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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND
EMPOWERMENT (2024-25)**

(EIGHTEENTH LOK SABHA)

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

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS
(2024-25)**

FIRST REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

December, 2024/ Pausha, 1946 (Saka)

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(DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT)**

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(2024-25)**

Presented to Lok Sabha on 18.12.2024

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 18.12.2024



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

December, 2024/ Pausha, 1946 (Saka)

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**COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL
JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2024-25*)**

SHRI P.C. MOHAN - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri E. T. Mohammed Basheer
3. Shri Bhaskar Murlidhar Bhagare
4. Smt. Vijaylakshmi Devi
5. Shri Chhatrapal Singh Gangwar
6. Km.Priyanka Satish Jarkiholi
7. Shri Ramesh Chandappa Jigajinagi
8. Shri Chintamani Maharaj
9. Shri Murari Lal Meena
10. Smt. Bag Mitali
11. Shri Bhojraj Nag
12. Shri Godam Nagesh
13. Shri Gajendra Singh Patel
14. Shri Rajkumar Roat
15. Shri Matheswaran V. S.
16. Adv. Priya Saroj
17. Shri Sasikanth Senthil
18. Shri Anoop Pradhan Valmiki
19. Shri Mansukhbhai Dhanjibhai Vasava
20. Dr. Lata Wankhede
21. Shri Surendra Prasad Yadav

Rajya Sabha

22. Smt. Sumitra Balmik
23. Smt. Geeta alias Chandraprabha
24. Shri Narayana Koragappa
25. Smt. Phulo Devi Netam
26. Shri Ramji
27. Shri Rameswar Teli
28. Smt. Mamata Thakur
29. Smt. P. T. Usha
30. Shri Abdul Wahab
- #31. Shri Niranjana Bishi

***Constituted w.e.f. 26.09.2024 vide Lok Sabha Bulletin Part – II para no. 847 dated 26.09.2024.**

Nominated w.e.f 21.11.2024

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

1. Smt. Mamta Kemwal - Joint Secretary
2. Shri Krishendra Kumar - Deputy Secretary

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment (2024-25) having been authorized by the Committee do present on their behalf this First Report on 'Demands for Grants for the year 2024-25' pertaining to the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment).

2. The Committee considered the 'Demands for Grants (2024-25)' of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment) which were laid on the Table of the House on 30th July, 2024. 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 5th November, 2024. The Committee considered and adopted the Report at the sitting held on 16.12.2024.

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 (2024-25)'.

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

New Delhi
18 December, 2024
27 Pausha, 1946 (Saka)

SHRI P.C MOHAN
Chairperson
Standing Committee on Social Justice
and Empowerment

REPORT

CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTORY

The objective of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment is to empower the socially, educationally and economically marginalised sections of the society including Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes, Denotified and Nomadic Tribes (DNTs), Economically Weaker Sections, Senior Citizens, Persons engaged in act of begging, Transgenders, Victims of Alcoholism and Substance abuse.

1.2. The vision of the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment is to build an inclusive society wherein members of the target groups can lead productive, safe and dignified lives with adequate support for their growth and development.

1.3. 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 following Programmes and Schemes of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment are categorized into Central Sector Schemes and the Centrally Sponsored Schemes:-

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

1. Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood & Enterprise (SMILE)
2. Comprehensive Rehabilitation of Persons Engaged in the Act of Begging
3. Comprehensive Rehabilitation for Welfare of Transgender Persons

III. OTHER BACKWARD CLASSES WELFARE SCHEMES

1. Venture Capital Fund (VCF) for Backward Classes
2. PM DAKSH Yojana for OBCs
3. Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for OBCs and EBCs
4. National Fellowship for OBCs
5. Interest Subsidy on Overseas Studies of OBCs
6. Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNT/NT/SNTs (SEED)
7. PM-Young Achiever's Scholarship Award Scheme for Vibrant India for OBCs & Others (PMYASASVI)

IV. OTHERS

1. Information, Monitoring, Evaluation and Social Audit

CENTRALLY SPONSORED SCHEMES

I. 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 **

II. SOCIAL DEFENCE SCHEMES

1. Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY)**

2. National Action Plan on Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR) *

III. OTHER BACKWARD CLASSES WELFARE SCHEMES

1. PM Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme for Vibrant India (PM YASASVI) for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs *

2. Post Matric Scholarship for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs

3. Pre Matric Scholarship for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs

4. Boys and Girls Hostel for OBCs

5. Top Class Schools

6. Top Class Colleges

* These schemes are 100% Supported by Central Government

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

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

(i) National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC);

(ii) National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC);
and

(iii) National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation (NBCFDC)

1.6. During the year 2024-25, the Ministry of Finance have allocated ₹13,000.20 crore against the projected requirement of ₹13,539.64 crore. The Budget Estimates, Revised Estimates and the Actual Expenditure of the Department for the last three years along with the percentage variation over the preceding years are as under:

(₹in crore)

Year	Budget Estimates	%age variation	Revised Estimates	%age Variation	Expenditure	%age Variation
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2021-22	10517.62	4.1	10180	24.03	7459.99	-9.43
2022-23	11922.51	13.36	11659.94	14.53	7420.75	-0.52
2023-24	12847.02	7.75	9853.32	15.49	9510.93	28.16
2024-25	13000.20*	1.19	-	-	-	-

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

The Demand for Grants of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment for the year 2024-25 are given under Demand No.93. The detailed Demand for Grants of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment were laid on the House on 30th July, 2024.

2.2. The Ministry of Finance have allocated ₹1,300.20 crore for the year 2024-25 against the projected requirement of ₹13,539.64 crore made by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment. The details of the Budget Estimates, Revised Estimates and the Actual Expenditure of the Department of each Schemes/ Programmes for the last three years alongwith the Budget Estimates for each Programme/ Scheme of the Department for 2024-25 is as follows:-

A statement showing the scheme-wise details of Outlays and Actual Expenditure during the last three years of Department of Social Justice & Empowerment											
											(₹. in crore)
Sl. No.	Programme/Schemes	2021-22			2022-23			2023-24			BE 2024-25
		BE	RE	Actual Expenditure	BE	RE	Actual Expenditure	BE	RE	Actual Expenditure (Till 31.03.2024)	
Schemes											
	SCD Division										
1	Post Matric Scholarship for SCs	3415.62	4196.59	1978.56	5660.00	5660.00	4392.50	6359.14	5400.00	5476.22	6359.98
2	Pradhan Mantri AnusuchitJaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM AJAY)	1800.00	1800.00	1820.32	1950.00	1062.39	164.00	2050.00	450.00	471.12	2140.00
3	Pre Matric Scholarship for SCs and Others	725.00	725.00	570.39	500.00	500.00	208.62	500.00	430.00	446.64	500.00
4	Development Action plan for SCs (DAPSC)					950.00	236.99				
5	Strengthening of machinery for Enforcement of Protection of Civil Right Act 1955 and Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989	600.00	600.00	610.11	600.00	500.00	390.85	500.00	500.00	535.18	550.00
6	Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers	100.00	43.31	39.00	70.00	70.00	11.10				

7	National Action Plan For Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE)							97.41	30.06	30.06	116.94
8	Scheme of Residential Education for Students in High School in Targeted Area (SRESHTA) for SCs (Earlier Assistance to Voluntary Organisations for SCs)	200.00	63.21	38.04	89.00	89.00	51.01	104.65	90.00	81.59	133.07
9	Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for SCs										
	9.1 National Fellowship for SCs	300.00	125.00	122.44	173.00	159.00	114.25	163.00	188.00	183.14	188.00
	9.2 Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs	50.00	30.00	14.98	47.00	27.00	18.41	47.00	14.82	7.76	35.00
	9.3 Top Class Education for SCs	70.00	70.00	84.72	108.00	108.00	85.67	111.00	100.00	83.84	110.00
	9.4 National Overseas Scholarship for SCs	30.00	35.00	49.07	36.00	50.00	75.44	50.00	85.00	88.57	95.00
	Total: Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for SCs	450.00	260.00	271.21	364.00	344.00	293.77	371.00	387.82	363.31	428.00
10.	Vanchit Ikai Samooch aur Vargon ki Arthik Sahayata (VISVAS) Yojana (Allocation for SCs)	100.00	10.00	0.00	50.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	6.01
11.	Venture Capital Fund for SCs and OBCs (Allocation for SCs)	100.00	70.00	70.00	70.00	70.00	35.00	70.00	22.00	22.00	10.00
12	Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi (PM DAKSH) Yojana (Allocation for SCs)	60.00	38.94	33.21	40.00	40.00	8.90	43.73	60.00	32.74	65.00
	Total SCD Division	7575.62	7807.06	5430.84	9393.01	9285.40	5555.75	10095.94	7369.89	7458.85	10309.00
	Social Defence, Media and Research										
13.	Information, Monitoring, Evaluation and Social Audit	25.00	25.00	17.82	19.50	19.50	13.74	20.00	25.00	22.33	10.00
14.	Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY) (Earlier National Action Plan for Senior Citizens)	300.00	150.00	96.54	150.00	140.00	117.54	294.97	140.00	141.42	539.44
15.	National Action Plan on Drug Demand Reduction	260.00	200.00	90.93	200.00	200.00	97.61	311.00	175.00	173.04	314.00

16	Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood & Enterprise (SMILE)										
	16.1 Integrated Programme for Rehabilitation of Beggars	50.00	10.00	0.05	15.00	15.00	0.44	20.00	10.00	5.26	30.00
	16.2 Scheme for Tansgender Persons	20.00	25.00	1.91	30.00	30.00	0.12	52.91	22.82	6.59	68.46
	Total: Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood & Enterprise (SMILE)	70.00	35.00	1.96	45.00	45.00	0.56	72.91	32.82	11.85	98.46
Total Social Defence	655.00	410.00	207.25	395.00	385.00	215.71	678.88	347.82	326.31	422.46	
Backward Classes Division											
17	PM Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme for Vibrant India (PM YASASVI) for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs										
	17.1 Post-Matric Scholarship for OBCs	1300.00	1300.00	1319.96	1083.00	1083.00	1007.04	1087.00	1087.00	988.45	921.00
	17.2 Pre-matric Scholarship to OBCs	250.00	250.00	218.46	478.00	394.61	361.13	281.00	281.00	195.66	210.00
	17.3 Top Class School					83.39	1.85	100.00	100.00	6.73	150.00
	17.4 Top Class College							90.00	90.00	111.40	515.00
	17.5 Boys & Girls Hostels for OBCs	30.00	30.00	18.76	20.00	20.00	18.80	30.00	45.00	14.41	40.00
	Total: PM Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme for Vibrant India (PM YASASVI) for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs	1580.00	1580.00	1557.18	1581.00	1581.00	1388.82	1588.00	1603.00	1316.65	1836.00
18	Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for OBCs and EBCs										
	18.1 National Fellowship for OBCs and EBCs	100.00	60.00	55.55	53.00	53.00	51.32	57.00	90.00	89.64	55.00
	18.2 Interest Subsidy on Overseas Studies of OBCs	30.00	30.00	26.70	27.00	27.00	24.05	29.00	60.00	56.22	25.00
	Total: Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for OBCs and EBCs	130.00	90.00	82.25	80.00	80.00	75.37	86.00	150.00	145.85	80.00

19	Vanchit Ikai Samoooh aur Vargon ki Arthik Sahayata (VISVAS) Yojana (Allocation for OBCs)	50.00	10.00	0.00	30.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	4.01
20	Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur KushaltaSampann Hitgrahi (PM DAKSH) Yojana (Allocation for OBCs)	40.00	40.54	35.02	44.00	44.00	6.04	48.74	60.00	25.60	65.00
21	Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNT/NT/SNTs (SEED)	50.00	40.40	0.21	28.00	28.00	2.30	40.40	15.00	15.00	39.40
22	Venture Capital Fund for SCs and OBCs (Allocation for OBCs)	20.00	20.00	20.00	40.00	40.00	10.00	22.00	10.00	10.00	40.00
	Total Backward Classes Division	187.00	1780.94	1694.66	1803.00	1773.01	1482.53	1785.15	1838.01	1513.11	2064.41
	Grand Total of all schemes of the Department	10100.62	9998.00	7332.75	11610.51	11462.91	7267.73	12579.97	9580.72	9320.59	12795.87
Non Schemes											
	Establishment										
1	Secretariat of Department of SJE	67.00	67.00	55.05	66.00	66.00	60.15	72.00	78.45	71.96	67.00
2	National Commission for Scheduled Castes	27.00	27.00	19.07	30.00	30.00	21.81	35.00	35.12	25.32	38.00
3	National Commission for Safai Karamcharis	10.00	10.00	5.53	11.00	11.00	3.08	12.00	10.98	5.20	12.75
4	National Commission for Backward Classes	12.00	12.00	9.11	15.00	15.00	3.67	20.00	20.00	6.47	21.00
5	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.							3.05	3.05	0.46	2.05
	Total Establishment	116.00	116.00	88.76	127.00	127.00	91.03	147.05	152.60	110.35	140.80
	Others										
6	Other Miscellaneous Expenditure					10.00	8.09	10.00	10.00	8.39	8.50
	Autonomous Bodies/Grantee Bodies										
7	Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Foundation	1.00	11.00	11.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	40.00	40.00	17.50	30.00
8	Dr. B.R. Ambedkar International Centre	25.00	25.00	14.68	30.00	30.00	30.00				

9	National Institute of Social Defence	20.00	20.00	3.00	20.00	20.00	13.90	30.00	30.00	14.09	20.00
10	Development and Welfare Board for DNTs	5.00	5.00	4.80	5.00	5.00	2.32	5.00	5.00	0.95	5.00
	Total Autonomous Bodies	51.00	61.00	33.48	60.00	60.00	53.90	70.00	70.00	31.59	55.00
	Equity Support										
11	National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation	100.00	0.00	0.00	50.00	0.01	0.00	15.00	15.00	15.00	0.01
12	National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation	50.00	5.00	5.00	25.00	0.01	0.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	0.01
13	National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation	100.00	0.00	0.00	50.00	0.01	0.00	15.00	15.00	15.00	0.01
	Total Equity Support	250.00	5.00	5.00	125.00	0.03	0.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	0.03
	Total Non Schemes	417.00	182.00	127.24	312.00	197.03	153.02	267.05	272.60	190.33	204.33
	Grand Total Schemes + Non Schemes	10517.62	10180.00	7459.99	11922.51	11659.94	7420.75	12847.02	9853.32	9510.93	13000.20

2.3. On being enquired about the reasons due to which Actual Expenditure is less in comparison to the Budgetary Estimates under various heads during 2022-23 and 2023-24 and the steps being taken to ensure that the Budget Estimated for 2024-25 is fully spent, the Committee were *inter-alia* informed *vide* written reply that:

“Some of the reasons for less budget utilisation:

1. Schemes are demand driven. Non-receipt of proposals from the States/UTs/Implementing agencies led to low utilisation.
2. More lucrative Schemes are available at the States than the Central Schemes.
3. Non submission/delayed submission of Utilisation Certificates by States due to which further tranches of funds could not be released to States.
4. Annual action plans submitted with reduced targets in terms of beneficiaries by the bigger states such as Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, Chhatisgarh, Odisha, and Gujarat under the Pre and Post-Matric Scholarships Scheme for SCs in the last three years.
5. Submission of incomplete, incorrect or dummy documents by applicants, and errors in bank details, missing income certificates, or failure to provide necessary caste verification cause delays in verification of students in case of pre and post matric scholarship leading to delays in providing verified data by the State Governments/UTs.
6. In some cases, the delay is due to delayed release of funds by the State Governments in respect of Pre and Post Matric Scholarship Scheme, as a result of which Central share could not be released on time.
7. Due to revision in scheme guidelines in respect of Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana, Beggary sub-scheme of SMILE (Support for Marginalised Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise) and National Helpline for Senior Citizens, resulted in less utilization of the allocated Budget.”

2.4. When asked about the steps taken to fully spend the budgetary allocation, the Department submitted as under:-

1. Performance of Schemes is monitored through the periodic progress reports. Secretary (SJ&E) regularly reviews Schemes with Program Divisions regularly to ensure that Schemes are progressing well and the allocations provided for the Schemes of the Department of SJ&E are fully utilized.
2. Selected high priority schemes are monitored at the level of Minister (SJ&E) regularly.
3. Department of SJ&E also organizes Conferences of State Social Welfare Ministers and the State Welfare Secretaries wherein all the schemes of the Departments of SJ & E are reviewed. States/UTs are also advised to strengthen their monitoring mechanism.
4. States are strategic partners in implementation of schemes of the Department. Therefore initiatives are being taken to actively involve the States. Regional Workshops are held for addressing State specific issues and to sensitise them on the need to submit their State Action Plans and ensure effective fund utilisation.
5. Regular capacity building and handholding/cluster/regional meetings and/or workshops for all States/UTs are conducted to review the progress of the States as well as to resolve any pending issues.
6. Department will engage in more IEC (Information, Education and Communication) activities for better publicity and wider dissemination of information about the schemes State Governments are being requested to publicize the schemes of the Department for raising awareness.
7. The Department of SJ & E sponsors evaluation studies from time to time through independent evaluation agencies to check whether the benefits of the Scheme reach the target groups.
8. Field visits: Officers of the rank of Joint Secretary have been assigned responsibilities of few States. These officials visit their assigned States periodically for monitoring scheme progress and resolving issues. Regular capacity building and Handholding/cluster/regional meetings and/or workshops for all States/UTs are conducted to review the progress of the States as well as to resolve any pending issues.
9. Applications have been invited for new projects of Senior Citizen Homes in gap Districts and for on boarding new Regional Resource and Training Centres (RRTC) under the Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC). Hence, broader reach is anticipated under the scheme.
10. Fund flow processes are being reviewed for streamlining flow of funds to NGOs.
11. Under PM DAKSH higher targets in terms of number of beneficiaries have been allocated to Training Institutes so that funds may be fully utilised.”

2.5. In the information furnished by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, the Committee have found that the physical targets are set by the Department for large number of Schemes. The achievements of those targets reflect the success of Scheme. A statement showing the physical targets and achievement for the last three years alongwith target is as follows:-

Statement showing the Physical targets and achievements for the last three years

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme/ project/ programme	Division	2021-22			2022-23			2023-24			% of achievements for last three years	2024-25 Target
			Target	Achievement	Shortfall, if any, indicating reasons in brief	Target	Achievement	Shortfall, if any, indicating reasons in brief	Target	Achievement	Shortfall, if any, indicating reasons in brief		
SCHEDULED CASTE DIVISION													
1.	Post-Matric Scholarships Scheme for SC Students	SCD	63.00	56.58 lakhs	-	66.15	44.47 lakhs	Non Seeding of Aadhar with the bank account of the beneficiaries	69.46 lakhs	28.36*		FY 2021-22: (-10%) FY 2022-23: (-33%) FY 2022-23: (-59%)	72.93
2.	Pre-Matric Scholarships Scheme for SC Students	SCD	26.00	32.41 lakhs	-	26.50	19.86 lakhs	Non Seeding of Aadhar with the bank account of the beneficiaries	26.75 Lakhs	14.45		FY 2021-22: (+25%) FY 2022-23: (-25%) FY 2023-24: (-46%)	27.00
3.	Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for SC												
(i)	National Fellowship for SCs	SCD-B	2000	3716	NA	2000	3613	NA	2000	4163	NA		2000
(ii)	National Overseas Scholarship for SCs	SCD-B	125	125	NA	125	125	NA	125	125	NA	100%	125
(iii)	Top Class Education for SCs	SCD-I	4100	4544	NA	4200	4171	Negligible Shortfall	4300	3969	Due to receipt of less number of application from some of the institutes	100.67%	4400

(iv)	Free Coaching Scheme for SCs and OBCs	SCD-I	4000	1761	Due to COVID-19 and closing of Physical mode of coaching	3500	558	Mode 1 of the scheme discontinued. Mode 2 of the scheme introduced giving students the liberty to choose institute of their choice. Around 400 students only out of 2109 selected students submitted the required documents.	3500	223	In 2023-24, Dr. Ambedkar foundation was designated as CNA for the scheme. Signing of MoU with the central Universities (CUs) took place upto December 2023 and the proposals for release of grants in respect of 8 CUs were	23.10%	3500
4.	Pradhan Mantri Anushuchit Jati Abhyuday Yojana (PM AJAY)												
(i)	Special Central Assistance to SCSP	NO PHYSICAL TARGET HAS BEEN FIXED UNDER ANY COMPONENT OF THE SCHEME OF PM-AJAY.											
(ii)	Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana	NO PHYSICAL TARGET HAS BEEN FIXED UNDER ANY COMPONENT OF THE SCHEME OF PM-AJAY.											
(iii)	Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana	NO PHYSICAL TARGET HAS BEEN FIXED UNDER ANY COMPONENT OF THE SCHEME OF PM-AJAY.											
5.	Strengthening of machinery for Enforcement of Protection of Civil Right Act 1955 and Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989	SCD	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
6.	Scheme of Residential Education for Students in High School in Targeted Area (SRESHTA) for SC	SCD-III	-	20435	-	-	16479	-	-	15816	-	-	-
7.	Venture Capital Fund (VCF) for SCs	*Physical targets are not specified as the performance of the scheme is primarily measured in terms of financial support provided.											

8.	Venture Capital Fund (VCF) for BCs	*Physical targets are not specified as the performance of the scheme is primarily measured in terms of financial support provided.											
9.	VISVAS Scheme	-											The scheme will be implemented for 2024-25 and 2025-26. During 2024-25 and 2025-26 a Budget of ₹251 crore has been earmarked with benefitting 15 lakh beneficiaries and an offtake of ₹4,200 crore worth of credit.
10.	Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNTs(See d)	DWB DNCs	--	--	--	--	--	--	To spend the budget on SEED components	Rs. 15 Cr. spent on Livelihood Component of SEED	No Short-fall	---	To achieve the full implementation of all 04 (four) component of SEED.
11.	Pradhan Mantri Dakshta aur Kushalta Sampann Hit grahi (PM DAKSH)	PM-DAKSH	49,800	42002	7798, Training is imparted based on the number of registration of candidates	51.900	33,021	18879, Training is imparted on the number of registration of candidates	101970	75000	26790* Training is imparted based on the number of registration of candidates	73	107970
SENIOR CITIZEN DIVISION													
12.	Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY)												
(i)	Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY)	Senior Citizen Division	71,000	71,000	-	62,000	62,000	-	1,20,000	62,000	Due to revision in scheme guidelines, camp could not be organized	77%	2,18,000

(ii)	Elderline: National Helpline for Senior Citizens	Senior Citizen Division	1,06,000	1,06,000	-	1,61,000	1,61,000	-	3,00,000	67,000	Due to change in the implementation of the Programme, the target could not be achieved.	59%	3,40,000
(iii).	Senior Care Ageing Growth Engine (SAGE)	Senior Citizen Division	9	9	-	4	4	-	8	8	-	100%	8
(iv)	Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens	Senior Citizen Division	Number of beneficiaries are based on the monitoring of the projects; therefore, no targets can be speculated and assigned.	1,39,385	-	Number of beneficiaries are based on the monitoring of the projects; therefore, no targets can be speculated and assigned..	87,745	-	Number of beneficiaries are based on the monitoring of the projects ; therefore, no targets can be speculated.	1,57,820	-	-	Number of beneficiaries are based on the monitoring of the projects; therefore, no targets can be speculated and assigned..
(v)	State Action Plan for Senior Citizens (SAPSR C)	Senior Citizen Division	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
(vi)	Training of Geriatric Care Givers	Senior Citizen Division	Scheme has been implemented wef 2023-24	13000	Under Implementation	The funds for the last year target is sanctioned during the current FY	-	18000**					
(vii)	Other Initiatives for Senior Citizens (New Component)	Senior Citizen Division	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

SOCIAL DEFENCE DIVISION

	Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood & Enterprise (SMILE) - Support for marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise (Garima Grehs)	DP	300	300	-	300	300	-	300	300	-	100%	450
14.	National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMA STE) (2023-24 and 2024-25)	Plan	-	-	-	-	-	-	1. Profiling of SSWs 100000. 2. Safety Devices to ERSUs 500 3. PPE Kits to SSWs 20000 4. Mechanised cleaning equipments 675 5. Health Insurance Coverage 60000 6. Occupational Training of Surface SSWs 20000 7. Workshops 500	1. 37208 2. NIL 3. 3615 4. 413 5. 8408 (Ayushman card provided to 2698 SSWs and 5710 SSWs are already covered under AB_PMJAY 6. NIL 500	**	No percentage is calculated as the scheme has been approved on 06.07.2023.	1. Profiling of SSWs 7500. 2. Safety Devices to ERSUs 521 3. PPE Kits to SSWs 30000 4. Mechanised cleaning equipments 1000 5. Health Insurance Coverage 60000 6. Occupational Training of Surface SSWs 30000 7. Workshops 500

