Secretariat of Department of SJE	60.00	55.54	51.3 6	67.00	67.00	55.05	66.00	66.00	44.82	72.00	
National Commission for Scheduled Castes	25.00	25.00	15.8 3	27.00	27.00	19.07	30.00	30.00	16.02	35.00	
National Commission for Safai Karamcharis	10.00	5.95	4.31	10.00	10.00	5.53	11.00	11.00	2.39	12.00	
National Commission for Backward Classes	8.00	10.00	9.39	12.00	12.00	9.11	15.00	15.00	2.74	20.00	
Commission under Commissions of inquiry Act, 1952 to examine the matter of according Scheduled Caste status to new persons, who claim to historically have belonged to Scheduled Castes but have converted to religion other than those mentioned in the presidential Orders issued from time to time under Article 341 of the constitution of India.											
Total Establishment	103.00	96.49	80.8 9	116.00	116.00	88.76	122.00	122.00	65.97	142.05	
Others											
Other Miscellaneous Expenditure								10.00		10.00	
Autonomous Bodies/Grantee Bodies											
Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Foundation	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	11.00	11.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	40.00	
National Institute of Social Defence	35.00	4.70	28.8 8	20.00	20.00	3.00	20.00	20.00	9.10	30.00	
Dr. B.R. Ambedkar International Centre	25.00	25.00	25.0 0	25.00	25.00	14.68	30.00	30.00	18.82	0.00	
Development and Welfare Board for DNTs	1.24	0.30	0.15	5.00	5.00	4.80	5.00	5.00	2.32	5.00	
Total Autonomous Bodies	62.24	31.00	55.0 3	51.00	61.00	33.48	65.00	65.00	40.24	75.00	
Equity Support											
National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation	180.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00	50.00	0.01	0.00	15.00	
National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation	40.00	40.00	40.0 0	50.00	5.00	5.00	25.00	0.01	0.00	10.00	
National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation	200.00	30.07	30.0 0	100.00	0.00	0.00	50.00	0.01	0.00	15.00	
Total Equity Support	420.00	70.07	70.0 0	250.00	5.00	5.00	125.00	0.03	0.00	40.00	
Total Non Schemes	585.24	197.56	205. 92	417.00	182.00	127.24	312.00	197.03	106.21	267.05	
Grand Total Schemes + Non Schemes	10103. 57	8207.5 6	823 6.84	10517. 62	10180. 00	7459.9 9	11922.5 1	10709. 94	3095.5 0	12847.02	

2.3 On being enquired about the annual percentage increase in the Budget of the Department during the last five years, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted the following details:-

(₹ In crore)

Financial Year	Budget Estimate	Increase in percentage over previous FY
2018-19	7750.00	12.19%
2019-20	8885.00	14.65%
2020-21	10103.57	13.71%
2021-22	10517.62	4.10%
2022-23	11922.51	13.36%
2023-24	12847.02	7.75%

2.4 As per the information provided by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment the following new Schemes have been introduced and old Schemes revised/merged:-

S. No.	2021-22		2023-24
	Schemes		Scheme
SCD Division			
1	Post Matric Scholarship for SCs	1	Post Matric Scholarship for SCs
2	National Fellowship for SCs	2	Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for SCs
3	National Overseas Scholarship for SCs		National Fellowship for SCs
4	Top Class Education for SCs		National Overseas Scholarship for SCs
5	Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs		Top Class Education for SCs
6	Pradhan Mantri Adharsh Gram Yojana	3	Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM AJAY)
7	Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana		
8	Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan		
9	Strengthening of machinery for Enforcement of Protection of Civil Right Act 1955 and Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989	4	Strengthening of machinery for Enforcement of Protection of Civil Right Act 1955 and Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989
10	Assistance to Vol. Orgns. for SCs	5	Scheme of Residential Education for Students in High School in Targeted Area (SRESHTA) for SC
11	Pre-matric Scholarships for the children of those engaged in unclean occupation	6	Pre Matric Scholarship for SCs and Others

12	Pre Matric Scholarship for SCs			
13	State Sch. Castes Development Corporations	7	Scheme Discontinued	
14	Self Employment Scheme of Liberation & Rehabilitation of Scavengers	8	National Action Plan for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem(NAMASTE)	
15	VISVAS Yojana (SC)	9	Vanchit Ikai Samooch aur Vargon ki Arthik Sahayata (VISVAS) Yojana for SCs	
16	Venture Capital Fund for SCs	10	Venture Capital Fund (VCF) for SCs	
		11	Pradhan Mantri Dakshta aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi (PM DAKSH) for SCs	
17	Credit Gurantee fund for SCs			
	Total SCD Division			
Social Defence, Media and Research				
18	Scheme for prevention of Alcoholism and Substance (Drugs) Abuse			
19	Research Studies & Publications			
20	Assistance to VO's. for Providing Social Defence Services			
21	(National Action Plan for Senior Citizens)	12	Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY)	
22	Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana			
23	National Survey on Drug Abuse and Substance Abuse			
24	National Action Plan on Drug Demand Reduction	13	National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR)	
		14	Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood & Enterprise (SMILE)	
25	Integrated Programme for Rehabilitation of Beggars		Comprehensive Rehabilitation of Persons Engaged in the Act of Begging	
26	Scheme for Tansgender Persons		Comprehensive Rehabilitation for Welfare of Transgender Persons	
	Total Social Defence			
Backward Classes Division				
		15	PM Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme for Vibrant India (PM YASASVI) for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs	
			Pre Matric Scholarship for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs	
27	Pre-matric Scholarship to OBCs			
28	Post-Matric Scholarship for OBCs			
29	Post Matric Scholarship for Economically Backward Classes			Post Matric Scholarship for OBCs EBCs and DNTs
30	Scheme for Educational and Economical Development of DNTs			
31	Boys & Girls Hostels for OBCs		Boys & Girls Hostels for OBCs	
			Top Class School	
			Top Class College	
32	Assistance for Skill Development of OBCs, DNTs and EBCs	16	Pradhan Mantri Dakshta aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi (PM DAKSH) for OBC & Others	

			Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for OBCs and EBCs
33	Interest Subsidy on Overseas Studies of OBCs	17	Interest Subsidy on Overseas Studies of OBCs
34	National Fellowship for OBCs and EBCs		National Fellowship for OBCs
35	VISVAS Yojana(OBCs)		Vanchit Ikai Samooch aur Vargon ki Arthik Sahayata (VISVAS) Yojana for OBCs
36	Venture Capital Fund for OBCs		Venture Capital Fund (VCF) for OBCs
		18	Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNT/NT/SNTs(SEED)
	Total Backward Classes Division		
37	Information & Mass Education Cell	19	Information, Monitoring, Evaluation and Social Audit (I-MESA)

2.5 It is pertinent to quote a revised procedure, referred to by the Ministry during their oral evidence before the Committee for release of funds under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) implemented by the Ministry and monitoring utilization of the funds released, as per the PFMS Division, Department of Expenditure Circular dated 23.3.2021 and further modification dated 16.2.2023, which *inter-alia* include the following:-

“The General Financial Rule 232(v) prescribes the release of funds to the State Governments and monitoring utilization of funds through PFMS. For better monitoring of availability and utilization of funds released to the States under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes(CSS) and to reduce float, the Department of Expenditure *vide* letter of even number dated 16.12.2020 had shared a draft modified procedure for release of funds under CSS with all the State governments and Ministries/ Departments of the Government of India to seek their comments. The comments received from the State Governments and Ministries/ Departments of the Government of India were considered and the procedure has been suitably modified. With a view to have more effective cash management and bring more efficiency in the public expenditure management, it has been decided that the following procedure will be followed by all the State Governments and Ministries/ Departments of the Government of India regarding release and monitoring utilization of funds under CSS with effect from 1st July, 2021:-

- (a) Every State Government will designate a Single Nodal Agency (SNA) for implementing each CSS. The SNA will open a Single Nodal Account for each CSS at the State level in a Scheduled Commercial Bank authorized to conduct Government business by the State Government.
- (b) In case of Umbrella schemes which have multiple sub-schemes, if needed, the State Governments may designate separate SNAs for sub-schemes of the Umbrella Scheme with separate Single Nodal Accounts.
- (c) Implementing Agencies (IAs) down the ladder should use the SNA's account with clearly defined drawing limits set for that account. However, depending on operational requirements, zero-balance subsidiary accounts for each scheme may also be opened for the IAs either in the same branch of the selected bank or in different branches.

- (d) All zero balance subsidiary accounts will have allocated drawing limits to be decided by the SNA concerned from time to time and will draw on real time basis from the Single Nodal Account of the scheme as and when payments are to be made to beneficiaries, vendors etc. The available drawing limit will get reduced by the extent of utilization.
- (e) The Ministries/ Departments will release the central share for each CSS to the State Government's Account held in the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for further release to the SNA's Account.
- (f) After opening of Single Nodal Account of the scheme and before opening zero balance subsidiary account of IAs or assigning them drawing rights from SNA's account, the IAs at all levels shall return all unspent amounts lying in their accounts to the Single Nodal Account of the SNA. It will be the responsibility of the State government concerned to ensure that the entire unspent amount is returned by all the IAs to the Single Nodal Account of the SNA concerned. For this, the State Governments will work out the modalities and the timelines and will work out Central and state share in the amount so available with IAs.
- (g) Ministries/ Departments will ensure that releases under all CSS are made strictly as per the actual requirement on the ground, without resulting in any material float with the implementing agencies at any level.
- (h) The State Government will transfer the Central share received in its account in the RBI to the concerned SNA's account within a period of 21 days of its receipt. The Central share shall not be diverted to the Personal Deposit (PD) account or any other account by the State Government. Corresponding State share should be released as early as possible and not later than 40 days of release of the Central share. The funds will be maintained by the SNA in the Single Nodal Account of each CSS. State Governments/SNAs/IAs shall not transfer scheme-related funds to any other bank account, except for actual payments under the Scheme.
- (i) State Governments will register the SNAs and all IAs on PFMS and use the unique PFMS ID assigned to the SNA and IAs for all payments to them. Bank accounts of the SNAs, IAs vendors and other organizations receiving funds will also be mapped in PFMS.
- (j) Ministries/Departments shall undertake monthly review of the release of funds (both the Central and State Share) from the State treasury to the SNA, utilization of funds by SNAs and IAs and outputs/outcomes vis-à-vis the targets for each CSS.

In partial modification of the aforesaid provision in the guidelines, the Committee observed, it has been decided by the competent authority that the State Government shall transfer the Central share as well as the commensurate State share to the SNA account within 30 days of receipt of Central share

Further, it has been decided to charge interest w.e.f. 01.04.2023 on the number of days of delay beyond 30 days in transfer of Central share to the SNA account at the rate of 7% per annum. PFMS division, O/o CGA will issue guidelines regarding procedure for deposit of penal interest by the State Government concerned in the Consolidated Fund of India”.

Similarly, for the Central Sector Schemes, where 100% funding and monitoring is done by the Central Government, the procedure for flow of funds was revised during 2022-23 on PFMS, portal by introducing CNA (Central Nodal Agency) under the Treasury Single Account (TSA) model. As per the O.M. dated 9.3.2022 issued by the Ministry of Finance, in case of CS Schemes having outlay of more than ₹ 500 crore and implemented without involvement of State agencies, the concerned Ministry/Department will designate an Autonomous Body as the CNA and for each of the Schemes, the CNA will open an account with the RBI in e-Kuber. It is a digital and fully on-line system on PFMS. Certain exemptions are made too in the said order. **(Ref: OMs No.1[18]/PFMS/FCD/2021 dated 9.3.2022 and 4.5.2022)**

2.6 When asked about the factors taken into consideration before allocating the budget amongst the various Schemes of the Department, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted *vide* written reply that:-

“The budgetary allocations are made on the basis of allocation recommended by EFC/SFC year-wise and after considering all the facets of the proposal for merger of the existing schemes. Further, in accordance with the decision of Ministry of Finance and NITI Aayog, 72.50% of the total scheme allocation is to be made under SC welfare schemes.”

2.7 On being asked specific reasons due to which allocated funds could not be fully utilized during 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment *inter-alia* submitted in their written reply that:-

“Following are the reasons for shortfall in 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23:-

(a) During 2020-21, the performance of the Centres running under NAPDDR were affected by Covid-19 and lock-down. Further, for continuation of the scheme of NAPDDR from 2021-22 to 2025-26, the approval of the Competent Authority was received in February 2022 and therefore the revised cost norms were made applicable with effect from financial year 2022-23.

(b) During 2021-22, it was proposed to open 90 DDACs across the Country. However, due to late receipt of approval for continuation of the scheme, these Centres could not be opened.

(c) During inspection, many of the Centres were found non-functional or functioning with deficiencies, thus leading to cancellation of release of GIA to some NGOs in FY 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23.

(d) The fund was released to each NGO/VO in proportion to the beneficiaries

found present at the time of inspection. Due to Covid-19 number of beneficiaries were less in some de-addiction centers. Fixed costs like salary and rent of the building were paid in full, but variable components consisting of contingencies, transportation, food cost, office expenses etc. were released based on beneficiaries found present at the time of inspection.

(e) A policy decision has been taken to release of 2nd installment of Grant in Aid to the organisations @ 25% instead of 50% on reimbursement basis.

(f) After 3rd meeting of Project Selection Committee, only 14 District De-addiction Centre has been selected across the Country.

2.8 The representative of the Department of social Justice and Empowerment submitted with regard to the shortfall in the expenditure during 2020-21 and 2021-22 that:-

“वर्ष 2021-22 में हमारी कुछ कमी रही थी। अभी हम थोड़े पीछे चले रहे हैं। उसके ऊपर मैं संक्षेप में बताना चाहूंगा, बाकि हम विस्तार में चर्चा करेंगे। वर्ष 2021-22 का हमारा प्रमुख कारण था, जो शॉर्टफाल था, करीब 73 परसेंट हमने खर्च किया था और 27 परसेंट रह गया था। अगर नंबर के हिसाब से देखा जाए तो हम 2,720 करोड़ रुपये खर्च नहीं कर पाए थे।

2.9 In respect of lower expenditure in 2022-23, the representative of the Department of Social Justice and empowerment further submitted that :-

“It remains in five of the schemes, this gap is majorly happening. The total gap is ₹7,221 crore. If you see these five schemes, the gap becomes ₹6,342 crore. There are two schemes – post-matric scholarships for SCs and pre-matric scholarships for SCs. In both the schemes, previously, States were allowed one year to release their 40 per cent before we released our 60 per cent. Now, from this year on, the States have to release their 40 per cent first, and then only the Centre can release its 60 per cent. We have the data. States have started the process. Around 45 lakh and above, their verification done, and the States are in the process of releasing their share. Once they release their 40 per cent share, we will release our 60 per cent share. It is because the States have not been able to do till date because of various reasons, that is the reason for delay. We are hopeful that whichever State does it, we would be in a position to immediately release our share.

The other factor is that there are three schemes, PM-AJAY, PCRPAO and PM Yashasvi schemes. At the RE stage, the budget is ₹3,143 crore and we have spent only ₹366 crore, which is around 12 per cent only. The reason is, that a State nodal system was started; the Central government took a decision that we would do just in time releases and we would not allow the idle parking of funds in the State treasury account. That is why, this SNA system was started with the bank account system, where everything will be visible to the MoF, nodal ministry and the States. Now, under these three schemes, States have ₹2,511 crore which is lying with them. This is a huge amount. Unless and until, as per the instructions of the MoF, State either refunds back that amount to Centre or utilise that money, we will not be able to do a fresh release.”

2.10 On being enquired about the reasons due to which the Budgetary Estimates even after downward revision at RE stage could not be fully spent, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment inter-alia submitted *vide* written reply that:

During FY 2022-23, 89.25 % fund of the total Budget accounted for the Centrally Sponsored Schemes and under Centrally Sponsored Schemes, funds are to be released as per revised flow of fund system through Single Nodal Agency (SNA) which was introduced during the FY 2021-22 by Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance. Budgetary outlay of Centrally Sponsored Schemes is ₹9643.39 crore which constitutes 91.73% of total scheme budgetary outlay of ₹10,512.91 crore at RE stage. Around ₹ 3600 crore, as on 14.02.2023, is lying unspent in SNA accounts with States/UTs in 10 schemes. As per SNA instructions issued by DoE, MoF the unspent amount transferred to SNA need to be refunded back to CFI. Due to non-compliance by States, fresh release is not possible. Further, there is delay in submission of UCs and proposals from States. Further, Budgetary outlay for Scholarship/Fellowship schemes is ₹ 8145 crore (77.4% of total scheme outlay) at RE stage. Out of this, Pre and Post Matric Scholarship for SCs budget is ₹ 6160 crore. Both Pre and Post Matric Scholarship for SCs is implemented in DBT mode where Central share can be released after release of State share. This is the first year for DBT mode in Pre Matric and first year for Post Matric when State share is to be released before release of Central share. Few States have started release of their share hence less release of Central share. Also, some of the schemes are demand driven scheme and during FY 2022-23 Grants in aid to the projects/NGOs/organizations are being released in proportionate to the number of beneficiaries found during inspection. The stringent measures mentioned above, introduced for better implementation and idle parking of Central Government funds, has resulted into less expenditure, as compared to BE, However, this Department is making all efforts to pace up the expenditure in the last Quarter of FY 2022-23”.

2.11 On being asked about corrective and remedial measures taken by the Department to spend the allocated budget for 2023-24, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted *vide* written reply that:-

“the necessary hand holding support are being provided to the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations to streamline the new system of fund flow mechanism through SNA under the scheme as provisioned by the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, Government of India. Further, a dedicated web-based portal has already been put in place for effective monitoring and implementation apart from interacting with individual basis with all the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations.

As on 13.02.2023, ₹ 2574.82 Crore have been utilized in releasing scholarship to the beneficiaries of 2021-22 in Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC Students. The remaining budgetary allocation of ₹ 3085.18 Crore is also expected to be utilized as the integration of States portals with Central portal is finalized and after the receipt of data of beneficiaries, to whom the State share has been paid, the Central share will be released.

In Pre Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC & Others, as on 13.02.2023, approximately 15.23 lakh beneficiaries applications have been verified by the State Governments. If the entire data is paid and forwarded by the States Government timely through the portal, the Central share would be approx Rs. 350 Cr. Considering that the States are processing the balance data and are expected to verify them very soon, the balance budgetary allocation under the Scheme may also be utilized during this year”.

2.12 The Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted during the deliberation of the Committee with regard to action taken so that the funds do not remain unutilized that:-

“हम लोग वीडियो कान्फ्रेंसेज किए हैं, उसमें इस पाइंट को इम्फेसाइज किया है कि अगर एस एन ए में पैसा होगा तो हम इस साल का फ्रेश एलोकेशन रिलीज नहीं कर पाएंगे। स्टेट्स के पास दो ऑप्शन्स हैं या तो वह पैसा यूटिलाइज कर लें, जिस काम के लिए पैसा दिया है नहीं तो वह वापस कन्सोलिडेट फंड ऑफ इंडिया में जमा करा दें। इस बात को हम बार-बार जोर दे रहे हैं। हमारे मिनिस्टर साहब के स्तर पर भी चिट्ठियां लिखी गई हैं, हमारे लेवल पर भी हो रहा है।“

2.13 On being enquired about the annual increase in the number of beneficiaries under various schemes, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted the following details *vide* written reply:-

S. No	Name of Scheme		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
			Physical	Physical	Physical	Physical	Physical
1.	Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Caste Sub Plan	From The financial year 2021-22, these Schemes have been merged and renamed as "Pradhan Mantri-Anusuchit Jati Abhyuday Yojna(PM-AJAY)	309780	269967	201734	55786	Nr
2.	PMAGY		0	0	0	0	0
3.	Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojna		1800	1954	1000	3230	2075
4.	Pre-matric Scholarship for SC students	From the Financial year 2021-22 these schemes have been merged and renamed as "Pre-matric Scholarship to the SC students and others.	2282254	2630366	2809542	3068876	3479609
5.	Pre-Matric scholarship for children of parents/guardians engaged in Unclean and hazardous Occupation						
6.	Post-matric Scholarship for SC students		5925544	6025544	5280189	6237819	3025136
7.	PCR & PoA Act		72023	80383	96762	104513	92238
8.	Top Class Scholarship scheme for SCs (TCS)	From the Financial year 2021-22 these schemes have been merged and renamed as Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers(SHREYAS).	1883	1385	1375	3118	4544
9.	National Overseas scholarship Scheme for SC etc. students (NOS)		183	100	100	100	125
10.	National Fellowship scheme for SCs (NFSC)and		2000	2000	2000	4029	2007
11.	Free Coaching for SC and OBC students		2247	1296	1345	2112	1761

12	Rehabilitation of Manual Savengers		1664	19905	15886	21053	3661
13	Post-matric Scholarship for OBC students	From the Financial year 2021-22 these schemes have been merged and rename as PM Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme for vibrant India, PM – YASASVI for OBCs and others (PM – YASASVI)	3968000	4312000	4094000	4481000	No. of beneficiaries are provided by States/ UTs with subsequent year's proposal
14	Pre-matric Scholarship for OBC students		5084000	11393000	9452000	3108000	
15	Construction of Hostels for OBC Boys & Girls		600	900	1750	3000	
16	Assistance to VOs working for SCs	From the Financial year 2021-22, this Schemes has been re-named as "Scheme for Residential Education for Residential Education for Students in High Schools in Targeted Areas(SHRESHTA)	50643	29459	47242	38250	19350
17	National Action Plan for Senior Citizens(NAP SrC)	From the Financial year 2021-22, "Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojna(AVYAY)" The Scheme is revamped and re-named version of the National Action Plan for Senior Citizen"	40450	34920	109085	136440	139385
18	Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana		34069	65615	44833	75240	70406
19	Assistance for Prevention of Alcoholism/Drug Abuse		106737	77479	93364	208415	285559
	Loans of Corporations						
20	NSFDC		108340	81431	83970	94002	76219
21	NSKFDC		22202	21301	26674	11619	51356
22	NBCFDC		138588	152844	173524	111261	159717
	Total		18152999	25201856	22536375	17767863	7415298

2.14 On being enquired about the steps being taken to increase the coverage of beneficiaries, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment *inter-alia* submitted in their written reply that:

“Under Post Matric Scholarship for SCs, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment is taking various steps to spread awareness. Advertisements have been published in leading National and Regional print media and Electronic media. Information about the schemes is spread through various social media platforms also like twitter, facebook etc. In addition, the scheme guidelines envisages awareness generation/identification programme through State Governments/UTs, which are as under:-

a). States/UTs are required to adopt methodology suitable to the local conditions for identification of poorest SC students e.g. SC majority districts/blocks/villages may be taken first for identification of poorest students or students leaving class 10th or 12th class may be tracked in association with the education department or data emanating from other Central/State schemes indicating the dropouts rates or other sources as deemed fit. Every State Government is required to undertake a campaign every year in March/April to identify SC students and mentor them to enroll and avail scholarships. Such students will be helped for identification of courses also as per their skills.

b). Awareness drive is required to be undertaken by the State Governments/UTs about the scheme through the Gram Panchayats Notice Boards, school committees, and discussions in the parent-teacher association meetings and other public awareness measures, in order to extend its coverage and also minimize any misuse by unscrupulous elements.

c). States are required to take up identification of the students for fresh enrollment by taking up systematic drives covering all the higher secondary schools and encouraging the pupils who have dropped out after Class 12th to come back to higher education.

The scheme of PM-AJAY comprises of three major components namely ‘Adarsh Gram’, ‘Grants-in-aid’ and ‘Hostel’ components and being implemented since 2020-21. Prior to the year 2020-21, these components were being implemented as an independent scheme. Since 2014-15, a total of 31000 Scheduled Castes(SCs) majority villages covering a total SC population of 2.63 cr have been selected for implementation under the ‘Adarsh Gram’ component; a total of 30,07,418 no. of beneficiaries have been covered under the ‘Grants-in-aid’ component and a total of 15,505 beneficiaries have been benefitted under the Hostel Component of this scheme.

NAPDDR: Certain changes in guidelines have been introduced since 2014-15 to increase the percentage of beneficiaries among each of the categories such as revision in IRCA cost norms, sepaarate scheme of NAPDDR from 2018-19, setting up of District De-addiction centre, setting up project, monitoring unit. Through these steps, State/UT Governments as well as NGOs/VOs have been able to utilize funds in various drug demand reduction, awareness generation, treatment & rehabilitation purposes, which has resulted increased the number of beneficiaries. The total number of beneficiaries benefitted from 2009-10 to 2013-14 is 5.10 lakh, whereas more than 13.16 lakhs beneficiaries benefitted since 2014-15.

Transgender Persons: Ministry through an autonomous body, regularly conducts sensitization programmes. These programmes have been conducted for HR Managers, Companies, Medical Students, Police/Prison functionaries, Journalists, Anganwadi Workers, CWC, Juvenile Justice Board members, Transgender community, CBOs and other stake holders for awareness about the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act & Rules. More than 280+ offline & Online sessions have been conducted with more than 10,000+ participants. Awareness campaigns through radio programmes and Social Media are also undertaken to increase the reach of Ministry's initiatives".

2.15 With regard to the Budgetary allocation for 2023-24 the representative, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, explained during the deliberation of the Committee that:-

“हमने मिनिस्ट्री ऑफ फाइनेंस से 13,877 करोड़ रुपये मांगा था। हमें 12,847 करोड़ रुपये मिला है। इस संदर्भ में मैं यह कहना चाहूंगा कि इस बार का जो हमें बी.ई. मिला है, वह हमारे गत वर्षों के हिसाब से सबसे ज्यादा मिला है। यह जो इंफ्लेक्शन है, अगर हमारे बी.ई. टूबी.ई. देखें तो यह 924.51 करोड़ है, जो 7.75 प्रतिशत पिछले साल के बी.ई. के ऊपर है। अगर हम आर.ई. देखें, क्योंकि हमारी आर.ई. कम है। अगर आर.ई. के हिसाब से देखें तो हमारा 2,137 करोड़ रुपये का इजाफा है, जो करीब 20 प्रतिशत ज्यादा मिला है। ज्यादा बजट से हमारे पास ज्यादा चैलेंज है कि हम इसको अच्छी तरह से कर पाए।“

2.16 On being asked to justify the enhancement in Budgetary Estimates for 2023-24 particularly when the Department have not been able to spend their allocation in previous years, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment *inter alia* submitted in their written reply that:-

(a) Ministry is going to set up of 100 more ATFs by 26.06.2023 in addition to 25 ATFs, which have been dedicated to the Nation on 09.02.2023.

(b) The ambit of NMBA will be extended in all border villages of the Country.

(c) As per revised guidelines, NGOs which can provide rent free accommodation can also apply for DDACs which will ensure active participation from NGOs. More selection of NGOs for DDAC projects will result into more release of funds.

(d) Spiritual organizations viz. Art of Living, Brahma Kumaris, Sant Nirankari Mandal etc. are being added under NMBA to spread the message of Abhiyaan and going to sign MoU.

(e) Ministry is setting up de-addiction centres in Prison across the Country.

(f) As per new revised guidelines of NAPDDR, provision of release of funds to State/UT Governments under State Action Plan has again been included which will result in more spending of funds allocated.

(g) 100 more districts have been included under Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan resulting into total of 372 districts. Funds will be released to all districts which will furnish Action Plan for awareness generation programmes under Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan.”

2.17 On being enquired about the steps taken by the Department to fill the gap between Budgetary Projections and Budgetary allocation, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted their written reply with the following:-

“As per the instructions of Ministry of Finance, all the schemes of the Department have to be appraised and recommended by EFC/SFC followed by approval of the competent authority. Accordingly, all the schemes of the Department have been appraised and recommended by EFC/SFC during 2020-21. The financial allocation for each of the scheme for period 2021-22 to 2025-26 has been recommended by EFC/SFC, taking into consideration the actual expenditure under the scheme during 2019-20 (subject to maximum limit of 5.5 times of actual expenditure of 2019-20). In view of the above, Ministry of Finance has allocated ₹12,847.02 crore for the year 2023-24 against the annual plan proposal of ₹13,877.25 crore. The Department will be able to undertake the envisaged works during the year 2023-24 through its internal re-allocation among the schemes and non-schemes component. In case, if any additional demand raised by the Department, the same may be sought at RE stage”.

2.18 The mandate of the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment is vital for the empowerment of socially, educationally and economically marginalized sections of the Society including Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes, Senior Citizens, Victims of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, Transgender Persons, Beggars, Denotified and Nomadic Tribes (DNTs), Economically Backward Classes (EBCs) and Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) to enable them to lead productive, safe and dignified lives, with all their basic needs being fulfilled, and where equal opportunities are ensured for their growth and development. These objectives are fulfilled through various Programmes/Schemes of the Department for (i) Educational, economic and social empowerment of Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs); (ii) Support to Senior Citizens by way of their Maintenance, Welfare, Security, Health Care and Productive and independent living and; (iii) Rehabilitation, through ‘whole person recovery’ approach, of victims of substance abuse, for which the Department gets allocations each year, after due consideration by EFC/SFC.

The Committee, during evidence, was apprised that under ‘Mission Karmayogi’, the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment is in the forefront of the capacity building programme, as compared to other Government of India Departments. As the Officers/staff of the Department of

Social Justice & Empowerment are well trained with better capacity, it would, the Committee hope, result in further rise in their overall performance.

Coming to the budgetary performance of previous years, the Committee note that the Budgetary Estimate of ₹10,103.57 crore in 2020-21 and ₹10,517.62 crore in 2021-22 were revised as ₹ 8207.56 croe for 2020-21 and ₹ 10,180.00 crore for 2021-22, out of which, the Department was able to spend ₹8,236.84 crore and ₹7,459.99 crore in 2020-21 and 2021-22 respectively. The Department has furnished the reasons for low utilisation of funds to the Committee, which, inter-alia, include cancellation of GIA to Centres found non-functional, late receipt of approval for continuation of DDAC Scheme and delay in furnishing of Utilisation Certificates and proposals by States/UTs. The Committee have no doubt that the Department is taking suitable steps to resolve these issues and constraints while preparing their Annual demand/proposal and taking necessary steps to utilise the funds, as any under-utilisation of funds adversely affects the Schemes. The Committee also find that certain initiatives/measures taken for effective implementation of various schemes have been taken such as Single Nodal Agency (SNA) system for Centrally Sponsored Schemes, first release of State share in Scholarship Schemes, Inspection of NGOs before release of GIA, etc. will prove to be helpful in further effective implementation of various schemes in future. The Committee, at the same time, feel that the new system of States releasing their share first may slow the pace in those cases where there are States/UTs, which may not be in a position to release their share timely due to a variety of reasons. Nonetheless, the Committee, while awaiting the positive outcomes of some of the initiatives, would also like to urge the Department to fully utilise the Budgetary Allocation for 2022-23 and 2023-24 so that the targetted sections of the society are not deprived of the benefits of the Schemes.

2.19 The Committee note the successive increase in the Budgetary Estimate of the Department during the last few years. However, the percentage increase of 7.75% in Budgetary Estimate for present Financial Year 2023-24 is rather less in comparison to 13.36% increase last year i.e. in 2022-23. The merger of some schemes and modifications in certain Schemes could be one of the

reasons as 37 Schemes operational in 2021-22 have been reduced to 19 Schemes in 2023-24 resulting in reduction in the budgetary estimates. The Committee are of the opinion that with a wider range of potential beneficiaries, the percentage increase in Budgetary Estimate need to increase and that it should be independent of actual expenditure incurred in previous year as the mandate of this department is completely different from other departments and is absolutely vital for accelerating the overall progress of the society. The Committee hope that the initiatives taken by the Department such as setting up of more ATFS, selection of more NGOs for DDAC, expansion of Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan, etc. would be implemented effectively so that Budgetary Estimate for 2023-24 are utilised fully and lead to higher percentage increase in Budgetary Estimate in the future.

CHAPTER-III

PRE-MATRIC SCHOLARSHIP FOR SCs & OTHERS

With the objective of promoting literacy and uninterrupted education at the pre-matric level for children belonging to Scheduled Castes and children of parents/guardian who are engaged in unclean and hazardous occupations, the Government of India has been implementing two Centrally Sponsored Schemes, namely (i) the Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC Students; and (ii) Pre-Matric Scholarship scheme for the children of parents/guardians engaged in unclean and hazardous occupation since 01.07.2012 and 01.04.1977 respectively. Both the Schemes have been merged into single scheme namely, 'Pre-matric Scholarship Scheme for SC Students & Others' w.e.f 2021-22. The students shall be given a consolidated academic allowance ₹3,500/- per annum for day Scholars and ₹7,000/-(Comp. I) and ₹ 8,000/- /-(Comp. II) (for class III-X) for hostellers w.e.f. 2022-23.

3.2 The Budget Estimates, Revised Estimates and Actual Expenditure of the Department for the last three years alongwith the Budget Estimates for 2023-24 is as follows:

(₹in crore)

Programme/ Schemes	2020-21					2021-22					2022-23					2023-24
	BE	RE	A E	Target	Achievement	BE	RE	A E	Target	Achievement	BE	RE	A E (Till 31.12.22)	Target	Achievement	
Pre Matric Scholarship - SCs and Others	700.00	600.00	569.52	*	310.68	725.00	725.00	570.39	26.00	32.41	500.00	500.00	0.56	26.50	NIL	500.00
Pre-Matric Scholarship for the Children of those engaged in unclean occupation	25.00	27.00	26.81													

1. * No exclusive targets were fixed before the revision of the Scheme

3.3 On being enquired about the achievement of objectives envisaged under Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC and the steps being taken to ensure that the targeted section of the society are not deprived of the benefits of the scheme, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment *inter-alia* submitted in their written reply that:-

“The scheme is achieving the envisaged objectives. The scheme is open ended and all the eligible beneficiaries based on verified data shared by the

States/UTs are covered under the scheme. The revised Scheme guidelines envisages that the State Government will make special efforts to identify the poorest eligible households from various sources and enroll students under the scheme in a mission mode. Further, these students would be monitored on regular basis so that they continue with their studies. Such students shall include (i) students from households with three or more deprivations as per SECC-2011 (ii) students from households where one or both the parents are illiterate. In this regard, States/UTs will launch special campaigns to identify and cover such students.”

3.4 On being asked the reasons due to which the budgetary allocation has been reduced in 2022-23 after the merger of both the schemes and how do the Department justify the low utilisation of the allocated budget for 2022-23, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“From 01.04.2023 Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC & Others is implemented on DBT mode in which Scholarship amount is released directly into Aadhaar seeded bank account of beneficiary. Since, it is the 1st year of implementation, the State Scholarship portals were not ready hence the budgetary allocation has been reduced. However, it is an open ended Scheme and we may demand for supplementary as and when the more sanctioned data is received from the States/UTs.”

3.5 In this regard, the representative of Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted during the course of evidence that:-

“यह पहला साल है 2022-23, जिसमें डी बी टी के माध्यम से इसको कर रहे हैं। पोस्ट मैट्रिक योजना पिछले साल से डी बी टी माध्यम से स्टार्ट हो गई थी। प्री मैट्रिक का यह पहला साल है, जिसमें हम इसको कर रहे हैं। इसमें भी आधार बेस्ड पेमेंट सिस्टम रहेगा। हम जो एकैडमिक एलाउंस देते थे, वह बढ़ाकर 3,000 से 3,500 रुपये किया गया है। इसमें 500 करोड़ रुपये का आबंटन है। अगर 2014-15 से देखा जाए तो हमने 221 लाख लाभार्थियों को हमने मदद पहुंचाई है और हमारा व्यय 3,280 करोड़ रुपये का रहा है।“

3.6 On being enquired about target fixed for 2023-24 under Pre-matric scholarship scheme for SC students and others along with the methodology adopted for fixing the criteria, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“The target of ₹482 Crore to eligible 26.75 lakh beneficiaries has been fixed by the Cabinet decision on EFC recommendations for the year 2023-24. Similarly the BE for 2023-24 under the Scheme is also same. Pre Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC Students and others is an open ended scheme and 60% Central Share (90% in case of North Eastern States and 100% in case of UT without legislature) shall be released based on the verified and sanctioned data shared by the States/UTs.

Year	Beneficiary	BE
2021-22	Target-26 lakh (Actual)- 32,41,735	BE- Rs. 750 Crore, Actual Expenditure-Rs. 509.34 crore
2022-23	26.75 lakh(Anticipated)	BE-Rs 500 Cr

From 2022-23, the Central Share is released based on the verified and sanctioned data shared by the States/UTs.”

3.7 On being asked the objective of the merger of the Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC students with Scheme with the Pre-Matric Scholarship scheme for the children of parents/guardians engaged in unclean and hazardous occupation and how far the objective is being achieved after the merger in 2021-22, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“Keeping in view the large overlap in the target groups of these schemes and with the objective of streamlining the implementation and optimizing resources, it has been decided to merge two schemes into a single scheme namely, ‘Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC Students & Others’ w.e.f 2021-22. In order to have a separate data base for policy and planning purposes, this scheme will have two components, one for SC students studying in classes IX and X (Component 1), and the other for the children studying in Classes I to X, of parents/guardians engaged in unclean and hazardous occupation (Component 2).

Before merger of the Schemes, proposals from hardly 2-3 States were received under Unclean Occupation Scheme. However, after the merger proposals from 7 more States were received in 2021-22.”

3.8 On being asked about the evaluation study conducted on the Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for the children of parents/guardians engaged in unclean and hazardous occupation to assess the impact of the scheme on the target sections of the Society, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“The Scheme was evaluated by the third party through the Plan division of this Ministry. The major findings & recommendations are as under:-

- (i) 72.7% students reported that scheme has enabled them to continue further study in Post Matric level.
- (ii) 75% students were satisfied with the current scheme.
- (iii) 96.8% of the students were found to study in Government or aided schools and only 3.2% study in private schools.
- (iv) 27.9% institutions are located in Urban and 72.1% in Rural areas.
- (v) 70.1% of the institutions reported that payment of scholarship in to the accountof students have positive impact on enrolment.
- (vi) On line processing of application is only in the State of Gujarat.
- (vii) There is confusion due to no proper definition of the terms Tanners/ Flyers/Waste Pickers etc.”