15.	Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (2021-22 and 2022-23)	Plan	As the scheme is demand driven, no physical targets are fixed	(i) Skill Development Training for 2823 manual Scavengers (ii) Self Employment Projects for 377 manual scavengers (iii) Sanitation relate project for 461 beneficiaries	Not Applicable	As the scheme is demand driven, no physical targets are fixed	i) Skill Development Training for 3414 manual Scavengers (ii) Self Employment Projects for 714 manual scavengers (iii) Sanitation relate project for 177 beneficiaries	Not applicable	As the scheme is demand driven, no physical targets are fixed	(i) Skill Development Training for 2000 Manual Scavengers (ii) Self Employment Projects to 191 Manual Scavengers	Not Applicable	Not applicable	As the scheme is demand driven, no physical targets are fixed.
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Backward Classes Division

16.	PM Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme for Vibrant India (PM Yasasvi) for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs												
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(i)	Pre Matric Scholarship for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs	BC	93.00	21828.29	-	102.00	36137.90	-	112.53	19382.82	-	-	123.783
(ii)	Post Matric Scholarship for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs	BC	41.00	132013.67	-	45.1	100561.28	-	49.61	98806.16	-	-	54.57
(iii)	Boys & Girls Hostels for OBCs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

17.	Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for OBCs and EBCs												
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(i)	Dr. Ambedkar Scheme of Interest Subsidy on Overseas Studies of OBCs	BC		6564			4159	-	-	2789			
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(ii)	Top Class Education in Colleges for OBC, EBC and DNT Students	BC	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.3	11117.54712			0.3
(iii)	Top Class Education in Schools for OBC, EBC and DNT Students	BC	-	-	-	0.165	185.00		0.1815	660.79	-	-	0.1965
(iv)	National Fellowship for OBC Students	BC		6564			4159			2789			

2.6. The Committee have noted that large amount of funds was surrendered under various Programmes/ Schemes of the Department during the financial year 2023-24. The details of the Funds surrendered under various Schemes of the Department are as follows:-

Fund position under all Schemes of the Department				
(₹ in crore)				
Sr. No.	Programme/Schemes	BE 2023-24	Actually Surrendered	Reasons for Savings
Schemes				
SCD Division				
1	Post Matric Scholarship for SCs	6359.14	882.92	Due to receipt of less application/proposals from States and less Aadhar seeding of students bank account.
2	Pre Matric for SCs and Other	500.00	53.36	Due to receipt of less application/proposals from States
3	Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for SCs			
	National Fellowship for SCs	163.00	NA	NA
	National Overseas Scholarship for SCs	50.00	NA	NA
	Top Class Education for SCs	111.00	27.16	Proposals for FY 2023-24 received late through NSP Portal
	Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs	47.00	39.24	Proposals for FY 2023-24 received late from empanelled University for release of funds.
4	Pradhan MantriAnusuchitJaatiAbhyudayYojana (PM AJAY)			
	Pradhan MantriAdharsh Gram Yojana			New procedure of fund release (Single Nodal)

	BabuJagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana (Hostel Component)			Account) was introduced by Ministry of Finance and the implementation of which was delayed by state governments.
	Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan (GIA)			
	Total PM-AJAY Scheme	2050.00	1578.88	
5	Strengthening of machinery for Enforcement of Protection of Civil Right Act 1955 and Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989	500.00	NA	NA
6	Scheme of Residential Education for Students in High School in Targeted Area (SHRESHTA) for SC	104.65	23.06	As per revised scheme, only financial assistance is being considered to organizations only SC beneficiaries and organizations are not having SC certificates of SC beneficiaries. In the absence of SC certificates, fund could not be considered to organizations. Due to this reason, an amount of Rs. 14.00 Crore (BE - 104.65 and RE- 90.00 Crore) was surrendered.
7	National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE)	97.41	67.35	Funds could not be fully utilized during 2023-24 due to less demand in respect of SRMS Component as it is demand driven. As regards, NAMASTE Component of the scheme, the fund could not utilized fully due to the reasons given in para 6 above.
8	VISVAS Yojana (SC)	0.01	0.01	saving was because no decision could be taken for continuation of the scheme in 2023-24
9	Venture Capital Funds for SCs	70.00	48.00	Saving was due to less demand by IFCI.
10	Pradhan MantriDakshtaaurKushaltaSampannHitgrahi (SC Component)	43.73	10.99	Saving was due to receipt of less proposals.
Social Defence, Media and Evaluation				
11	Atal VayoAbhyudayYojana (AVYAY)-CSS	294.97	153.55	It is a demand-driven scheme and payment is made on the basis of monitoring of the project and number of beneficiaries present and after observing that Projects are maintained as per the specifications mentioned in the scheme guidelines.
12	National Action Plan on Drug Demand Reduction	311.00	137.96	It is a demand-driven scheme and payment is made on the basis of monitoring of the project and number of beneficiaries present and after observing that Projects are maintained as per the specifications mentioned in the scheme guidelines.Savings was due to receipt of less proposals from NGOs.
13	Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood & Enterprise (SMILE)			
	Integrated Programme for Rehabilitation of Beggars	20.00	14.74	Due to receipts of fewer proposals and less administrative expenses.
	Scheme for Transgender Persons	52.91	46.32	

	TOTAL SMILE	72.91	61.06	
Backward Classes Division				
14	PM Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme for Vibrant India (PM YASASVI) for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs			
	Pre Matric Scholarship for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs	281.00	85.34	i. Not receipt of proposals from some States/UTs. ii. Not receipt of proposals from some North East States for 10% earmark budget for NE.
	Post Matric Scholarship for OBCs EBCs and DNTs	1087.00	98.55	
	Boys & Girls Hostels for OBCs	30.00	15.59	
	Top Class School	100.00	93.27	
	Top Class College	90.00	NA	
15	Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for OBCs and EBCs			
	Interest Subsidy on Education Loans for Overseas Studies for OBCs and EBCs	29.00	NA	NA
	National Fellowship for OBCs and EBCs	57.00	NA	NA
16	VISVAS Yojana(OBCs)	0.01	0.01	saving was because no decision could be taken for continuation of the scheme in 2023-24
17	Venture Capital Fund for Backward Classes	22.00	12.00	Saving was due to less demand by IFCI.
18	PM DAKSH Yojana OBC Component	48.74	23.14	Saving was due to receipt of less proposals.
19	Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNT/NT/SNTs(SEED)	40.40	25.40	The Funds given at RE in last year was fully utilized.
20	Information, Monitoring, Evaluation and Social Audit	20.00	NA	NA

2.7. During the deliberation of the Committee with the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, the representative of the Department informed with regard to the budgetary allocation and expenditure for previous years and for the financial year 2024-25 that:-

“If we see the BE and RE, we are experiencing some reduction. In 2020-21, we were getting around ₹10,000 crore. The Government has been trying to increase our budgetary allocation. So, they have taken it this year as ₹13,000 crore. So, उन्होंने बढ़ाया है। You are right कि एक्सपेंडिचर को हम उतना नहीं बढ़ा पाते हैं। I will explain it why we are unable to do it. इसका मेन रिजन यह है कि this is one Ministry of the Government of India which functions entirely through State Governments. Even our corporations do refinance of what the State Government is doing. A lot of capacity of State Government is involved. जो स्टेट जितना काम कर लेता है, we can fund them more. We will have this conversation. I don't think सरकार की ओर से, वित्त मंत्रालय की ओर से, there is any problem of allocation of budget. All the States and UTs have to come together to absorb the budget and not keep it pending for the next year. आप जानते हैं कि एसएनए सिस्टम आ गया है। अगर स्टेट नोडल एकाउंट में पैसे पड़े हैं, I can't give more. Finance will simply not allow it. Those are the guidelines of financial discipline. That is impacting our work. So, we are now visiting all the States. अभी हमने हैदराबाद में एक कांफ्रेंस किया, नॉर्दन में लखनऊ में किया, उसमें 5 स्टेट्स को बुलाया गया। How to boost the expenditure, हम सिर्फ इसके लिए जा रहे हैं।

Sir, I just want to show you that about 89.9 per cent of our schemes are Centrally Sponsored Schemes which means 40 per cent will be given by the States and 60 per cent by the Department. But we will release our 60 per cent when the State gives its 40 per cent. That is the principle of cooperative federalism. When States are delaying in giving their 40 per cent, we are not able to release our 60 per cent fund. This is a major problem.”

2.8. As regards to the role of Autonomous Bodies in achieving the objectives of the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment and the criteria fixed for allocation of funds to them, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“National Institute of Social Defence is the nodal training and research institute in the field of social defence. The mandate of the institute is to provide inputs for the social defence programmes of the Government of India through training, research and documentation. The National Institute of Social Defence (NISD) aids efforts of the Department for achieving the objectives of the following components of the scheme namely AVYAY-CS:

- i. Elderline: National Helpline for Senior Citizens
- ii. Training of Geriatric Care Givers.
- iii. Other Initiatives for Senior Citizens
- iv. Training on drug prevention

Funds are released to NISD as per provisions of scheme guidelines.

Dr.Dada Saheb Ambedkar Foundation (DAF) was set up on 24th March 1992 on the recommendations of the Centenary Celebrations Committee headed by the then Hon’ble Prime Minister of India, to implement the programmes and activities for furthering the ideology and message of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar among the masses in India as well as abroad. DAF is financed through its corpus fund which was created in 1992 through Grant in Aid. DAF has the mandate to manage, administer and carry out the identified schemes and programmes like:

1. Dr. Ambedkar Medical Aid Scheme for SCs & STs.
2. Dr. Ambedkar Chairs in Universities/ Institutions.
3. Dr.Ambedkar National Merit Award Scheme for SC/ST students for Class 10th level
4. Dr.Ambedkar National Merit Award Scheme for SC students for Class 12th level
5. Celebration of Birth Anniversaries of Great Saints
6. Dr. Ambedkar National Essay Competition Scheme
7. Dr. Ambedkar International Award for Social Change.
8. Dr. Ambedkar Memorial Lecture
9. Celebration of Birth Anniversary and Mahaparinirwan Diwas of Dr. Ambedkar on 14th April & 6th December respectively in Parliament House Lawns.

10. Publication of the Collected Works of Baba Saheb Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in Hindi and 8 regional languages viz. Tamil, Telugu, Odiya, Malyalam, Gujarati, Punjabi, Urdu & Bengali.

Dr. Ambedkar International Centre (DAIC) was inaugurated by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated on 07th December 2017. DAIC has been envisaged as a 'Centre of Excellence' for study, research, analysis and policy-making in the field of Socio-Economic Transformation. The objective of the Centre is to reduce Socio-political and economic inequalities by conducting rigorous socio-empirical research. This centre is the academic wing of Dr. Ambedkar Foundation (DAF). Now it is working simultaneously with DAF towards disseminating the ideology and message of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar among the Indian masses and also abroad through various forms of publication on cutting edge social based research topics. From time to time, DAIC organises conferences, seminars, lecture series, training programmes, projects, and provides policy feed backs. DAIC has three Auditorium Bheem (700 seats), Nalanda and Samrasta (100 seats each) on the Ground Floor. Bheem and Nalanda are equipped with language translator of 8 languages. DAIC possesses a well-equipped Library consisting of around 10000 books. It also has a collection of constitution of 100 countries. Dr. Ambedkar National Memorial & Museum at 26, Alipur Road, Delhi. On 21st March 2016 Hon'ble PM Sh. Narendra Modi laid the Foundation Stone for the memorial which was subsequently dedicated to the Nation on 13th April 2018. The overall ambience of the memorial is a perfect blend of modern science and traditional Buddhist architecture. Various models/multi touch interactive tables, murals, life size animatronics and Cultural symbols to include Replica of Ashoka Pillar in Bronze exist in DANM. No Separate budget line is maintained for DANM and managed from the resources of DAIC. No amount is charged from disciples for entry to the memorial and all facilities extended are free of cost. DAIC, DANM has been merged with DAF wef 10th July 2020 vide an administrative order of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. DAIC and DANM are funded by grants in aid provided to DAF.”

2.9. On being enquired about the major activities undertaken by Department under Social Defence and how far it has been able to fulfill the responsibility entrusted to it, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:-

“Under Social Defence, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, through its Program Divisions, addresses critical areas such as Drug Abuse Prevention, Senior Citizens welfare, Transgender welfare & Beggary Prevention and rehabilitation of socially marginalized and vulnerable groups. It is entrusted with formulating and implementing strategies to safeguard these populations.

Key Activities:

1. **Drug Abuse Prevention:** Nationwide campaigns, training and capacity-building programs for stakeholders, and rehabilitation services are provided under various schemes such as Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA), National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR).
2. **Care for Senior Citizens:** The Department promotes welfare schemes for the elderly, including programs for healthcare, shelter, and Elderline a national helpline for senior citizens.

3. **Rehabilitation and Welfare:** Special programs targeting marginalized sections like beggars, transgender persons, and the homeless, under the SMILE Scheme (Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise).

Major Achievements of NISD during last three years:

National Centre for Drug Abuse Prevention (NCDAP): NCDAP conducted more than 2100 programs for NGOs, GIA functionaries, social workers, schools, colleges, service providers and for different target groups on drug prevention. Over **1,48,000** participants have been trained till 8.10.2024 through these initiatives since 1.4.2021.

Financial Year	Total Number of Programs	Number of Beneficiaries
2021-22	744	47,365
2022-23	772	61,788
2023-24	146	4,759
2024-25 Till 08.10.2024	483	34,685
Total	2,145	1,48,597

Major Achievements of NCDAP

- i. Navchetna Module: NISD trained 114 resource persons on drug education for school children, developing life skills and drug prevention knowledge.
- ii. State Collaborations: The state of Goa and Delhi Police sought NISD's programs to address drug abuse among police personnel and their families.
- iii. Delhi Police Collaboration: Conducted primary prevention programs for 2,000 police officials across 15 districts.
- iv. Prison De-addiction: NISD's certification course was made mandatory for de-addiction centres in Haryana prisons.
- v. Training Modules: NISD partnered with AIIMS to train the 184 Child Welfare Police Officers (CWPOs) and other stakeholders.
- vi. Awareness Exhibits: Stalls at Dilli Haat and CBSE Summit reached 7,000+ beneficiaries on drug abuse prevention.
- vii. Doctor Training: Online training for 200 doctors managing substance use disorders was conducted by AIIMS and NISD.
- viii. Primary Prevention Training: Organized a two-day training program for 20 District Magistrates and officials on drug abuse prevention.
- ix. District De-addiction Centers (DDACs): Conducted training for DDAC staff in GAP districts to align with NAPDDR guidelines.
- x. International Day Against Drug Abuse (26th June 2024): National and state-level events, including competitions, webinars, and panel discussions, were organized under the theme "Invest in Prevention."
- xi. Digital Platforms: Uploaded drug abuse prevention courses on platforms like i-Got and DIKSHA.

- xii. Online Course on Drug Abuse Prevention: Mandated for Group A& B officials in Arunachal Pradesh, with 431 registrations.
- xiii. Partnerships: Collaborated with Nehru Yuva Kendras, National Service Scheme, Universities, and National Institute of Rural Development to raise awareness and build capacity for drug prevention.
- xiv. Resource Manuals: Manuals for Outreach and Drop in Centre, Community and Peer Led Intervention, and Integrated Rehabilitation Centre for Addicts, currently under finalization.

Hurdles Faced by NISD: Despite its notable achievements, NISD encounters challenges, primarily due to shortage of human resources.

Roadmap for 2024-25: NISD has prepared a comprehensive plan for utilizing the increased allocation in 2024-25. This roadmap will ensure that NISD continues to fulfill its mandate effectively while overcoming the challenges:

1. **Expansion of Rehabilitation Centres:** Enhanced funding will enable the setup of additional centres in remote areas/uncovered areas such as ODIC & IRCA etc.
2. **Training and Capacity Building:** The Institute plans to strengthen training programs and collaborate with more National & International institutions to scale the reach of Social Defence initiatives.
3. **Strengthening Infrastructure:** A significant portion of the increased budget will go towards building infrastructure to support nationwide rollout, especially for programs related to senior citizens, welfare of Transgender persons, Beggary Prevention and drug prevention.”

2.10. On being enquired about the expenditure accounted under Establishment and the funds made available for infrastructure are sufficient to meet the requirement of the Institutions falling under the Establishment, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“Under this head establishment expenditure like Salaries, Allowances, Medical Expenses, Travel Expenses, Office Expenses, Rent, Professional Services, Advertisement and Publicity, Civil Works, electrical works etc.of the Secretariat of Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, National Commission for Scheduled Castes, National Commission for Backward Classes, National Commission for Safai Karamcharis and Justice Balakrishnan Commission are accounted. The requisite infrastructure to meet the requirement of the Institutions falling under the Establishment is available.”

2.11. The objective of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment is to empower the socially, educationally and economically marginalised sections of the society including Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes, Denotified and Nomadic Tribes(DNTs), Economically Weaker Sections, Senior Citizens, Persons engaged in act of begging,Transgenders, Victims of Alcoholism and Substance abuse through various Schemes and programmes. The Committee find that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment was able to spend more than 85 per cent of revised allocation in 2022-23 and 2023-24. The Department has furnished various reasons for the shortfall in the expenditure viz. due to non- receipt of proposals from States, availability of lucrative Schemes in the States, submission of annual action plan with reduced targets by bigger States such as Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, Chattisgarh, Odisha and Gujarat. The Committee were informed that the Department have taken various steps such as monitoring through the periodic progress reports, organizing conferences of State Social Welfare Ministers, State Welfare Secretaries, regular capacity building programmes, field visits by the officers of the Department to ensure full utilization of enhanced BE of ₹13000.20 crore for 2024-25. The Committee appreciate the steps taken by Department of Social Justice and Empowerment and hope that these steps will help them in fixing the problems that may arise in implementation of various welfare Schemes of the Department by the State/UT Governments. Since active participation of State Governments and other implementing agencies is crucial for success of schemes of the Department, the Committee would not deter from recommending that the States/UTs that are not able to justify their role in implementing the welfare

schemes should be dealt strictly, ensuring that the beneficiaries are not deprived of any of the welfare Scheme.

2.12. The Committee find that the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment have fixed annual physical targets for various schemes such as Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarship Schemes, National Fellowships for SCs, National Oversees Scholarships for SCs, Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Samparna Hitgrahi (PM-DAKSH) etc. Simultaneously, the Committee also find that there are several schemes under which physical targets are not fixed by the Department, such as Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana(PMAGY), Babu Jagjiwan Ram Chatrawas Yojana (BJRCY) and Venture Capital Fund (VCF) for SCs and OBCs, etc. The Committee believe that the success of any scheme can be measured with the achievement of targets/ goals. In the absence of targets/goals it would not be possible to assess the outcome of any scheme. The Committee would be happy if the annual physical targets are fixed for such Schemes where the welfare measures can be quantified as the Committee have found that the schemes with targets perform better than the Scheme without annual targets. In view of the above, the Committee would like the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment to examine the viability and fix the physical targets of all the welfare schemes of the Department so that there is no laxity in the implementation of the Schemes at any stage by the States or other Implementing Agencies.

2.13. The Committee note that the funds were surrendered in many schemes in 2023-24 due to multiple reasons. In Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarship Schemes, funds were surrendered due to less receipt of application/ proposals and in Top class education for SCs and Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs proposals were received late. Similarly, in Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana

(PM-AJAY) funds were surrendered due to the introduction of Single Nodal Account System and in Scheme of Residential Education for Students in High School in Targeted Area (SHRESHTA) for SCs it was due to revision in the scheme. The Committee believe that the changes introduced in the Schemes were to streamline the system and to prevent fraud and misuse of funds. The Committee, however, do not find that surrender of funds due to reduction in late receipt of application/ proposals from States is in the interest of beneficiary. The Committee feel that delay in submission of proposal reflects very poorly on the part of State/ UT Governments. The reduction in number of applications due to delay in processing of applications by the State/UT Governments is not acceptable and should be avoided by the State/UT Governments. The Committee expect that the Department would devise suitable mechanism for capacity building, handholding to various implementing institutions of the State Governments so that all the Schemes are implemented effectively.

2.14. National Institute of Social Defence (NISD) is undertaking work of training and research in the field of Social Defence and also addresses critical areas such as Drug Abuse prevention, Senior Citizens Welfare, transgender welfare, Beggary prevention and rehabilitation of socially marginalized and vulnerable groups. The Committee are happy to find that NISD has done remarkable work by conducting 2100 programmes during 2021-22 to 2024-25 for NGOs, GIA functionaries, social worker, schools, service providers and for different target groups on drug prevention. However, the Committee find that the Institute encounters certain challenges primarily due to shortage of human resources. The Committee find that the Institute has prepared a comprehensive plan for expansion of Rehabilitation centres, training and capacity building and to strengthen the infrastructure. The

Committee appreciate the efforts of the Institute and expect that they would continue to increase their presence amongst Senior Citizens, transgenders, beggars and the persons suffering from drug abuse, etc. The Committee would recommend that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment will make all out efforts to ensure that the welfare activities undertaken by the Institute do not suffer for want of funds, human resources etc. and the Institute continues to contribute effectively in the welfare of the targeted persons.

CHAPTER-III

POST MATRIC SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME FOR SCHEDULED CASTES

The Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC Students (PMS-SC) is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the students for studies in India and are awarded by the Government of the States/UTs to which the applicant actually belongs *i.e.* permanently settled or domiciled. Parent/Guardian's income should not exceed ₹2.5 lakh per annum. The objective of the scheme is to provide financial assistance to the Scheduled Caste students and to appreciably increase the Gross Enrollment Ratio of SC students in higher education with a focus on those from the poorest households. It is the endeavor of the Government to raise the GER of SCs in higher education from 23.0 per cent to the national average in the next five years.

3.2 The Department of Social Justice and Empowerment have taken following steps to strengthen the implementation of the scheme:-

- (i) Online end to end processing, verification of eligibility credentials through online transaction to ensure greater transparency, control duplicity and wrongful claims by institutions;
- (ii) During FY 2020-21, funding pattern was revised from the concept of Committed Liability to a fixed sharing pattern of 60:40 between Centre and States (90:10 in case of NE states);
- (iii) Central share is being released directly to the students' bank account *w.e.f.* 2021-22 only through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) preferably through an Aadhaar Payment Bridge System.

3.3 On being asked about the steps taken for coverage of maximum number of beneficiaries under the Scheme, the representative of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment during the deliberation with the Committee submitted as under:-

“जितने बच्चों के लिए एप्लीकेशंस हमारे पास आती हैं, उनको हम ऑनर करते हैं। This is our basic approach. It is called the saturation approach. आप देखेंगे कि एक्सपेंडिचर के ट्रेंड की जो लाइन है, वह डॉटेड लाइन है और वह बढ़ ही रही है। There was a dip in 2021-22. What was the reason? The reason was, as we have mentioned, we had introduced DBT in 2021-22. So, at that time, State Governments had to make a lot of adjustments because it was a national system. It was not only Central Government. It is in partnership with states. चूंकि हम इसे राज्यों के साथ पार्टनरशिप में इंप्लिमेंट करते हैं, तो

बहुत सारी स्टेट्स बच्चों के नाम, उनके अकाउंट नंबर्स, उनके आधार कार्ड नंबर्स नहीं डाल पाए थे। उनको समय लगा था, लेकिन अगर आप अब देखें, जैसा कि मैंने स्कॉलरशिप्स के बारे में अपने रिमार्क्स में कहा था कि हमारी यह स्कीम स्टेबलाइज़ हो गई है। Now there is an upward trend. So, this is what I wanted to say. In SC scholarship, we have attained this through States. States also gave a lot of priority to children's scholarship and they have stabilised this particular scheme. So, we are able to spend this kind of money.”

3.4 The Budget Estimates, Revised Estimates and the Actual Expenditure of the Department under the scheme for the last three years alongwith the Budget Estimates for 2024-25 is as follows:

(₹ in crore)

2021-22					2022-23					2023-24					2024-25	
BE	RE	AE	Target	Achievement	BE	RE	AE	Target	Achievement	BE	RE	AE	Target	Achievement	BE	Target
3415.62	4196.59	1978.56	63 Lakhs	56.58 Lakhs	5660.0	5660.0	4392.50	66.15 Lakhs	44.47 Lakhs	6359.14	5400.00	5476.22	69.46 Lakhs	28.36 Lakhs	6359.98	72.94 lakhs

3.5 During the deliberation with the Committee, the representative of the Department deposed before the Committee with regard to the reduction in demand that:-

“76 per cent of the Ministry’s Budget goes for post-matric and pre-matric scholarship for SCs. यह हमारा बजट एलोकेशन है। जो बड़े राज्य हैं जैसे राजस्थान, मध्यप्रदेश, बिहार, छत्तीसगढ़ इन्होंने पोस्ट मैट्रिक में अपनी डिमांड कम कर दी है। They have reduced their demand for post-matric. This is a fact. So, there are a lot of reasons. One is that एक तो हमारा डीबीटी आ गया। एक तरफ आधार आ गया और एक तरफ एकाउंट नम्बर आ गया। So, lot of names have got double verified. So, States are also taking lot of care in verifying. Many States are there who do two-level, three-level, four-level. There is one State which does seven level verification. In Bihar, they do seven level verification. And then, they send to us. So, they take time also. But they say कि हम 100 प्रतिशत वैरीफिकेशन करके ही भेजेंगे। So, everybody is being careful.