3.9 With regard to the factors taken into consideration for fixing the consolidated academic allowance per annum and the proposal to increase the allowance, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“Considering all the facets of the scheme, Pre-Matric Scholarship Schemes have been revised recently in 2020-21 up to the financial year 2025-26 with the approval of Cabinet. However, to off set the impact of inflation, a proposal to increase the Academic allowance of scholarship under scheme was sent to Finance Ministry. However, the same was not approved by the Finance Ministry”.

3.10 On being asked whether any statistical information has been compiled to assess the exact number of persons that are eligible for Pre-matric scholarship scheme for SC students & others, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted that no such information is compiled.

3.11 On being asked the steps being taken to avoid fraud in the scheme the Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted that during the deliberation of the Committee that:-

“हमने दो चीजें की हैं, एक है कि एन टू एन कम्प्यूटर पर आता है, जैसे एन एस पी पोर्टल पर आता है। दूसरी बात, जो हम पेमेंट कर रहे हैं, उसी के आधार आर्थेटीकेटिड एकाउंट में कर रहे हैं।”

3.12 In this regard, the representative of the Department further added during the deliberation of the Committee that:-

“When we release the fund to their accounts, we send an SMS telling them that so much money has been sent to them under the scholarship scheme. When they become aware that their money has come, the likelihood of others misusing their account becomes less.”

3.13. The Committee find that the Budgetary Allocation under Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC & Others has been reduced to ₹500.00 crore for 2022-23 and 2023-24, whereas it was ₹725.00 crore in 2021-22 i.e. in the year of merger of two Schemes namely Pre-Matric Scholarship Schemes for SC and Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for the Children of parents/ guardians engaged in unclean and hazardous occupation. However, it is still 18 crore more than the amount of ₹482 crore proposed by the Department for 2023-24. As regards the utilization of funds during 2020-21, the Committee note from the deposition of the Department that it was the first year of implementation of merged Scheme and the Scholarship Portals of many States/UTs were not ready. The Committee hope that with States/UTs making special efforts to identify the poorest eligible households from various sources and enrolling students under the scheme in Mission mode, there would be higher demand under the Scheme. The Committee also urge that the findings of an Evaluation Study on the Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for children or parents/guardians engaged in unclean and hazardous occupation, on matters, such as processing of applications, definition of terms, etc. *inter-alia* noted by the Plan Division of the Department, would be addressed urgently. The Committee desire that concerted efforts should be made by the Department with the Ministry of Finance for revision of the academic allowance in the interest of the

beneficiaries. The Committee would like to be apprised of the action taken by the Department in this regard.

In so far as publicizing these scholarship schemes are concerned, the Committee note efforts with regard to the Portal and through print media. In this connection, the Committee further suggest that for better coverage of beneficiaries, the publicity should be undertaken in unaided-private schools too since some percentage of students from marginalized sections study there, as mandated by the Right to Education Act. The Committee recommend measures like setting up of help desks in schools, reaching out to Management Committees of schools, announcement of scholarship schemes during Morning Assemblies etc., which, they are sanguine, will result in better response from the potential beneficiaries of the scheme.

CHAPTER-IV

POST MATRIC SCHOLARSHIP FOR SC STUDENTS

The Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC Students (PMS-SC) is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme in operation since 1944 to provide financial assistance to SC students to pursue post-matric education. With effect from 2020-21; the funding pattern under this scheme has been changed to 60:40 sharing ratio between Centre and the States (90:10 in case of North-Eastern states). Starting from 2021-22, the Central Share in the scheme is being released on DBT mode directly into the bank account of the beneficiaries.

4.2 The Budget Estimates, Revised Estimates and the Actual Expenditure of the Department for the last three years alongwith the Budget Estimates for 2023-24 is as follows:

Post Matric Scholarship for Scheduled Castes

2020-21					2021-22					2022-23					2023-24
BE	RE	AE	Target	Achievement	BE	RE	A E	Target	Achievement	BE	RE	A E (Till 31.12.22)	Target	Achievement	BE
2987.33	3815.87	4010.16	60.00 Lakh	62.37 Lakh	3415.62	4196.59	1978.56	63.00	53.90 Lakh	5660.00	5660.00	2500.22	66.15 Lakh	0	6359.14

4.3 On being asked the reasons due to which Actual Expenditure is less than the allocated budget under Post matric scholarship scheme for SC students in 2021-22 and 2022-23 particularly when it was committed by the Department during the examination of DFG 2021-22 that the allocated budget would be fully spent by 31 March 2022, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“Due to COVID-19 pandemic prevailing during 2021-22, the Schools/Colleges were opened in the later part of the year consequently delaying the opening of State Scholarship Portals. Hence, the registrations and processing of applications of 2021-22 by States was delayed. In addition, enrollment of students in some major courses viz. Medical, Engineering etc. were not completed by the end of 2021-22 due to delayed counseling of these courses in various universities/institutions. Accordingly, the courses and residential status (Day scholar/Hosteller) of the students were not final and States could not verify their applications. As a result, the payments of 2021-22 were continued in the 1st & 2nd quarter of FY 2022-23”.

4.4 With regard to low expenditure of the budgetary allocation under Post matric scholarship scheme for SC students for 2022-23 and fixing higher budget for 2023-24 particularly when the department have not been able to spend the allocated budget in previous years, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written

reply that:-

“For the FY 2022-23, the release of 60% Central Share will commence only after the States release their 40% State Share. The process of verification/sanction of applications in the States/UTs is at slow pace and the final paid data has yet not been received by Central Government. Since, not many States have released their 40% State share, the release of 60% Central Share has not yet initiated”.

4.5 Elaborating the procedure and the consequences of the changes in procedure of disbursement of the amount of Scholarship by Central and State Governments, the representative of the Department stated during the course of evidence that:-

“पोस्ट मैट्रिक स्कॉलरशिप में जैसे 60:40 के विभाजन में यह स्कीम 2020-21 में स्टार्ट हो गई थी। इससे एक बहुत बड़ा फायदा यह हुआ कि कैबिनेट का जो निर्णय था कि हम इसको 60:40 की बेसिस पर लायेंगे, उसमें हमारे विभाग से जो पैसा पोस्ट मैट्रिक स्कॉलरशिप का जाता था, उसका योगदान बहुत बढ़ गया। इसके पहले हम कमिटेड लाइबेलिटी के ऊपर चलते थे। स्टेट ने लास्ट ईयर के लास्ट फाइनेंस साइकल में जो पैसा खर्च किया, उसके हिसाब से उतनी स्टेट की रेस्पॉन्सिबिलिटी रहती थी। हम उसके ऊपर अपनी स्कीम में टॉपअप करते थे। इसके कारण दस से भी कम राज्य ही स्कीम में आ पा रहे थे और हमारा पैसा भी बहुत कम जा पा रहा था। केंद्र का जो 60:40 का निर्णय हुआ, उसके कारण और पूर्वोत्तर राज्यों में 90:10 के बाद हमारा योगदान बढ़ गया। हमारी सबसे बड़ी स्कीम यह हो गई है। इसमें हमारा पैसा भी इस साल में सबसे ज्यादा है। वर्ष 2021-22 से हमने डी बी टी के माध्यम से बच्चों को देना शुरू किया है। अब लाभार्थियों के बैंक एकाउंट में सीधे पैसा जाता था। उनको इसका एस एम एस जाता है। उनको इस बात की जानकारी मिल जाती है कि 60 प्रतिशत जो गया है, यह केंद्र सरकार की तरफ से गया है और 40 प्रतिशत बाकी राज्य सरकार की तरफ से मिलेगा। यह एक बहुत बड़ी उपलब्धि रही है कि हम एकाउंट में पैसा डालकर एस एम एस के द्वारा कन्फर्म भी कर रहे हैं कि आपको पैसा मिल गया है। दूसरी बात, हम इसको 2022-23 से आधार बेस्ड पेमेंट सिस्टम में ला रहे हैं। इससे योजना के अंदर जो कमी रह गई थी, वह दूर हो जाएगी। वर्ष 2022-23 में हमारा बजट अनुमान 5,660 करोड़ रुपये का है और यही आर ई स्टेज पर भी है। यह बढ़कर 6,359 करोड़ 2023-24 का हो गया है। इसमें इजाफा हुआ है। जैसा नैक्स्ट ईयर का बजट है, उसके हिसाब से हम नंबर भी हर साल बढ़ा रहे हैं। जैसे हमने एक साल साठ लाख बच्चों को सपोर्ट किया, अगली बार हमारा टार्गेट 62 लाख का है, फिर 64, फिर 67 लाख का है। इस तरह धीरे-धीरे हम बच्चों के नंबर बढ़ा रहे हैं। चूंकि यह बजट का लास्ट ईयर है, हम यह आंकड़ा भी देना चाह रहे हैं कि वर्ष 2014-15 से हमने क्या किया है? वर्ष 2014-15 से लाभार्थियों की कुल संख्या 434 लाख रही है और इसमें हमने 23,038 करोड़ रुपये का व्यय किया है।”

4.6 On being enquired about the States/UTs that have not contributed their share under Post matric scholarship scheme for SC students and alternatives available with the Department in such circumstances so that the students do not suffer, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“The States/ UTs share is due from 28 States/UTs, some of the States/UTs are Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Delhi, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal etc.”

4.7 With regard to the factors taken into consideration for fixing the consolidated academic allowance per annum and the proposal to increase the allowance, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“Considering all the facets of the scheme, Post-Matric Scholarship Schemes have been revised recently in 2021-22 up to the financial year 2025-26 with the approval of Cabinet. However, to off set the impact of inflation, a proposal to increase the

Academic allowance of scholarship under scheme was sent to Finance Ministry. However, the same was not approved by the Finance Ministry”.

4.8 The Committee note that under Post-Matric Scholarship for SC students the Department have been able to spend ₹2,500.22 crore upto 31st December, 2022 out of the Budgetary Allocation of ₹5,660.00 crore in 2022-23, as several States have not been releasing their share first in compliance of the revised procedure that the Central share of 60% will be released only after 40% State share is released. The Committee feel that many of the State Governments are not forthcoming in bearing the expenditure. While there is no doubt about the intentions of the Department to be financially prudent in administering the scheme, the Committee are worried about the students from the community, as their studies may suffer for want of financial assistance. The Committee are, therefore, of the view that the Department should take up this issue at appropriate level. The Committee would appreciate if Budgetary Estimates for 2023-24 are utilized fully.

CHAPTER-V

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR THE HIGHER EDUCATION FOR YOUNG ACHIEVERS (SHREYAS) FOR SC, OBC AND OTHERS

SHREYAS is the umbrella Scheme which has four existing Schemes for SCs, viz (a) National Fellowship (b) Free Coaching for SCs and OBC, (c) Top Class Education Scheme (d) National Overseas Schemes. The Scheme is proposed to be implemented during the 2021-22 to 2025-26.

5.2 The salient features of all the Schemes of SHREYAS for SCs are as follows:

(a) National Fellowship scheme for Scheduled Caste Students:

It is a Central Sector Scheme introduced during the financial year 2005-06 to provide opportunities to Scheduled Castes students for pursuing higher education leading to M.Phil/Ph.D degrees in Sciences, Humanities and Social Science streams. The scheme provides for 2000 new Fellowships (1500 Junior Research Fellows for Humanities/ Social Sciences and 500 Junior Research Fellows for Science stream) per year to such Scheduled Caste students to undertake advanced studies and research leading to M.Phil/Ph.D Degrees.

(b) Free Coaching for SC and OBC Students:

The objective of the Scheme is to provide coaching of good quality for economically disadvantaged SC and OBC candidates to enable them to appear in competitive examinations and succeed in obtaining an appropriate job in Public/Private sector. Coaching offered under the scheme are UPSC, SPSC, SSC, Bank, Railway Recruitment Branch, IIT-JEE, NEET, CAT, CLAT, SAT, GRE, GMAT, IELTS and TOEFL, Entrance examination tests for CPL courses/ National Defence Academy and Combined Defence Services. The Ministry directly selects a total of 3500 students based on merit of marks obtained in class X and XII depending on course applied for benefit under this scheme. These students have the liberty to avail coaching in selected courses, in institutions of their choice. Category wise Ratio of Candidates. The ratio of SC and OBC students to be coached under the Scheme is 70:30. Applications are called directly through the portal and selected awardee will get the scholarship through DBT directly from this Ministry. 30% slots have been reserved for girl students applying under these scheme. The actual course fee of the institute, or the prescribed course fee by the Ministry as per the Scheme, whichever is less, are paid. The coaching fee are paid through DBT in a single installment on a reimbursement basis, after uploading the fee receipt showing payment of fee to the institution by the student. Monthly stipend of ₹4,000/-per student are released to the student through DBT in one installment after completion of the coaching period, and after appearing in the exam for which coaching has been taken. Both components of scholarship i.e. Fee and stipend is paid into account of students as per the guidelines of the scheme.

(c) Scholarship Scheme of Top Class Education for SC Students:

The objective of the scheme is to promote qualitative education amongst SC students, by providing full financial support for pursuing studies beyond 12th class. The other features of scheme are:-

- a. There are 259 institutions of excellence spread all over the country in the list of notified institutions (revised as per recommendation of steering committee meeting held during 2021-22). Notified institutions include all IIMs, IITs, NITs, Commercial Pilot License training institutes of excellence and other institutes. The overall number of scholarships are capped at 21,500 for the period 2021-22 to 2025-26 (4100 for 2021-22, 4200 for 2022-23, 4300 for 2023-24, 4400 for 2024-25 and 4500 for 2025-26).
- b. Courses of study covered are Engineering, Medicine/Dentistry, Law, Management, Hotel Management, Fashion Technology and other streams.
- c. The total family income of the students from all sources has been revised from ₹6.00 lakh to ₹8.00 lakh per annum w.e.f. 01-04-2020. Full tuition fee and other non-refundable charges (there will be a ceiling of ₹ 2.00 lakh per annum per student towards fee in the private sector institutions and ₹3.72 lakh per annum for CPL and Type Rating Courses).
- d. Stipend @ ₹86,000/- per annum for Fresh applicants and ₹41,000/-per annum for Renewal applicants.

(d) National Overseas Scholarship Scheme :

The Central Sector Scheme of National Overseas Scholarship is to facilitate the low income students belonging to the Scheduled Castes, Denotified Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes, Landless Agricultural Labourers and Traditional Artisans category to obtain higher education viz., Master degree or Ph.D courses by studying abroad thereby improving their economic and social status. In each Selection Year, 125 fresh awards will be given under the Scheme. 30% of the awards for each year shall be earmarked for women candidates.

5.3 A statement showing the Outlays and Actual Expenditure during the last three years of Department under various Schemes of SHREYAS for SCs is as follows:-

(Rs. in crore)

	2020-21			2021-22			2022-23			2023-24
	BE	RE	AE	BE	RE	AE	BE	RE	AE	BE
1 National Fellowship for SCs	300.00	125.00	119.00	300.00	125.00	122.44	173.00	159.00	85.00	163.00
2 Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs	30.00	30.00	11.97	50.00	30.00	14.98	47.00	27.00	13.03	47.00
3 Top Class Education for SCs	40.00	50.00	52.88	70.00	70.00	84.72	108.00	108.00	7.44	111.00
4 National Overseas Scholarship for SCs	20.00	30.00	33.09	30.00	35.00	49.07	36.00	50.00	23.67	50.00
Total: Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for SCs	390.00	235.00	216.93	450.00	260.00	271.21	364.00	344.00	129.14	371.00

5.4 With regard to number of students benefitted under each of these Schemes since their inception, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“The scheme of Top Class (SC) came into effect in 2007. The scheme of Free Coaching for SCs was started during 6 th Five Year Plan. In 2001, a combined scheme for providing coaching to SCs, OBCs and minorities was introduced. Thereafter, in April 2007, after creation of separate Ministry for handling matters relating to minorities, minority component was removed from the ambit of the scheme. After that, the scheme was revised time to time.

(i) Year-wise details of Expenditure and number of students benefitted since 2007 under the Scheme of Top Class for SC Students:-

Financial Year	Expenditure (Rs. in crore)	No. of beneficiaries
2007-08	2.17	195
2008-09	4.95	378
2009-10	8.26	541
2010-11	14.15	1036
2011-12	14.82	1259
2012-13	16.70	1306
2013-14	24.18	1574
2014-15	19.37	1568
2015-16	29.77	1911
2016-17	28.50	2033
2017-18	33.94	1883
2018-19	25.48	1385
2019-20	39.70	1375
2020-21	52.00	3118
2021-22	84.72	4544
2022-23 (as on 31.12.2022)	7.44	365

(ii) Year-wise details of Expenditure and number of students benefitted since 2007 under the Scheme of Free Coaching for SC and OBC Students:-

Financial Year	Expenditure (₹ in crore)	No. of the beneficiaries
2007-08	3.92	4860
2008-09	3.99	3403
2009-10	2.79	3013
2010-11	9.43	9347
2011-12	6.96	7359
2012-13	5.38	5765
2013-14	8.95	4400
2014-15	8.14	6126

2015-16	6.83	4300
2016-17	1.50	250
2017-18	19.84	2247
2018-19	14.88	1296
2019-20	13.26	1345
2020-21	11.96	2112
2021-22	14.98	1761
2022-23 (as on 10.10.2022)	13.03	354

(iii) The schemes of NOS started in year 1953-54 and data regarding benefitted students under NOS since 2014-15 may be seen below:-

Year	Total No. of Scholarships	Candidates Selected
2014-15	100	59
2015-16	100	50
2016-17	100	108*
2017-18	100	183*
2018-19	100	100
2019-20	100	100
2020-21	100	100
2021-22	125	125
2022-23	125	125

* Vacant Slots of previous years were filled.

(iv) National Fellowship scheme for Scheduled Caste Students was introduced during the financial year 2005-06. The number of fellowships awarded under NFSC since 2014-15 are as follows:-

Year	Fellowships awarded
	Total
2014-15	2000
2015-16	2000
2016-17	2000
2017-18	2000
2018-19	2315
2019-20	2366*
2020-21	4841*(merged cycle)
2021-22	1932*(merged cycle)
2022-23	1612*(merged cycle Dec 2021 & June 2022)

*Vacant slots of previous years were carried over.

Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Schemes (SHREYAS) for OBC & Others.

5.5 The Scheme has been proposed to implement during the 2021-22 to 2025-26 by placing two ongoing Central Sector Schemes for OBC and others namely- (i) National Fellowship for OBC (ii) Dr. Ambedkar Central Sector Scheme of Interest Subsidy on Educational Loans for Overseas Studies for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Economically Backward Classes (EBCs). The salient features of these Schemes are:-

(a) National Fellowship for OBC Students:

The Scheme is designed to provide a total number of 1000 Junior Research Fellowships per year to undertake advanced studies and research leading to M.Phil. /Ph.D. Degrees, who have qualified in the following tests:-

- i) National Eligibility Test) – Junior Research Fellowship (NET-JRF) of UGC (for Humanities/Social Sciences) or
- ii) UGC-Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (UGC-CSIR) NET-JRF Joint Test (for Sciences)

The scheme covers all universities/institutions recognized by the University Grants Commission (UGC) and are implemented by the UGC itself on the pattern of the scheme of UGC Fellowships being awarded to research students pursuing M.Phil. and Ph.D.

(b) Dr. Ambedkar Scheme of Interest Subsidy on Educational Loans for Overseas Studies for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Economically Backward Classes (EBCs):

This is a Central Sector Scheme to provide interest subsidy to the student belonging to the OBCs and EBCs on the interest payable for the period of moratorium for the Education Loans for overseas studies to pursue approved courses of studies abroad at Masters, M.Phil. and Ph.D. level. Under the Scheme 50% of the total financial assistance is reserved for women candidates.

5.6 When asked about the performance of the Schemes under SHREYAS for OBC & Others, the Department submitted the following details:-

National Fellowship for OBC Candidates					
					Amount in Crores
	Year	BE	RE	Funds released	Target beneficiaries
	2014-15	11.00	11.00	9.43	-
	2015-16	6.20	18.30	18.30	409
	2016-17	27.00	27.00	27.00	900
	2017-18	40.00	40.00	20.00	910
	2018-19	110.00	30.00	30.00	683
	2019-20	70.00	52.50	52.50	1193
	2020-21	120.00	45.00	33.00	1235
	2021-22	100.00	60.00	55.55	1338
	2022-23	53.00	-	45.84	1067* upto 31st August 2022

Dr. Ambedkar Central Sector Scheme of Interest Subsidy on Educational Loans for Overseas Studies for Students to OBCs/EBCs since its inception

Amount in Lakh				
Year	BE	RE	Funds released	Beneficiaries (Actual)
2014-15	600.00	100.00	89.94	173
2015-16	660.00	100.00	99.90	776
2016-17	200.00	300.00	290.15	1000
2017-18	430.00	430.00	1987.00	1821
2018-19	1000.00	1000.00	1000.00	3164
2019-20	1500.00	2609.00	2609.00	3297
2020-21	3500.00	3500.00	3261.00	4342
2021-22	3000.00	3000.00	2670.00	6564
2022-23	2700.00	-	2380.00	4708* Up to 30th June 2022

5.7 On being enquired about the assessment of the performance of these Schemes *vis-à-vis* the money invested on these Schemes and the action taken on the assessment, the Department submitted in their written reply that:-

“(i) Evaluation study of the Scheme of Top Class and Free Coaching was done by third party. As per the observations, this department took action on them and revised both the schemes accordingly. Under Top Class scheme, there was issue of delay in disbursing scholarship to the students due to non-receipt of required documents from the institute like Utilization certificate etc. Therefore, under the revised scheme, scholarship is not released to the institute and the total scholarship amount including fee & stipend is released directly into the bank account of the beneficiary through DBT mode. As a result of which the department has succeeded to release the scholarship to the students timely in 2021-22. Under Free Coaching Scheme, irregularities were noticed in implementation of mode 1 of the scheme through empanelled institute like charging of fee from students, students were not taking coaching in the institute. Therefore, under the revised scheme, empanelled Institutes have been discontinued and the scheme is implemented in a single mode where the students are directly selected by the department and they have the liberty to choose coaching institute of their own choice for coaching.

(ii) An evaluation study report of NOS was carried out by the Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi which submitted its report to the Department in March 2020. Impact evaluation of the NOS Scheme is also done by way of Google survey . From time to time the division conducts Google survey wherein responses from the students regarding various aspects of the scheme are sought and incorporated as required.

(iii) Monitoring mechanism adopted by the Ministry for monitoring of the NFSC scheme:

- i. Disbursal of the fellowship by the implementing agency is monitored every month in the Ministry.
- ii. Further, for release of funds provisional/audited UC is being provided by the implementing agency.

iii. A portal for National Fellowship Management and a Grievance redressal portal were launched by the Hon'ble MSJ&E on 6th Dec 2021, which will allow a student-centric administration of the fellowship and would substantially reduce the vexation paper work for timely release of the fellowship”.

5.8 On being asked about the reasons for the reduction in the funds sanctioned for 2022-23 and 2023-24 under National Fellowship for SCs and the steps taken to ensure that the students do not suffer as a result of reduction in allocation in 2023-24, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their reply that:-

“Yes, the budgetary allocation has been reduced. B.E for 2022-23 and 2023-24 is ₹173.00 crore and ₹177.00 crore respectively as against the B.E of ₹300.00 crore for 2021-22. The scheme was being implemented through UGC till September, 2022. However, from 01.10.2022 NSFDC has become the implementing agency for NFSC. No problems have been faced as of yet and the funds asked for by NSFDC for implementation of the scheme are being easily met from the allocated budgetary allocation”.

5.9 On being asked the reasons due to which funds could not be spent in various schemes, the representative of the Department submitted before the Committee during the deliberation that:-

“The major reason why we have not been able to spend in this scheme is that we are selecting students through the exams conducted by the UGC and CSIR. UGC exams were very-very badly delayed, and the result came to us only in January this year. So, we could not so far cover the new admissions. But now, we will be taking care of the new admissions also. We will be paying to them as and when the confirmation comes from the university that they have indeed joined.

On the CSIR side, examination results have not still come to us. Even the ongoing UGC NET exam is for December cycle. Results are likely to come out sometime in March only. Our expenditure has been less because we were not able to select new students as UGC did not conduct the exams in time.

5.10 On being enquired about the performance of Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs Scheme and reasons for low expenditure during 2020-21, 2021-22 including allocation of more funds for 2022-23, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

‘The performance of Coaching Schemes has not been as good as expected. Under Free Coaching Scheme, fund could not be utilized fully. Although the scheme of FCS was revised during 2020-21, the fund could not be utilized due to covid, 2020-21 became the zero year for the scheme as no coaching classes were conducted under the scheme during the year. During 2021-22, institutes were empanelled under the scheme however due to covid, they conducted online classes and for online classes 75% of fee was released to the institute under mode 1. Further, selection of the students under mode 2 in 2021-22 were cancelled due to administrative reasons. Thus, no amount was released to the students in 2021-22 under mode 2 of the scheme. During 2022-23, the scheme has been implemented in a single mode under which students are directly selected by the Department on the basis of their marks in 10th and 12th class depending on the course for which he/she has applied for coaching. Under this mode, credentials of students are to be verified

by NSP/States/UTs. Due to delay in verification and inability of some of the selected students depositing acceptable fee deposition proof, department could not release expected amount to the students”.

5.11 When asked about the reasons for low expenditure under Top Class Education for SCs in 2022-23, the representative of the Department submitted that:-

“Sir, on the Top Class Education for SCs, so far we have booked only ₹9.5 crore. The portal on which we get applications from the students was closed only yesterday. And, this is because there have been a lot of delays in admissions as well as in exams conducted by the institutions. So, the institutions themselves requested that since they have not been able to do the admissions, and have not been able to conduct the promotion exams, we may keep the portal open. The portal was closed yesterday.”

5.12 On being asked about the request received from any quarter for increase in the number of National Overseas scholarships and the income eligibility criteria for availing the Scholarship, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“Under Central Sector Scheme of National Overseas Scholarship (NOS) for Scheduled Caste etc., the number of seats have been increased from 100 to 125 from 2021-22. The eligibility criteria in respect of Total Family Income for availing NOS has been increased from 6 lakhs to 8 lakhs per annum”.

5.13 On being enquired whether the funds allocated under SHREYAS are sufficient to cater to the requirement of huge population of OBC and others and the criteria adopted to fix the allocation alongwith the results expected from the Scheme, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“As per the instructions of Ministry of Finance, all the schemes of the Department have to be appraised and recommended by EFC/SFC followed by approval of the competent authority. Accordingly, all the schemes of the Department have been appraised and recommended by EFC/SFC during 2020-21. The financial allocation for each of the scheme for period 2021-22 to 2025-26 has been recommended by EFC/SFC, taking into consideration the actual expenditure under the scheme during 2019-20 (subject to maximum limit of 5.5 times of actual expenditure of 2019-20). In view of the above, Ministry of Finance has allocated ₹12,847.02 crore for the year 2023-24 against the annual plan proposal of ₹13,877.25 crore. The Department will be able to undertake the envisaged works during the year 2023-24 through its internal re-allocation among the schemes and non-schemes component. In case, if any additional demand raised by the Department, the same may be sought at RE stage”.

5.14 On being asked about the allocation of funds for the sub-schemes falling under SHREYAS, and the advantage of bringing them all under it, the representative of the Department stated in the deliberation of the Committee that:-

“इसमें एक तरह से चार स्कीम्स का मिलन हमने किया है। अगर आपस में कभी किसी स्कीम में जरूरत हो, तो wherever there is a shortfall, we can meet it from the other Scheme. Hence, this has been introduced. इसके अंदर हमारी जो चार स्कीम्स हैं, नेशनल ओवरसीज स्कीम है, फ्री कोचिंग स्कीम है, टॉपक्लास स्कीम है और नेशनल फेलोशिप स्कीम है, इन चारों में हम डी बी टी के माध्यम से पैसा देते हैं। हमारी टॉप क्लास स्कीम मैरिट बेस्ड स्कीम है। इसमें शैक्षणिक भत्ता पहले साल के लिए 86 हजार

रुपये है, जिसमें हम लैपटॉप वगैरह का सपोर्ट देते हैं और दूसरे साल के लिए 41 हजार रुपये है। इन चारों स्कीम्स में मैं यह कहना चाहूंगा कि हमारी क्या उपलब्धि रही है और हमने कैसे स्कीम को अच्छा किया है। हमने एक तो कवरेज बढ़ाया है। जैसे नेशनल ओवरसीज स्कीम में 100 बच्चे थे, 100 से 125 का स्लॉट बढ़ाया। दूसरा हमने एक्सपीडियस डिसबर्सल के लिए, कि लाभार्थियों को प्रॉबलम न हो, पहले उनको बिल जमा करने पड़ते थे, लैपटॉप खरीदा उसके बिल दीजिए, जो संस्थाओं को पैसा देते थे, उनके यू सी आते थे। इन सारी प्रक्रियाओं को हमने बिल्कुल सिंपल कर दिया है। अब चूंकि हम डी बी टी के माध्यम से देते हैं तो जो हमारे जनरल फाइनेंशियल रूल्स हैं, उनके हिसाब से हमें यूसी की आवश्यकता नहीं है। इसके कारण से हमारा काफी प्रभाव पड़ा है। एक ईज़ हम लाये हैं कि उनको बहुत सारे वैरिफिकेशंस देनी पड़ती थीं। ये सारी चीजें हमने इसके अंदर दूर कर दी हैं। कुल-मिला कर जो हम डी बी टी लाए, यू सी बंद कर दिया, मल्टी वैरिफिकेशन बंद कर दिया और स्लॉट्स बढ़ा लिए, इस कारण से इस स्कीम में काफी अच्छा प्रयास बढ़ रहा है और यह स्कीम आगे और बच्चों को सहायता कर पाएगी।“

5.15 As regards the awareness generation of the Schemes among the students belonging to SC/OBC Communities, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“For increasing awareness about the scheme of Top Class, the Department conducts a radio programme viz. Savarti Jaayein Jeevan Ki Raahein. Besides this, communication alongwith the poster indicating salient features of the scheme is sent to all the notified institutes to spread awareness about the scheme among all their respective students. For smooth functioning of the scheme, the Department developed a separate portal (tcs.dosje.gov.in) for the scheme. The scheme is advertised through the portal by uploading scheme related notification like calling of proposal on the portal. For increasing awareness about Free Coaching scheme, it is advertised through local/national newspapers before selection of students. For implementation of the scheme, this Department developed a separate portal (coaching.dosje.gov.in) through which the scheme is advertised. Both the schemes are also advertised through social media e.g. Twitter, Facebook and Instagram etc.

5.16 To generate awareness regarding the NOS scheme, the Department has taken various progressive steps which are as follows:-

1. Twitter Campaigns
2. Newspaper Advertisements
3. Letters to Principal Secretaries to disseminate information regarding NOS scheme in their states.

The guidelines of NFSC are widely publicized and are also readily available on the Ministry's website and students can easily go through the guidelines and apply accordingly”.

5.17 When asked about the need for taking more steps for publicity of the schemes, the Secretary, informed the Committee during the deliberation that:-

“हमारे विभाग की बहुत स्कीम्स हैं, जिनमें हमें लगता है कि और प्रचार करने की जरूरत है ताकि हमारे पास सफिशिएंट नंबर हों। हमने जिस टारगेट ग्रुप के लिए बनाया है, उस पर ज्यादा जोर दे सकें।“

5.18 When asked about the performance of the Free Coaching for SCs scheme in terms of numbers of beneficiaries, the representative of the Department submitted that:-

“एप्लीकेशन्स तो बहुत आई लेकिन बहुत कम बच्चों ने ज्वाइन करके अपनी रसीद जमा की है। मैं मानती हूँ कि अगर हम अवेयरनेस बढ़ाएंगे तो ज्यादा एप्लीकेशन्स आएंगी। यह नया मोड है, इसलिए कम नंबर हैं। जैसे-जैसे डिमांड बढ़ती जाएगी फिर देखा जाएगा कि हम नंबर कैसे बढ़ाएं।”

5.19 On being asked about the difficulties being faced by the Department in implementation of these Schemes, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“National Overseas Scheme for SCs: The scheme has been running successfully for the past many years and has benefited many students. However, to further ensure smooth and fair implementation of scheme many changes as detailed below have been made recently:

a) Earlier police verification consumed much time but now it has been done away and only Self declaration regarding any Pending Case/Non-conviction of offense is obtained from the candidate.

b) Candidates having unconditional offer letter are being given priority *w.e.f* 2020-21. Thus, blocking of slots by students not having confirmed admissions is avoided.

c) The process of application has been made simpler by making it online. Portal for inviting of applications have been started with *w.e.f* 2019-20.

d) To ensure that the best students are selected and are afforded the best education, students are now selected on the basis of merit based on the QS international ranking of institutions in which they have secured admissions *w.e.f* 2020-21.

The NFSC Scheme has been running successfully since 2005-06. Also, the scheme guidelines are reviewed and revised every year so that maximum students are benefited”.

5.20 The Committee note that the Department have introduced an umbrella Scheme, Scholarships for the Higher Education for Young Achievers (SHREYAS) for SCs comprising of four Scholarships viz National Fellowship, Free Coaching for SC, Top Class Education Scheme and National Overseas Scheme with the objective that the shortfall under one Scheme can be met from other Scheme. The Committee also are happy that the number of seats has been increased from 100 to 125 from 2021-22 under scheme of National Overseas Scholarship (NOS) for Scheduled Caste and the total family income for availing the benefits of the scheme has also been increased from ₹6 lakh to ₹8 lakh per annum. With regard to performance of the Scheme, it is seen that the actual expenditure under the Scheme was ₹216.93 crore against budgetary Estimate of ₹390.00 crore in 2020-21, ₹271.21 crore against budgetary Estimate

of ₹450.00 crore in 2021-22 and ₹129.14 crore against budgetary Estimate of ₹364.00 crore in 2022-23. The Committee find that the expenditure and budgetary provisions in sub-schemes have remained fairly good except for National Fellowship for SCs, where the BE has been reduced at RE stage, during the last three years. All the sub-schemes are equally important for the educational empowerment of SC students pursuing higher education. Hence, in the opinion of the Committee, curtailment in the Budgetary Estimate at RE stage should not occur. The Committee are informed that the funds allocated under the Coaching Schemes could not be spent due to delay in verification, submission of fee deposition proof, etc. Similarly, the expenditure under Top Class education was less as there have been lot of delays in admissions and in conducting exams by the Institutions. While acknowledging that certain reasons are beyond the control of the Department, the Committee are of the opinion that periodic evaluation study, awareness campaign, etc. will bring out improvements for the effective implementation of the Scheme. The Committee firmly believe that sincere steps taken for the implementation of the Scheme would be fruitful and the students will not face problem in getting their dues. The Committee, therefore, desire that the review of the implementation of Scheme should be held at regular intervals to assess the shortcomings and take necessary measures to overcome the shortcomings. The Committee also desire that there is a need of extensive publicity of the Schemes for giving wide coverage so that large number of students participate and get benefits of the Scheme. The Committee would look forward and hope that the Budgetary Estimates for 2023-24 would be spent fully and none of the difficulties faced by the Department would become a major hurdle in implementing the Schemes to the best extent possible.

CHAPTER-VI

PRADHAN MANTRI ANUSUCHIT JAATI ABHYUDAY YOJANA (PM-AJAY)

Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM- AJAY) is a unified scheme by merging existing three Centrally Sponsored Schemes namely Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY), Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan (SCA to SCSP) and Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana (BJRCY) and is being implemented since 2021-22 with an aim to reduce poverty of the SC communities by generation of additional employment opportunities through Skill development, income generating schemes and other initiatives and to improve socio-economic developmental indicators by ensuring adequate infrastructure and requisite services in the SC dominated villages.

(i) Adarsh Gram (erstwhile scheme of Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana)

Vision of an 'Adarsh Gram'

6.2 An 'Adarsh Gram' is one wherein people have access to various basic services so that the minimum needs of all the sections of the society are fully met and disparities are reduced to a minimum. These villages would have all such infrastructure facilities and its residents will have access to all such basic services that are necessary for a dignified living, creating here by an environment in which everyone is enabled to utilize his/her potential to the fullest.

The selected villages are to be saturated with the identified Socio-Economic developmental indicators selected under various domains with a view to ensure the homogenous development of SC dominated villages. At present, there are 50 socio-economic development all monitorable indicators identified/selected under 10 domains. These 10 domains areas under:-

- i. Drinking water and Sanitation
- ii. Education
- iii. Health and Nutrition
- iv. Social Security
- v. Rural Road and Housing
- vi. Electricity and Clean Fuel
- vii. Agricultural Practices etc.
- viii. Financial Inclusion
- ix. Digitization
- x. Livelihood and Skill Development

6.3 Integrated development of selected villages would be achieved primarily through implementation of the existing schemes of the Central as well as State/UT Governments in a convergent manner, there by ensuring access to quality services as well as infrastructure development. The Gap-filling funding will be provided for carrying out infrastructure developmental requirements, which cannot be carried out through convergence. It is expected that in selected villages, convergence of at least three to four times of ' Gap-filling' funds from existing Central/State Schemes or with matching grants from State Governments is ensured.

6.4 Usually, a certain number of SC dominated Villages will be taken up for integrated development every year depending upon various factors e.g., willingness of State/UT Govts. to implement the Scheme, availability of funds, status of UCs, unspent balances etc. The funds released under the "Gap-filling" component in these selected villages, will be utilized within a period of Two (02) years from the date of release. However, the monitoring of convergence implementation would be done for another Three years to continue efforts for improving the socio-economic indicators. Thus, while funds released under PMAGY are to be utilized within Two (02) years period from the date of release, the Monitorable Indicators, however, will be reviewed for a total period of Five years.