But I have names of some States where the demand has come down in the first bullet point. Once we give them the funds, then there is some delay in release of funds by States. That we have mapped that there is some delay in release of funds in States and we are trying to tell them that जैसे ही पैसा आया, आप उसे रिलीज करिए। So, the fourth point I mentioned is that to prevent fraud and misuse of scholarship funds, many States and UTs and National Scholarship portal, इन्होंने एडिशनल वैरीफिकेशन मैजर्स को इनकार्पोरेट कर लिया है। It is a good thing but the fact is that because of this reason, every verification takes time. Then, Sir, there are I would say around less than 10 परसेंट से कम केसिस में टेक्निकल इश्यूज आते हैं, जिसके लिए हमारे पास एक टीम 23 लोगों की है। who solve these problems but we see that there is some technical problem जिसमें कि डिले प्रोसेसिंग होती है, किसी बच्चे का एकाउंट नम्बर मैच ही नहीं करता है। टाइपिंग में मिसटेक हो गई या सिस्टम

रिकग्नाइज नहीं करता है क्योंकि बैंक में पैसा जाता है। Some bank system is not talking electronically, digitally with national scholarship portal. सारा फंड नेशनल स्कालरशिप पोर्टल पर डीबीटी बेसिस पर जाता है, इसलिए कई बार टेक्निकल इश्यूज आते हैं।“किसी बच्चे का एकाउंट नम्बर मैच ही नहीं करता है। टाइपिंग में मिसटेक हो गई या सिस्टम रिकग्नाइज नहीं करता है क्योंकि बैंक में पैसा जाता है। Some bank system is not talking electronically, digitally with national scholarship portal. सारा फंड नेशनल स्कालरशिप पोर्टल पर डीबीटी बेसिस पर जाता है, इसलिए कई बार टेक्निकल इश्यूज आते हैं।“

3.6 On being asked about the criteria adopted for fixing the target and the reasons due to which target fixed for 2022-23 and 2023-24 could not be achieved including the initiatives taken to achieve the targets fixed for 2024-25, the Committee were informed by the Department in their written reply that:

“The annual action plans for the year are submitted by the States and UTs which are then approved by the Project Appraisal Committee. The annual action plans as submitted by the States and UTs are based on the scheme guidelines as well as the target population and the expected number of beneficiaries to be covered under the schemes as per the local State specific conditions. The reasons for less expenditure are:

(i) the annual action plans as submitted by the bigger states such as Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, Chhatisgarh, under the Post-Matric Scholarships scheme for SC have reduced (in terms of beneficiaries) to a great extent in the last three years are as follows:

States	PAC target of FY 2022-23	PAC target of FY 2023-24	PAC target of FY 2024-25
MP	5,92,000	5,85,000	5,25,000
Rajasthan	5,34,902	4,63,596	3,66,119
Bihar	2,22,070	1,69,996	98,821
Chhattisgarh	1,25,801	1,13,165	89,459

(ii) Another reason for pending scholarship applications is the submission of incomplete, incorrect or dummy documents by applicants. Errors in bank details, missing income certificates, or failure to provide necessary caste verification causes delays in verification leading to delayed pushing of finally verified State share paid data by the State Governments/UTs.

(iii) Many States such as Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan are following a multi-tiered verification process involving many levels for educational institutions and district-level authorities. Delays at any of these levels, whether due to shortage of staff, inefficiencies, or manual processing, lead to delayed pushing of finally verified State share paid data by the State Governments/UTs. As a matter of example, the applications of FY2022-23 and FY2023-24 still pending with the States/UTs are as follows:

FY	States/UTs	No. of pending applications
2022-23	Rajasthan	102304
	West Bengal	69787
	Uttar Pradesh	21947
	Tamil Nadu	21659
	Punjab	18896
2023-24	Rajasthan	127510
	Tamil Nadu	63033
	Andhra Pradesh	35879
	Punjab	18243
	West Bengal	7629

(iv) In some cases, the delay is due to slow fund release from the State Governments. Many of the State Governments release the funds in the last quarter of the financial year. Budgetary constraints, procedural delays in sanctioning and approval of funds, or a mismatch in the allocation significantly slows down the distribution process.

(v) To prevent fraud and misuse of the scholarship funds, many States/UTs and NSP for NSP on-boarded States have incorporated additional verification measures that slow down the approval process. Additional checks on income verification or student enrollment status lead to further delays.

(vi) Since the scholarships are disbursed through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), any technical issues related to the accounts also lead to delayed processing in few cases. Some of the key technical problems include:

- i. Bank Account Not Enabled for DBT
- ii. Inactive Bank Account
- iii. DBT Disabled Due to Compliance Issues

3.7. On being asked about the initiatives taken to achieve the targets fixed for 2024-25, the Committee were informed by the Department in their written reply that following steps are being taken for full utilization of Budget Estimated for 2024-25 :-

“1.(i) Under the chairmanship of JS (SCD), SCD-V monitors the progress of the implementation of the Schemes/Acts on monthly basis wherein review of scheme, State wise is undertaken. With the change in the scheme architecture to make it more transparent as well as the funding pattern, a state of fiscal discipline and financial responsibility has come to the states/UTs where both States and UTs being the implementing agencies have streamlined their systems in line with the department guidelines as well as upgraded

themselves and stabilised their systems because of which fake and ghost beneficiaries as well as institutions were removed from the system. Moreover, with the advent of Aadhaar Payment Bridge System, the scholarship is disbursed directly into the Aadhaar seeded accounts of the beneficiaries which has become a flag bearer among the major scholarship schemes of this department.

(ii) Regular capacity building and Handholding/cluster/regional meetings and/or workshops for all States/UTs are conducted to review the progress of the States as well as to resolve any pending issues.

(iii) Advertisements to promote outreach and increase awareness:

2. Scheme snippets are being uploaded on social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram).

3. Classified advertisements are being published in National and regional newspapers in Hindi, English and regional languages.

(i) Officials dealing with Pre and Post Matric Scholarship schemes for SCs visit various institutes in the States to understand their concerns.

(ii) Channelising various agencies/partners: Services from National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI), Indian Post Payments Bank (IPPB) are being taken to ensure Aadhaar seeding of beneficiaries as non-seeding of Aadhaar is a major concern for non-disbursement of SC scholarships. PMU staff is also deputed to visit the districts with the maximum pendency so that coordination with bankers and institutions may be done.”

3.8. On being enquired, whether the scholarship amount fixed is sufficient to meet the requirement and has there been any demand from any quarter to increase the scholarship amount, the Committee were informed by the Department in their written reply that:

“As regard scholarship amount, it is informed that the scheme guidelines have been frozen till the FY2025-26 with the approval of the Cabinet after extensively considering all the facets of the scheme. Both the schemes are open ended in nature and Central Share are released to the all the eligible students whose data received from the States/UTs. No States/UTs have requested to increase the scholarship amount.”

3.9. With regard to drop-out rate and the exact number of persons that are eligible for Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC Students, the Committee were informed by the Department in their written reply:

“Scholarships Schemes for SC Students are Centrally Sponsored Schemes and being implemented through States/UTs. Accordingly, the details of the drop out incidents are not available and not maintained with this Department. The exact number of persons that are eligible for Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC Students & others and Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC Students is not compiled by this Department. However, appropriate efforts are being made so as to streamline the things.”

3.10. On being enquired about the decision taken to raise the Gross Enrollement Ratio (GER) of SCs in higher education (23%) to the national average and the achievements in this direction, the Committee were informed by the Department in their written reply that:

“During FY 2020-21, the Post-Matric Scholarships Scheme for SC Students has been revised with the objectives to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of SCs in higher education (23.0%) to the national average (27.0%). The GER of SC student has increased to 25.9% in 2021-22 from 23.1% in 2020-21 as per the latest AISHE report published by the Department of Higher Education. There is also a significant improvement in GER from 2014-15 (18.9%).”

3.11. As regards to the criteria being adopted to identify the poorest household and the initiatives taken in this regard, the Committee were informed by the Department in their written reply that:

“To identify and enroll the poorest household, scheme guidelines envisage that:

- (i) The State Government is required to make special efforts to identify the poorest households from various sources and enroll the eligible students under the schemes in a mission mode;
- (ii) Awareness drive shall 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;

(iii) Advertisement to promote outreach and increase awareness:

- 1. Scheme snippets are being uploaded on social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram).
- 2. Classified advertisements are being published in National and regional newspapers in Hindi, English and regional languages.

(iv) For the following, States/UTs are advised to make special campaign to identify the poorest and make them enroll:

- (a) Students from SC households with three or more deprivations as per SECC-2011;
- (b) Students from SC households where one or both the parents are illiterate; and
- (c) The students who have passed 10th standard from a State Government/ Municipality/Local Body school.”

3.12. The Committee note that under Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for SCs, the financial assistance is provided to Scheduled Caste students studying at Post matriculation or post-secondary stage to complete their education. The Committee

find that the budgetary allocation under the Scheme was ₹3,415.62 crore, ₹5,660.00 crore, ₹6,359.14 crore, whereas the actual expenditure was ₹1,978.56 crore, ₹4,392.50 crore and ₹5,476.22 crore in 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24, respectively. The Committee also find that the funds allocated during these years could not be spent as bigger States such as Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar and Chattisgarh have submitted reduced annual action plan in terms of beneficiaries in 2022-23 and 2023-24 and large number of applications are pending with Rajasthan, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Punjab for 2022-23. The Committee find it hard to believe that despite the step wise mechanism established by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, the State Governments are not able to complete all the formalities on time. The Committee also find that several efforts have been made by the Department for active participation of State/UT Governments for implementation of Post Matric Scholarship Scheme. However, nothing fruitful seems to work out to avoid the delay in submission of proposals by the States. The Committee feel that the State Governments should own up their responsibility for proper implementation of the Scheme. The Committee recommend that the Department should make all-out efforts to establish a fool proof mechanism to deal with those States that are not performing well in terms of number of beneficiaries and expenditure under the scheme so that the large number of Scheduled Castes students would be able to complete their higher education.

3.13. The Committee note that Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC students was revised in 2020-21 to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of SCs in higher education from 23.0 per cent to the national average of 27.0 percent. The Committee have found that the GER of SC students has increased to 25.9 per cent in 2021-22 from 23.1 per cent in 2020-21 which is a significant improvement in GER of

18.9 per cent in 2014-15. However, the Committee are little apprehensive with regard to the target of 27 per cent fixed to be achieved by 2025-26 as several States are submitting reduced annual action plan and there is substantial delay in submitting the proposals by State/ UT Governments including the pendency with several States for 2022-23 and 2023-24. The Committee feel that unless the measures taken by the Department are stringently complied by the State Governments, the target of the Department to increase the GER of SCs in higher education to the national average of GER may not be achieved. The Committee are of the opinion that the criteria adopted by the Department to identify the poorest household may also supplement the efforts of the Department in enhancing the GER of SCs subject to the condition that the State/UT Governments efficiently execute them and enhance the enrollment of SC students. The Committee have no doubts about the efforts and the competency of the Department but the active participation of State/UT Governments is very essential to achieve the target. Hence, the Committee would like the Department to direct all the State/ UT Governments for expediting the process of identifying the poorest households from various sources and enroll the eligible SC students under the Scholarship schemes in a mission mode so that the Department would achieve the target of GER of SCs fixed to be achieved by 2025-26.

CHAPTER-IV

SCHOLARSHIP FOR HIGHER EDUCATION FOR YOUNG ACHIEVERS SCHEME (SHREYAS) FOR SCs

It is the umbrella scheme consisting of four existing sub-schemes viz. (a) National Fellowship for SCs (b) National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for SCs (c) Top Class Education scheme for SCs (d) Free Coaching Scheme for SC and OBC students.

4.2. The Budget Estimates, Revised Estimates, Actual Expenditure for the last three years alongwith BE for 2024-25 is as follows:-

Programme/Schemes	2021-22			2022-23			2023-24			BE 2024-25
	BE	RE	Actual Expendi ture	BE	RE	Actual Expendi ture	BE	RE	Actual Expendit ure (Till 31.03.2024)	
Schemes										
Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for SCs										
National Fellowship for SCs	300.00	125.00	122.44	173.00	159.00	114.25	163.00	188.00	183.14	188.00
Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs	50.00	30.00	14.98	47.00	27.00	18.41	47.00	14.82	7.76	35.00
Top Class Education for SCs	70.00	70.00	84.72	108.00	108.00	85.67	111.00	100.00	83.84	110.00
National Overseas Scholarship for SCs	30.00	35.00	49.07	36.00	50.00	75.44	50.00	85.00	88.57	95.00
Total: Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for SCs	450.00	260.00	271.21	364.00	344.00	293.77	371.00	387.82	363.31	428.00

4.3. A statement showing the physical targets and achievements alongwith shortfall for the last three years and 2024-25 under SHREYAS for SCs is as follows:-

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme/project/programme	2021-22			2022-23			2023-24			% of achievements for last three years	2024-25 Target
		Target	Achievement	Shortfall, if any, indicating reasons in brief	Target	Achievement	Shortfall, if any, indicating reasons in brief	Target	Achievement	Shortfall, if any, indicating reasons in brief		
(i)	National Fellowship for SCs	2000	3716	NA	2000	3613	NA	2000	4163	NA		2000
(ii)	National Overseas Scholarship for SCs	125	125	NA	125	125	NA	125	125	NA	100%	125
(iii)	Top Class Education for SCs	4100	4544	NA	4200	4171	Negligible Shortfall	4300	3969	Due to receipt of less number of application from some of the institutes	100.67%	4400
(iv)	Free Coaching Scheme for SCs and OBCs	4000	1761	Due to COVID-19 and closing of Physical mode of coaching	3500	558	Mode 1 of the scheme discontinued. Mode 2 of the scheme introduced giving students the liberty to choose institute of their choice. Around 400 students only out of 2109 selected students submitted the required documents.	3500	223	In 2023-24, Dr. Ambedkar foundation was designated as CNA for the scheme. Signing of MoU with the central Universities (CUs) took place upto December 2023 and the proposals for release of grants in respect of 8 CUs were	23.10%	3500

National Fellowship for SC

4.4. National Fellowship Scheme for Scheduled Caste (NFSC) students is a Central Sector Scheme introduced during the financial year 2005-06 to provide opportunities to Scheduled Caste students for pursuing higher education leading to M.Phil/Ph.D degree 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 Scheduled Caste students to undertake advanced studies and research leading to M.Phil/Ph.D Degrees, who have qualified National Eligibility Test-Junior Research Fellowship (NET-JRF) of UGC or UGC-Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (UGC-CSIR) NET-IRF joint test). The NFSC Scheme was implemented through UGC till September, 2022. However, from 01.10.2022 NSFDC has become the implementing agency for NFSC.

4.5. On being asked about the criteria fixed to allocate funds in the budget and the reasons due to which funds allocated were reduced at RE stage, the Department informed as under:-

“The budget allocation is made based on the recommendations of the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC). The NFSC scheme was implemented through UGC till September, 2022. However, from 01.10.2022 NSFDC has become the implementing agency for NFSC. Funds are disbursed to the implementing agency based on their raised requirements. In the financial years 2021-22 and 2022-23, the budget under the R.E. was reduced due to the absence of further funding requests from the implementing agencies. However, in the F.Y. 2023-24, a B.E. of ₹163.00 crore was allocated to the NFSC scheme, which was subsequently increased to ₹188.00 crore in the Revised Estimate for the year.”

4.6. On being enquired, whether there has been any request to increase the number of scholarships and to increase the income eligibility criteria for availing the Scholarship, the Committee were informed by the Department vide written reply that:

“There is no proposal regarding increase of slots and income eligibility criteria under consideration.”

4.7. On being asked to provide the steps taken by the Department for awareness generation of the Scheme among the students belonging to SC/OBC Communities, the Department submitted in their written reply as under:-

“The guidelines are widely publicized and are also readily available on the Ministry's website and students can easily go through the guidelines and apply accordingly. Letter written to Principal Secretaries to disseminate information regarding these schemes in their states.”

4.8. When asked about the steps taken for smooth implementation of Scheme, the Department informed as under:

- i) A field has been added in the application to capture the current educational status of the student. Such students, who have either cleared their post graduate course or are in their final year of the course, shall be given preference for selection and would be allowed upto one year from selection to join.
- ii) If, the allocated slots earmarked for either UGC-CSIR-NET-JRF joint test or UGC-NET-JRF remain unfilled, the vacant slots may be filled up through the UGC-NET-JRF or the UGC-CSIR-NET-JRF joint test, as the case may be for the same academic year.
- iii) A monthly certificate system has been introduced in place of Semester based Certificate System for better monitoring and effective implementation of the NFSC scheme.
- iv) A portal for National Fellowship Management and a Grievance redressal portal (<https://scholarship.canarabank.in>) was launched which allows a student-centric administration of the fellowship and would substantially reduce the vexation paper work for timely release of the fellowship.

National Overseas Scholarships for SCs

4.9. The Central Sector Scheme of National Overseas Scholarship is to facilitate the low income students belonging to 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. Students are selected on the basis of unconditional offer of admission to top 500 QS World University ranked foreign Institutes/Universities. Students are required to at least score 60% marks or equivalent grade in the qualifying examination. Total family income of a student from all sources shall not exceed ₹8.00 lakh per annum in the preceding financial year.

4.10. The scheme of National Overseas Scholarship started in year 1953-54 and data regarding students benefitted under the scheme since 2004-05 is as under:

S NO.	Year	Total No. of Scholarships	Candidates Selected
1	2004-05	20	20
2	2005-06	20	20
3	2006-07	20	15
4	2007-08	30	28
5	2008-09	30	29
6	2009-10	30	30
7	2010-11	30	30
8	2011-12	30	30
9	2012-13	30	23
10	2013-14	60	39
11	2014-15	100	59
12	2015-16	100	50
13	2016-17	100	108*
14	2017-18	100	183*
15	2018-19	100	100
16	2019-20	100	100
17	2020-21	100	100
18	2021-22	125	125
19	2022-23	125	125
20	2023-24	125	125

4.11. With regard to the gender-wise details of the beneficiaries under National Overseas Scholarships, the Department submitted as under:-

“The scheme of NOS was started in year 1953-54. NOS is a Central Sector Scheme and therefore, no State/UT wise allocation of funds under the scheme. The details of Male and Female who have taken benefit of Scholarship from 2014-15 to 2023-24 is as follows:-

S.Y.	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
2014-15	47	12	59
2015-16	34	16	50
2016-17	72	36	108
2017-18	136	47	183
2018-19	65	35	100
2019-20	70	30	100
2020-21	69	31	100
2021-22	86	39	125
2022-23	86	39	125
2023-24	86	39	125

4.12. On being enquired whether there has been any request to increase the number of scholarships and also to increase the income eligibility criteria for availing the Scholarship, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“Under Central Sector Scheme of National Overseas Scholarship (NOS) for Scheduled Caste etc., the number of seats has 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. Further, there is no proposal regarding increase of slots and income eligibility criteria under consideration.”

4.13. On being asked about the steps taken by the Department for awareness generation of the Scheme among the students belonging to SC/OBC Communities, the Department submitted as under:

“To generate awareness regarding the NOS Scheme, the Department has taken various progressive steps which are as follows:

1. Twitter & Facebook Campaigns
2. Newspaper Advertisements in both National and Regional Newspapers all over India
3. The Ministry is making due efforts to create awareness of the Scheme throughout the country. The details of the scheme are available on the website of the Department. Apart from this the features of the scheme are also broadcasted through radio channels of All India Radio in the programme 'Sawarati Jaye Jeewan ki Rahen'.

Letters written to Principal Secretaries to disseminate information regarding the Scheme in their States.”

Top Class Education for SCs

4.14. The Scheme aims at recognizing and promoting quality education amongst students belonging to SCs, by providing financial support. The Scheme covers SC students for pursuing studies beyond 12th class. SC students having total annual family income from all sources up to ₹8.00 lakh and having secured admission in a full-time prescribed course in any of the notified institutions according to the general selection criteria prescribed by the concerned institution are eligible for scholarship to the extent of the number of scholarships (slots) allocated to the institution for the course. Thirty percent (30%) of slots allotted to the Institution shall be reserved for eligible SC girl students. The benefit of the Scheme is not provided to more than 2 siblings in a family.

4.15. When asked about the Year wise beneficiaries under the scheme, the Department is submitted as under:

Financial Year	No. of beneficiaries
2007-08	195
2008-09	378
2009-10	541
2010-11	1036
2011-12	1259
2012-13	1306
2013-14	1574
2014-15	1568
2015-16	1911
2016-17	2033
2017-18	1883
2018-19	1385
2019-20	1375
2020-21	3118
2021-22	3465 Male+ 1079 Female=4544
2022-23	3154Male+1017Femal e=4171
2023-24	2975 Male + 994 Female =3969

4.16. On being asked about the criteria fixed to allocate funds in the budget for various Sub Schemes under SYREYAS and also about the reasons due to which funds allocated had to be reduced at RE stage in 2023-24 from ₹111.00 crore to ₹100.00 crore for Top class education for SCs, the Committee were informed *vide*written reply that:

“The budget in the scheme is allocated based on the recommendations of Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC). Further funds were reduced at RE stage due to non-receipt of proposals from some of the empanelled institutions.”

4.17. On being enquired whether there has been any request to increase the number of scholarships and also to increase the income eligibility criteria for availing the Top Class Scholarship, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“In the Schemes of Top Class Education, no request has been received from Institutes/Universities. The income eligibility criteria under the scheme of Top Class Education Scheme was revised in the year 2020-21 and was increase to ₹8 Lacs/annum from ₹6 Lacs/annum.”

Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs

4.18. The Scheme of Free Coaching Scheme for SC and OBC Students came into existence in the present form in the year 2007. This Scheme is being Central Sector, State-Wise fund are not earmarked. The objective of the Scheme is to provide coaching of good quality for economically disadvantaged Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) candidates to enable them appear in competitive and entrance examinations for obtaining appropriate jobs in Public/Private Sector as well as for securing admission in reputed technical and professional higher education institutions. The ceiling of the total family income under the scheme is Rs. 8 lakhs per annum. 3500 slots are allotted per annum. The ratio of SC: OBC students is 70:30 and 30% slots are reserved for female candidates in each category. In case of non-availability of adequate number of candidates in SC category the Ministry can relax this ratio. However, in no case, less than 50% SC students shall be permitted. Since 2023-24 the scheme is being run by Dr.Ambedkar Foundation (DAF) which is the Central Nodal Agency for the scheme through Dr.Ambedkar Centre for Excellence (DACE) in 19 empanelled Central Universities. Benefit under the Scheme can be availed by a particular student not more than twice.

4.19. When asked about the gender wise details of the beneficiaries under the Scheme, the Department submitted as under:-

“Presently, FCS is not on National Scholarship Portal (NSP). Therefore, Gender-Wise data is not available. However, onboarding the Scheme on NSP portal is under consideration. The year- wise beneficiaries under the scheme is as follows:

Financial Year	No. of the beneficiaries
2007-08	4860
2008-09	3403
2009-10	3013
2010-11	9347
2011-12	7359
2012-13	5765
2013-14	4400
2014-15	6126
2015-16	4300
2016-17	250
2017-18	2247
2018-19	1296
2019-20	1345
2020-21	2112
2021-22	1761
2022-23	558
2023-24	223

4.20. As regard to the evaluation of Free Coaching Scheme for SC and OBC students done in the year 2020-21, the following action was taken by the Department on the observations:-

- (i) Release of stipend to the student was not in the time that compels them to drop in between of the course.
Action Taken: Under the revised scheme, the scheme is run by Dr. Ambedkar Foundation through Empanelled Central Universities. Both fee and stipend will be released directly into the bank account of the beneficiary student through DBT after receipt of fund demand from concerned Central Universities.
- (ii) The ministry may consider judging the performance of the students in not only clearing the targeted exam but in related lower level exams as well.
Action Taken: The Department evaluates the performance of the student(s) on the basis of the success not only in the targeted exam but also in the equivalent exam.
- (iii) Efforts should be made to bring more and more student under the scheme especially student belonging to the rural setup.

Action Taken: The scheme is advertised by the Department through national newspapers and internet. The Department developed the online portal for the scheme which is as under: coaching.dosje.gov.in. Any notification regarding the scheme is uploaded on the Ministry's portal."

4.21. On being asked about the steps taken by the Department for awareness generation of the Schemes among the students belonging to SC/OBC Communities, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

"Scheme guidelines are uploaded on the website of the Ministry, www.socialjustice.nic.in. Letter written to Principal Secretaries to disseminate information regarding these schemes in their states."

4.22. As regards to the measures taken to ensure that the funds allocated for 2024-25 under the Scheme are fully utilized as the funds allocated could not be fully utilized during the previous years, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

"Funds released *vis-à-vis* budget allocated under Free Coaching Scheme for SC and OBC Students in the last 3 years:

Financial Year	Budget (BE)	Budget (RE)	Expenditure
2021-22	50.00	30.00	14.98
2022-23	47.00	27.00	18.41
2023-24	47.00	14.82	7.76

The Scheme has been revised in the year 2023-24 and is now being implemented through empanelled Central Universities. All the Central Universities were requested to enter into an MoU with Dr Ambedkar Foundation (DAF), the implementing agency of the scheme. However, only 19 Central Universities signed MoU."

4.23. On being asked, whether the performance of Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs Scheme is satisfactory and meet the expectations of the Department, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

"The performance of the scheme has been satisfactory to some extent. However, to make the scheme more effective, the scheme has been revised in 2023-24 so that the benefit of the scheme may be extended to larger number of beneficiaries."

4.24. On being asked about the steps taken by the Department for awareness generation of the Schemes among the students belonging to SC/OBC Communities, the Committee were informed that:

"Scheme guidelines are uploaded on the website of the Ministry, www.socialjustice.nic.in. The scheme of Top Class Education is implemented

through NSP, Department of Electronic and Information Technology is already taking action for advertisement of date of opening /closing of NSP portal. Time to time messages is sent to the applicant regarding status of their scholarship application. From this year i.e. 2023-24, we have developed creative social media post for spreading awareness. Letter written to Principal Secretaries to disseminate information regarding these schemes in their states.”

4.25. On being asked about the difficulties being faced by the Department in implementation of these Schemes, the Department submitted that:

“Top Class Education Scheme is being implemented on National Scholarship Portal (NSP). There were some technical issues on the NSP. However there has been continuous improvement in the portal over the years and majority of issues have been resolved.”

4.26. As regards to the necessity to enhance the budgetary allocation in future keeping into consideration the performance of all Sub-Schemes of SHREYAS for SCs, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“Budget allocation in Top Class, Free Coaching, National Overseas Scholarship and National Fellowship for Scheduled Castes is currently sufficient to meet the requirement. In case there is more demand, the Department will go for fresh EFC after the end of the present financial cycle.”

4.27. During the deliberation with the Committee, the representative of the Department submitted before the Committee on the overall functioning of the Scheme that:-

“इसमें हम एससीज़ को नेशनल फैलोशिप देते हैं। इलेवेंथ और ट्वेल्थ के बाद हम पोस्ट-मैट्रिक में जिस तरह स्कॉलरशिप देते हैं, we give national fellowship for M.Phil, Ph.D. degrees, Sciences, Humanities and Social Science. Similarly, we also provide funding for Scheduled Caste students, जो विदेश जाकर चिन्हित यूनिवर्सिटीज़ में पढ़ना चाहते हैं। मास्टर डिग्री हो या पी.एच.डी. डिग्री के लिए एब्रांड जाना हो, उसके लिए एक निर्धारित रैंकिंग का फ्रेमवर्क है। ऐसा नहीं है कि विदेश में किसी भी निम्नवर्ग की यूनिवर्सिटी ज़में, लो-कालिटी यूनिवर्सिटीज़ में हम बच्चों को भेज दें, ऐसा नहीं है। हाई कालिटी यूनिवर्सिटीज़ का एक फ्रेमवर्क बना हुआ है, अगर वहां एडमिशन आता है, तो उस रैंकिंग के आधार पर हम बच्चे को अलाऊ करते हैं। We have identified some top class institutes in the country, जैसे कि आई आई टीज़, आई आई एम्स आदि। आपने देखा होगा कि न्यूज़ पेपर्स में आया था, ऑनरेबल सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने यह कहा था कि इस बच्चे को आईआईटी, खड़गपुर में एडमिशन क्यों नहीं मिला? वह मुज़फ्फर नगर, यूपी कालड़ का था। यह एक अपवाद है। असलियत यह है, वह पता नहीं कैसे हुआ, पता नहीं वह बच्चा कैसे छूटा, कि आईआईटीज़, ट्रिपल आईआईटीज़, एनआईटीज़, एनआईएफटी, नेशनल इंस्टिट्यूट ऑफ डिज़ाइन, इंडियन इंस्टिट्यूट ऑफ होटल मैनेजमेंट या किसी भी एम्स में एससी का कैटिगरी का बच्चा जाता है, इन सभी में we pay the fees. This is the mandate of the Department. अगर बच्चा वहां पहुंच गया है और वह अप्लाई कर देता है, he has to apply, हमें नहीं पता चलता है कि किसने, कहां एडमिशन लिया है? उसकी एप्लीकेशन आनी जरूरी है। सारा का सारा डिजिटल प्रोसेस है,

मैनुअल नहीं है। अगर उस बच्चे ने एप्लीकेशन भरकर पोर्टल पर डाल दी, तो हम उसकी एप्लीकेशन को ऑनर करते हैं।

Lastly, free coaching scheme for Schedule Caste and Other Backward Class students for competitive examination in UPSC, public sector as well as private sector. Apart from this, to go to professional institutions, we have this scheme. Sir, you have very kindly mentioned in your opening remarks about umbrella scheme. This is one of the umbrella schemes. Here also, you will find a steady increase in our expenditure. This is another scheme जिसमें काफी डिमांड आ रही है। The children from the SC category are going to higher institutions and they are applying for higher institutions. The trend has now come in the country. We are funding it. So, this is a positive upward trend in terms of expenditure”.

4.28. The Scholarship for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for SCs is the Umbrella Scheme which has four existing sub-Schemes viz. National Fellowships for SCs, National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for SCs, Top Class Education Scheme for SCs and Free Coaching Scheme for SC and OBC Students. The Committee note that the budgetary allocation for 2022-23 and 2023-24 was less in comparison to 2021-22 but the actual expenditure has been constantly increasing since 2021-22, as it was ₹271.21 crore, ₹293.77 crore and ₹363.31 crore in 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24, respectively. The Committee find that the Free Coaching Scheme for SCs and OBCs is not available on the National Scholarship Portal and onboarding of the Scheme on the portal is under consideration. The Committee also find that the Scheme is being implemented by Dr Ambedkar Foundation through empanelled Central Universities after revision of the Scheme in 2023-24 and only 19 Central Universities have signed the MoU with the Foundation. The Committee desire that the Department should take necessary steps to onboard the Free Coaching Scheme for SCs and OBCs on National Scholarship Portal and more Central Universities should be empanelled so that a large number of students of SC and OBC communities are able to appear in competitive and entrance examinations for obtaining jobs in Public/Private Sector as well as to secure admission in reputed higher educational institutions.

CHAPTER-V

PRADHAN MANTRI ANUSHUCHIT JAATI ABHYUDAY YOJANA (PM-AJAY)

Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhuyday Yojana (PM- AJAY) is a unified scheme by merging existing 03 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. The aim of the Yojana is 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. The Yojana also ensure better convergence of public funds and more efficient utilization of resources. However, no physical target has been fixed under any component of the Scheme. Broadly, the Scheme has following three components:

- (i) Development of SC dominated villages into an “Adarsh Gram”. This component aims at improving socio-economic developmental indicators by ensuring adequate infrastructure and requisite services in the SC dominated villages.
- (ii) ‘Grants-in-aid’ for District/State-level Projects for socio-economic betterment of SCs that may include creation of infrastructure in SC dominated villages including those selected under Adarsh Gram component, construction of Residential schools, Comprehensive Livelihood Projects which may include components such as Skill development, related infrastructure development, financial assistance in case loan is taken by beneficiaries for acquisition/creation of assets required for livelihood generation etc. Its objective is to reduce poverty of the SC communities by generation of additional employment opportunities through skill development, income generating schemes and other initiatives.
- (iii) Construction of Hostels in higher educational institutions which are top-ranked as per the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) of Government of India as well as other Central Institutes (such as CIPET, Institutes under control of this Ministry etc.) and State Institutes which are funded by the Centre/State Governments/Union Territory Administrations either fully or partially. Similarly, construction of hostels in schools which are either fully or partially funded by the Centre/State Governments/Union Territory Administrations and recommended by them. Its aim is to 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 aspirational districts/ SC dominated blocks and elsewhere in India.

5.2. The Budget Estimates, Revised Estimates, Actual Expenditure alongwith shortfall/ excess expenditure during last three years under PM-AJAY alongwith BE for 2024-25 is as follows:-

(₹ in crore)

S.No.	Programme/Schemes	2021-22			2022-23			2023-24			BE 2024-25
		BE	RE	Actual Expenditure	BE	RE	Actual Expenditure	BE	RE	Actual Expenditure (Till 31.03.2024)	
Schemes											
	SCD Division										
	Pradhan Mantri AnusuchitJaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM AJAY)	1800.00	1800.00	1820.32	1950.00	1062.39	164.00	2050.00	450.00	471.12	2140.00

5.3. On being enquired about the reasons for downsizing the BE allocations at RE stage in 2022-23 and 2023-24, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“The introduction of the SNA system required States/UTs to complete the necessary mapping, causing a procedural delay and resulting in lower expenditure. Additionally, pending Utilization Certificates, SNA balances, and fewer proposals for Hostels and non-submission of Grants-in-aid perspective plans by some States contributed to less expenditure. As a result, BE allocations had to be downsized at the RE stage. To address this, the Department conducts monthly review meetings, maintains regular communication with States/UTs, and closely monitors the implementation of schemes to assess potential expenditure throughout the financial year, ensuring prudent Budgetary Allocations from the outset.”

5.4. As regards to the reasons for low expenditure under the Scheme in 2022-23 and 2023-24 in comparison to budgetary allocation and the steps being taken by the Department to ensure that funds allocated for 2024-25 are fully utilized, the Department submitted in their written reply that:-

“Being a centrally sponsored scheme implemented by State Governments and UT administrations, has faced delays due to pending Utilization Certificates (UCs) and significant SNA balances with the States/UTs, leading to reduced expenditure. Additionally, the Department received fewer proposals under the hostel component, and some States have not submitted the required perspective plans under the Grants-in-aid (GIA) component. As a result, expenditure for the scheme in 2022-23 and 2023-24 was lower. To address this, the Department holds monthly review

meetings and maintains regular communication with States/UTs to improve implementation, clear SNA balances, and ensure timely submission of UCs for smooth fund release”

5.5. On being asked about the assessment done prior to merging of the Schemes under PM-AJAY and the performance of Scheme after the merger alongwith the individual performance of these Schemes during each of the last five years, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“An evaluation conducted for the three schemes prior to merging of these schemes under PMAJAY and in the evaluation report, the components were found relevant. The assessment may be summarized as below:

1. Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana - Scheme highlights the significance and potential to create national level impact. Scheme lays focus on convergence with livelihood and skill development initiatives. No issue observed in relation to funds under the scheme.
2. Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan (SCA to SCSP) - Scheme is much needed by the target community as the scheme uptake has remained significant over the years. Scheme has made significant impact on the target group by reducing the financial burden and providing sustainable livelihood. Funding pattern of the scheme is appropriate
3. Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana (BJRCY)- Scheme has made significant impact on the target group by facilitating access to higher education and supporting them financially by providing residential facilities near their colleges/universities.

After the merger of the schemes, there has been progress in the performance in various fields such as expansion of coverage of Adarsh Gram villages, financial assistance increased from Rs. 10,000/- to Rs. 50,000/- under GIA component and enhancing the coverage under Hostel Component.”

5.6. On being asked about the initiatives taken since 2021-22 and the roadmap laid down to achieve the aims of the Scheme, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“There have been numerous initiatives undertaken since 2021-22 under the three components of the scheme. The details (component-wise) areas under:

- (i) Adarsh Gram Component: Rs.1305 Crore has been released to 23 States/UTs and 6282 villages have been declared as Adarsh Gram. State of Uttar Pradesh declared highest number of Adarsh Gram i.e. 1066 villages followed by Tamil Nadu (1016 villages) and Madhya Pradesh (962 villages).
- (ii) Grant-in-aid Component: Rs.1023.0 Cr. provided to 184815 beneficiaries (as reported by States/UTs).
- (iii) Hostel Component: Rs.114.23 Cr. sanctioned for 44 hostels covering 4985 beneficiaries.”

5.7. With regard to the mechanism developed to ensure that none of the Scheme suffer individually for the lack of funds etc. after the merger, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“To ensure that none of the Schemes suffer individually after the merger, there is a provision of fund allocation to each component proportionately which is as below:

- (i) Adarsh Gram: Up to 50 % of the total allocated funds under the scheme to the States/UTs under Gap filling activities for selected villages.
- (ii) Administration, Monitoring & Evaluation: Upto 5 percent of total allocated funds under the scheme for administration, monitoring etc.
- (iii) Construction/Repair of Hostels: Up to 2% of total allocated funds to be utilized for central institutions.
- (iv) Grants-in-aids for the projects at District/State – The balance available funds under the Scheme will be allocated to the States/UTs under this head.”

5.8. On being enquired about the reasons due to which the allocation for 2024-25 has increased very marginally particularly when this Scheme has three big Sub-Schemes and the allocated funds would contain rising inflation, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“Outlay of expenditure for PM-AJAY has already been decided by EFC for 2021-22 to 2025-26. The Department feels that the given funds would adequately meet the objectives of PM-AJAY and would contain rising inflation.”

5.9. The Committee note that Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhudaya Yojana (PM-AJAY) is an Umbrella scheme wherein 3 centrally sponsored schemes, namely, Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PM-AJAY), Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan (SCA to SCSP) and Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana (BJRCY) have been merged in 2021-22 due to similarity in nature. The Committee find that since 2021-22, 6282 villages in the country have been declared Adarsh Grams, ₹1023 crore provided to 18,4815 beneficiaries under GIA component and ₹114.23 crore sanctioned for 44 hostels covering 4985 beneficiaries. The Committee appreciate the efforts of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment for taking several steps for effective implementation of the Scheme. The Committee are however, slightly worried with the pace of actual expenditure incurred during 2022-23 and 2023-24. The Committee feel that the gap between Budgetary Estimate and Actual Expenditure should be narrowed down so that the objectives of the Scheme are fully achieved. The State Governments should be guided to take necessary steps so that more and more villages are declared Adarsh Grams in their States as it has happened in Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh. Similarly, the construction of hostels in educational institutions should also be prioritized as large number of students belonging to SC community are not able to join good educational institutions due to limited availability of hostels.

CHAPTER-VI

STRENGTHENING OF MACHINERY FOR ENFORCEMENT OF PROTECTION OF CIVIL RIGHTS ACT 1955 AND PREVENTION OF ATROCITIES ACT, 1989

Article 17 of the Constitution of India abolished 'untouchability', forbade its practice in any form and made enforcement of any disability arising out of 'untouchability', an offence punishable in accordance with law. In accordance with this Constitutional provision, an Act of Parliament namely the Protection of Civil Rights (PCR) Act, 1955, was enacted which prescribed punishment for enforcement of any disability arising from practice of 'untouchability'. The provisions of the Act extend to the whole of India. Further, to check and deter crimes against members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, another Act of Parliament which also falls under the provisions of Article 17 of the Constitution namely the "the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989" was enacted and enforced on 30.01.1990. The main objectives of the Act are:

- (i) to prevent the commission of offences of atrocities against the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes;
- (ii) to provide for Special Courts for the trial of such offences;
- (iii) to provide relief and rehabilitation of the victims of such offences; and
- (iv) for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

6.2. The Central Government in exercise of Powers conferred by Sub Section (i) of Section 23 of the provisions of the Act extend to the whole of India (PoA) notified the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Rules, 1995 on 31.03.1995. The PoA Rules among other things, prescribed minimum scale of relief and rehabilitation for the affected persons (between ₹20,000/- to ₹200,000/-, depending upon the nature of offence. The prescribed minimum scale of relief and rehabilitation under the Rules has been last amended in April 2016 making it between ₹85,000/- to ₹8,25,000/- depending upon the nature of offence.

6.3. With an objective to deliver effective justice to members of SCs and STs as well as enhanced deterrent to the offenders, the PoA Act was amended by the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Act, 2015 (No.1 of

2016) and enforced on 26.01.2016. The amendments relate to rephrasing and expansion of some of earlier offences and addition of several new offences, addition of certain IPC offences attracting less than ten years of imprisonment, committed against members of SCs and STs, as offences punishable under the PoA Act, establishment of Special Court and Exclusive Special Courts and specification of Special Public Prosecutors and the Exclusive Special Public Prosecutors to try the offences under the PoA Act, power of Special Courts and Exclusive Special Courts to take direct cognizance of offence and as far as possible, completion of trial of the case within two months from the date of filing of the charge sheet, addition of chapter on the 'Rights of Victims and Witnesses' and wilful negligence of a public servant in discharging his duties for registration of complaints, recording statement of witnesses, conducting investigation and filing charges and any other duties specified in the Act and Rules.

6.4. The PoA Act has been further amended by the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Act, 2018, and after section 18, section 18A inserted which reads as under:

"18A.

(1) For the purposes of this Act, —

(a) preliminary enquiry shall not be required for registration of a First Information Report against any person; or

(b) the investigating officer shall not require approval for the arrest, if necessary, of any person, against whom an accusation of having committed an offence under this Act has been made and no procedure other than that provided under this Act or the Code shall apply.

(2) The provisions of section 438 of the Code shall not apply to a case under this Act, notwithstanding any judgment or order or direction of any Court."

The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Act, 2018, was notified in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary on 17.08.2018 and enforced on 20.08.2018.

6.5. Consequent upon amendments done in the PoA Act, certain amendments had been necessitated in the PoA Rules. Accordingly necessary amendments have been done in the PoA Rules by the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Rules, 2016, notified in the Gazette of India on 14.04.2016, which broadly relate to rationalization of the phasing of payment of relief amount to victims for

various offences of atrocities, and substitution of Annexure-I of the Schedule to the PoA Rules, which specifies relief amount for various offences or atrocities. This includes prescribing relief for new offences or atrocities as well for rephrased/expanded offences and not linking payment of any part of relief amount with the requirement of medical examination for non-invasive kind of offences against women like sexual harassment, gestures or acts intended to insult the modesty, assault or use of criminal force with intent to disrobe, voyeurism, stalking, separate provision of relief for offences of rape and gang rape, enhancement of relief amount to between ₹85,000/- to ₹8, 25,000/-, depending upon the nature of the offence, payment of admissible relief to atrocity victims/ their dependents, within seven days, completion of investigation and filing of charge sheet within sixty days, to enable timely commencement of prosecution and periodic review of the Scheme for the Rights and Entitlements of Victims and Witnesses in accessing justice, by the State, District and Sub-Division Level Vigilance and Monitoring Committees in their respective meetings.

6.6. With a view to financially assist the States/UTs in implementation of provisions of the Acts; a Centrally Sponsored Scheme was introduced initially for implementation of the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1957 in 1974-75. With the enactment of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, the scope of the scheme was extended to the PoA act as well in 1990-91. Central assistance is provided to the States/UTs mainly for:

- (i) Functioning and strengthening of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Protection Cell and Special Police Stations.
- (ii) Strengthening and Enforcement of Judicial Machinery.
- (iii) Relief and Rehabilitation of atrocity victims.
- (iv) Incentive for Inter-Caste Marriages, where one of the spouses is a member of a Scheduled Castes.
- (v) Awareness generation and publicity.

6.7. The funding pattern of the scheme is such that the total expenditure is shared on 50:50 basis between the Central Government and States/UTs (with legislature) for (iii), (iv) and (v) above, and on 50:50 basis over and above the committed liability of the State/UT

(with legislature), for (i) and (ii) above. The UTs (without legislature) receives 100% Central Assistance.

6.8. The Budgetary Estimates, Revised Estimates, Actual Expenditure alongwith the shortfall/ Excess Expenditure for the last three years under the Scheme and BE for 2024-25 is as Under:-

Programme/Schemes	2021-22			2022-23			2023-24			BE 2024-25
	BE	RE	AE	BE	RE	AE	BE	RE	AE (Till 31.03.2024)	
Strengthening of machinery for Enforcement of Protection of Civil Right Act 1955 and Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989	600.00	600.00	610.11	600.00	500.00	390.85	500.00	500.00	535.18	550.00

6.9. According to the Annual Report (2023-24) of the Department, the details with regard to the funds release to various States are as follows:-

Sl.No	States/ UTs	Central Assistance released (₹ in crore) in F.Y 2023-24
1.	AndhraPradesh	14.67
2.	Assam	0.54
3.	Bihar	37.63
4.	ChhattisgarhS	13.38
5.	Chandigarh	01.73
6.	Delhi	0.18
7.	Goa	0.25
8.	Gujarat	29.81
9.	Haryana	29.43
10.	HimachalPradesh	2.61
11.	Jharkhand	0.81
12.	Karnataka	40.00
13.	Kerala	11.32
14.	MadhyaPradesh	63.49
15.	Maharashtra	37.28
16.	Odisha	58.03
17.	Puducherry	1.39
18.	Rajasthan	42.55
19.	Sikkim	0.05

20.	TamilNadu	36.59
21.	Telangana	9.00
22.	Tripura	0.11
23.	UttarPradesh	97.95
24.	Uttarakhand	1.00
25.	WestBengal	03.69
26.	NationalHelplineagainstAtrocities(NHAA)	01.70
27.	Advertising&Publicity	0.51
	Total	535.70

6.10. With respect to the implementation of various provisions contained in the Scheme and the Budgetary Estimates, the representative of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment briefed the Committee during the deliberation that:-

“To safeguard the rights and interests of the vulnerable communities, particularly SCs and STs, हम यह स्कीम एक एक्ट के तहत चलाते हैं। सर, हम बहुत काम करते हैं। We designate special SC police stations, and specially empowered courts are designated by the Chief Justice of High Court ताकि मुकदमे तेजी से चल सकें। इसके अलावा हम यहाँ से भी फॉलो करते हैं कि मुकदमे के बाद चार्जशीट दाखिल हुई या नहीं। फैसला कितने दिनों में हुआ? We collect and analyse that data and हम राज्यों को देते हैं और एडवाइजरी देते हैं कि आप इस चीज में पीछे चल रहे हैं, इस चीज को आगे बढ़ाइए।

I have mentioned about the functioning and strengthening of the SC/ST Protection Cell, special police station, strengthening and enforcement of judicial machinery, relief and rehabilitation of atrocity victims. जो दलितों पर अत्याचार होता है, उसके लिए हम यह रिलीफ देते हैं, उनका रीहैबिलिटेशन करते हैं। हम इसी एक्ट के अंतर्गत इंसेंटिव फॉर इंटर कास्ट मैरिज भी देखते हैं। एक्ट कहता है कि अगर इंटर कास्ट मैरिज होगी और दोनों में से एक एससी से होगा तो हम उसको इंसेंटिव देंगे। अवेयरनेस जनरेशन पब्लिसिटी तो है ही। आगे चलिए।

यहाँ एक प्रश्न उठता है कि डाउनवर्ड क्यों जा रहा है? There is no lack of money. When we are going deep into the analysis of the States, we are finding that they have to raise the demand. अगर मैंने किसी राज्य को 100 करोड़ रुपया दिया, वह बाँट दे और उसका कम से कम 75 परसेंट का यूटिलाइजेशन भी हो। एफ ए मैडम ने हमें 493 करोड़ रुपये की स्वीकृति दे दी है और इस समय हमने जो स्पेंड किया है, मेरे पास वह डाटा है, 341 करोड़ रुपये हमने डिस्बर्स इस साल, इन 7-8 महीनों में कर दिया है। अभी तो 5 महीने बाकी हैं। In seven months, we have disbursed Rs. 341 crore. Now, this money must be utilised. If more demand comes, then we will give more. So, money is not a problem for this particular thing. जो इस साल का पैसा नेक्स्ट ईयर रह जाता है, so, next year also, we cannot give it till they give me the Utilisation Certificate जिसके ऊपर फाइनंस इनसिस्ट करता है।

Here, I want to submit before the hon. Committee कि यह डाउनवर्ड ट्रेंड जरूर है, जो ट्रेंड लाइन है, लेकिन मैं माननीय सदस्यों को यह आश्चस्त करना चाहता हूँ कि इस मद में बजट में भी कमी नहीं है और पैसे की कमी नहीं है। अगर हमें राज्यों से डिमांड आयेगी तो हम निश्चय ही उनकी डिमांड

के अनुसार, we will be able to honour the obligation because this is under the Act. This is a statutory requirement. तो हम मना कर ही नहीं सकते, हम कम दे ही नहीं सकते। डिमांड आयेगी, एक्ट है, हमें देना है। So, this is what I want to submit before the hon. Committee insofar as this downward trend is concerned.”