Villages having >40% SC population and a total population \geq 500, as per the latest available Census data will be eligible for selection in descending order of their SC population. Once these villages are covered, such villages having less than or equal to 40% SC population, but overall a high number of persons belonging to SCs, shall also be taken up. The Ministry shall fix the selection criteria for such villages at the appropriate time. As per the former selection criteria, the number of villages already covered in different phases of the scheme is as under:-

Number of Villages selected and funds released under PMAGY			
Phase	Period of intervention	No. of villages selected	Fund released (Rs. In Cr.)
<i>Pilot Phase</i>	<i>2009-2014</i>	<i>1000</i>	<i>201.00</i>
<i>Phase-I</i>	<i>2014-2020</i>	<i>1500</i>	<i>346.85</i>
<i>Phase-II</i>	<i>2018-2019</i>	<i>4162</i>	<i>167.76</i>
	<i>2019-20</i>	<i>5418</i>	<i>717.84</i>
	<i>2020-21</i>	<i>3639</i>	<i>216.52</i>
	<i>2021-22</i>	<i>6044</i>	<i>996.51</i>

(*From 2021-22, there is a single Budget Head opened for the merged scheme of PM AJAY.)

6.5 Funding Pattern of the Scheme is as under:-

- (i) An amount of ₹21.00 lakh per village will be provided for new villages by the Central Government, out of which, ₹20.00 lakh would be for carrying out activities under the 'Gap-filling' component in selected villages. The balance amount of ₹1.00 lakh per village would be for administrative and other expenses i.e., technical resource support, training and capacity building, awareness generation, publicity etc. at Central, State, District and Village level, and for development and maintenance of an MIS at Central level, which will be distributed amongst Centre, State, District and Village in a ratio of 1:1:1:2.
- (ii) The State/UT Governments are expected to converge at least 3 to 4 times of Gap filling fund from other Centrally Sponsored Schemes and State Schemes, or even State Share, so as to saturate the villages with basic infrastructure.

- (iii) Further, for continuous development of the villages all ready covered under the earlier phases, there would a component of an additional round of funding of ₹10 lakh per village after the end of 5 years provided other conditions are fulfilled. Out of this, ₹9.50 lakh per village would be utilized for 'Gap-filling' component and ₹0.50 lakh per village will be distributed amongst the Centre, State, District and Village in ratio of 1:1:1:2 for Administrative and other expenses.

(ii) Grants-in-aid for District/State-level Projects for Socio-Economic betterment of SCs (erstwhile scheme of Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Caste Sub Plan)

6.6 The main objectives of this component of the scheme are:-

- i) To increase the income of the target population by way of comprehensive livelihood projects having components of income generating schemes, skill development and related infrastructure development thereby reducing the poverty among the target population and bring them above the poverty line.
- ii) Improve socio-economic developmental indicators by ensuring adequate infrastructure in the SC dominated villages.
- iii) Increase literacy and encourage enrolment of SCs in schools and higher educational institutions by providing adequate residential facilities in quality institutions, as well as residential schools where required, especially in the inspirational districts/SC dominated blocks and elsewhere in India.

(iii) Hostel Component (erstwhile scheme of Babu Jagjeevan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana)

6.7 The construction of hostels is one of the means to enable and encourage students belonging to Scheduled Castes (SC) to attain quality education. Such hostels are immensely beneficial to the students hailing from rural and remote areas of the country. While the component of construction of hostels for SC girls is in operation from the Third Five Year Plan (1961-66), the same for boys was started with effect from the year 1989-90. The objective of this component is containment and reduction of dropout rate of Scheduled Castes Students, especially for SC girls.

6.8 The Budgetary Estimate, Revised Estimate and Actual Expenditure for 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 including Budgetary Estimate for 2023-24 is as follows:-

(₹ In crore)

Program me/ Schemes	2020-21			2021-22			2022-23			2023-24
	BE	RE	AE	BE	RE	AE	BE	RE	AE (Till 31.12.2 2)	
Pradhan	-	-	-	1800.00	1800.	1820.32	1950.00	1062.39	29.34	2050.00

Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyudaya Yojana (PM AJAY)					00					
Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan	1200.00	300.00	387.00							
Pradhan Mantri Adharsh Gram Yojana	700.00	300.00	216.52							
Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana	30.00	30.00	56.40							

6.9 On being enquired about the study conducted prior to merging of these Schemes under PM-AJAY and the individual performance of the Schemes during each of the last five years, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment stated in their written reply that:-

“Prior to the merging of the erstwhile schemes under PM-AJAY, their evaluation was conducted by the NITI Aayog during the year 2020-21. Based on their recommendations, the erstwhile three schemes were merged for implementation as a unified scheme. Since the objectives as well as interventions of the erstwhile three schemes were similar in nature and in view of the facts that these erstwhile schemes were being implemented by a common implementing agency for the most parts, it is expected that they would perform better in terms of outcome of the scheme. Further, since there would be a unified allocation of funds for all these three components, any likely surrender of funds in any components of the scheme may be utilized to meet the demand of other components. The unified scheme of PM-AJAY is being implemented since 2021-22 only and since then the individual performances of these schemes, now being implemented as components of this scheme, are as under:

(a) Under 'Adarsh Gram' component, a total of 17,555 additional Scheduled Castes majority villages were selected.

(b) Under 'Grants-in-aid' components, proposals of the State Governments/UT Administrations have been approved to extend the benefits to 11,97,378 no. of prospective beneficiaries.

(c) Under 'Hostel' component, a total of 19 no. of hostels were sanctioned for construction thereby benefitting 2075 nos. of SC students. It is pertinent to mention here that being a demand driven scheme, the sanctioned figure do not reflect the performance of the scheme”.

6.10 On being asked about the reasons for downsizing the BE allocations at RE stage in 2022-23 and the reasons for low expenditure under the Scheme in 2022-23 alongwith the steps being taken by the Department for full utilization of funds at the end of the financial

year, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“In view of availability of large amount of unspent funds lying with the implementing agencies, it has not yet been possible to release funds to them during the current financial year. Therefore, in order to avoid surrendering of funds at the last moment, the allocation at RE stage has been downsized.

Low expenditure is mainly due to delay in adoption of new fund flow system through Single Nodal Agency(SNA) by the States/Union Territories, non-furnishing of Utilization Certificate and huge unspent balance lying with the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations with regards to funds already released”.

6.11 On being equired about the reasons due to which the allocation has not increased for PM-AJAY as it encompasses severals works and also to absorb the inflation, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their reply that:-

“While approving the scheme of PM-AJAY for implementation in the 15th Finance Commission Cycle, this has already been taken care of by this Department while allocating year-wise funds under the scheme. The allocated funds under the scheme are sufficient to meet the objectives of the scheme”.

6.12 The representative of the Department submitted during the deliberation of the Committee with regard to the financial allocations and the steps taken to make Scheme viable that:-

“इसके तहत हमारी तीन स्कीम्स हैं, प्रधानमंत्री आदर्श ग्राम योजना, एससी ए टू एससी एसपी सपोर्ट और बाबू जगजीवनराम छात्रावास योजना। इन स्कीम्स में जो हमने गांवों का चयन किया था, उसमें हमने प्रक्रिया में चेंज किया है और एससी पॉपुलेशन 50 से घटाकर 40 प्रतिशत पर ले आए हैं। इस निर्णय के कारण 11,500 गांवों का चयन हम कर पाए हैं। आदर्श ग्राम योजना बनाने की जो टोटल गांवों की संख्या वह 31 हजार हो गई है। अभी तक करीब 36 लाख लाभान्वित हुए हैं। इसके बाद एससी ए टू एससी एसपी में भी हम वित्तीय सहायता 10 हजार की देते थे, उसको बढ़ाकर 50 हजार किया गया है। वर्ष 2014-15 से करीब 30 लाख लाभार्थियों को करीब 64 सौ करोड़ रुपये स्वीकृत किए गए हैं। छात्रावास में 2014-15 से 171 छात्रावास बनाये गये हैं, जिनमें 43 लड़कों के लिए और 128 बालिकाओं के लिए बनाये गये हैं, जिसके कारण से 15,737 लाभार्थियों को मदद मिली है और 342 करोड़ हमने इसके लिए मंजूर किए हैं। इसमें बजट 1950 करोड़ रुपये था, जो अगले वित्त वर्ष के लिए बढ़कर 2,050 करोड़ रुपये हो गया है।”

6.13 The Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment further added with reference to the expenditure made under Adarsh Gram Yojana that:-

“इसमें गांव के इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर के लिए देते हैं, उसको हमने अक्टूबर से शुरू किया। लेकिन अभी भी उसमें एक मेजर पोर्शन स्टेट्स के पास पड़ा हुआ है जिसके लिए हम बार-बार कह रहे हैं। स्टेट्स ने हमें आश्वस्त भी किया है, हमारे पास नये प्लॉन भी एप्रूवल्स के लिए आ रहे हैं, हम वह भी एप्रूव कर रहे हैं, लेकिन यह कन्डीशन उसमें है। जब तक आप एस एन ई में पैसा खर्च नहीं करेंगे हम पैसा नहीं दे पाएंगे। या तो हमें पैसा वापस कीजिए, कई स्टेट्स ने प्रोमिस किया है कि यूटिलाइजेशन सर्टिफिकेट हमें 28 फरवरी से पहले दे देंगे। अगर उनका एस एन ए काउंट जीरो हो जाता है, पिछले सालों में जो पैसा रिलीज किया गया है और वह पेन्डिंग नहीं रहता है तो हम उनको नये साल का पैसा दे पाएंगे।”

6.14. The Committee are happy to find that the Actual Expenditure after merger of three Schemes namely, Adarsh Gram, Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub-Plan (SCA to SCSP) and Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana, into Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojna (PM-AJAY) has substantially increased to ₹1820.32 crore in 2021-22 in comparison to the Actual Expenditure of ₹659.92 crore incurred in 2020-21, when these three Schemes were operated independently. However, in 2022-23, the Actual Expenditure of ₹29.34 crore was incurred out of the total expenditure of ₹1950.00 crore due to delay in adoption of Single Nodal Agency (SNA) system by the State/Union Territories. The Committee feel that all the three components of the unified Scheme are important to empower the SC Community, hence there is an urgent need to set up SNAs in each State so that the funds are released to the States on time. With advanced IT tools available, the procedural formalities/changes should be implemented fast. Hence, the Committee, desire that the Department should develop a sound system to overcome the shortcomings, such as delay in submission of Utilisation Certificates by the States, unspent balance lying with the State Governments, etc. and alert them well in time because now the funds will not be released under the new provision unless the unutilised funds are surrendered by the States or Utilisation Certificates are provided by them for the release of next instalment out of the grant. The Committee also feel that the Department need to formulate an action plan and lay down the time bound targets under PM-AJAY to achieve the objective of the Scheme. The Committee would also like the Department to take suitable steps so that the budgetary allocation made for 2022-23 and 2023-24 are fruitfully utilised by the implementing agencies and the new provisions are successfully implemented. In order to cover larger number of SC villages under the Scheme, the Committee recommend that the population criteria fixed for selection of village under 'Adarsh Gram' should also be periodically reviewed as has been done by reducing 50% SC population criteria to 40%. The Committee would like to be informed of the action taken by the Department in this regard.

CHAPTER-VII

SCHEME OF RESIDENTIAL EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS IN HIGH SCHOOL IN TARGETED AREA (SRESHTHA) FOR SC

The “Assistance to VOs for SC Scheme” is being implemented since 1953 with the objective to enhance the reach of development Intervention of the Government and to fill the gap in service deficient SCs population dominant areas, in the sector of education through the efforts of Voluntary Organizations and other organizations and to provide environment for socio-economic upliftment and overall development of the Scheduled Castes (SCs) students.

7.2 “Assistance to VOs for SC” has been revised *w.e.f* 2022-23 as “Scheme for Residential Education for Students in High Schools in Targeted Areas (SHRESHTA)” to be operated under two Modes. A new component under Mode-I has been added to the Scheme, under which every year a specified number of meritorious SC students in the country will be selected for quality residential education in top-class residential High Schools through a nation-wide entrance test conducted by National Testing Agency (NTA). Under Mode-II, the financial support shall continue to the VOs/ NGOs for their ongoing projects of Residential/ Non-Residential Schools.

7.3 The Budgetary Estimate, Revised Estimate and Actual Expenditure for 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 including Budgetary Estimate for 2023-24 under the scheme is as follows:-

(₹ In crore)

2020-21				2021-22				2022-23				% of shortfall / Excess expenditure year wise			2023-24
BE	RE	AE	Shortfall	BE	RE	AE	Shortfall	B E	R E	AE	Shortfall	20-21	21-22	22-23	BE
100.00	125.00	55.81	69.19	200.00	63.21	38.04	25.17	89	89	31.61	57.39	55.35	39.82	64.48	104.65

7.4 On being enquired about the shortfall in 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 and the reasons for downsizing the allocation of funds at RE stage in 2021-22, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“The scheme has been revised *w.e.f* 2022-23 as Scheme for Residential Education for Students in High Schools in Targeted Areas (SHRESHTA). Due to Corona/Covid-19 pandemic funds were released only for fixed cost items in most of the cases under Mode-II of the Scheme during 2020-21 and 2021-22”.

7.5 On being asked about the number of students provided education under the Scheme during 2022-23 and the number of students are proposed to be taken every year under the Scheme and annual expenditure estimated for each student, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“2405 students were provided education under the Scheme during 2022-23. The funds under the scheme is given for the school fees and residential/hostel charges, subject to the maximum amount for 9th is ₹1,00,000, for 10th is ₹1,10,000, for 11th is ₹1,25,000 and for 12th is ₹1,35,000 annually. If the school charges more, it is to be paid by the students/parents/family. The other expenses like books, uniform etc. are to be paid by the students/parents/family”.

7.6 On being enquired that how SHRESTA would be better in comparison to the earlier Schemes *i.e.* assistance to VOs for SCs, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“The objective of SHRESHTA is to enhance the reach of development Intervention of the Government and to fill the gap in service deficient SCs dominant areas, in the sector of education through the efforts of grant-in-aid institutions (run by NGOs) and residential high schools offering high quality education and to provide environment for socio economic upliftment and overall development of the Scheduled Castes (SCs). The Scheme has been modified to provide easier access to the bright SC students in the best schools in the Country, thereby securing their future opportunities. Under the new component *i.e.* Mode-I, every year a specified number of meritorious SC students in the country are selected for quality residential education in top-class residential High Schools through a nation-wide entrance test”.

7.7 The new Scheme for Residential Education for students in High School in targetted area (SRESHTHA) for SC has replaced the earlier scheme of ‘Assistance to VOs for SC’ from 2022-23 onwards. As revised, the Scheme is being implemented in two modes. In Mode-I, a specified number of meritorious students in the Country will be selected for quality residential education in top class residential schools through a nation wide entrance test conducted by National Testing Agency. Under Mode-II, the financial support to Vos/ NGOs would continue for ongoing Projects of Residential / Non-Residential Schools. The Committee feel that the Budgetary Allocation of ₹104.65 crore made for 2023-24 Budgetary Allocation should increase in comparison to previous years as a new component to provide quality residential education in top class residential schools to specified number of students has been added in SRESTHA from 2022-23. The Committee note that the school fees and residential charges fixed at present are quite less, in comparison to actual fees and residential charges of top residential High Schools. The Committee would, therefore, like the Department to revise the charges proportionately and make them compatible with the prevailing fee structure of the top residential High Schools.

CHAPTER-VIII

NATIONAL ACTION FOR MECHANISED SANITATION ECO SYSTEM (NAMASTE)

The Government with an objective to provide dignity to Sewer and Septic Tank workers and to empower them socially and economically has formulated the “National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE)”. NAMASTE is to be implemented in all 4800+ ULBs of the country, during the next three years upto 2025-26 with an outlay of around ₹350.00 crore. It is a joint initiative of Department of Social Justice & Empowerment and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs to ensure safety and dignity of sanitation workers in urban India and enhancing their occupational safety through capacity building and improved access to PPT Kits, safety devices and machines. In addition, NAMASTE would bring about a behaviour change amongst citizens and other service seekers towards sanitation workers and enhance demand for safe sanitation services. Budgetary Estimate for 2023-24 is ₹97.41crore.

8.2 On being enquired about the number of Sewer and Septic Tank workers in the country and the modus operandi of National action for mechanized Ecosystem (NAMASTE), the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“At present there is no authentic data of number of sewer and septic tank workers in the country. NAMASTE envisages identification of sewer and septic tank workers and their profiling through Urban Local Bodies(ULBs). Thereafter, they would be extended benefits of occupational training, distribution of PPE Kit, Health Insurance and assistance for sanitation related projects etc”.

8.3 On being asked about the funds to be spent in each Urban Local Body (ULB, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“The scheme is to be implemented jointly with M/o Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) in all ULBs for extending benefits like occupational training, PPE kits, Safety Devices, Capital subsidy for Sanitation related project to Sewer Septic Tank Workers (SSWs). There is no fixed amount to be spent in each ULB as the size of the population in each ULB, extent of sewerage coverage and requirement of machines for mechanisation of cleaning of sewers and septic tanks varies from ULB to ULB”.

8.4 On being enquired about the number of ULBs that are proposed to be covered under the Scheme during the year 2023-24 and the criteria fixed for selecting ULBs for this year, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“All the ULBs in the country are proposed to be covered during the implementation of NAMASTE. The scheme envisages the appointment of Responsible Sanitary Authority (RSA) and establishment of Emergency Response Sanitation Unit (ERSU) in each district. Profiling of SSWs will be completed in the first year and health insurance will be provided thereafter. Other benefits like providing safety device, PPE kits and occupational training will be extended through ERSU. Therefore, the question of selection of ULBs does not arise. However, the ULBs responding first may be covered first.”

8.5 On being asked regarding steps being taken to ensure that the target fixed for 2023-24 is achieved and funds allocated for the purpose are sufficient to accomplish the task, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“Necessary tie-ups and coordination is being made with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) for implementation of NAMASTE so that the scheme could be successfully implemented in ULBs with their support. Matter has already been taken up with the Mission Directors, Swachh Bharat Mission for being in the state of readiness for implementation of NAMASTE in the ULBs under their jurisdiction. Funds for the year 2023-24 have been earmarked after careful estimation of the requirement of funds based on the proposed interventions”.

8.6 As regards to the provision to provide loan to the Sewer and Septic Tank workers to purchase machines to carry out their work, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“NAMASTE has a major component of providing concessional loan to sewers and septic tank workers for purchase of machines for cleaning of sewers and septic tanks. The details of the assistance and major terms and conditions to repay the loan are as follows:-

- (i) Concessional loan upto ₹15.00 lakh would be provided to individual sewer and septic tankers. In case of group, projects costing upto ₹50.00 lakh would be assisted.
- (ii) Loan would be provided at maximum interest rate of 6% p.a.
- (iii) The loan would be repaid in 7 years.
- (iv) The scale of admissible capital subsidy for sanitation related projects is as under:-

Project cost upto ₹5.00 lakh	50% of the project cost
Project cost above ₹5.00 lakh and upto ₹15.00 lakh	₹2.50 lakh + 25% of the remaining project cost above ₹ 5.00 lakh
For Group projects costing upto ₹50.00 lakh with each beneficiary project share maximum upto ₹ 10.00 lakh.	Same as above with maximum per member capital subsidy of ₹3.75 lakh and maximum group project subsidy of ₹18.75 lakh.

- (v) Concerned ULB would be pursued to provide work assurance to sanitation worker purchasing the machine”.

8.7 When asked about the compensation paid to families of the sewer workers who have died while cleaning the septic tanks, the representative of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment during the deliberation submitted that:-

“आज तक जो हमारे पास जो टोटल डेथ्स की संख्या रिपोर्टेड है, वह 1035 है। इसके बारे में मैंने पिछले साल स्टैंडिंग कमेटी में आपके माध्यम से बताया था कि जिनको कंपनसेशन नहीं दिया गया है, उसमें केवल 104 लोग थे। यह आंकड़ा अब घटकर के सिर्फ 74 रह गया है। इनमें से 836 लोगों को फुल कंपनसेशन दे दिया गया है। फुल कंपनसेशन का मतलब जो सुप्रीम कोर्ट का जजमेंट है, उसके अनुसार 10 लाख का पूरा मुआवजा दिया गया है। कुछ ऐसे लोग भी हैं, जिनकी संख्या 112 हैं, उनको पूरा 10 लाख नहीं दिया गया है। उनको 10 लाख से थोड़ा कम दिया गया है।“

8.8 On being asked the action taken against the contractors who are responsible for not providing safely gears and other equipments to the sanitation workers before entering the

septic tanks for cleaning, the representative of Department of Social Justice and Empowerment stated during the deliberation that:-

“इसमें हमारा दायित्व बनता था कि हम सब के अगेंस्ट एफ आई आर लॉज करवाएं। इसमें आज की तारीख में काफी बढ़ोतरी हुई है। हम जितने केसेज मॉनिटर करते हैं, उसके बारे में हम रेगुलरली प्रिंसिपल सेक्रेटरीज को लिखते हैं, उनके साथ मीटिंग करते हैं और हमसारे केसेज को एन सी एस के को भी फॉरवर्ड करते हैं। मैडम, मैं आपको बताना चाहूंगी कि 616 केसेज में एफ आई आर लॉज हो चुकी हैं। जो लेटली केसज हो रही हैं, उसमें हरेक केस में एम एस एक्ट के अंतर्गत एफ आई आर लॉज होर ही है। पहले कई बार एफ आई आर लॉज नहीं होती थी।”

8.9 As regard to the number of persons convicted/acquitted and steps taken for conviction of such persons, the Secretary informed the Committee during the deliberation that:-

“One conviction has been done so far, so we have to do a lot in this area. Secondly, what we are emphasizing as of now is this. One is giving out compensation. That is the immediate money that needs to be given to the families. That is first part. Second part is that our endeavour is to ensure that there is no such death. There is a zero tolerance on deaths in the case of sewer workers at the time of cleaning.”

8.10 She further added that:-

“उसके अंदर हमारा दो चीजों के ऊपर विशेष जोर रहेगा। खासकर, सोशल जस्टिस डिपार्टमेंट का, जिसको हम महुआ के साथ मिल कर करेंगे। उसमें पहला तो यह है कि जो प्रोटेक्टिव गियर और एस ओपीज होने चाहिए, वह हम बनाएंगे। उसके बाद, एक अवेयरनेस का भी लेवल है। मैं आपसे रिक्वेस्ट करूंगी, क्योंकि यह हम सब लोगों को एज ए सोसाइटी इम्पैक्ट करता है। इसमें हमें अवेयरनेस को ऐसे लेवल पर लेकर जाना है, जहां इंडयूजर और स्टेकहोल्डर्स हैं। उसमें इंडयूजर आता है, कॉन्ट्रैक्टर आता है और जो काम कर रहा है, वह भी आता है, उनको भी कम्प्लीट अवेयरनेस हो कि यदि हमें यह चीज क्लीन करवानी है तो it should be mechanised. Secondly, if it is not possible to do it through mechanised thing, the person who is going inside the pit is completely given protective gear so that there is no death. Our objective is a zero tolerance in this case, zero death basically. So, with these kinds of things, we will be coming out with a detailed programme on the awareness issues”.

8.11 On being enquired about the status of manual scavenging free Country as all the States in the country have informed the Supreme Court that they are manual scavenging free, the representative of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment informed during the deliberation of the Committee that:-

“All the States have given an affidavit in the Supreme Court stating that they are manual scavenging free. But last year, many civil society organisations had approached us. We had done a survey to identify these manual scavengers. In 2018, this survey was conducted along with the chairmanship of NITI Aayog where the Ministry of Social Justice was the nodal Ministry for this. We had State Government participation and we did the survey in 194 districts throughout the country. After the survey was complete, 58098 manual scavengers were identified to whom we had extended the one-time cash assistance as per the scheme guidelines which was available to us and helped rehabilitate some of them for skilling and for self-employment projects.

Thereafter, the civil society approached us again in 2020, and they gave us a list – I do not remember the exact number of districts- of 170 more such

districts in the country. Although, they were our partners in the earlier survey, they said that we still have manual scavenging in this country, and that there are some people who are still lifting human excreta with hand.”

8.12 She further added that:-

“To address this problem, we had conceptualised a new mobile app called the Swachhata App, under which anybody in the country could click the photograph of the sanitary latrine which is being cleaned, and send us this photo along with the details of the manual scavenger who was doing this particular activity. Over 6,000 such data was reported to us on this app. This data was verified not only by the district administration at the local level, the State Government, but also by our own PMU team. Almost 90 per cent of the sites were visited by our own PMU team, and no credible data was found. It means nobody was doing this particular activity, that is lifting human excreta with hand.

We still approached the Principal Secretaries of various State Governments asking them to look, even for one more last time, if there are some people who are still engaged in manual scavenging, they could still approach us for their rehabilitation. The Government of India is totally committed to rehabilitate them as per the Scheme guidelines. So, we gave them one more opportunity to again look back into the districts and report to us. So, we have undertaken the activity which we had started last year, and after that the app data was also ratified. We had written to all the State Governments, and all the District Magistrates to look back and if they still find that somebody is doing this work, they should report it to us”.

8.13 On being asked to specify the safety measures that would be taken for the sanitary workers under the Scheme and how would the liability of the worker in case of their death would be borne by the Department, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“As per the provisions of the “Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013” hazardous cleaning has been banned. The Rules framed thereunder and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) issued by MoHUA has prescribed the safety precaution to be taken while cleaning sewer septic tanks. MoHUA has also issued a ready reckoner for ULBs for ensuring safety of Sanitation workers. The local authorities are responsible for taking safety measures such as providing safety equipments, PPE Kits and observance of safety precautions before, during and after cleaning of sewers and septic tanks. However, NAMASTE also provides for distribution of PPE Kits and Safety Devices. As per the orders of the Hon’ble Supreme Court Judgement dated 27th March,2014, in case of death of a worker while cleaning sewer/septic tank, the State Governments /UTs must ensure payment of compensation of ₹10.00 lakh to the family of the victim”.

8.14 On being asked about the measures being taken by the Department for the behavioral changes of the society towards the sanitation workers, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“Strong IEC interventions are proposed to be undertaken during the implementation of the Scheme which will inter alia, target the citizens for bringing behavioural changes among them towards sanitation workers and for availing the services of cleaning of sewers and septic tanks through formal system only. IEC campaign

would be undertaken jointly by the ULBs and NSKFDC to spread awareness about the importance of safe and healthy cleaning practices and for availing services only through empanelled PSSO's/vendors. These outreach programmes would be citizen centric to educate household/individuals/RWAs/Mall owners/Hospitals/Hotels and contractors. Workshops on Prevention of hazardous Cleaning of Sewer Septic Tanks would be continued to be organized in the ULBs to educate stakeholders about the penal provisions under MS Act 2013 for engaging persons in hazardous manual cleaning of sewer septic tanks and for promotion of safe mechanized cleaning operations”.

8.15. The Committee note that a Scheme “National Action for Mechanised Sanitisation Ecosystem (NAMASTE)” has been formulated by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment to provide dignity to sewer and septic tanks workers. It is to be implemented jointly with Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs in 4800+ ULBs with the budgetary outlay of ₹350.00 crore during next three years upto 2025-26. In this regard, the Committee find that the Scheme has been formulated for implementation from 2023-24 after it is planned to collect basic data of number of Sewer and Septic Tank workers in the Country from ULBs and their profiling done. Also as per the norms under NAMASTE Responsible Sanitary Authencity and Emergency Response Sanitation Units are to be established in each district for the effective implementation of the Scheme. The Committee would therefore, like the Department to take necessary steps to obtain data of sewer and septic tank workers from States/ UTs ULBs and also pursue with the States/UTs continuously for establishing Response Sanitation Unit and Emergency Response Sanitation Units at the earliest so that the target fixed is achieved in the given time. The Committee also desire that a time limit needs to be fixed for completing the work of collection of data by each ULB as well as purchase of machines for sewer cleaning by these bodies. The Committee would like to be informed with regard to the measures taken in this regard.

8.16 Total number of 1035 sanitation workers have died while cleaning the sewer and septic tanks out of which 74 are yet to be paid compensation despite Supreme Court Judgement dated 27th March 2014 which directed that the State Governments /UTs must ensure payment of compensation of ₹10.00 lakh to the family of a victim in case of death of a worker while cleaning sewer/septic tank. The Committee are happy to note that for identification of

such workers, the Department have launched a new mobile app called 'Swachhata App' to verify the information about the existence of manual scavenging in the States/UTs. The Committee desire that the Department should ensure from all the State/UT Governments that their States/UTs are manual scavenging free. The Committee would also like the Department to ensure that the rules framed under Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 are strictly implemented by all the States/UTs. They would also urge the Department to take suitable measures so that the compensation to the victims' families of 74 deaths is paid immediately. The Committee feel that these norms with regard to penalty and conviction for engaging sewer and septic workers by the Contractors are strictly implemented so that the Contractors are immediately held and convicted for any violation of norms. The Committee would like to be informed of the action taken in this regard. They urge for a country wide mechanization of sewer cleaning work as early as possible.

CHAPTER-IX

PRADHAN MANTRI DAKSHTA AUR KUSHALTA SAMPANN HITGRAHI (PM DAKSH) FOR SCs, OBCs, AND OTHERS

Pradhan Mantri Dakshta aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi (PM DAKSH) Yojna is a National Action Plan for skilling of marginalized persons covering SCs, OBCs, EBCs, DNTs, Sanitation workers including waste pickers implemented through three corporations, NSFDC, NBCFDC and NSKFDC. Under the Yojana, NSFDC has been sponsoring SDTPs for Scheduled Castes persons in the age of 18-45 year NBCFDC is providing Long Term Training, Short Term Training, Up-skilling and Entrepreneurship Development Programme Training to its target group *i.e.* Other Backward Classes having annual family income below ₹3.00 lakh, Economically Backward Classes having annual family income below ₹1.00 lakh and De-notified, Nomadic without income criteria and Semi-Nomadic Tribes through empanelled Training Institutes. NSKFDC is providing short term and Up-skilling Training to its target group.

9.2 From the financial year 2021-22, the SDTPs under PM-DAKSH Yojana, are being implemented through a dedicated PM-DAKSH Portal. In order to ensure that genuine persons are selected for trainings, the candidates are required to register their candidature on PM-DAKSH Portal by filling-up the requisite information viz. Name, Father's Name, Aadhaar Number, Mobile Number, Caste, Date of Birth, Educational Qualification and uploading the copies of requisite documents in support of their credentials on the Portal. Their credentials are verified by the concerned Training Institutes while selecting them for a particular training programme. As soon as the portal is closed for receiving the applications, candidates who have opted for a particular training institution will give online psychometric test using the portal. All candidates who are found suitable based on the qualifications and the psychometric test would be communicated to the Training Institutes on the PM-DAKSH portal automatically

9.3 The Budgetary Estimate, Revised Estimate and Actual Expenditure alongwith the target fixed and achieved during 2021-22, 2022-23 and Budgetary Estimate for 2023-24 is as follows:-

	2021-22					2022-23					2023-24	
	BE	RE	AE	Target Fixed	Target Achieved	BE	RE	AE	Target Fixed	Target Achieved	BE	Target
SC	60.00	38.94	33.21	10000	8283	40.00	40.00	0.00	9000	7451	43.73	11000
OBC	40.00	40.54	35.02			44.00	44.00	0.00			48.74	

9.4 On being asked about the Organisations that have been entrusted the responsibility for skilling of persons, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment in their written reply stated that:-

“The list of training institutes will be finalized on year to year basis with the recommendation of the Committee consisting of the officials from the three Corporations (Implementing Agencies) and Department of Social Justice and Empowerment including IFD. The selection of training institutes (mostly Government training institutes and some Private training institutes but not NGOs) will be made based on following conditions:

- (i) Empanelled with Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) scheme of Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE);
- (ii) Past performance including placement record;
- (iii) Recommendations/Observations of PMU team in their report during surprise inspection”.

9.5 As regard to the fund allocation made annually for the NSFDC, NBCFDC and NSKFDC for skilling of persons under the Scheme since the inception of the scheme, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment in their written reply stated that:-

“As per approved SFC, funds have been allocated from the financial year 2020-21 to 2025-26 for skilling of persons under the scheme. The details of funds allocated, released by MoSJ&E to NSFDC, released by NSFDC to Training Institutes and Number of persons trained (based on commencement) for implementation of SDTPs under PM-DAKSH Yojana, are given as under:-

(₹ in crore)

Financial Year	Funds Allocated as per SFC	Funds Released by MoSJ&E to NSFDC	Performance	
			Funds released by NSFDC to TIs	Number of Persons Trained (based on commencement)
2020-21	17.61	17.61	11.86	8064
2021-22	38.94	33.21	22.52	16395
2022-23	40.07	0*	4.25*	9193

* NSFDC has released ₹4.25 crore from CNA Account out of the funds received for the financial years 2020-21 and 2021-22 under PM-DAKSH Yojana.

Further, as per the Common Norms issued by Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, from time to time, the funds towards implementation of SDTPs are released on milestone basis (in 3 instalments) i.e. 30% on Commencement, 40% on completion and 30% on placement of trainees.

NSKFDC: Funds are allocated to apex corporations in accordance to the grant in aid request submitted to MoSJE.

NBCFDC: As per approved SFC, funds have been allocated from the financial year 2020-21 to 2025-26 for skill of persons under the scheme. The details of funds allocated, released by MoSJ&E, released by NBCFDC to the Training Institutes and Number of persons trained (based on Commencement) for implementation of SDTPs under PM-DAKSH Yojana, are given as under:-

(₹ in crore)

Financial Year	Fund allocated as	Fund Received from (In crore)	Trainings Commencement completed (No. of Beneficiaries)	Funds Released by NBCFDC (in crore)
2020-21	20.28	20.28	15750	17.05
2021-22	32.77	28.42	18156	18.97
2022-23	33.82	0.00*	13375	3.61*

* NBCFDC has released ₹3.61 crore from CNA Account out of the funds received for the financial years 2020-21 and 2021-22 under PM-DAKSH Yojana.

9.6 On being asked about the reasons for less expenditure incurred during last three years and the measures taken to ensure that the funds allocated for 2023-24 are optimally utilized, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment in their written reply *inter-alia* stated that:-

“NSFDC: The reasons for less expenditure than allocation are given as under:-

(a) Due to outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown/restrictions imposed by the Central Government and Local Administration, the Training Institutes were closed during April to September, 2020. Therefore, the target for the financial year 2020-21 was reduced to 50%. Further, during the second wave of COVID-19, the training institutes were again closed during April-August, 2021, resulting delayed commencement, completion of training programmes, submission of claims by training institutes and release of funds.

(b) As per the Common Norms issued by Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, from time to time, the funds towards implementation of SDTPs are released on milestone basis (in 3 instalments) i.e. 30% on Commencement, 40% on completion and 30% on placement of trainees. In the whole process i.e. from mobilization/registration of candidates to release of 3rd instalment, particularly for longer duration of Training Programmes, takes around 1 to 1½ years.

(c) As per the guidelines issued vide OM No.1(18)PFMS/FCD/2021 dated 09.03.2022 by Ministry of Finance, Government of India, the entire unspent funds received earlier under PM-DAKSH Yojana during 2020-21 and 2021-22, was transferred to CNA Account in the month of September, 2022. Accordingly, the funds were released against the claims received from Training Institutes conducted SDTPs during the financial year 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 from the said CNA Account. Further, as per the clause-3(ix) of the above-said CNA guidelines, further funds was to be released only upon utilization of at-least 75% of the funds released earlier. As cumulative utilization of fund was below 75%, no fund was released by MoSJ&E to MoSJ&E for the financial year 2022-23. ₹4.25 crore has been released under NSFDC to the Training Institutes on account of implementation of SDTPs for the financial year 2022-23 from the CNA Account. Recently, NSFDC after submitting Utilization Certificate in GFR-12A of ₹38.63 crore as against ₹50.82 crore released by MoSJ&E during the financial years 2020-21 (₹17.61 crore) and 2021-22 (₹33.21 crore), constituting 76.01%, has requested M/o SJ&E for release of ₹16.00 crore for the financial year 2022-23 under PM-DAKSH Yojana.

NBCFDC

NBCFDC has released ₹3.61crore from CNA Account out of the funds received for the financial years 2020-021 and 2021-22 under PM-DAKSH Yojana. As per the guidelines issued vide OM No.1(18)PFMS/ FCD/2021 dated 09.03.2022 by Ministry of Finance, Government of India, the entire unspent funds received earlier under PM-DAKSH Yojana during 2020-21 and 2021-22, was transferred to CNA Account in the month of September, 2022. Accordingly, the funds were released

against the claims received from Training Institutes conducted SDTPs during the financial year 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 from the said CNA Account. Further, as per the clause-3(ix) of the above-said CNA guidelines, further funds was to be released only upon utilization of at-least 75% of the funds released earlier. As cumulative utilization of fund was below 75%, no fund was released by M/o SJ&E for the financial year 2022-23. However, ₹3.61crore has been released to the Training Institutes on account of implementation of SDTPs for the financial year 2022-23 from the CNA Account. Recently, NBCFDC after submitting Utilization Certificate of ₹36.81crore as against ₹48.70 crore released by MoSJ&E during the financial years 2020-21 (₹20.28 crore) and 2021-22 (₹28.42 crore), constituting more than 75%, has requested DoSJ&E for release of ₹14.13crore for the financial year 2022-23 under PM-DAKSH Yojana.

In order to ensure the funds allocated for the financial year 2023-24 are optimally utilized and the target set are achieved, the following measures are envisaged:-

- (a) Selection of Training Institutes by April, 2023.
- (b) Sanction of Training Programmes to the selected Training Institutes in one-go by 15th June, 2023.
- (c) Commencement of Training Programmes by Training Institutes in the month of July, 2023 for NSFD and August 2023 for NBCFDC.
- (d) Completion of SDTPs by Training Institutes by February 2024 for NSFD and financial year for NBCFDC.
- (e) The funds will be released, as per the Common Norms, from time to time.

NSKFDC

Training were impacted in FY 2020-21 due to COVID 19 pandemic. Further as payments are made based on achievement of milestones as per sanctions and post transfer of funds under CNA account the unspent amount was used to make payments for FY 2022-23. For Financial Year 2023-24, it is envisaged that majority of trainings would be completed within the Financial Year thus leading to increased spending during the said Financial Year.