6.11. It is found from the information furnished by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment that a Committee has been constituted for the effective coordination to devise ways and means to curb offences of untouchability and atrocities against SCs and STs and effective implementation of Protection of Civil Rights (PCR) Act, 1955 and the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. A meeting of the Committee was held under the Chairmanship of Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment on 21 November, 2023. The following were the highlights of the Meeting:

- (i) States were encouraged to set up the Exclusive Special Courts.
- (ii) Except the State/UT of Manipur, Nagaland and Lakshadweep all other States/UTs have established SC/ST Protection Cells.
- (iii) Special Police Stations for registration of complaints of offences against members of SCs and STs have also been set up by the State of Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Kerala and Madhya Pradesh.
- (iv) The chargesheet filing rate in courts is low in respect of the State of Assam, Jharkhand and Punjab. The State of Madhya Pradesh, Goa and Chhattisgarh have performed well in this regard.
- (v) It was brought to the notice that the 90% of the cases were pending in various courts at various levels. The official representatives were encouraged to look into the matters and encourage the IOs for pursuing the cases as the pending cases are high.
- (vi) The States of Jharkhand, Manipur, Nagaland and Delhi were asked to submit the Annual Reports on the working of PCR Act, 1955 and the SC/ST (PoA) Act, 1989, for the year 2022 pending from their end.
- (vii) The need for increasing awareness generation was also emphasised upon.
- (viii) The matters pertaining to the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the implementation of the PCR Act, 1955 and the SC/ST (PoA) Act, 1989 were highlighted.

6.12. On being enquired about the progress made in regard to setting up of special police stations by the State Governments to deal with the cases of atrocities against the members of SC/ST, the Committee were informed by the representative of the Department during the evidence before the Committee that:-

“we generally advise each State to earmark a few police stations where all such cases will be investigated from one particular police station in that district. That improves the focus. That improves the investigation because then we are looking at one police station, how many cases, all the cases come there. I am happy to tell you that this year, with NALSAR Hyderabad, which is a law university, we are launching a special digitalization programme of all such notified police stations. Now what is happening is that in some States, they have notified one police station per district. But in some States, they have not done that. So, I will just be happy to share with you the full details in which I can show you that these police stations will be taken up. I will submit it to the committee. I am also happy to inform the Committee that under the NALSAR programme, for the first time, in the special courts, empowered courts we call them, when the person against whom the atrocities have been done will enter the campus, on his registered mobile number, he will be told to go to court number so and so. Once he enters the court, whatever document is filed, will be downloaded automatically on his mobile. So lack of information, which is the problem with people from marginalized sections of society, the whole file will be available. He will not have all the information. So, this is the way. Similarly, for police station, once he goes, on his number, the FIR and all documents will be available to him.”

6.13. As abolition of untouchability is enshrined in the Constitution of India, the Government of India has taken several measures such as enactment of Protection of Civil Rights (PCR) Act, 1955 and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. The Committee note that a centrally sponsored scheme was introduced to financially assist the States/UTs for strengthening the machinery for implementation of these Acts. The Committee find that the Central assistance of ₹535.70 crore was released to various States during the year 2023-24 for functioning and strengthening of the SC/ST Protection Cell and Special Police Stations, strengthening and enforcement of judicial machinery, relief and rehabilitation of atrocity victims, incentive for inter-caste marriages and awareness generation and publicity. In this regard, the Committee have found that maximum financial assistance has been released to Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Odisha and Bihar during the year 2023-24. However, the Committee have observed that several States have not been able to set up the requisite system to effectively implement the provisions contained in the Acts and to deal with the cases of atrocities against SCs. The Committee were also made to understand that

there is no financial constraints with the Government of India, and they are ready to release more funds to the States for the establishment of the machinery required for effective implementation of the Acts. The Committee are of the opinion that the issue of atrocities against the persons belonging to Scheduled castes should be sincerely tackled by the State Governments. The Committee, therefore, recommend that all the State Governments should be pursued by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment to establish and strengthen the machinery required for enforcement of the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, effectively.

CHAPTER-VII

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

The Central Sector Scheme namely Grant-in-aid to Voluntary and Other Organisation working for Scheduled Castes (SCs) is being implemented since 1953. The Scheme was revised in 2021-22 and renamed as Scheme for Residential Education for Students in High Schools in Targeted Areas (SHRESHTA). The objective of the SHRESHTA scheme is to enhance the reach of development Intervention of the Government and 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).

7.2 The Scheme is operated under two Modes. Under Mode-I of the Scheme, every year a specified number of meritorious SC students in States/UTs are selected through a nation-wide entrance test conducted by National Testing Agency (NTA) for providing quality residential education in top-class CBSE / State Board affiliated Residential High Schools. Under Mode II, financial assistance is provided to NGOs for running and maintenance of projects related to education for Scheduled Caste students. The Scheme broadly covers 3 types of projects namely (i) Residential Schools (ii) Non Residential Schools (iii) Hostels, both for Primary and Secondary Students, ongoing projects of Non-residential schools/Residential Schools/ Hostels of the VOs/NGOs are supported under this Mode.

7.3. The Budgetary Estimates, Revised Estimates, Actual Expenditure and the shortfall /Excess Expenditure during the last three years and BE for 2024-25 is as follows:-

S.No.	Programme/Schemes	2021-22			2022-23			2023-24			BE 2024-25
		BE	RE	AE	BE	RE	AE	BE	RE	AE (Till 31.03.2024)	
Schemes											
	Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for SCs										
	National Fellowship for SCs	300.00	125.00	122.44	173.00	159.00	114.25	163.00	188.00	183.14	188.00
	Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs	50.00	30.00	14.98	47.00	27.00	18.41	47.00	14.82	7.76	35.00
	Top Class Education for SCs	70.00	70.00	84.72	108.00	108.00	85.67	111.00	100.00	83.84	110.00
	National Overseas Scholarship for SCs	30.00	35.00	49.07	36.00	50.00	75.44	50.00	85.00	88.57	95.00
	Total: Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for SCs	450.00	260.00	271.21	364.00	344.00	293.77	371.00	387.82	363.31	428.00
	Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for SCs										

7.4 On being enquired about the number of students that were provided education under the Scheme during 2022-23 alongwith percentage of girl students who have benefitted from this scheme during each of the last three years the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“Total 16479 students (Mode-1 2405 and Mode-II- 14074) were benefitted under the SHRESHTA scheme during 2022-23 and as per the available records approximately 33% of the total beneficiaries were Girl students under the SHRESHTA scheme during the last three years.”

7.5 As regards to the number of students that are proposed to be taken every year under the Scheme and how much annual expenditure has been estimated for each student, the Department submitted in their written reply that:

“Under Mode-1, each year 3000 meritorious SC students (1500 for 9th class and 1500 for 11th class) are selected through the National Entrance Test for SHRESHTA (NETS) to be conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA) and admitted in the best private residential schools in classes 9th and 11th for completion of education till 12th standard. Admissible fee under the Scheme for each class is as under:

Class	Fee per student per annum (Rs.)
9 th	1,00,000
10 th	1,10,000
11 th	1,25,000
12 th	1,35,000

Under Mode-II, Schools/Hostels run by VOs/NGOs and other organizations having higher classes (upto class 12) are provided Grants-in-Aid for **13500** SC students per year subject to satisfactory performance. The grants under the Scheme to organizations per SC student:

	Cost per student limit (₹ Per year)		
	Residential	Non-Residential	Hostel
Primary	44000	27000	30000
Secondary	55000	35000	30000

The cost norms per student as per project wise are as under:

Type Of Project	Cost Per Student Limit (₹ Per Year)		
	Residential School	Non Residential	Hostel
Primary	44000	27000	30000
Secondary	55000	35000	30000

Total funds released during the last 3 years in Mode-II of the scheme are as under:

S. No.	Years	Fund Released (₹ In Crore)
1	2021-22	28.49
2	2022-23	23.16
3	2023-24	31.16
	Total	82.81

7.6. With regard to the details of the voluntary organizations/NGOs that have been disbursed funds under this Scheme, the Department submitted that the following NGOs/VOs received Grant-in aid from 2020-21 to 2023-24 under the SHRESHTA Scheme:

Andhra Pradesh					
Sl. No.	Name of NGO	Project	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
1.	Centre For Rural Education And Development Society	Residential School (Primary)	41.50	19.69	31.31
2.	Ravicherla Integrated Development And Education Society	Hostel (Secondary)	16.83	7.00	1.40
3.	Maddirala Sivaiah Memorial Educational Society	Non-Residential School (Primary)	11.00	2.14	17.93
4.	Sri Venkateswara Mahila Mandali	Residential School (Primary)	24.40	0.48	33.49
5.	Shree Shanthi Reddy Educational Society	Non-Residential School (Primary)	24.94	5.50	18.53
6.	International Educational Society	Residential School (Primary)	20.86	17.50	34.05
ASSAM					
7.	Dr Ambedkar Mission	Residential School (Primary)	21.01	15.64	0
8.	Global Health And Education Centre	Non-Residential School (Primary)	11.00	7.09	0
9.	Global Health Immunization Population Control Organization	Non-Residential School (Primary)	11.00	3.54	0
10.	Gram Vikas Parishad	Non-Residential School (Primary)	11.00	5.86	0
11.	Rupahi Kohinoor Club	Non residential School (Primary)	5.27	16.50	0
Delhi					
12.	Samaj Sewa Sangh	Non-Residential School (Primary)	22	11.00	33.78
13.	Shri Mukhtiar Singh Smariti Shiksha Samittee (2 Project)	Non-Residential School (Primary) & (Secondary)	48.53	25.23	65.04
14.	Harijan Sevak Sangh (2 Project)	HOSTEL (Primary) & (Secondary)	11.08	69.59	56.28
GUJARAT					
15.	Harijan Sevak Sangh	Hostel (Primary)	14.09	7.67	0
HARYANA					
16.	Adarsh Saraswati Shiksha Samiti	Non-Residential School (Primary)	5.5	13.00	0
KARNATAKA					
17.	Sri Ambika Education Trust	Residential School (primary)	19.41	0	19.80
18.	Bhagyodaya Vidya Vardhak Sangh-	Residential School (primary)	33.65	26.25	0
19.	Adhyayana Vidya Trust-[Avt629]	Non-Residential School (primary)	47.89	35.08	30.61
20.	Swabhimaan Education Society (2project)	Residential School (primary) (Secondary)	67.26	58.75	86.90
21.	Sri Hoysala Vidyasamsthe Reg	Residential School (Primary)	23.22	0	0
22.	Jana Kalyana Trust	Residential School (Primary)	19.97	26.25	41.05
23.	Jnana Jyothi Jai Bheem Education Society	Residential School (Primary)	27.54	26.25	41.75
24.	Shri Durga Devi Banjara Seva Sangh	Residential School (Primary)	22.15	47.25	81.75
25.	Shree Siddharth Vidyavardhak Sangh Kalakeri	Residential School (Primary)	0	0	13.11
26.	Shri Satya Saibaba Education Society	Residential School (Primary)	0	0	33.34
27.	Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar Vidya Vardhaka Sangha Shoropur	Residential School (Primary)	8.98	17.06	38.69
28.	Social Integrated Rural Development Society	Hostel (Secondary)	9.97	5.46	13.07
MADHYA PRADESH					
29.	Shri Shri Ma Anandmayee Upavan Shiksha Samiti	Non-Residential School (Secondary)	21.76	0	0

30.	Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar Prasar Seva Samiti	Non-Residential School (primary)	28.10	5.50	21.02
31.	Atihasik Mahila Shiksha Samiti	Non-Residential School Hostel (Primary)	11.00	3.96	15.70
32.	Madhya Pradesh Anusuchit Jati Jan Jati Evam Pichhra Varg Kalyan Sangh	Non-Residential School Hostel (Primary)	16.13	4.95	0
33.	Ashok Shiksha Prasar Samiti	Non-Residential School (Primary)	22.34	0.78	15.65
34.	Madhya Pradesh Bairwa Sanskrit Parishad	Non-Residential School Hostel (Primary)	22.00	13.28	0
35.	Shri Satya Sai Seva SanskrutikSamajikShaikhsanik Mandal	Hostel (Secondary)	1.98	0	0
MAHARASHTRA					
36.	JogaimataSanskrutikSamajikShaikshanik Mandal	Hostel (Secondary)	26.10	17.01	0
37.	AaiTulja Bhavani Mahila ShikshanAndPrashikshan Sanstha	Hostel (Secondary)	5.83	14.00	26.70
38.	Adarsh ShikshanPrasarak Mandal (2 Project)	Residential School (Primary) & (Secondary)	62.17	51.16	61.47
39.	Ujwal Rural Development Society	Hostel Secondary	0	2.78	0
40.	ChadragiriShikshanPrasarak Mandal Pardi Saw TqAundhaDistHingoli	Hostel (Secondary)	2.95	14.49	23.20
41.	Jyotiba Phule Seva Trust Nanded	Hostel Secondary	0	14.57	19.32
42.	Priyadarshani Shikshan Santha	Residential School (Secondary)	45.23	28.46	0
43.	Late Tehlaram Khurana PratishthanHingoli	Hostel (Secondary)	0	9.38	22.72
44.	Swami Vivekanand ShikshanPrasarak Mandal Hingoli (2Project)	Hostel (Secondary) &	16.73	11.23	35.98
		Non-Residential School (Primary)			
45.	Bharat Multipurpose Education Society Latur	Residential school (Primary)	0	15.40	23.57
46.	Jagatjyoti Gramin Bahhuuddheshiya S V S Sanstha Nalegaon	Hostel (Secondary)	6.57	5.04	4.83
47.	Shri Sant Shiromani Manmath Swami SikshanPrasarak Mandal	Residential School (Primary)	2.46	51.90	43.41
48.	JijamataShikshanPrasarak Mandal	Residential School (Secondary)	2.85	16.91	27.36
49.	Kai.Manji Naik Education Society	Hostel Secondary	0	3.71	1.12
50.	Shubham ShikshanPrasarak Mandal	Residential School (Primary)	20.32		1.31
51.	Ahilyadevi Holkar ShikshanPrasarak Mandal Udgir	Hostel (Primary)	0	8.42	22.67
52.	Harisundar Mahila BahuddeshiyaShikshanPrasarak Mandal Udgir (2 Project)	Residential School (Primary)	0	13.73	57.99
		Hostel Secondary			
53.	Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar ShikshanPrasarak Mandal Gangakhed	Hostel (Primary)	0	13.42	26.65
54.	Maharashtra ShikshanPrasarak Mandal Parbhani	Hostel (Secondary)	5.84	14.00	25.30
55.	Shreekhandobarayasevabhavisanstha	Non-Residential School (Secondary)	30.43	23.36	32.46
56.	Tirupati Balaji SevabhaviAnd Education Sanstha At. Tadlimba (2 project)	Hostel (Secondary)	19.14	43.05	66.70
		Non Residential school Secondary			
57.	Sant Gajanan Maharaj ShikshanPrasarak Mandal	Hostel (Secondary)	5.87	10.25	12.93
58.	Shri TambaveshwarSevabhaviSansthan	Residential School (Primary)	33.58	25.80	3.85
59.	Apang Mahila Mandal Amaravati	Residential School (Primary)	0	37.47	16.50

60.	Kai nura naik bhauuddeshiyshikshansansthasattarmal	Hostel (Secondary)	0	0.29	0
61.	Swami Chakradhar ShikshanPrasark Mandal	Residential School (Primary)	43.52	30.15	15.24
62.	Chetanashikshansansta	Hostel (Primary)	0	37.97	20.57
63.	Mahila BahuudeshiyaShikshanPrasark Mandal	Hostel (Secondary)	5.99	13.72	19.18
64.	Aai Dev Mogra Mahila Mandal	Residential School (Secondary)	12.12	0	0
65.	Indira Mahila Bal Kalyan and ApangPunarvasan Vikas Mandal	Hostel (Secondary)	11.35	0	0
66.	Prayas Education Society	Residential School Secondary	42.55	32.59	50.87
67.	Shri Mahila Bal Kalyan and ApangPunarvasan Vikas Mandal	Residential School (Secondary)	12.35	0	0
68.	Shri SadgurumauliSevabhavi Sanstha	Hostel (Secondary)	2.19	38.89	28.80
69.	Shri Sant Gadge Maharaj Mission	Non-Residential School (Primary)	2.92	15.62	10.45
70.	Shri Swami Samartha Shikshan Sanstha	Residential School (Primary)	22.41	8.66	19.06
71.	Shri krishna Mahila Balkalyan&ApangPunarvasan Vikas Mandal	Residential School (Secondary)	51.88	0	0
72.	WagdaraBahuddeshiyaSevabhavi Sanstha	Hostel (Secondary)	3.49	0	0
73.	Mirabai ShiskshanPrasarak Mandal	Hostel (Secondary)	0	1.53	11.25
Manipur					0
74.	Western Rural Socio Economic Development Organisation	Non-Residential School (Primary)	14.31	0	11.00
MEGHALAYA					
75.	Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama Cherrapunjee (2project)	Non-Residential School (primary & Secondary)	34.01	21.66	0
ODISHA					0
76.	Adarsha Seva Sangathana		6.12	0	0
77.	Vishwa Jeevan Seva Sangha	Residential School (Primary)	40.40	5.94	16.49
78.	Nikhila Utkal Harijan Adivasi Seva Sangha	Residential School (Primary)	18.91	21.26	40.09
79.	Arun Institute Of Rural Affairs	Residential School (primary)	17.54	14.35	39.65
80.	Jeevan Jyoti Club For Social Welfare And Rural Development	Hostel (Secondary)	0	19.81	20.90
81.	Sadjyotika	Hostel (secondary)	1.85	0	0
82.	Mahila UnnayanPathagar	Hostel (Secondary)	0	9.88	24.58
83.	Nehru Seva Sangh	Residential School (Primary)	10.69	33.97	52.81
84.	JungaleeUnayanParisad	Residential School (Primary)	35.00	14.89	39.93
85.	Banki AnchalikaAdibasi Harijan Kalyan Parisad	Residential School (Primary)	11.01	0	0
86.	Holy Home (2 Project)	Non-Residential School (Secondary)	73.96	47.25	62.35
		Hostel (Secondary)			
87.	Servants of India Society	HOSTEL (Primary)	0	15.30	3.76
88.	Shakti Social Cultural and Sporting Organisation	Hostel (Secondary)	15.16	21.00	29.22
89.	Voluntary Institute For Rural Development	Hostel (Primary)	9.35	0	0
RAJASTHAN					
90.	Nirashrit Mahila Bal Vikas Gramodhyog Shiksha Samiti	Non-Residential School (Primary)	24.83	3.79	17.46
91.	M.D.Public School Samiti		0	0	0
92.	Bal Bodh VidhaPeeth Sanstha	Non-Residential School (Primary)	11.00	7.26	0

93.	Gramin Kalyan Society	Non-Residential School (Primary)	10.69	7.18	0
94.	Mahaveer Bal Shikshaand Vikash Samiti	Non-Residential School (Primary)	11.00	8.00	22.92
95.	PrasasviSansthan	Non-Residential School (Primary)	11.00	2.99	18.39
96.	Summer Hill Vidyalaya Samiti	Residential School (Primary)	37.53	17.50	0
97.	Balram Adarsh Vidyalaya Samiti	Non-Residential School (Primary)	11.00	5.03	23.26
98.	Bright Future InSTITUTE Santha	Non-Residential School (Primary)	11.00	5.61	11.99
99.	Manohar Bal Mandir Samiti	Non-Residential School (Primary)	15.67	6.02	21.27
100.	Public Seva Society	Non-Residential School (Primary)	11.00	2.47	0
101.	Shanti Public School Samiti	Non-Residential School (Primary)	11.00	5.06	0
102.	Shri Krishan VidhalayaParbandhak Samiti	Non-Residential School (Primary)	11.00	6.03	17.19
103.	Adrash Bal VatikaVidhlaya Samiti	Non-Residential School (Primary)	11.00	5.50	10.12
104.	Gayandeep Public School Samiti Pilibanga	Non-Residential School (Primary)	11.00	6.85	22.53
105.	Jack And Jill Society	Non-Residential School (Primary)	11.00	7.92	22.48
106.	Ankita Bal Vidhya Mandir Shiksha Samiti	Non-Residential School (Primary)	11.00	7.01	22.59
107.	Navodaya Bal Vidhyalaya Samiti	Non-Residential School (Primary)	11.00	7.35	22.70
108.	Shradhalaya Ashram Samiti	Residential School (Primary)	21.29	60.85	41.75
109.	Suhit Jan Kalyan Samiti	Residential School (Primary)	32.57	26.25	41.75
110.	Manav Uthan Jan Jagrati evamvikassanstha	Non-Residential School (Secondary)	7.41	23.72	33.51
TAMIL NADU					0
111.	Harijan Sevak Sangh (2 projects)	Residential School (Primary)	42.81	119.92	0
TELANGANA					
112.	Goutham Education Society	Residential School (Primary)	26.29	18.38	30.87
113.	LokasevaKendram	Hostel (Secondary)	5.91	8.00	1.60
114.	Residential Schools for the blind		7.61	0.29	0
UTTAR PRADESH					
115.	Sudha Devi Shiksha Samiti	Non-Residential School (Primary)	4.76	8.25	20.27
116.	Netu Singh Educational and Welfare Society	Non-Residential School (Primary)	0	26.98	21.77
117.	Bal Bani AvomNirbalSevaNari Kala Kendra Samiti	Non-Residential School (Primary)	77.53	0	15.59
118.	Sarvodaya Ashram	Residential (Secondary)	69.80	108.73	135.44
119.	Children holy public shiksha samiti	Non-Residential School (Primary)	15.01	11.37	1.92
120.	Atal Gramodyog Sewa Samiti	Non-Residential School (Primary)	22.76	5.01	17.11
121.	Yahodanandangramodyog seva avamshikshansansthan	Non-Residential (Secondary)	72.60	62.74	87.77
122.	Basic Utthan Evam Gramin Sewa Sansthan	Non-Residential School (Primary)	25.78	7.01	21.98
123.	Deendayal Research Institute	Residential School Primary	9.17	28.01	40.81
124.	Bal Kalyan Kendra	Non-Residential School (Primary)	11.00	5.86	22.20
125.	Gyan Bharti Mahila Kalyan evamshikshaprasar samiti	Non-Residential School (Primary)	27.78	0	0
126.	Sw. Tapeshwar Ram Kalyan Samiti	Residential School Primary	65.12	24.67	37.82

127.	Pawan Sewa Sansthan	Residential School Primary	25.99	30.75	39.22
128.	shanti sarvodayasansthan (2Project)	Residential School Primary	38.97	31.60	50.20
		Non-Residential School Primary			
129.	harijan sevak sangh (2Project)	Residential School Primary	134.65	69.04	119.04
130.	Bhartiya Samaj Sewa Sansthan	Residential School Primary	21.90	21.79	32.01
131.	Amethi Mahila Avom Bal Kalyan Samiti	Non-Residential (Secondary)	39.76	18.90	24.67
132.	Baba Ram Nath Shiksha Samiti Amethi UP	Non-Residential School (Primary)	38.16	21.53	37.06
133.	Nehru balkalyan samiti	Non-Residential (Secondary)	44.05	23.10	33.42
134.	Sant Ramdas Shiksha Samiti	Non-Residential (Secondary)	32.63	24.41	13.96
135.	Servants of India Society	Residential School Primary	8.36	34.62	35.10
UTTARAKHAND					
136.	Indira Rashtriya Chetna Evam SamajothanSansthan	Residential School Primary	20.04	9.71	34.26
WEST BENGAL					
137.	Bharat Sevashram Sangha	Hostel (Secondary)	10.85	0	24.84
138.	Chiranabin	Hostel (Primary)	8.53	3.00	17.87
139.	Sri SriHarichandMatuaSevashram	Non-Residential School (Primary)	39.77	6.85	19.23
140.	Gazole Good News Welfare Society	Hostel (Secondary)	18.03	10.50	14.30
141.	Malopara Simanta Welfare Organisation	Hostel (Secondary)	12.59	0	0
142.	Minerva Educational and Welfare Society	Hostel (Secondary)	4.86	0	0
143.	Raychak Morning Star Club	Hostel (Secondary)	2.77	4.44	0

7.7. The Committee found that during the years 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24, the Department could release ₹28.49 crore, ₹23.16 crore and ₹31.16 crore, respectively under Mode II of the Scheme. In regard to the falling expenditure during last three years and the measures taken to avoid such situation in the coming year, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“In Mode-1, under the scheme every year 3000 seats have been allocated but a few seats could not be filled during last three years and thus remained vacant. Further, as the scheme was revised in 2020-21, there was no awareness about the scheme among the SC beneficiaries. Due to this fund remained unutilized. Further, in Mode-2 of the scheme, earlier, Grant-in-Aid was considered to organizations for running school/hostel projects as per sanctioned strength of the project and beneficiaries were considered in the school/hostel project in the ratio of 60:40 (SC: others). However, after revision of scheme in 2021-22, the fund is being considered to organizations only for SC beneficiaries subject to availability of valid SC certificate of beneficiary and also on the basis of number of students found during inspection.

This Department has taken several measures like DO Letters written to State/UT Governments to publicize the scheme amongst Schools and motivate SC students to participate in the SHRESHTA scheme. Number of counselling rounds for admission of the SC students in the vacant seats in Mode – I of the scheme have been increased. Further,

State/UT Governments are requested to facilitate SC students in getting their SC certificates without delay for availing benefits of the scheme. The scheme is also being published through website of the Ministry and print media as well.”

7.8. As regards to achieve the objective of the Scheme, the Department submitted as under:

“The current scheme of SHRESHTA is successful in achieving the envisaged objectives and is set to be reviewed in 2025-26 for further advancements/upgradation as per modern needs/requirements.”

7.9. **The Committee note that the Scheme of Residential Education for Students in High School in Targeted area (SRESHTA) for SCs came into existence in 2021-22 in place of Grants-in-aid to Voluntary and Other Organizations working for Scheduled Caste to provide environment for Socio-economic upliftment and overall development of Scheduled Castes. The Committee find that the Scheme is operated in two modes, as per the established norms, every year 3000 meritorious SC students (1500 for IXth class and 1500 for Xth Class) are selected for admission in the best private residential schools under Mode-I whereas under Mode-II schools/hostels run by VOs/NGOs are provided Grants-in-aid for 13500 SC Students per year. The Committee are happy to note that annual allocation of ₹428.00 crore made for 2024-25 is much higher in comparison to the allocation of ₹371.00 crore made in 2023-24 and ₹364.00 crore made in 2022-23 but the quantum of actual expenditure for 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 is little discouraging for the Committee. Further, only 2405 students were selected under Mode-I in 2022-23 against 3000 Students fixed for selection. The Committee also note that large number of VOs/ NGOs from Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh received Grants-in-aid under Mode-II from 2020-21 to 2023-24 but many States did not receive any grant. The Committee believe that the SRESHTA Scheme is crucial**

for the SC students to get proper education from the best schools in the country. Hence , the Committee desire that the Scheme should be well publicized so that large number of students get the benefit of the scheme. Since, the Scheme under Mode-II appears to be popular in some States only, the Committee would like the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment to take suitable steps to increase awareness about the Scheme in the country to increase the footprints of the Scheme among the SC students. The Committee hope necessary action will be taken by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment in this regard.

CHAPTER-VIII

PRE MATRIC SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME FOR SCs AND 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. With the objective of streamlining the implementation and optimizing resources, both the schemes have been merged into single scheme namely, 'Pre-matric Scholarship Scheme for SC Students & Others' w.e.f 2021-22.

8.2. The Budgetary Estimate, Revised Estimate, Actual Expenditure alongwith the target fixed/ achieved for the last three years and BE for 2024-25 is as follows:-

	2021-22					2022-23					2023-24					2024-25	
	BE	RE	AE	Target	Achievement	BE	RE	AE	Target	Achievement	BE	RE	AE	Target	Achievement	BE	Target
Pre matric scholarship SC and others	725.00	725.00	570.39	26 Lakhs	32.41 Lakhs	500.00	500.00	208.62	26.50 Lakhs	19.86 Lakhs	500.00	430.00	446.64	26.75 Lakhs	14.45 Lakhs	500.00	27 lakhs

8.3. In order to have a separate data base for policy and planning purposes, this scheme has 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)

Component 1: Pre Matric Scholarship for SC students

- (i) The students should be studying in class IX and X on a full time basis.
- (ii) They should belong to a Scheduled Caste.
- (iii) Their Parent/Guardian's income should not exceed Rs. 2.50 lakh per annum.

Component 2: Pre-Matric scholarship for children of parents/guardians engaged in Unclean and hazardous Occupation. There is no family income ceiling under this component of the Scheme. The students should be studying in classes I to X on a full time basis. Scholarship will be admissible to the children/wards of parents/guardians who, irrespective of their caste/religion belong to one of the following categories:

- (i) Persons who are Manual Scavengers as defined under section 2(I) (g) of Manual Scavengers Act 2013;
- (ii) Tanners & Flayers;
- (iii) Waste pickers and
- (iv) Persons engaged in hazardous cleaning as defined in Section 2(I) (d) of Manual Scavengers Act 2013.

8.4. The major changes in the revised scheme are as follows:

- (i) This Scheme is based on fixed sharing pattern of 60:40 between Centre and State (90:10 in case of NE states, Uttarakhand & Himachal Pradesh and 100:0 in case of UT without legislature);
- (ii) Central share is being released directly to the students' bank account w.e.f. 2022-23 only through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) preferably through an Aadhaar Based Payment System only after ensuring that the concerned State Government has released their share;
- (iv) Online end to end processing, verification of eligibility credentials through online transaction to ensure greater transparency, control duplicity and wrongful claims by institutions;
- (v) All verification process of the students should be done using the authenticated databases automatically using the digital process with little or no manual intervention;
- (vi) Coverage of poorest households would be focused.

8.5. As per the Annual Report of the Department for the year 2023-24, the expenditure and the number of beneficiaries of the States/ UTs under the Scheme is as follows:

Sl.No	Name of State/UT	Financial Figures (Central Share released) (Rs.in Lakh)	Figures (No.of beneficiaries)
1.	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	Not implementing the scheme	
2.	Andhra Pradesh	5633.50	2,21,219
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	Not implementing the scheme	
4.	Assam	0.44	14
5.	Bihar	1561.72	1,46,660
6.	Chandigarh	38.29	1097
7.	Chhattisgarh	882.03	41,271
8.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu	0.28	8
9.	Delhi	15.13	761
10.	Goa	0	0
11.	Gujarat	5756.08	2,73,157

12.	Haryana	0	0
13.	Himachal Pradesh	771.28	24,536
14.	Jammu & Kashmir	54.28	2,584
15.	Jharkhand	0	0
16.	Karnataka	4932.70	2,35,562
17.	Kerala	251.15	11,999
18.	Ladakh	Not implementing the scheme	
19.	Lakshadweep	Not implementing the scheme	
20.	Madhya Pradesh	0	0
21.	Maharashtra	0	0
22.	Manipur	26.11	676
23.	Meghalaya	0	0
24.	Mizoram	Not implementing the scheme	
25.	Nagaland	Not implementing the scheme	
26.	Odisha	710.04	31,486
27.	Puducherry	14.80	704
28.	Punjab	2146.70	1,03,357
29.	Rajasthan	2807.61	1,35,092
30.	Sikkim	0.25	8
31.	Tamil Nadu	7051.31	3,35,642
32.	Telangana	Not implementing the scheme	
33.	Tripura	67.00	2,105
34.	Uttar Pradesh	8005.80	3,82,766
35.	Uttarakhand	313.73	9,940
36.	West Bengal	3623.06	1,68,896
Total		44664.29	21,29,540

8.6. On being enquired about the 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 Committee were *inter-alia* informed vide written reply that Pre-Matric Scholarships Scheme for SCs and Others (Comp-II: Pre-Matric Scholarships to the Children of those Engaged in occupations involving cleaning and prone to health hazards) was evaluated by Santek Consultants Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi during FY 2019-20.

8.7. Details of the beneficiaries during last five years are as follows:-

FY	No. of beneficiaries
2017-18	2265
2018-19	1836
2019-20	200846
2020-21	234592
2021-22	332969

8.8. On being asked about the annual percentage increase in the funds meant for the Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for the children of parents/guardians engaged in unclean and hazardous occupation prior to its merger with Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC Students, the Committee were informed vide written reply that the annual percentage increase in the funds meant for the Pre-Matric Scholarship scheme for the children of

parents/guardians engaged in unclean and hazardous occupation prior to its merger with Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC Students are as follows:-

(₹ in crore)

FY	BE	Percentage Increase
2016-17	2.00	-
2017-18	2.70	35
2018-19	5.00	85
2019-20	5.00	0
2020-21	25.00	400

8.9. With regard to the objective of the merger of the Scheme of Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for hazardous cleaning with the Pre-Matric Scholarship for SC students and how far the objective is being achieved after merger in 2021-22, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:-

(i) 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 was decided to merge them into single scheme namely, 'Pre-matric Scholarship Scheme for SC Students & Others' *w.e.f* 2021-22.

(ii) Before merger, the proposals of Pre-Matric scholarship Scheme for hazardous cleaning used to be processed by National Safai Karamcharis' Financial and Development Corporation which used to forward them to this Ministry for further action. This used to take additional time to process the proposals resulting in delayed release of the Central Share to the States/UTs. Now, this Department releases the scholarships through DBT to the eligible applicants once their state share paid data is pushed to National Scholarship Portal for Central share disbursement.

(iii) During FY2019-20 and FY2020-21 before merger, Central share was released to only one state i.e. Gujarat, since proposals from other states and UTs were not received for disbursement of scholarships under this component. As of now during FY2024-25, this Department has received proposals from the 11 States/UTs."

8.10. On being enquired whether the Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC Students is achieved the envisaged objective of the Scheme and the reasons due to which the actual expenditure has always been less than the budgetary allocation, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that the Pre-Matric Scholarships Scheme for SCs & Others is achieved the envisaged objectives. The Department furnished the following information regarding less expenditure under the Scheme:-

“The releases are on an increasing and upward trend as under:-

(₹. in Cr.)

FY	Pre-Matric Scholarships Scheme for SCs & Others		
	BE	RE	Actual Expenditure
2022-23	500.00	500.00	208.62
2023-24	500.00	430.00	446.65

As regards to the reasons for less expenditure, it is submitted that:

- (i) It has been observed that the annual action plans as submitted by the bigger states such as Bihar, Punjab, Odisha, Gujarat and Delhi under the Pre-Matric Scholarships scheme for SCs & Others have reduced (in terms of beneficiaries) to a great extent in the last three years. The details are as follows:

States	PAC target 2022-23	PAC target 2023-24	PAC target 2024-25
Bihar	6,41,831	5,65,405	1,22,005
Punjab	2,16,529	1,70,978	1,25,295
Odisha	1,72,069	90,214	77,450
Gujarat	60,000	51,300	50,000
Delhi	38,000	7,000	3,500

- (ii) Incomplete or Incorrect Documentation: Another reason for pending scholarship applications is the submission of incomplete, incorrect or dummy documents by applicants. Errors in bank details, missing income certificates, or failure to provide necessary caste verification causes delays in verification leading to delayed pushing of finally verified State share paid data by the State Governments/UTs.
- (iii) Delay in Verification at the Institutional or District Level: Many states are following a multi-tiered verification process involving many levels for educational institutions and district-level authorities. Delays at any of these levels, whether due to shortage of staff, inefficiencies, or manual processing, lead to delayed pushing of finally verified State share paid data by the State Governments/UTs. As a matter of example, the pending applications of FY2022-23 and FY2023-24 still pending with the States/UTs are as follows:

Pre-Matric Scholarships Scheme for SCs & Others		
FY	States/UTs	No. of pending applications
2022-23	West Bengal	39522
	Rajasthan	30510
	Punjab	25589
	Andhra Pradesh	10743
	Uttarakhand	3851
2023-24	Punjab	12560
	West Bengal	10891

	Gujarat	6835
	Rajasthan	5086
	Himachal Pradesh	3371

- (iv) **Delayed Fund Release from State Authorities:** In some cases, the delay is due to slow fund release from the State Governments. Many of the state governments release the funds in the last quarter of the financial year. Budgetary constraints, procedural delays in sanctioning and approval of funds, or a mismatch in the allocation significantly slows down the distribution process.
- (v) **Fraud Prevention and Stringent Checks:** To prevent fraud and misuse of the scholarship funds, many States/UTs and NSP for NSP on-boarded States have incorporated additional verification measures that slow down the approval process. Additional checks on income verification or student enrollment status lead to further delays.
- (vi) **Account related Issues:** Since the scholarships are disbursed through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), any technical issues related to the accounts also lead to delayed processing in few cases. Some of the key technical problems include:
 1. Bank Account Not Enabled for DBT
 2. Inactive Bank Account
 3. DBT Disabled Due to Compliance Issues.”

8.11. The Committee note that the Pre-matric Scholarship for children of parents/guardians engaged in unclean and hazardous occupation was merged with Pre-matric Scholarship Scheme for SCs in 2021-22 with the objective of streamlining the implementation and optimizing resources. The Committee find that prior to the merger the Central share was released only to Gujarat during 2019-20 & 2020-21 and now the proposals have been received from 11 State/UT Governments in 2024-25. The Committee find that the merger has increased the number of beneficiaries from the children of persons engaged in hazardous occupation from 234592 in 2020-21 to 332969 in 2021-22. However, the actual expenditure has been less than the Budgetary Estimate in 2022-23 and 2023-24. The Committee also find that States such as Haryana, Goa, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra did not have a single beneficiary and Central share was also not released to them in 2023-24. Further, some of the States/UTs such as Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Ladakh, Lakshadweep, Mizoram, Nagaland and Telangana are not implementing the Scheme. The Committee believe that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment must have taken appropriate measures with regard to the reasons due to which actual expenditure was less than the Budgetary Estimate and if any action is yet to be taken, then the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment may expedite it. Similarly, in regard to the non-achievement of targets fixed for 2022-23 and 2023-24, the Committee are sure that the measures taken to enhance the actual expenditure would certainly help the Department in achieving the target of 27 lakhs set up for 2024-25. The Committee desire that the States that are not implementing the Scheme and non-release of Central Share to certain States requires to be examined and the necessary action taken so that the

objective of promoting literacy and uninterrupted education of the Pre-matric level amongst the SC students and children of persons engaged in hazardous occupation is achieved. The Committee would like to be informed of the action taken by the Department in this regard.

CHAPTER-IX

NATIONAL ACTION FOR MECHANISED SANITATION ECOSYSTEM (NAMASTE)

'Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers' (SRMS) was introduced by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in January 2007 with the objective of rehabilitating manual scavengers and their dependents by March, 2009. SRMS component has been subsumed under NAMASTE Scheme being implemented since 2023-24. Subsequent to coming into force of the "Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013" (MS Act, 2013), the SRMS was revised in November, 2013 to provide the following benefits to the identified Manual Scavengers:

- (i) Onetime cash assistance of ₹40000/- to identified manual scavenger.
- (ii) Upfront Capital subsidy upto ₹5.00 Lakh for project cost upto ₹15.00 lakh for self employment project and capital subsidy of ₹18.75 Lakh for a group project of five manual scavengers for a project cost of ₹50.00 Lakh.
- (iii) Similarly, Upfront Capital subsidy upto ₹5.00 Lakh for project cost upto ₹15.00 lakh for sanitation related projects and capital subsidy of ₹18.75 Lakh for a group project of five sanitation workers including manual scavengers for a project cost of ₹50.00 Lakh
- (iv) Skill Development Training upto two years with stipend of ₹3000/- per month to the manual scavenger / dependent who opts for such training.

9.2. After coming into force of MS Act, 2013, two surveys have been conducted during the year 2013 and 2018 for the identification of erstwhile Manual Scavengers. As per these two surveys, 58098 eligible manual scavengers have been identified. The identified manual scavengers and their dependents have been provided the following assistance to promote livelihood as on 26.07.2024:-

- (i) One Time Cash Assistance of ₹40,000/- has been provided to all identified and eligible 58098 manual scavengers.
- (ii) Capital Subsidy upto ₹5,00,000/- to ₹2507 indentified manual scavengers and their dependents for self employment projects.
- (iii) After revision of SRMS Scheme Sanitation workers have also been made eligible for the capital subsidy for taking up projects relating to cleaning of sewers and septic tanks. So far 1064 sanitation workers have been provided

the assistance for procurement of the sanitation related equipments/machines.

- (iv) Skill Development Training upto two years provided to 24,294 indentified manual scavengers and their dependents with stipend @ ₹3,000/- per months during the training period. The successfully trained candidates are also provided Government recognized training certificates and assistance for placement. During the current financial year 2024-25, it is planned to provide skill development training to 2000 manual scavengers/dependants.

9.3. National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem scheme (NAMASTE) has been launched in July, 2023 to formalize the Sewer and Septic Tank Workers (SSWs). NAMASTE scheme will be implemented across all ULBs (4800+) including Cantonment Boards. Components of erstwhile SRMS have been subsumed in NAMASTE. The goal of the NAMASTE Scheme is to ensure the safety and dignity of sanitation workers in Urban India by creating an enabling ecosystem that recognizes sanitation workers as one of the key contributors to the operations and maintenance of sanitation infrastructure, thereby providing sustainable livelihood through making them “Sanipreneur” and enhancing their occupational safety through capacity building and improved access to safety gear and machines. In addition, NAMASTE would bring about a behavioural change amongst stakeholders towards sanitation workers and enhance demand for safe sanitation services.

9.4. NAMASTE will be implemented in convergence amongst key stakeholders including Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, National SafaiKarmacharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation and Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship etc. The scheme leverages the available financial allocations of existing SRMS, SBM, DAY – NULM and NSKFDC etc. NSKFDC is the implementing Agency of the scheme.

9.5. NAMASTE aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- (i) Zero fatalities in sanitation work in India;
- (ii) All sanitation work is performed by formalized skilled workers;
- (iii) No sanitation workers come in direct contact with human faecal matter;
- (iv) Strengthening and capacitating ERSUs to ensure safe delivery of mechanized sanitation services;
- (v) Sanitation workers are collectivized into SHGs and are empowered to run sanitation enterprises;
- (vi) Sewer and Septic tank sanitation workers (SSWs) and their dependents also have access to livelihoods by providing Capital subsidy for purchase of sanitation related equipments;

- (vii) Increased awareness amongst sanitation services seekers (individuals and institutions) to seek services from registered PSSOs and skilled & certified sanitation workers only;
- (viii) Extending Health Insurance Scheme benefits under AB-PMJAY to SSWs & manual scavengers and their family members; and
- (ix) Occupational safety training to SSW.

9.6. Scheme will be converged with Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, particularly for the following interventions / components:

- (i) Identification and profiling of SSWs through MIS portal;
- (ii) Nomination of Responsible Sanitation Authority(RSA) in each district;
- (iii) Setting up of Emergency Response Sanitation Unit (ERSU) in larger ULBs of each district having requisite number of trained sanitation workers and mechanised cleaning equipments to provide services in urban as well as rural areas of district for mechanised cleaning of sewers and septic tanks;
- (iv) Operationalise Helpline Number , preferably 14420, in each ERSU to get service request from service seekers for cleaning of sewer septic tanks;
- (v) Train ULBs and SRU staff to implement NAMASTE including Occupational safety training and skilling for Sewer Entry Professionals (SEPs) & Duty Supervisors;
- (vi) Issue model contracts to ULBs for engaging PSSOs and SSWs;
- (vii) Listing of PSSO's on the MIS portal at local level;
- (viii) Facilitate SHG formation of identified SSWs;
- (ix) Procure and distribute PPE kits, Safety devices and equipment for deep cleaning (below surface) of sewer/septic tanks for ERRUs;
- (x) Promote and fund mechanisation of Urban Local Bodies under Swachh Bharat Mission;
- (xi) Provide work assurance to sanitation workers interested in availing Sanitation Related Projects;
- (xii) Undertake IEC activities in ULBs;

9.7. The Budgetary Allocation alongwith Revised Estimate and Actual Expenditure for the year 2023-24 and BE of 2024-25 is as follows:-

Programme/Schemes	2021-22			2022-23			2023-24			BE 2024-25
	B E	R E	AE	BE	RE	AE	BE	RE	AE(Till 31.03.2024)	
Schemes										
National Action Plan ForMechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE)							97.41	30.06	30.06	116.94

9.8 On being enquired about the reasons due to which funds allocated for 2023-24 could not be spent and the steps being taken to ensure that the budgetary allocation for 2024-25 is utilized fully, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“The Scheme was approved by SFC in its meeting held on 6th July, 2023. Thereafter, Scheme Guidelines were issued. The Guidelines for profiling of SSWs, development of Mobile App for profiling of SSWs, preparation and approval of training module for ULB Nodal Officers for profiling through Mobile App have been prepared. State Nodal Officers and ULB- wise Nodal Officers were nominated by States/UTs. State-wise trainings for surveyors & validators were conducted through VC for ULB Nodal Officers to make them conversant with the process of profiling is done through Mobile App. Profiling of SSWs could commence in December, 2023 & was halted during Model Code of Conduct because of Lok Sabha General Election - 2024. The increase in profiling and time bound delivery of PPE Kits and Safety Devices along with actively pursuing SUY nominations are the major steps which would aid in achieving the targets for FY 2024-25. Since ULB plays an important role in implementation of the scheme, all the ULBs of the country have been requested that SSWs listed with the ULBs, parastatal agencies and PSSOs be profiled and validated on priority basis.”

9.9. The achievements under NAMASTE Component of the Scheme as on 26.07.2024 are:

- (i) A NAMASTE portal having public dashboard is LIVE at <https://namastescheme.com> and relevant information of NAMASTE Scheme viz. State/UT coverage, validated SSWs, health insurance coverage, occupational safety training, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Kits, Capital subsidy, etc available on public dashboard. To further strengthen the monitoring system in the country for deaths due to hazardous cleaning, there is provision at district level to enter details pertaining to death cases and the same includes FIR, Compensation and rehabilitation (Skill Training and Loan facility) information.
- (ii) A Mobile App i.e. “NAMASTE SSW Profiling App” has been developed for profiling of SSWs and is available at Google Playstore.
 - (i) Profiling of Sewer & Septic tank workers (SSWs) has been initiated in 30 States/UTs.
 - (ii) 42,961 SSWs have been profiled and 37,407 SSWs have been validated by the concerned Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).
 - (iii) PPE Kits have been provided to 3615 SSWs.
 - (iv) 13,012 validated SSWs have been provided Ayushman Cards which includes SSWs already in NHA BIS System.

9.10. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment launched a mobile app “SwachhataAbhiyaan” on 24.12.2020 to capture the data of insanitary latrines still existing and manual scavengers associated with them. Any person can upload the data of insanitary latrines and manual scavengers on the mobile app. Thereafter, the data is verified by the concerned district administration. The verified insanitary latrines are demolished or converted into sanitary latrines and manual scavengers identified are provided assistance for rehabilitation. So far 6253 cases have been uploaded on the App. However, not a single insanitary latrine has been confirmed so far. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has also requested the Chief Secretaries, concerned Principal Secretaries and District Magistrates to give report whether their State / Districts are manual scavenging free. In this regard, so far 732 districts have confirmed that their Districts are manual scavenging free.

9.11. With a view to provide safe, dignified and sustainable livelihoods to the waste pickers in India by empowering them through various schematic and non-schematic interventions, waste pickers have been included as an additional target group along with sewer septic tank workers and manual Scavengers under NAMASTE scheme, wherein the enumeration and profiling of waste pickers would be undertaken and health insurance under AB-PMJAY and other benefits would be extended to them. The identified waste pickers would later on be provided occupational/upgradation training for waste value addition. The objective of the Scheme is to integrate Waste pickers in the Solid Waste management by addressing the challenges and difficulties faced by them by mainstreaming them in the society, recognizing and strengthening their contribution in waste collection, recovery & recycling and Providing safe, dignified and sustainable livelihood by empowering them through various schematic and non-schematic interventions. The key interventions are:

- (i) Enumeration of Wastepickers:- Enumeration and profiling of the waste pickers would be held at the ULB level in the first phase, in camp mode and Identity Cards will be provided;
- (ii) Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits: Appropriate PPE kits, considering the specific hazards, such as harmful chemicals, extreme weather events like heat waves, landfill fires, rains and floods etc. shall be provided;
- (iii) Health Insurance coverage under PMJAY: All eligible and identified waste pickers are covered under Ayushman Bharat Yojana (PMJAY) in convergence with National Health Authority (NHA). This should additionally cover free annual health check-ups for all identified waste pickers,

- vaccination and de-worming as required and quarterly check-ups for pregnant and lactating waste picker women;
- (iv) Social Security Benefits: Waste pickers and their dependents would be assisted for their coverage under Pre-Metric Scholarship and eShram;
 - (v) Empowerment of Wastepickers through Collaboration:-Scheme will promote formation of SHG / Cooperatives of Wastepickers. On formation of SHG / Cooperative, assistance would be provided to the SHG / Cooperative;
 - (vi) Allotment of Material Recovery Facility centres by ULBs: Matter of formal engagement of SHGs and Cooperatives across the SWM Value Chains would be pursued with the ULBs through advisories etc. to allot the Municipal Recycle Facility (MRF) to the SHGs / cooperative of wastepickers, on a long term basis, to enable them to set up safe, sheltered, and sustainable workplace;
 - (vii) Capital Subsidy for Dry Waste Collection Centres (DWCCs) to procure Waste Collection Vehicles: DWCCs would be incentivized through Capital Subsidy for procurement of Dry Waste Collection Vehicles for door-to-door collection of Dry Waste;
 - (viii) Handholding Assistance: Scheme would provide for engagement of resource organizations (RO)/ community organizers (CO) for handholding of the waste pickers and their organizations;
 - (ix) Training: The identified waste pickers would be provided occupational / upgradation training for waste value addition & upcycling etc. Trainings will also be provided to relevant municipal officials including sanitary inspectors, solid waste management enterprise, ROs and COs to recognize hazards faced by waste pickers with solutions to address them; and
 - (x) Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Campaign: Workers and citizen centric IEC campaigns would be conducted to generate awareness about safety and dignity of Waste pickers as waste warriors, about benefits of proposed scheme for Waste pickers, awareness of legal and penal provisions and to encourage citizens to segregate waste at source.