9.7 On being asked about the satisfaction of the Department with regard to the target fixed for each year *vis-a-vis* the population of SC, OBC etc. in the country, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment in their written reply stated that:-

“NSFDC: The PM-DAKSH Yojana was launched by DoSJ&E during 2020-21 on pilot basis but the performance was affected due to COVID-19 pandemic. However, the SFC has approved the continuation of the Yojana for next five years from 2021-22 to 2025-26 with a budget of ₹450.25 crore to cover 2,71,000 persons, out of which the financial and physical targets for NSFDC (SC Component) are ₹212.58 crore for skilling of 1,05,600 persons, respectively.

As the SDTPs under PM-DAKSH Yojana are meant for interested Unskilled/Semiskilled persons between the age of 18-45 years from the target groups *viz* SC, OBC etc. in the country.

NBCFDC : As the SDTPs under PM-DAKSH Yojana are meant for interested Unskilled/Semiskilled persons between the age of 18-45 years from the target groups viz i SC, OBC etc. in the country”.

However, ₹3.61 crore has been released to the Training Institutes on account of implementation of SDTPs for the financial year 2022-23 from the CNA Account. Recently, NBCFDC after submitting Utilization Certificate of ₹36.81 crore as against ₹48.70 crore released by MoSJ&E during the financial years 2020-21 (₹20.28crore) and 2021-22 (₹28.42 crore), constituting more than 75%, has requested DoSJ&E for release of ₹14.13 crore for the financial year 2022-23 under PM-DAKSH Yojana”.

9.8 The Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi (PM-DAKSH) Yojna is a National Action Plan for skilling of marginalized persons covering SCs, OBCs, EBCs, DNTs, Sanitation Workers and waste pickers. The Scheme is implemented through three Corporations namely NSFDC, NBCFDC and NSKFDC. The Committee find that NSFDC has submitted Utilisation Certificates of ₹38.63 crore against ₹50.82 crore released during 2020-21 and 2021-22 and has requested to release ₹16.00 crore for the Financial Year 2022-23. Similarly, NBCFDC has requested release of ₹14.13 crore for the Financial Year 2022-23 as they have submitted Utilisation Certificates for ₹36.81 crore against ₹48.70 crore released in 2020-21 and 2021-22. In order to optimally utilise the Budgetary Allocation during 2023-24, the Committee would like the Department to develop a digital system where Utilisation Certificates for usage of 75% of the allocation of funds are received timely and the remaining grant is automatically transferred to the Implementing Agencies. The Committee would also urge that the SNA system under PFMS established by the Ministry of Finance for better monitoring of funds should be implemented without any further delay by all the States/UTs to avoid underutilisation of allocated funds. The Committee would also urge the Department that the funds requested for release by NSFDC and NBCFDC against the Utilisation Certificates submitted are released immediately so that the work of skilling SCs, OBCs, EBCs, DNTs, Sanitation workers are continued. The Committee would like to be informed of the status of initiatives taken by the Department.

CHAPTER-X

SENIOR CITIZENS

As per 2011 Census, total population of Senior Citizens (people aged 60 years and above) is 10.38 crore, of which population of males and females are 5.11 crore and 5.27 crore respectively. As per the Report of the Technical Group on Population Projections July, 2020 constituted by National Commission on Population, the projected population of 60 plus years in the country is expected to be 16.28 crore by 2026. Amongst various schemes of the Department Scheme of Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC) is one of the Schemes for the welfare of senior citizens. Under the Scheme grant in aid is provided to NGOs/ Voluntary Organisations for running and maintenance of projects like senior citizen homes (Old age Homes), continuous care homes, etc. The resident beneficiaries of such homes, who are indigent senior citizens, are provided free of cost facilities like shelter, nutrition, medicare, entertainment. Till date, the department have covered 296 districts of the country, out of 764. The Ministry aims to cover each district of the country with at least one senior citizen home under Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC). Grant in aid is provided to States/ UTs for State specific activities, ongoing mobile medicare units, ongoing physiotherapy clinics, etc. under State Action Plan for Senior Citizens (SAPSrC)

10.2 The Department launched Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY) on 1st APRIL 2017 to provide assistive devices free of cost to eligible Senior citizens belonging to the BPL category or senior citizen with monthly income less than ₹ 15,000. The objective of the RVY is to bring near normalcy in the lives of senior citizens. The scheme is implemented through their PSU Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation (ALIMCO). Till date 264 out of 764 districts of the country have been covered under the Scheme. The Ministry aims to cover each district of the country under the Scheme.

10.3 A National Helpline for Senior Citizens i.e, Elderline was launched on 1st October 2021 to provide free information, guidance, emotional support and field intervention in cases of abuse and rescues in order to improve the quality of life of senior citizens. National Institute of Social Defence (NISD) is the Central Nodal Agency (CNA) for Elderline. 31 States/ UTs have kept the Elderline operational.

10.4 The Department has launched a Portal SAGE to encourage youth to think about the problems of the elderly and come out with innovative ideas for the elderly care and promoting them into Start-ups by providing equity support. Start-ups should submit their innovative proposal through SAGE portal. Selected Start-up(s) are provided equity support of upto Rs.1 crore per project. Industrial Finance corporation of India (IFCI) Venture Capital Ltd. will hold the equity support given to the innovative start-ups projects, on behalf of the Ministry (not exceeding 49%). For selection of Start-ups the Empowered Expert Committee (EEC) of NISD evaluates the applications and the Project Approval Committee under the chairmanship of Secretary will consider the recommendations for final selection of the project.

10.5 The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (MWPSA) Act was enacted in December 2007 to ensure need based maintenance for parents and senior citizens and their welfare. The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (Amendment) Bill, 2019 was referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee. After receipt of the Report from the Standing Committee, the official Amendment to the Bill is under preparation.

10.6 The Budgetary Estimate for IPSrC (that included State Action Plan for Senior Citizens (SAPsCrC) for 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2023-24 was ₹200 crore, ₹300 crore and ₹ 150 crore respectively. The details for expenditure under IPSrC are as follows:-

Financial Year	IPSrC Gross Budgetary			
	BE	RE	Exp (in Cr)	Beneficiaries
2019-20	90	107.30	107.30	1,09,085
2020-21	130	130	130	136415
2021-22	300	150	95.55	139385
2022-23 (as on 18.01.2023)	150	150	33.14	33,975

10.7 On being asked about the role of State/UT Governments in implementing the various welfare measures meant for senior citizens, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply as under:-

“**IPSrC** – While selecting new projects under IPSrC the State / UT Government Recommendation is mandatory. The Ministry invited proposals for new projects in 104 gap districts during 2021-22 and in 103 gap districts during 2022-23.

For 2021-22 State recommendations are awaited from Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, and Telangana.

For 2022-23 proposals were invited from Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Jammu-Kashmir, Jharkhand, Kerala, Ladakh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal. State Recommendations are awaited from all the States/ UTs.

SAPsCrC – During 2019-20 grant in aid was provided to all the States/ UTs. However since then matters like Utilisation Certificates, SNA compliance are pending from several States.

Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY) – the assistive devices are provided to beneficiaries in camp mode. Camps are organized in districts with the cooperation of district administration. The States/ UTs are cooperating well in this scheme.

Elderline -The Elderline is being implemented through Cooperation of States/UTs and the private implementation agencies. So far the States/ UTs of Andaman-Nicobar, Lakshadweep, Haryana, West Bengal and Sikkim are yet to make the Elderline operational.

10.8 On being enquired about the evaluation of IPSrC, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“The Scheme of IPSrC was evaluated during 2019 by Indian Institute of Public Administration. A Gist of the Evaluation Report is as follows:-

- i. A total of 2310 senior citizens were interviewed in 93 senior citizens in 8 States.
- ii. Before joining the Senior Citizen homes of IPSrC:-

- a. 75% lived in own Houses
 - b. 1821 were from Rural areas, out of 2310
 - c. 75% were self employed, 16.8% unemployed
 - d. 67% earned between Rs. 15-20 thousand
 - e. 60% of inmates lived with children
 - f. 40% of them reported no interaction with family when they lived there
- iii. Recommendations of the Evaluation Study:-
- a. Enhancement of GIA to the Homes
 - b. RRTCs should conduct more capacity building programmes for senior citizens
 - c. Model Senior Citizen Homes should be identified and replicated
 - d. Frequent surprise visits by teams from Ministry
 - e. Scope of the Scheme should be broadened in other States
 - f. IPSrC should be continued”.

10.9 On being enquired about the details of Old Age Homes in the Country, the Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment informed the Committee during the course of evidence that:-

“सीनियर सिटिजन्स के लिए हमारी जो स्कीम चल रही है, उसमें एन जी ओज के थ्रू हम सीनियर सिटिजन्स होम्स चला रहे हैं। मेरा यह अनुमान है की सिर्फ हमारा विभाग ही नहीं, अन्य लोग भी अपने-अपने तरीकों से इस क्षेत्र में काम कर रहे हैं, लेकिन उनके आंकड़े हमारे पास नहीं हैं, क्योंकि वे हमसे ग्राण्ट नहीं लेते हैं। दूसरी बात यह है कि वृद्धावस्था में जिस तरीके की चीजों की जरूरत होती है, जरूरी नहीं है कि हर कोई वृद्ध आश्रम में आए, तभी उसी देखभाल हो सके। उनकी जिस तरह की जरूरतें होती हैं, उनको एड्रेस करने के लिए हमारी एक एल्डर लाइन चलती है, जिस का एक नम्बर है और यह लाइन एक साल से चल रही है। उसका फीडबैक काफी अच्छा आया है, लेकिन हम इसको आगे और सशक्त करना चाहते हैं। हमारे पास सीनियर सिटिजन्स वेलफेयर फण्ड है, उसके तहत हम कई स्कीम्स बना रहे हैं, जो अगले साल से लागू होंगी।“

10.10 See further added that:-

“हमारी भी यही कोशिश है कि हर डिस्ट्रिक्ट हेडक्वार्टर पर वृद्ध लोगों की देखभाल के लिए हम एक सीनियर सिटिजन्स होम खोलें।“

10.11 On being enquired about the reasons due to which Budget Estimates were reduced under Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana(AVYAY) at the revised stage from 2020-21 to 2022-23 and reasons for low utilization of funds during the last three financial years, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“The major factor is that the Ministry does not receive complete proposals, and then many NGOs do not provide deficient documents, even after seeking them multiple times. During the past 2 years grant in aid to a total of 139 projects have been cancelled on the basis of negative inspection reports from the Project Monitoring Unit of the Ministry, and after giving the NGOs due opportunity to explain themselves”.

10.12 On being asked about the roadmap drawn by the Department to cater to the population of Senior Citizens projected in the Report of Technical population Projection of National Commission on Population, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted in their written reply that:-

“The Scheme of IPSrC under which shelter, nutrition, medicare and entertainment are provided free of cost to indigent Senior Citizens living in Sr. Citizens homes. For this Schemes, we are in the process to cover all the districts of the country. Likewise, all the districts are to be covered under RVY. For providing a holistic welfare to the senior citizens of the country, the Ministry has introduced new measures, like Elderline, SAGE and SAPSrC. Third Party Evaluation of the Scheme of IPSrC shall be carried out in 2023-24. The term of reference shall include the changing scenario, to find out the changes required in this scheme”.

10.13 The Committee note that the population of 60 plus years in the country is likely to rise to 17.32 crore in 2026 from 10.38 crore in 2011 as per National Commission on Population. The Committee are happy to note that the Department proposes to cover each district of the country with at least one senior citizen home under State Action for Senior citizens and aims to cover each district of the country under the Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana. The Committee find that 296 districts have been covered under Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC). The Committee also find that the Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana launched on 1st April 2017 to provide assistive devices free of cost to eligible Senior citizens belonging to the BPL category or senior citizen with monthly income less than ₹15,000 have been able to cover 264 districts of the country. However, since no time lines have been drawn in this regard, they desire that phase-wise time line should be fixed to cover all the districts in the country. The Committee also find that the Budgetary Estimate of ₹300.00 crore for IPSrC in 2021-22 was reduced to ₹150.00 crore in 2022-23 and the Department could only spend ₹33.14 crore as the Department did not get complete proposals from the States/UTs. Hence they recommend that suitable measures should be taken by the Department so that the Budgetary allocation are utilized fruitfully and the number of Beneficiaries are enhanced. The Committee hope that the recommendations made by Indian Institute of Public Administration in their Evaluation Study of IPSsC conducted in 2019 must have been implemented and would have brought some improvement in implementation of Scheme and expect that the third Party evaluation study

proposed during 2023-24 would also bring out good suggestion to lay the roadmap for implementation of the Scheme in future.

10.14 The Committee note that as per surveys the number of elderly people is steadily increasing in our country, so, there is an urgent need to ensure that the elders remain happy, healthy, financially sound and physically active. In this connection, the Committee recall that they had examined the “Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens” Bill 2019 and presented a report thereon. The official amendment of the Bill is stated to be under preparation in the Ministry. The Committee hope that the same will be prepared soon and brought for legislation so that the maintenance of parents and senior citizens and their welfare gets a solid legal support. The Ministry is statedly taking several initiatives also, apart from implementing the Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana, AVYAY, Senior Citizens Welfare Fund, etc., one of which is SAGE, which is a portal based ‘Senior Care Ageing Growth Engine’ as a one-stop access of elderly care products and services by credible Start Ups. This portal, opened on 5th June, 2021, will invite Start Ups to be selected on the basis of innovative products and services across the sectors such as health, housing, care centres, food and wealth management, legal guidance as well as technological access linked to finances for elderly care. ₹1 crore is to be provided to such Start Ups. Appreciating this new initiative, the Committee have been informed that 12 Start Ups have been/are being supported through SAGE Portal, and desire to be apprised about the products and services developed/being developed by these Start Ups in the last two years. The Committee are happy to note that ‘Elderline’ i.e. National Helpline for senior citizens was launched on 1st October, 2021 to provide free information, guidance, emotional support, field intervention in cases of abuse and rescues in order to improve quality of life of senior citizens. They further note that 31 States/ UTs have kept the Elderline operational. The Committee acknowledge the intention of the Ministry to make programmes for elderly care a National movement involving youth and innovators and providing business opportunities to social enterprises, technological Start Ups, legal and financial services, infrastructure and managed-care systems as well as research and data driven

organizations for the same. The Committee feel a more robust elder care ecosystem can be created in India if such efforts gain momentum.

New Delhi
22nd March, 2023
1 Chaitra, 1945 (Saka)

SMT. RAMA DEVI
Chairperson
Standing Committee on Social Justice
and Empowerment

MINUTES OF THE SIXTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2022-23) (DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT) ON DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (2023-24) HELD ON THURSDAY, THE 16th FEBRUARY, 2023

The Committee met from 1150 hrs. to 1345 hrs. in Committee Room 'C', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SMT. RAMA DEVI - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Thomas Chazhikadan
3. Shri Chhatar Singh Darbar
4. Smt. Rangeeta Koli
5. Smt. Geeta Kora
6. Shri Akshaibar Lal

Rajya Sabha

7. Smt. Sumitra Balmik
8. Smt. Ramilaben Becharbhai Bara
9. Shri Abir Ranjan Biswas
10. Smt. Geeta *alias* Chandraprabha
11. Shri Narayan Koragappa
12. Shri Ramji
13. Shri Mukul Balkrishna Wasnik

SECRETARIAT

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------|---|----------------------|
| 1. | Smt. Anita Bhatt Panda | - | Additional Secretary |
| 2. | Shri Ved Prakash Nauriyal | - | Joint Secretary |
| 3. | Smt. Mamta Kemwal | - | Director |
| 4. | Shri Krishendra Kumar | - | Deputy Secretary |

WITNESSES

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EMPOWERMENT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. | Ms. Anjali Bhawra | Secretary |
| 2. | Shri Surendra Singh | Additional Secretary |
| 3. | Ms. Yogita Swaroop | Sr. Economic Advisor |
| 4. | Ms. Kalyani Chadha | Joint Secretary |
| 5. | Shri Ram Prasad Meena | Joint Secretary |
| 6. | Shri Sanjay Pandey | JS & FA |
| 7. | Ms. Radhika Chakravarthy | Joint Secretary |
| 8. | Ms. Indira Murthy | Joint Secretary |

2. Shri Thomas Chazhikadan, MP, Lok Sabha and Member of the Committee initiated the Sitting of the Committee convened to discuss 'Demands for Grants for 2023-24' of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment by welcoming the representatives of the Department as the Chairperson of the Committee had to attend the inaugural ceremony of Aadi Mahotsava. In his opening Remarks, he inquired about the allocation made under various Schemes during the year 2022-23 and the achievements under each of the Scheme. He also drew attention of the representatives of the Department to Direction 55(1) of the 'Directions by the Speaker of Lok Sabha' about maintaining confidentiality of the proceedings of the Committee until the report is presented to the House.

3. Thereafter, the representatives of the Department introduced themselves. Before deliberating on the Subject, the Secretary briefed the Committee on the performance of the Department during 2022-23 in terms of utilisation of funds and realisation of the targets fixed for various Schemes implemented by them through a Power Point Presentation.

4. The Chairperson thereafter chaired the Sitting of the Committee.

5. The Committee *inter-alia* deliberated on the following issues:-

- (i) Performance of the Schemes alongwith the challenges faced and decisions taken for course correction;
- (ii) Under-utilisation of budgetary allocation during the past three years and the roadmap for 2023-24 to avoid under-utilisation;
- (iii) Monitoring of schemes and Implementing Agencies;

- (iv) Timely disbursement of Scholarship amounts to students under various schemes;
- (v) Disbursement of monetary benefits to beneficiaries through the Direct Bank Transfer system.
- (vi) Elimination of the inhuman practice of manual scavenging, punitive actions against contractors employing manual scavengers and steps for Mechanization of sewer and septic tanks cleaning;
- (vii) Implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Abhyuday Yojana (PM AJAY) Scheme;
- (viii) Support for children who have lost both parents during the Covid-19 Pandemic; and
- (ix) Status of Old Age Homes and their maintenance and publicity.

6. The Chairperson, then thanked the Secretary and other representatives of the Department for providing valuable information on the subject and also asked the Secretary to furnish written replies on the issues that remained unanswered during the sitting.

A copy of the verbatim proceedings of the sitting has been kept on record.

The witnesses then withdrew.

(The Committee then adjourned)

**MINUTES OF THE ELEVENTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2022-23) HELD ON WEDNESDAY,
22ND MARCH, 2023**

The Committee met from 1030 hrs. to 1100 hrs. in Chairperson's Chamber, Room No. 113, PHA Extension Building, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SMT. RAMA DEVI - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Smt. Sangeeta Azad
3. Smt. Pramila Bisoyi
4. Shri Abdul Khaleque
5. Shri Akshaibar Lal
6. Smt. Supriya Sadanand Sule

RAJYA SABHA

7. Smt. Sumitra Balmik
8. Smt. Ramilaben Becharbhai Bara
9. Smt. Geeta alias Chandraprabha
10. Shri N.Chandrasegharan
11. Smt. Mamata Mohanta
12. Shri Ramji
13. Shri Mukul Balkrishna Wasnik

SECRETARIAT

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Smt. Anita Bhatt Panda | Additional Secretary |
| 2. Shri Ved Prakash Nauriyal | Joint Secretary |
| 3. Smt. Mamta Kemwal | Director |
| 4. Shri Krishendra Kumar | Deputy Secretary |

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee.