9.12. On being enquired about the number of Sewer and Septic Tank workers identified in the country, State/UT wise the Committee were informed vide written reply that

“The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs estimates that there are 100 Sewer and Septic tank Workers (SSWs) for an urban population of five lakh. Based on this, the government used decadal growth rates to estimate that as of 2021, there are likely to be one lakh SSWs in the country. As on 08-10-2024, Out of the 46783 surveyed Sewer and Septic Tank Workers (SSWs) identified, 43196 SSWs have been validated across 31 States/UTs.”

9.13. The State-wise number of surveyed and validated SSWs is as follows:

S. No.	STATES/UTs	SSWs Surveyed	SSWs Validated
1	ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR	35	35
2	ANDHRA PRADESH	2615	2476
3	ARUNACHAL PRADESH	87	86
4	ASSAM	356	323
5	BIHAR	2936	2640
6	CHANDIGARH	246	246
7	CHHATTISGARH	711	706
8	DAMAN DIU AND DADRA NAGAR HAVELI	15	13
9	DELHI	2396	2304
10	GOA	95	93
11	GUJARAT	4500	4141
12	HARYANA	2165	1894
13	HIMACHAL PRADESH	379	358
14	JAMMU AND KASHMIR	532	478
15	JHARKHAND	902	846
16	KARNATAKA	2388	2078
17	KERALA	1630	1617
18	LADAKH	21	21
19	MADHYA PRADESH	3246	3127
20	MAHARASHTRA	6,783	6,581
21	MANIPUR	111	110
22	MIZORAM	125	125
23	MEGHALYA	0	0
24	NAGALAND	67	66
25	ODISHA (Garima Scheme)		
26	PUDUCHERRY	174	174
27	PUNJAB	4278	3555
28	RAJASTHAN	2643	2593
29	SIKKIM	95	95
30	TAMIL NADU (Sanitary Workers Development Scheme (SWDS))		
31	TELANGANA	1791	1694
32	TRIPURA	110	110
33	UTTAR PRADESH	4778	4091
34	UTTARAKHAND	520	520
35	WEST BENGAL	0	0
	TOTAL	46730	43196

9.14. As regards to the Modus Operandi of NAMASTE the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“NAMASTE is jointly implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. National SafaiKaramcharis Finance and Development Corporation is the implementing agency. The primary target of NAMASTE is the Sewer and Septic tank Workers (SSWs) in urban areas of India and is to be implemented across all ULBs (at present about 4800 plus ULBs) including para-statal bodies (Jal Boards etc.), Cantonment Boards (Civilian areas) of India. Core of the scheme is profiling and validation of the SSWs. In order to achieve this, the role of States/UTs and specifically the ULBs is critical. Scheme Guidelines and SOP for profiling were shared with the States/UTs. States/UTs were requested to nominate two State Nodal Officers, one from the Urban Development Department and other from Social Welfare Department. Subsequently the details of nodal officer for the ULBs along with surveyors was sought and online training sessions explaining the functioning of the NAMASTE Profiling App and activities involved were given. To increase the outreach of the scheme, IEC material was shared with States/UTs and proposals for the IEC was sought and 40% advance fund was released. The State Governments are allowed to procure the PPE kits and Safety Devices locally and get the reimbursement. There is also the provision to procure and distribute centrally to ensure time bound outcome. MoU with CSC was done to provide support in the eKYC of the validated SSWs. Liasoning with NHA *w.r.t.* Ayushman card and process for availing the benefits under the scheme has been done. Handholding agencies were roped in for facilitating the process of availing subsidy under the scheme and Loan for the balance amount.”

9.15. On being enquired about the role played by stakeholders to achieve the objectives of the Scheme and the significant achievements made since the inception of the Scheme, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“The following are the achievements of the scheme as on 08-10-2024:

- 1) 46783 Sewer and Septic Tank Workers (SSWs) have been surveyed and 43196 SSWs have been validated across 31 States/UTs
- 2) 238 workshops in FY 2024-25 have been conducted on “Prevention of Hazardous Cleaning of Sewer and Septic Tanks” in Municipal Corporation/Municipality/Nagar Palika and other such organization engaging Sewer and septic tank cleaning workers across the country
- 3) 16,741PPE kits have been distributed
- 4) 42 Safety Devices has been distributed.
- 5) 13,412validated SSWshave been provided/ havingAyushman Bharat Cards under PM-JAY.”

9.16 As regards to the number of death of sewer and septic tank workers and the action taken by the resentative of the Department during the deliberation of the Committee that:-

“अगर मैनुअल क्लीनिंग करते हैं तो यह हजार्ड्स क्लीनिंग की श्रेणी में आता है और यह बैन है। कई लोग रूल्स और रैगुलेशन्स को फॉलो नहीं करते हैं जो कि ऑलरेडी एमएसएक्ट और एमएस रूल्स में दिया गया है और इस कारण वे अपना जीवन खो देते हैं। मैं बताना चाहती हूँ कि मध्य प्रदेश में वर्ष 1992 से लेकर आज तक हमारे पास जो डेटा है, उसके अनुसार 20 लोगों की डैथ हुई है। इसमें कम्पेनसेशन देने की बात थी। हमने मध्य प्रदेश सरकार से एन्शोर किया है। पहले प्रावधान के अनुसार वर्ष 2014 सुप्रीम कोर्ट की जजमेंट में दस लाख रुपये देने थे, जो कि सारे केसिस को दे दिए गए हैं। वर्ष 2023 में सुप्रीम कोर्ट से एक और आदेश आया है, बलराम सिंह वर्सिस यूनियन ऑफ इंडिया केस के अंतर्गत एन्हेंस कम्पेनसेशन की बात हुई जो कि 30 लाख है। यह उन लोगों को देना है, जिन प्रदेशों ने वर्ष 1992 से लेकर अब तक भुगतान नहीं दिया, उनको एन्हेंस भुगतान देना है। कई संसदीय समितियों की रिपोर्ट थी कि इसे बढ़ाया जाए इसलिए अब इसे बढ़ाकर 30 लाख कर दिया गया है।

आपने उत्तर प्रदेश के बारे में पूछा है, वर्ष 1992 से लेकर आज तक 133 डैथ हुई हैं, जिसमें 110 केसिस में से दस लाख रुपये से ऊपर धनराशि आबंटित हो गई है। सात केसिस ऐसे हैं, जिनमें दस लाख रुपये के कम का आबंटन हुआ है। हम इस काम में लगे हुए हैं। हम उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार से संपर्क में हैं। ये केसिस बहुत पुराने हैं। हमने हर एक डिस्ट्रिक्ट कलक्टर को ब्यौरा भेज दिया है और हम उनके साथ संपर्क में हैं। कई डिस्ट्रिक्ट कलक्टर रिपोर्ट करते हैं कि उनके परिजन और आश्रित मिल नहीं पा रहे हैं। हम इस पर ऑलरेडी परस्यु कर रहे हैं। हमने उनसे अनुरोध किया है कि अगर ये अनट्रेसेबल केसिस हैं तो अखबार के माध्यम से एडवर्टाइजमेंट निकालकर क्लोज कर दिया जाए ताकि हम बता सकें कि इनके आश्रित अनट्रेसेबल हैं इसलिए इनका भुगतान नहीं कर पाएंगे।”

9.17. As regards to ensuing minimum wages to workers engaged in Septic Tank cleaning and safety representatives of the Department deposed before the Committee that:-

“Under our scheme Namastey, an attempt has been made to formalise them. Earlier, they were working as informal workers with no proper equipment, no PPE kits, no formalisation, no minimum wages. The schemes tries to address this very serious issue by trying to formalise them into the organised setup thereby giving them dignity of life and dignity of work parallelly. How do we do this? We have Emergency Sanitation Response Units. As a citizen, I get my septic tank cleaned. I don't know where to go because I don't see a formal set up where I can access it. So, I call any unorganized labourer available for cheap money and engage him for septic tank cleaning. This gentleman who does this work is not given PPE kit, does not know what is there in the MS Act and MS Rules which are there to empower him. He does not know that there has to be a written submission from the CEO of the Municipality or the District Magistrate before he is allowed to even undertake that work. Hazardous cleaning is a banned activity with extreme penal provisions under BNS. So, on one hand, we are trying to make the citizens aware that there is a formal set-up of these ESRUs with the National Helpline No. 14420 where citizens can call this and avail of cleaning services. Secondly, through our portal and through our identification of these workers, we have a nationwide data across about 4,000 municipalities where such workers have been identified. We launched this scheme in July' 23 and I am happy to inform you that we have covered 4,000 ULBs. The latest figure this morning is that 56,316 such workers who have been formalized and identified. The next process is to give them training. We are also through a central procurement giving them PPE kits and safety devices so that they can do this cleaning in a mechanized way. They don't have to come into contact with faecal matter directly which is hazardous and leads to loss of life. Your second last question was about the minimum wages. This is not a

part of our scheme but is very important. As a worker gets formalized and there is a model contracting system which we are ensuring at MoHUA, we are also getting onboard the PSSOs or parastatal agencies which are actually operating in the ULBs. We are trying to give them contracting system that there are certain minimum wages below which you can't engage them; there are certain rules and regulations that you have to follow and only those workers who are formalized and are on the portal, can be engaged for such work."

9.18. As regards to the satisfaction of the Department with the progress of work being undertaken under the Scheme, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

"One of the pivotal component of the NAMASTE scheme is profiling and expenditure of other components of the scheme depends on the number of profiled SSWs. The profiling process could only be started in December, 2023. Consistent efforts have been taken to expedite the process of profiling, for instance, all the ULBs of the country have been requested that SSWs listed with the ULBs, parastatal agencies and PSSOs be profiled and validated on priority basis."

9.19. With regard to the targets and achievements fixed under the Scheme, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that the persistent efforts are being made to achieve the targets. The targets fixed and achievements for 2023-24 and 2024-05 are as under:-

Name of the Scheme/ Project / Programme	Targets and Achievements (₹in crore)			
	Year	BE	RE	Actual Expenditure
National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (2023-24 and 2024-25)	2023-24	97.41	30.06	30.06
	2024-25	116.94	60.73	27.535 (as on 30.09.2024)

9.20 On being asked about the development Occupational Safety Training Module for Sewer and Septic Tank workers, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:-

"Participant Handbooks and the following Training Modules for the 2 Job roles for which training is being provided under NAMASTE scheme have been designed:

- (i) Junior Technician - Mechanized Sewer Cleaning
- (ii) Desludging Operator"

9.21. With regard to the monitoring mechanism and the outcome of the reviews held, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:-

“Monitoring of the scheme is carried out in a hierarchical manner. The details are as follows: -

The State Project Management Units (SPMU) are monitored at the national level through weekly ULB-wise progress update reports and review meetings. Furthermore, the National Project Management Unit (NPMU) submits state-wise weekly progress update reports to the Ministry.

At the state level, two State Nodal Officers (SNOs) have been designated in every State/UT. The SNO from the Urban Development Department is responsible for implementing the scheme, while the SNO from the Social Welfare Department is responsible for monitoring its implementation. The SNO/PMU/NPMU conducts review meetings with the ULB Nodal Officers to issue instructions and carry out review of the scheme progress at the ULB-level.

Additionally, periodic review meetings between the Ministry officials, top management and state stakeholders ensure that the scheme remains on track, with timely interventions whenever necessary. The progress of the NAMASTE scheme has been discussed in meetings such as the Chintan Shivir, attended by ministers and other state-level representatives, as well as in national-level meetings with the Social Welfare Principal Secretaries.

Coordination Committee under the chairmanship of the Secretary, MoSJE has also been created to oversee the implementation of NAMASTE, and liaise with other Missions/ Ministries/Departments/Industry associations to explore areas for convergent action at the national, State and city levels. The Coordination Committee gives advises and suggestion on time to time with respect to safety and security of Manual Scavengers and Sewer Septic Tank Workers. In addition, there is a three tier working group at Centre, State and District level to monitor quarterly the activities undertaken for implementation of the scheme.”

9.22. National Action Plan for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem Scheme (NAMASTE) was launched in July, 2023 to formalize the Sewer and Septic Tank Workers (SSWs) and to ensure safety and dignity of sanitation workers in Urban India. It is implemented in convergence amongst key stakeholders including Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation and Ministry of skill Development and Entrepreneurship. As per the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, there are likely to be one lakh Sewer and Septic Tank Workers (SSWs) in the country. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs are required to converge for interventions such as profiling of SSWs through MIS portal, nomination of Responsible Sanitation Authority, setting up of Emergency Response Sanitation Unit, etc. In view of the involvement of several Ministries/ Departments/ Organisations, the Committee are of the opinion that for the success of the NAMASTE, it is important that there is proper coordination amongst them so that the responsibilities entrusted over them are carried out smoothly. Unless all the SSWs are validated they would be deprived from the benefits of the Scheme. The Committee find that out of 43961 profiled SSWs, 37407 SSWs have been validated by the concerned Urban Local Bodies. The Committee, therefore, desire that all the SSWs should be profiled and validated urgently. Further, the pace of the distribution of PPE Kits, Safety devices and Ayushman Bharat Cards to SSWs is required to be increased as only 16741 PPE Kits, 42 Safety Devices and 13412 Ayushman Bharat Cards have been provided to them. The Committee expect that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment would take all necessary steps for the welfare of the SSWs and effective implementation of NAMASTE in a time bound manner.

9.23. The aim of NAMASTE is to ensure that there is zero fatalities in sanitation work in India, all sanitation work is performed by formalized skilled workers and no sanitation workers come in direct contact with human faecal matter, occupational safety training to SSWs, etc. However, the Committee have found that the Department is lagging behind in this regard as several instances of death of unskilled sanitation workers due to negligence/ non-availability of safety equipments are reported every year in the press. There is utmost need for capacity building of sanitation workers by enhancing their occupational skills. The Committee therefore, desire that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment should ensure that all the sanitation workers are adequately trained and conduct comprehensive campaign to increase awareness amongst sanitation service seekers to obtain services for cleaning of sewer septic tanks from trained SSWs. The Committee also desire that the minimum wages may be ensured for SSWs and the State/UT Governments may be suitably directed to ensure that SSWs get minimum wages prescribed.

CHAPTER-X

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

Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi (PM-DAKSH) Yojana, a Central Sector Scheme, was launched during 2020-21. The main objective of the Scheme is to enhance competency level of SCs, OBCs, EWSs, DNTs Safai Karamcharis including waste pickers etc; between the age of 18-45 years, to make them employable both in self-employment and wage-employment for their socio-economic development. There is no Income limit for SCs, Safai Karamcharis Including waste picker and DNT. OBCs with an annual income family below ₹3 lakh and EWSs with an annual family income below ₹3 lakh are eligible for free of cost training under the Yojana.

10.2. The Department of Social Justice and empowerment submitted that during 2020-21, 32097 trainees were trained out of whom 24652 trainees were placed. The total expenditure on these trainings was ₹44.79 crore. Similarly, in 2021-22, 42002 trainees were trained out of which 31033 trainees were placed for employment. An amount of ₹68.22 crore was spent on these trainings. In 2022-23, 33021 trainees were trained out of which 21552 trainees were placed. An amount of ₹14.94 crore was released on these trainings. In this way, from the FY 2020-21 to 2022-23, trainings were imparted to 107120 trainees out of whom 77237 trainees were placed in gainful employment. The total amount spent from FY 20-21 to 22-23 on these trainings is ₹127.95 crore. During 2023-24, 28 Government and 84 private training institutes had been empanelled for implementation of the Scheme. More than 95000 trainee targets were distributed among these 112 empanelled training institutes.

10.3. As regards to the salient features of the Scheme, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“Salient Features of the Scheme are given as under: -

- a) The Yojana: Pradhan Mantri Dakshata Aur KushalataSampannaHitgrahi (PM-DAKSH) Yojana, a Central Sector Scheme was launched during 2020-21. The focus of the programme is on providing high quality skills through good quality institutions

so that the training can result in finding jobs or self-employment ventures for the target group(SCs, OBCs, EWSs, DNTs Safai Karamcharis including waste pickers etc.)

- b) Types of Skilling programme:
 - Up-skilling/Re-skilling - only for Safai karmacharis/waste pickers
 - Short Term Training (STT) - as per mandate of M/o Skill Development & Entrepreneurship
 - Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP) - only through IIE and NIESBUD
- c) Age Criterion: 18-45 years
- d) Income Criteria:
 - SCs, Safai Karamcharis including waste picker and DNT: No Income limit,
 - OBCs and EWSs: Annual income family below Rs.3 lakh
- e) Cost of the training:
 - To trainees: it is free of cost
 - To training institutes: Training institutes are being as per common cost norms issued by Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Government of India
- f) The stipend to trainees
 - Under short term training: The trainees will be paid stipend @ ₹1,500/- per month for SC candidates, ₹1,000/- per month to OBCs/EWSs/DNTs and ₹1,500/- per month to Sanitation Workers including waste pickers and their dependents.
 - Under Up-skilling/Re-skilling under Recognition of Prior Learning: As the trainees are already employed, they will be paid @ ₹500/- per person to Safai Mitras including Waste Pickers for duration of training of Up-skilling and Re-skilling under RPL, towards compensation of their wage loss, during the period of training.”

10.4 The Budget Estimates, Revised Estimates, Actual Expenditure for the last three years and BE for 2024-25 is as follows:-

S. No.	Programme/Schemes	2021-22			2022-23			2023-24			BE 2024-25
		BE	RE	AE	BE	RE	AE	BE	RE	AE (Till 31.03.2024)	
Schemes											
1.	Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi (PM DAKSH) Yojana (Allocation for SCs)	60.00	38.94	33.21	40.00	40.00	8.90	43.73	60.00	32.74	65.00
2.	Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi (PMDAKSH) Yojana (Allocation for OBCs)	40.00	40.54	35.02	44.00	44.00	6.40	48.74	60.00	25.60	65.00

10.5 On being enquired about the reasons due to which actual expenditure was less in comparison to Budget Estimates during the last three years and the steps taken to improve the situation in future, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted as under:-

“The expenditure is made on the completed training programmes and certified candidates only as against the targets, therefore, there is variation in the sanctioned. Further, the payment is made in mile stone basis to the TIs on fulfilling scheme/sanction guidelines/norms submission of invoices/documents timely. Moreover, the stipend is released to the candidates having minimum 80% attendance and submission of correct/updated bank account details. The Department is committed to train approved number of candidates within the allocated and approved budget.”

10.6 State-wise details of trainees trained from 2020-21 to 2023-24 under the Scheme is as follows:-

Sl. No.	Name of State/Ut	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
		Trained	Trained	Trained	Trained
1	ANDHRA PRADESH	870	2167	1969	325
2	ASSAM	1183	2070	1357	3633
3	BIHAR	2596	3032	2040	2113
4	CHHATTISGARH	694	999	641	593
5	DELHI	487	337	327	198
6	GOA	0	0	125	0
7	GUJARAT	1199	1783	910	623
8	HARYANA	1137	964	1470	1888
9	HIMACHAL PRADESH	319	898	739	885
10	JAMMU AND KASHMIR	664	765	1292	1040
11	JHARKHAND	370	1241	790	1108
12	KARNATAKA	781	1351	790	2094
13	KERALA	763	859	353	198
14	LADAKH	60	50	0	60
15	MADHYA PRADESH	2764	3260	4222	17192
16	MAHARASHTRA	2567	1963	1261	10046
17	MANIPUR	241	516	343	0
18	MEGHALAYA	60	30	140	0
19	ODISHA	736	1017	1304	1232
20	PUDUCHERRY	31	51	0	30

21	PUNJAB	1509	2377	2884	2122
22	RAJASTHAN	1890	1927	1383	7934
23	SIKKIM	160	155	25	25
24	TAMIL NADU	1032	1137	1011	2140
25	TELANGANA	430	720	866	1055
26	TRIPURA	92	509	470	487
27	UTTAR PRADESH	6659	7798	4167	21304
28	UTTARAKHAND	1090	679	512	1247
29	CHANDIGARH	0	0	110	0
30	WEST BENGAL	1713	3347	1520	613
	Total	32097	42002	33021	80185

10.7. On being enquired about the implementation of the Scheme and the details of the Organisations that have been entrusted the responsibility for skilling of persons, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“Till 2023-24, PM-Daksh Scheme was implemented by the Apex Corporations of D/o Social Justice & Empowerment (MoSJE). National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC) is looking after the training of Scheduled Castes category candidates. National Backward Class Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC) is looking after the training of OBC, DNT & EBC category candidates. National Safai Karamcharis Finance Development Corporation (NSKFDC) is looking after the training of Safai Karamcharis and Waste pickers candidates and their dependents. Selection of Training Institutes is being done a rigorous process and best out of best institutes are being selected to train the candidates in different National Skill Quality Framework (NSQF) aligned courses. The Training Institutes are entrusted to train the candidates as per different cost norms and as per different provisions of the scheme guidelines.”

10.8. As regards to the target fixed/ achieved during last three years and target for 2024-25, the details are as follows:-

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme/project/ programme	Division	2021-22			2022-23			2023-24			% of achievements for last three years	2024-25 Target
			Target	Achievement	Shortfall, if any, indicating reasons in brief	Target	Achievement	Shortfall, if any, indicating reasons in brief	Target	Achievement	Shortfall, if any, indicating reasons in brief		

	Pradhan Mantri Dakshta aur KushaltaSampannHitgrahi (PM DAKSH)	PM-DAKSH	49,800	42002	7798, Training is imparted based on the number of registration of candidates	51.900	33,021	18879, Training is imparted on the number of registration of candidates	101970	75000	26790* Training is imparted based on the number of registration of candidates	73	107970
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10.9. On being enquired about the criteria laid down by the Department for the selection of candidates for skilling of persons covering SCs, OBCs, DNT and sanitation workers, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“The Selection of eligible candidates would be finalized by the Selection Committee having Members from the concerned Training Institute, Nodal Officer / District Officer of SCAs; Officer from District Social Welfare Department; Representative from Nationalized Bank; Representative of Government/Collector Office; Representative from concerned industry; Representative from the ministry / department / corporations etc. (At-least three members from above). At least one member must be from Government Organisation. Since, the committee has government representative, it is believed that only genuine, eligible and interested candidates are being selected. The eligibility criteria for candidates are given below:

- (i) Age must be between 18-45 years
- (ii) Annual family income for OBC and EWS candidates should be below ₹3.00 lakh.
- (iii) There is no income limit for the candidates belonging to SC/DNT/Safai Karamcharis including Waste Pickers
- (iv) Should possess an Aadhar card and Aadhar linked bank account, with the exemption for the candidates of such States which have not implemented Aadhar completely
- (v) Fulfills other educational and domain expertise criteria for the respective job roles as approved by M/o Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE).

10.10. On being asked with regard to the system that existed prior to the introduction of the Scheme in 2020-21 providing for skill training to SCs/OBCs/DNTs and the difference between new and old system, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:-

“Earlier skill development of the candidates from OBC/EBC/DNT communities was done from the grants-in-aid of the scheme “Assistance to skilling for OBC/EBCs/DNTs”. The existing scheme Assistance of skilling for OBC/EBC/DNT was revamped and renamed as PM-DAKSH Yojana, as a Central Sector Scheme with 100% assistance to the training Institutes. The target groups under PM-DAKSH Yojana OBC/EBC/DNT/SC and safaikaramcharis including waste pickers in the age group of 18-45 years. Thus, the scheme has covered almost all the marginalized sections of society to fulfill their aspirations. PM-DAKSH Yojana is being implemented from the financial year 2020-21 through its Apex Corporations across the country.”

10.11. On being asked, whether any review mechanism has been adopted and the reasons due to which target fixed under the Scheme could not be achieved, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“All courses under PM-DAKSH Scheme are NSQF aligned courses duly approved by National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET). The scheme has been approved by Standing Finance Committee (SFC) for an amount of ₹450 Cr. From the year 2021-22 to 2025-26 aligned with the XVI Finance Commission (FC) Cycle. During this period, Department is committed to train approved number of candidates within the allocated and approved budget. The objective of the scheme is to provide gainful placement or self-employment ventures. To ensure better implementation of the scheme, the scheme is being monitored through biometric attendance, Project Monitoring Unit (PMU) inspections, video calls, geotagged photographs of ongoing training programmes. The candidates completing the training are mandated to be assessed and certified by the third-party Assessment Agencies and respected awarding bodies as approved by NCVET.”

10.12. On being asked, whether the Department is satisfied which the target fixed for each year *vis-a-vis* the population of SC, OBC, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“This scheme is additionality to Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) Scheme. SC and OBC candidates are also trained under other skilling schemes including in PMKVY. Therefore, with this view the Department is satisfied with the target fixed by the SFC.”