3. The Committee then took up for consideration the following draft Reports of the Committee:-

(i) xx xx xx xx

(ii) 46th Report on 'Demands for Grants (2023-24)' of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment); and

(iii) xx xx xx xx

4. The Chairperson then requested the Members to give their suggestions, if any, on the draft Reports. The Reports were adopted by the Committee without any modifications. The Committee then authorized the Chairperson to finalize the draft Reports and present the same to both Houses of Parliament on 23.3.2023.

(The Committee then adjourned)

xx Does not pertain to this Report

ANNEXURE

STATEMENT OF OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Sl.No	Para No.	Observations/ Recommendations
1.	2.18	<p>The mandate of the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment is vital for the empowerment of socially, educationally and economically marginalized sections of the Society including Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes, Senior Citizens, Victims of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, Transgender Persons, Beggars, Denotified and Nomadic Tribes (DNTs), Economically Backward Classes (EBCs) and Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) to enable them to lead productive, safe and dignified lives, with all their basic needs being fulfilled, and where equal opportunities are ensured for their growth and development. These objectives are fulfilled through various Programmes/Schemes of the Department for (i) Educational, economic and social empowerment of Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs); (ii) Support to Senior Citizens by way of their Maintenance, Welfare, Security, Health Care and Productive and independent living and; (iii) Rehabilitation, through 'whole person recovery' approach, of victims of substance abuse, for which the Department gets allocations each year, after due consideration by EFC/SFC.</p> <p>The Committee, during evidence, was apprised that under 'Mission Karmayogi', the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment is in the forefront of the capacity building programme, as compared to other Government of India Departments. As the Officers/staff of the Department</p>

of Social Justice & Empowerment are well trained with better capacity, it would, the Committee hope, result in further rise in their overall performance.

Coming to the budgetary performance of previous years, the Committee note that the Budgetary Estimate of ₹10,103.57 crore in 2020-21 and ₹10,517.62 crore in 2021-22 were revised as ₹ 8207.56 croe for 2020-21 and ₹ 10,180.00 crore for 2021-22, out of which, the Department was able to spend ₹8,236.84 crore and ₹7,459.99 crore in 2020-21 and 2021-22 respectively. The Department has furnished the reasons for low utilisation of funds to the Committee, which, inter-alia, include cancellation of GIA to Centres found non-functional, late receipt of approval for continuation of DDAC Scheme and delay in furnishing of Utilisation Certificates and proposals by States/UTs. The Committee have no doubt that the Department is taking suitable steps to resolve these issues and constraints while preparing their Annual demand/proposal and taking necessary steps to utilise the funds, as any under-utilisation of funds adversely affects the Schemes. The Committee also find that certain initiatives/measures taken for effective implementation of various schemes have been taken such as Single Nodal Agency (SNA) system for Centrally Sponsored Schemes, first release of State share in Scholarship Schemes, Inspection of NGOs before release of GIA, etc. will prove to be helpful in further effective implementation of various schemes in future. The Committee, at the same time, feel that the new system of States releasing their share first may slow the pace in those cases where there are States/UTs, which may not be in a position to release their share timely due to a variety of

		<p>reasons. Nonetheless, the Committee, while awaiting the positive outcomes of some of the initiatives, would also like to urge the Department to fully utilise the Budgetary Allocation for 2022-23 and 2023-24 so that the targetted sections of the society are not deprived of the benefits of the Schemes.</p>
2.	2.19	<p>The Committee note the successive increase in the Budgetary Estimate of the Department during the last few years. However, the percentage increase of 7.75% in Budgetary Estimate for present Financial Year 2023-24 is rather less in comparison to 13.36% increase last year i.e. in 2022-23. The merger of some schemes and modifications in certain Schemes could be one of the reasons as 37 Schemes operational in 2021-22 have been reduced to 19 Schemes in 2023-24 resulting in reduction in the budgetary estimates. The Committee are of the opinion that with a wider range of potential beneficiaries, the percentage increase in Budgetary Estimate need to increase and that it should be independent of actual expenditure incurred in previous year as the mandate of this department is completely different from other departments and is absolutely vital for accelerating the overall progress of the society. The Committee hope that the initiatives taken by the Department such as setting up of more ATFS, selection of more NGOs for DDAC, expansion of Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan, etc. would be implemented effectively so that Budgetary Estimate for 2023-24 are utilised fully and lead to higher percentage increase in Budgetary Estimate in the future.</p>

3.	3.13	<p>The Committee find that the Budgetary Allocation under Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC & Others has been reduced to ₹500.00 crore for 2022-23 and 2023-24, whereas it was ₹725.00 crore in 2021-22 i.e. in the year of merger of two Schemes namely Pre-Matric Scholarship Schemes for SC and Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for the Children of parents/ guardians engaged in unclean and hazardous occupation. However, it is still 18 crore more than the amount of ₹ 482 crore proposed by the Department for 2023-24. As regards the utilization of funds during 2020-21, the Committee note from the deposition of the Department that it was the first year of implementation of merged Scheme and the Scholarship Portals of many States/UTs were not ready. The Committee hope that with States/UTs making special efforts to identify the poorest eligible households from various sources and enrolling students under the scheme in Mission mode, there would be higher demand under the Scheme. The Committee also urge that the findings of an Evaluation Study on the Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for children or parents/guardians engaged in unclean and hazardous occupation, on matters, such as processing of applications, definition of terms, etc. <u>inter-alia</u> noted by the Plan Division of the Department, would be addressed urgently. The Committee desire that concerted efforts should be made by the Department with the Ministry of Finance for revision of the academic allowance in the interest of the beneficiaries. The Committee would like to be apprised of the action taken by the Department in this regard.</p> <p>In so far as publicizing these scholarship schemes are concerned, the Committee note efforts with regard to</p>
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		<p>the Portal and through print media. In this connection, the Committee further suggest that for better coverage of beneficiaries, the publicity should be undertaken in unaided-private schools too since some percentage of students from marginalized sections study there, as mandated by the Right to Education Act. The Committee recommend measures like setting up of help desks in schools, reaching out to Management Committees of schools, announcement of scholarship schemes during Morning Assemblies etc., which, they are sanguine, will result in better response from the potential beneficiaries of the scheme.</p>
4.	4.8	<p>The Committee note that under Post-Matric Scholarship for SC students the Department have been able to spend ₹2,500.22 crore upto 31st December, 2022 out of the Budgetary Allocation of ₹5,660.00 crore in 2022-23, as several States have not been releasing their share first in compliance of the revised procedure that the Central share of 60% will be released only after 40% State share is released. The Committee feel that many of the State Governments are not forthcoming in bearing the expenditure. While there is no doubt about the intentions of the Department to be financially prudent in administering the scheme, the Committee are worried about the students from the community, as their studies may suffer for want of financial assistance. The Committee are, therefore, of the view that the Department should take up this issue at appropriate level. The Committee would appreciate if Budgetary Estimates for 2023-24 are utilized fully.</p>

5.	5.20	<p>The Committee note that the Department have introduced an umbrella Scheme, Scholarships for the Higher Education for Young Achievers (SHREYAS) for SCs comprising of four Scholarships viz National Fellowship, Free Coaching for SC, Top Class Education Scheme and National Overseas Scheme with the objective that the shortfall under one Scheme can be met from other Scheme. The Committee also are happy that the number of seats has been increased from 100 to 125 from 2021-22 under scheme of National Overseas Scholarship (NOS) for Scheduled Caste and the total family income for availing the benefits of the scheme has also been increased from ₹6 lakh to ₹8 lakh per annum. With regard to performance of the Scheme, it is seen that the actual expenditure under the Scheme was ₹216.93 crore against budgetary Estimate of ₹390.00 crore in 2020-21, ₹271.21 crore against budgetary Estimate of ₹450.00 crore in 2021-22 and ₹129.14 crore against budgetary Estimate of ₹364.00 crore in 2022-23. The Committee find that the expenditure and budgetary provisions in sub-schemes have remained fairly good except for National Fellowship for SCs, where the BE has been reduced at RE stage, during the last three years. All the sub-schemes are equally important for the educational empowerment of SC students pursuing higher education. Hence, in the opinion of the Committee, curtailment in the Budgetary Estimate at RE stage should not occur. The Committee are informed that the funds allocated under the Coaching Schemes could not be spent due to delay in verification, submission of fee deposition proof, etc. Similarly, the expenditure under Top Class education was less as there have been lot of delays in admissions and in conducting exams by the Institutions.</p>
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		<p>While acknowledging that certain reasons are beyond the control of the Department, the Committee are of the opinion that periodic evaluation study, awareness campaign, etc. will bring out improvements for the effective implementation of the Scheme. The Committee firmly believe that sincere steps taken for the implementation of the Scheme would be fruitful and the students will not face problem in getting their dues. The Committee, therefore, desire that the review of the implementation of Scheme should be held at regular intervals to assess the shortcomings and take necessary measures to overcome the shortcomings. The Committee also desire that there is a need of extensive publicity of the Schemes for giving wide coverage so that large number of students participate and get benefits of the Scheme. The Committee would look forward and hope that the Budgetary Estimates for 2023-24 would be spent fully and none of the difficulties faced by the Department would become a major hurdle in implementing the Schemes to the best extent possible.</p>
6.	6.14	<p>The Committee are happy to find that the Actual Expenditure after merger of three Schemes namely, Adarsh Gram, Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub-Plan (SCA to SCSP) and Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana, into Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojna (PM-AJAY) has substantially increased to ₹1820.32 crore in 2021-22 in comparison to the Actual Expenditure of ₹659.92 crore incurred in 2020-21, when these three Schemes were operated independently. However, in 2022-23, the Actual Expenditure of ₹29.34 crore was incurred out of the total expenditure of ₹1950.00 crore due to delay in</p>

		<p>adoption of Single Nodal Agency (SNA) system by the State/Union Territories. The Committee feel that all the three components of the unified Scheme are important to empower the SC Community, hence there is an urgent need to set up SNAs in each State so that the funds are released to the States on time. With advanced IT tools available, the procedural formalities/changes should be implemented fast. Hence, the Committee, desire that the Department should develop a sound system to overcome the shortcomings, such as delay in submission of Utilisation Certificates by the States, unspent balance lying with the State Governments, etc. and alert them well in time because now the funds will not be released under the new provision unless the unutilised funds are surrendered by the States or Utilisation Certificates are provided by them for the release of next instalment out of the grant. The Committee also feel that the Department need to formulate an action plan and lay down the time bound targets under PM-AJAY to achieve the objective of the Scheme. The Committee would also like the Department to take suitable steps so that the budgetary allocation made for 2022-23 and 2023-24 are fruitfully utilised by the implementing agencies and the new provisions are successfully implemented. In order to cover larger number of SC villages under the Scheme, the Committee recommend that the population criteria fixed for selection of village under 'Adarsh Gram' should also be periodically reviewed as has been done by reducing 50% SC population criteria to 40%. The Committee would like to be informed of the action taken by the Department in this regard.</p>
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7.	7.7	<p>The new Scheme for Residential Education for students in High School in targetted area (SRESHTHA) for SC has replaced the earlier scheme of 'Assistance to VOs for SC' from 2022-23 onwards. As revised, the Scheme is being implemented in two modes. In Mode-I, a specified number of meritorious students in the Country will be selected for quality residential education in top class residential schools through a nation wide entrance test conducted by National Testing Agency. Under Mode-II, the financial support to Vos/ NGOs would continue for ongoing Projects of Residential / Non-Residential Schools. The Committee feel that the Budgetary Allocation of ₹104.65 crore made for 2023-24 Budgetary Allocation should increase in comparison to previous years as a new component to provide quality residential education in top class residential schools to specified number of students has been added in SRESTHA from 2022-23. The Committee note that the school fees and residential charges fixed at present are quite less, in comparison to actual fees and residential charges of top residential High Schools. The Committee would, therefore, like the Department to revise the charges proportionately and make them compatible with the prevailing fee structure of the top residential High Schools.</p>
8.	8.15	<p>The Committee note that a Scheme "National Action for Mechanised Sanitisation Ecosystem (NAMASTE)" has been formulated by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment to provide dignity to sewer and septic tanks workers. It is to be implemented jointly with Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs in 4800+ ULBs with the budgetary outlay of ₹350.00 crore during next three years</p>

		<p>upto 2025-26. In this regard, the Committee find that the Scheme has been formulated for implementation from 2023-24 after it is planned to collect basic data of number of Sewer and Septic Tank workers in the Country from ULBs and their profiling done. Also as per the norms under NAMASTE Responsible Sanitary Authencity and Emergency Response Sanitation Units are to be established in each district for the effective implementation of the Scheme. The Committee would therefore, like the Department to take necessary steps to obtain data of sewer and septic tank workers from States/ UTs ULBs and also pursue with the States/UTs continuously for establishing Response Sanitation Unit and Emergency Response Sanitation Units at the earliest so that the target fixed is achieved in the given time. The Committee also desire that a time limit needs to be fixed for completing the work of collection of data by each ULB as well as purchase of machines for sewer cleaning by these bodies. The Committee would like to be informed with regard to the measures taken in this regard.</p>
9.	8.16	<p>Total number of 1035 sanitation workers have died while cleaning the sewer and septic tanks out of which 74 are yet to be paid compensation despite Supreme Court Judgement dated 27th March 2014 which directed that the State Governments /UTs must ensure payment of compensation of ₹10.00 lakh to the family of a victim in case of death of a worker while cleaning sewer/septic tank. The Committee are happy to note that for identification of such workers, the Department have launched a new mobile app called 'Swachhata App' to verify the information about</p>

		<p>the existence of manual scavenging in the States/UTs. The Committee desire that the Department should ensure from all the State/UT Governments that their States/UTs are manual scavenging free. The Committee would also like the Department to ensure that the rules framed under Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 are strictly implemented by all the States/UTs. They would also urge the Department to take suitable measures so that the compensation to the victims' families of 74 deaths is paid immediately. The Committee feel that these norms with regard to penalty and conviction for engaging sewer and septic workers by the Contractors are strictly implemented so that the Contractors are immediately held and convicted for any violation of norms. The Committee would like to be informed of the action taken in this regard. They urge for a country wide mechanization of sewer cleaning work as early as possible.</p>
10.	9.8	<p>The Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi (PM-DAKSH) Yojna is a National Action Plan for skilling of marginalized persons covering SCs, OBCs, EBCs, DNTs, Sanitation Workers and waste pickers. The Scheme is implemented through three Corporations namely NSFDC, NBCFDC and NSKFDC. The Committee find that NSFDC has submitted Utilisation Certificates of ₹38.63 crore against ₹50.82 crore released during 2020-21 and 2021-22 and has requested to release ₹16.00 crore for the Financial Year 2022-23. Similarly, NBCFDC has requested release of ₹14.13 crore for the Financial Year 2022-23 as they have submitted Utilisation Certificates for ₹36.81 crore against ₹48.70 crore released in 2020-21 and 2021-22. In</p>

		<p>order to optimally utilise the Budgetary Allocation during 2023-24, the Committee would like the Department to develop a digital system where Utilisation Certificates for usage of 75% of the allocation of funds are received timely and the remaining grant is automatically transferred to the Implementing Agencies. The Committee would also urge that the SNA system under PFMS established by the Ministry of Finance for better monitoring of funds should be implemented without any further delay by all the States/UTs to avoid underutilisation of allocated funds. The Committee would also urge the Department that the funds requested for release by NSFDC and NBCFDC against the Utilisation Certificates submitted are released immediately so that the work of skilling SCs, OBCs, EBCs, DNTs, Sanitation workers are continued. The Committee would like to be informed of the status of initiatives taken by the Department.</p>
11.	10.13	<p>The Committee note that the population of 60 plus years in the country is likely to rise to 17.32 crore in 2026 from 10.38 crore in 2011 as per National Commission on Population. The Committee are happy to note that the Department proposes to cover each district of the country with at least one senior citizen home under State Action for Senior citizens and aims to cover each district of the country under the Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana. The Committee find that 296 districts have been covered under Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC). The Committee also find that the Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana launched on 1st April 2017 to provide assistive devices free of cost to eligible Senior citizens belonging to the BPL category or</p>

		<p>senior citizen with monthly income less than ₹15,000 have been able to cover 264 districts of the country. However, since no time lines have been drawn in this regard, they desire that phase-wise time line should be fixed to cover all the districts in the country. The Committee also find that the Budgetary Estimate of ₹300.00 crore for IPSrC in 2021-22 was reduced to ₹150.00 crore in 2022-23 and the Department could only spend ₹33.14 crore as the Department did not get complete proposals from the States/UTs. Hence they recommend that suitable measures should be taken by the Department so that the Budgetary allocation are utilized fruitfully and the number of Beneficiaries are enhanced. The Committee hope that the recommendations made by Indian Institute of Public Administration in their Evaluation Study of IPSsC conducted in 2019 must have been implemented and would have brought some improvement in implementation of Scheme and expect that the third Party evaluation study proposed during 2023-24 would also bring out good suggestion to lay the roadmap for implementation of the Scheme in future.</p>
12.	10.14	<p>The Committee note that as per surveys the number of elderly people is steadily increasing in our country, so, there is an urgent need to ensure that the elders remain happy, healthy, financially sound and physically active. In this connection, the Committee recall that they had examined the “Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens” Bill 2019 and presented a report thereon. The official amendment of the Bill is stated to be under preparation in the Ministry. The Committee hope that the</p>

		<p>same will be prepared soon and brought for legislation so that the maintenance of parents and senior citizens and their welfare gets a solid legal support. The Ministry is statedly taking several initiatives also, apart from implementing the Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana, AVYAY, Senior Citizens Welfare Fund, etc., one of which is SAGE, which is a portal based 'Senior Care Ageing Growth Engine' as a one-stop access of elderly care products and services by credible Start Ups. This portal, opened on 5th June, 2021, will invite Start Ups to be selected on the basis of innovative products and services across the sectors such as health, housing, care centres, food and wealth management, legal guidance as well as technological access linked to finances for elderly care. ₹1 crore is to be provided to such Start Ups. Appreciating this new initiative, the Committee have been informed that 12 Start Ups have been/are being supported through SAGE Portal, and desire to be apprised about the products and services developed/being developed by these Start Ups in the last two years. The Committee are happy to note that 'Elderline' <i>i.e.</i> National Helpline for senior citizens was launched on 1st October, 2021 to provide free information, guidance, emotional support, field intervention in cases of abuse and rescues in order to improve quality of life of senior citizens. They further note that 31 States/ UTs have kept the Elderline operational. The Committee acknowledge the intention of the Ministry to make programmes for elderly care a National movement involving youth and innovators and providing business opportunities to social enterprises, technological Start Ups, legal and financial services, infrastructure and managed-care systems as well as</p>
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		research and data driven organizations for the same. The Committee feel a more robust elder care ecosystem can be created in India if such efforts gain momentum.
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