10.13. The Committee note that 32097, 42002, 33021 and 80135 persons were trained in 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24, respectively under Pradhan Mantri Dakshta aur Kushalta Sampaan Hitgrahi (PM-DAKSH) for SCs, OBCs and others. The Committee are happy to find that 24652, 31033 and 21552 persons trained under the Scheme secured employment in 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23. The Committee appreciate the performance of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment under the Scheme but strongly feel that the number of persons trained/employed is not sufficient to cater to the large percentage of population belonging to SCs, OBCs, EWSs, DNTS, Safai Karamcharis, waste pickers, etc. It is true that there are several other Schemes under which people receive training but it is also a fact that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment is a nodal Department for these sections of the society, hence, they cannot absolve themselves from their responsibility. The Committee feel that ₹450 crore approved by the Standing Finance Committee would be prudently utilized during the period from 2021-22 to 2025-26 and all measures will be taken to ensure that the target fixed are achieved. The Committee trust that the norms fixed by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment for the selection of candidates for training will be meticulously applied in selection of candidates and also expect that the Institutes imparting training will be properly monitored so that qualitative training is provided to the candidates for their gainful employment and suitable action would be taken against Institutes not complying to the norms fixed for training, infrastructure, etc.

CHAPTER-XI

SOCIAL DEFENCE

Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY)

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is implementing Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY) for welfare of senior citizens with the following components: -

A. Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC) – Grant in aid is provided to Non-Governmental Organisations/Panchayati Raj Institutions/ local bodies and the Community at large for running and maintenance of senior citizen homes (old age homes), continuous care homes, etc. Facilities like shelter, nutrition, medicare and entertainments are provided free of cost to indigent senior citizens. The Department furnished the following details of assistance given under the Scheme to the Panchayati Raj Institutions/local bodies and eligible Non-Governmental Voluntary Organisations:

- (i) From 2004-05 to 2013-14, Released an amount of ₹170.06 crore covering around 3.86 lakhs beneficiaries.
- (ii) From 2014-15 to 2023-23, Released an amount of ₹681.13 crore covering around 7.95 lakhs beneficiaries.
- (iii) During FY 2023-24, Released an amount of ₹118.96 crore till 31st covering around 1.58 lakhs beneficiaries.

B. State Action Plan for Senior Citizens (SAPSrC) -Under State Action Plan for Senior Citizens (SAPSrC), the Government of India perceives a major and critical role of all State Governments in partnering and implementing the Action Plan for welfare of senior citizens. Grant in aid is provided to States/ UTs for activities like awareness generation, sensitization, cataract surgeries and State specific activities. The details of expenditure since inception of the scheme *i.e.*, FY 2019-20 is as under:

- (i) 2019-20 (first year– ₹29 crore released to States/UTs
- (ii) 2020-21 – ₹7.25 crore
- (iii) 2021-22 – ₹2.36 crore
- (iv) 2022-23 – ₹11.74 crore
- (v) 2023-24 – ₹21.19 crore.

Release of GIA to States under SAPSrC is subject to receipt of State Plan and Utilisation Certificates from States.

C. RashtriyaVayoshri Yojana (RVY) - The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is implementing the scheme of 'Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY)' with an objective to provide senior citizens, belonging to BPL category or the senior citizen with the monthly income not more than ₹15000/- and suffering from age related disabilities/ infirmities, with such physical aids and assisted living devices which can restore near normalcy in their bodily functions. The Scheme was launched on 01.04.2017. The Scheme is implemented through the 'Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation (ALIMCO)', (a Central Public Sector Undertaking under the M/oSJE) as the sole implementing Agency. The following aids & assisted living devices are provide under the scheme to the senior citizens:

Generic Items	Special Items
1. Walking sticks 2. Elbow crutches 3. Walkers / Crutches 4. Tripods / Quadpods 5. Hearing Aids 6. Artificial Dentures 7. Spectacles	1. Wheelchairs 2. Wheel Chairs with Commode 3. Chair/Stool with Commode 4. Silicon Foam Cushion 5. Knee Brace 6. Spinal Support 7. Cervical Collar 8. Lumbosacral Belt (LS) 9. Walker/Roalator with Brakes 10. Walking Stick with Seat

As regards the camps organized and number of beneficiaries under RVY for the last three years, the Department submitted as under:-

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
No. of Camps	49	39	84
No. of Beneficiaries	70943	63307	62584
No. of Devices	3,88,899	3,98,858	254280

D. Elderline-National Helpline for Senior Citizens (NHSC): Registration of grievances, redressal of Grievances and Monitoring of the performance of States

/UTs are done through the website of Elderline for Senior citizens (elderline.dosje.gov.in). The National Helpline for Senior Citizens is to generate awareness about the Act, Schemes & Programmes being executed by different Central & State Governments and to provide a platform to redress grievances of Senior Citizens across the country. The Helpline also enables Government to understand the challenges faced by the senior citizens, and thereby works towards bringing new policies or effecting necessary policy changes and improving implementation as required. National Helpline for Senior Citizens is a toll-free number (14567) operating for 12 hours a day (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM) that provides 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. It is being financed through the Senior Citizens Welfare Fund (SCWF). All the States/UTs have been covered under the scheme. Total ₹92.30 crore has been released to NISD since inception of the scheme. The Following achievements were made under Elderline:-

Types of Calls	Number of calls
Total Calls Received	23,40,393
Unique Services Offered	333,358
Information	74,493
Guidance	140,370
Field Intervention	22,803

E. Senior-care Ageing Growth Engine (SAGE)– In accordance with the Govt policy to promote out-of-the-box and innovative solutions for the commonly faced problems, innovative start-ups would be identified and encouraged for developing products, processes and services for the welfare of the elderly. The selection of the start-ups would be made through a transparent process and the fund would be provided as equity, subject to the Govt investment not exceeding 49% of the total equity of the Firm. The initiative would be implemented by IFCI Venture Capital Funds Ltd. (Investment Manager) in consultation with MoSJE. The SAGE portal was launched on 05.06.2021 to provide equity support to such out-of-the-box and innovative start-ups that have come up for providing products, processes and services for the welfare of the elderly. Details of achievements since inception of the scheme *i.e.*, 2021:

S. No.	Financial Year	Number of Startups
1	2021-22	9
2	2022-23	4
3	2023-24	8 (recommended)

F. Training of Geriatric Care Givers: The main objective is to bridge the gap in supply and increasing demand in the field of geriatric caregivers so as to provide more professional services to the senior citizens and also to create a cadre of professional care givers in the field of geriatrics. The programme will ensure sufficient availability of dedicated, professionally trained manpower of geriatric caregivers who can attend to diverse and dynamic needs of elderly population relating to recreation, holistic well-being through Naturopathy, alternative medical practices including Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy, physiotherapy, normal and emergent and crisis related medical conditions including Dementia, Paralysis, Prostate, Parkinson, Alzheimer, Depression, religious and spiritual handholding, pet care and pet management, overall management of patients and families dealing with terminal illness and death etc. National Institute of Social Defense (NISD) will function as the implementing agency and also CNA. Total 40,589 candidates have enrolled and trained under the scheme during FY 2023-24.

G. Other Initiatives for Senior Citizens: In order to solve the problems of healthy and productive ageing, several initiatives are being done across the country. The proposed initiatives are aimed at involving the elders in building up knowledge which can be useful for the society as a whole. National Institute of Social Defence (NISD) will be the implementing agency and will also function as CNA.

Initiatives:

- a. Activities like community-based radio services, podcasts, voice bots;
- b. Volunteering for financial, digital and legal literacy;
- c. Time bank credit system;
- d. Human library;
- e. Sensitization of Children through value education training;
- f. Intergeneration bonding; and
- g. Any other initiative and innovative ideas for the welfare/wellness of senior citizens.

11.2. The budgetary allocation under various Schemes of Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY) during each of the last five years including actual expenditure made alongwith the Budgetary Estimate for 2024-25 are as follows:-

S. No	Name of the Scheme	2019-20		2020-21		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24		BE 2024-25
		B.E.	AE	B.E.	Actual Exp.	B.E.	Actual Exp.	B.E.	Actual Exp.	B.E.	Actual Exp.	
1.	RashtriyaVayoshri Yojana (RVY)	0	0	26.50	26.50	25.00	25.00	88.84	88.84	92.15	59.32	168.21
2.	Elderline	NA	NA	27.88	27.88	21.31	21.31	33.49	33.49	52.47	9.62	53.46
3.	SAGE	NA	NA	NA	NA	20.00	20.00	0.00	0.00	5.00	0.00	5.00
4.	Training of Geriatric Care Givers	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	25.00	0.00	35.00
5.	Other Initiatives for Senior Citizens	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	8.00	0.12	15.00
6.	IPSrC	90.10	106.20	200	122.58	216.32	93.19	241.76	72.31	275.05	118.96	159
7.	SAPSrC		29		7.25	18.37	2.36	18.47	11.74	17	21.19	17

11.3. On being enquired about the changes introduced in the Schemes meant for Senior Citizens and the outcome of the changes, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“Before 2019-20, only 08 devices were provided under the scheme of RashtriyaVayoshri Yojana (RVY). However, the scheme was amended and at present, 17 devices are provided under the scheme. Thus, more senior citizens are engaged and benefitted under the scheme. Till FY 2019-20, total 3,75,447 aids & assisted living devices were provided to the senior citizens which have reached to total 15,54,179 till the FY 2023-24.

This Department also launched a scheme namely ‘Training for Geriatric Care Givers’ to bridge the gap in supply and increasing demand in the field of geriatric caregivers so as to provide more professional services to the senior citizens and also to create a cadre of professional givers in the field of geriatrics.”

11.4. On being enquired about the role of State/UT Governments in implementing the various welfare measures meant for senior citizens and how successfully they have been carrying out their responsibility, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“AVYAY, an umbrella scheme is a Central Sector Scheme. However, for few components the involvement of State is required in order to effectively implementation of the scheme.

Under the scheme of State Action Plan for Senior Citizens (SAPSrC), each State/UT frames their own State Action Plans (SAP) taking into account their local considerations for the welfare of their Senior Citizens. The Department of Social Justice and Empowerment releases funds to the States/UTs for the implementation of their respective State Action Plans.

Under the scheme of RashtriyaVayoshri Yojana (RVY), beneficiaries in each district are identified by the State Governments/UT Administrations through the Committee chaired by the Deputy Commissioner/District Collector. Based on the data provided by State/UT Government, the implementing agency conduct the camp.

Under the scheme of Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC), new projects of Senior Citizen Homes are selected on the basis of recommendations received from the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations.”

11.5. The representative of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment elaborated about implementation of the Schemes for the Welfare of Senior Citizens during the deliberation with the Committee as under :-

“I had mentioned about the Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana. All our schemes are such that there are multiple components. In this scheme, there is an integrated programme for senior citizens. In this, we build capacity so that basic facility is given to the elderly by the institutions. Then, we ask for a State Action Plan for senior citizens. If the action plan comes, we give grants-in-aid. I can submit here that sometimes we find that there is a delay in the State Action Plan. So, we keep insisting strongly कि स्टेट एक्शन प्लान जरूर हमें समय से दीजिए। इसमें स्टेट स्पेसिफिक एक्टिविटीज़ में कैटेरेक्ट सेर्जरीज़ का जो चलता है, डैट ऑल्सो, उसमें भी हम, जो मोतिय बिंद का है, उसको भी हम सपोर्ट करते हैं।

तीसरा, जो राष्ट्रीय वयोश्री योजना है, इसमें हम सहायक उपकरण, आपने देखा होगा कि that there are so many camps that we organise in which we give walking sticks, wheelchairs, and spectacles. कान का सुनने वाला, बैसाखियाँ आदि यह सब हम देते हैं। बस यह है की वे बीपीएल केटेगरी के हों या उनका मासिक १५ हजार रूपये से कम इन कम हो, तो हम उनको ये सहायक उपकरण देते हैं। एक हमने एल्डरलाइन बना रखी ही, 14567, जो फ्री इनफार्मेशन, गाइडेंस, इवन इमोशनल सपोर्ट हम देते हैं। कई बार वे कॉल करते हैं कि हम बिलकुल अकेले हो गए हैं, हमारे साथ यह-यह हुआ। एक सीहनयर केयर एजिंग ग्रॉविथ इंजन स्कीम हमने बनाई है। Under the said scheme, if someone has crossed 60 years of age but wants to become an entrepreneur and has got an idea, then we give support to him. Naturally, we cannot say ‘yes’ to every scheme. We give support to such people. During the discussion, I will give further details with regard to the setting up of enterprises.”

11.6. On being asked, whether any study has been conducted to check the level of satisfaction among the senior citizens and also to seek suggestions for improvements, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“Department conducted third party evaluation of the scheme Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC) to Study/ Evaluate the following points: -

- i. Functioning of Senior Citizen Homes
- ii. Adequacies & facilities in these Homes
- iii. Impact/ outcome of IPSrC in improving quality of life of the elderly
- iv. Data on deaths of inmates in these Homes
- v. Source of funds – delayed/ no GIA
- vi. Highlighting good Practices & Case Studies

The recommendations of the Study were as follow:

- 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) Some States have more Sr. C. Homes. Hence, socio-economic conditions of these States should be understood.
- f) Scope of the Scheme should be broadened in other States
- g) IPSrC should be revised every 2 years
- h) IPSrC should be continued

In view of the recommendations of the study, the targets achieved are as follows:

- i. Frequent surprise visits are done by the Officials of this Department for inspection of the Senior Citizens Homes.
- ii. IPSrC is an ongoing scheme with 622 projects supported through Old Age Homes, Continuous Care Homes, Physiotherapy Centres and Mobile Medicare Units.
- iii. To broaden scheme in other States, applications have been invited for new project of Senior Citizen Homes in GAP Districts under the Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC). Hence, broader reach is anticipated under the scheme.

RashtriyaVayoshri Yojana (RVY):

a) Third-party evaluation study has been completed on the scheme of RVY in June, 2024. The objective of the study is:

- i. To study if easy access is being provided to Senior Citizen belonging to BPL category in providing the devices.
- ii. To study if better quality and useful equipment are distributed to the beneficiaries.
- iii. To study the constraints faced by the different level i.e. implementing agency and district administration.
- iv. To study the impact of the scheme in improving the socio-economic life of beneficiaries.

b) Outcome of the Study Report on RVY:

- i. The State-wise data highlights an impressive coverage of 3,15,257 beneficiaries with a gender disparity favouring male (58%) over females (42%).
- ii. National coverage stands at approximately 0.30%, with significant variance across States and UTs, highlighting both achievements in certain regions and potential for expansion in other.
- iii. The higher representation of women in State like Puducherry and Meghalaya contrasts sharply with the lower figures in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, suggesting a multifaceted challenge influenced by social norms, awareness level, and accessibility to the scheme.
- iv. Scheme's broad reach and positive impact on independence and social interactions are commendable. However, there is also the

need for improvement on the feedback of aid quality and effectiveness.

- v. The scheme's geographical coverage is commendable, extending to both rural and urban areas across numerous districts. Yet, there is also challenges such as low awareness and logistical hurdles in certain areas which hint at the need for more targeted and innovative awareness-raising strategies.
- vi. The awareness level among Senior Citizen Associations about RVY indicates a significant gap in information dissemination.

c) Recommendation of the Third-Party Study Report on RVY:

- i. Employ a multi-channel communication strategy that includes local media, social media, direct community outreach, and collaborations with local NGOs and health workers for reaching all segments of the population.
- ii. Adopt alternative distribution methods. Strategies such as partnering with primary healthcare centres for local distribution.
- iii. Organizing regular assessment camps at the village level and involving local leaders and community organizations in promoting the scheme.
- iv. Need for introducing new items in the scheme like ergonomic furniture, Adaptive clothing designed with Velcro closures and elastic bands, cognitive aids like memory devices, Therapeutic activity kits, home modification supports etc.”

11.7. On being enquired, whether the provisions contained in Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (MWPSC) Act, 2007 are being exhaustively implemented and further amendments likely to be introduced in future, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (MWPSC) Act, 2007, was enacted to uphold the “Right to life with dignity,” a fundamental right enshrined in the Constitution of India. The Act aims to prevent the abandonment of senior citizens by their children and to ensure they enjoy a life of dignity and respect, similar to the care they provided to their children.

In 2019-20, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment (DoSJE) collaborated with the National Productivity Council (NPC) to study the effectiveness and implementation of the MWPSC Act. This study collected feedback from some State Governments and other key stakeholders, focusing on the functioning of provisions under the Act.

The MWPSC Act emphasizes legal service access for senior citizens, supported by the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. The Legal Services to Senior Citizens Scheme (2016) ensures free legal aid for seniors, establishing legal service clinics in tribunals and old age homes. These clinics, managed by trained paralegal volunteers, assist senior citizens with legal processes, access to government schemes, pension benefits, and entitlements.

The MWPSC Act aims to provide effective provisions for the maintenance and welfare of parents and senior citizens, emphasizing timely and cost-effective processes. To this end, it mandates the formation of maintenance tribunals that empower seniors to seek

maintenance, protect them from financial exploitation, and issue eviction orders to ensure their well-being.

The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (MWPSC) bill, 2019 lapsed after the dissolution of 17th Lok Sabha. The revised Bill is under consideration of DoSJE.”

11.8. As regards the review of all components of AVYAY held of the Scheme, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“As per census 2011, the population of senior citizens in the country was 10.38 crore. During the Financial Year 2020-21, the scheme of Integrated Programme of Senior Citizens was reviewed and the scheme was revised on the basis of recommendations of the third-party evaluation and comments received from other stakeholders. It may also be noted that the cost-norms of Grant-in-Aid under IPSrC component was increased keeping in view for providing better facilities for the welfare of Senior Citizens.

In addition, the scheme of Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY) was evaluated by a third party in Financial Year 2023-24 to see the implementation of the scheme at ground level and its impact. The report of it was received in June, 2024. The whole umbrella scheme *i.e.* AVYAY will be reviewed before 2026-2027.”

11.9. On being enquired about the roadmap drawn by the Department to cater to the needs of aged population including social security, the Committee were informed *vide* written reply that:

“The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (MWPSC) bill, 2019 was lapsed after dissolution of 17th Lok Sabha. The revised Bill is under consideration of DoSJE.

Moreover, the AVYAY scheme will be reviewed before 2026-2027 after seeking comments from various stakeholders and the feedback received from third-party evaluation report.”

11.10. The Committee note that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment are running various programmes for the welfare of the senior citizens such as Integrated Programme for senior citizens (IPSrC), Rastriya Vayoshree Yojana (RVY), Elderline, Senior-care Ageing Growth Engine (SAGE), Training of Geriatric Care Givers under Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY). The Committee find that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment have not been able to spend the allocated funds in the programmes where State Governments are involved, as ₹59.32 crore could only be spent out of ₹92.15 crore allocated under

Rastriya Vayoshree Yojana and ₹118.96 crore could be spent out of ₹275.05 crore allocated under Integrated Programme for senior citizens in 2023-24. The Committee believe that the role of State Governments is very crucial for effective implementation of all the component of the Scheme, hence, concerted efforts should be made to make the State Governments proactive for identifying the beneficiaries under RVY and IPSrC. The Committee are happy to note that the programmes falling under Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana were evaluated regularly. The suggestions/ recommendations received on evaluations are required to be exhaustively examined and implemented. The Committee also expect that with the expansion of Rastriya Vayoshree Yojana by increasing distribution of devices from 8 to 17 would cover large number of the senior citizens. The Committee feel that in view of increasing number of the senior citizens, the responsibility of the Central Government increases multiple times, hence, it is required that the Central and State Governments should justify their role and carry out their responsibilities with proper coordination so that senior citizens are not made to suffer due to any reason.

New Delhi
18 December, 2024
27 Pausha, 1946 (Saka)

SHRI P.C. MOHAN
Chairperson
Standing Committee on Social Justice and
Empowerment

MINUTES OF THE SECOND SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2024-25) (DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT) HELD ON TUESDAY, 5TH NOVEMBER, 2024

The Committee met from 1130 hrs. to 1330 hrs. in Committee Room No. '2', Parliament House Annexe Extension Building, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SHRI P.C. MOHAN - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

LokSabha

2. Shri E.T. Mohammed Basheer
3. Shri Chhatrapal Singh Gangwar
4. Kumari Priyanka Satish Jarkiholi
5. Shri Murari Lal Meena
6. Smt. Bag Mitali
7. Adv. Priya Saroj
8. Shri Anoop Pradhan Valmiki
9. Shri Mansukhbhai Dhanjibhai Vasava

RajyaSabha

10. Smt. Sumitra Balmik
11. Smt. Geeta alias Chandraprabha
12. Shri Narayan Koragappa
13. Smt. Phulo Devi Netam
14. Shri Rameswar Teli
15. Smt. Mamata Thakur
16. Smt. P.T. Usha
17. Shri Abdul Wahab

SECRETARIAT

1. Smt. Mamta Kemwal - Joint Secretary
2. Dr. Vatsala Joshi - Director
3. Shri Krishendra Kumar - Deputy Secretary

WITNESSES

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT)

1.	Shri Amit Kumar Ghosh	Additional Secretary
2.	Ms. Caralyn Khongwar Deshmukh	Additional Secretary
3.	Mr. Biswaranjan Sasmal	Joint Secretary
4.	Ms. Debolina Thakur	JS & FA
5.	Ms. Monali P. Dhakate	JS
6.	Ms. Yogita Swaroop	Sr. Economic Advisor

2. At the outset, Chairperson, Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment welcomed the representatives of Department of Social Justice and Empowerment to the meeting convened to discuss the 'Demands for Grants for 2024-2025'. In his opening remarks, the Chairperson pointed out that some of the issues have been recurring year after year despite of the recommendations of the Committee in the past to improve the execution of the Schemes of the Department. The Chairperson drew the attention of the representatives of the Department towards the failure of the Department in spending the budgetary allocation and achieving targets fixed under pre-matric and post-matric Scholarship Schemes for the year 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. He also stated with regard to delay in profiling of Sewer and Septic Tank Workers (SSWs) that the delay has deprived them from availing basic necessities such as PPE kits, medical benefits, etc. The Chairperson also cautioned the Department to take suitable action with regard to the creation of Umbrella Scheme so that the individual Schemes falling under them do not suffer.

3. The Chairperson, thereafter, 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.

4. Then, asked the representatives of the Department to introduce themselves before starting the deliberations. Thereupon, the representatives of the Department introduced themselves. Thereafter, the representatives briefed the Committee on the performance of the Department during 2023-24 in terms of utilization of funds and realization of the targets fixed for various Schemes implemented by them through a Power Point Presentation. He also briefed on the plan laid down by the Department to achieve the targets fixed for 2024-2025.

5. The major issues discussed relating to Demand for Grants (2024-25) of the Department are as follows:-

- (i) Under-utilisation of budgetary allocation during the previous years and the roadmap for 2024-25 to avoid under-utilisation;

- (ii) Resolving of the issues concerning disbursement of scholarships under educational schemes;
- (iii) Safeguarding the rights and interests of SCs;
- (iv) Implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Abhyuday Yojana (PM AJAY) Scheme and other schemes of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment;
- (v) Promotions of entrepreneurship amongst SCs and OBCs.
- (vi) Strengthening of welfare Schemes meant for the old age persons under 'Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana';
- (vii) 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; and
- (viii) Monitoring of schemes and Implementing Agencies.

6. Before concluding the discussion, the Chairperson, 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 expeditiously without any delay.

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 SIXTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2024-25) HELD ON MONDAY, 16TH DECEMBER, 2024.

The Committee met from 1500 hrs. to 1530 hrs. in Chairperson's Chamber, Room No. 113, E-PHA, Block 'B', Extension Building, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SHRI P.C. MOHAN - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri E.T. Mohammed Basheer
3. Shri Bhaskar Murlidhar Bhagare
4. Smt. Vijaylakshmi Devi
5. Shri Chhatrapal Singh Gangwar
6. Shri Chintamani Maharaj
7. Shri Murari Lal Meena
8. Smt. Bag Mitali
9. Shri Bhojraj Nag
10. Shri Godam Nagesh
11. Shri Matheswaran V.S
12. Adv. Priya Saroj

Rajya Sabha

13. Smt. Sumitra Balmik
14. Smt. Geeta alias Chandraprabha
15. Shri Narayan Koragappa
16. Shri Rameswar Teli
17. Smt. P.T. Usha
18. Shri Abdul Wahab

SECRETARIAT

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|---|------------------|
| 1. | Smt. Mamta Kemwal | - | Joint Secretary |
| 2. | Shri Krishendra Kumar | - | Deputy Secretary |

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee convened to consider and adopt the following draft Reports:

(i) First Report on Demands for Grants (2024-25) of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment (Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment)

(ii) XX XX XX

(iii) XX XX XX

(iv) XX XX XX

3. The Chairperson then requested the Members to give their suggestions, if any, on the draft Reports. The Report was adopted by the Committee without any modifications.

4. The Committee then authorized the Chairperson to finalize the draft Report and to present the same to both the Houses on 18.12.2024.

The Committee then adjourned.

XX Does not pertain to this Report

ANNEXURE

STATEMENT OF OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Sl.No	Para No.	Observations/ Recommendations
1.	2.11	<p>The objective of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment is to empower the socially, educationally and economically marginalised sections of the society including Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes, Denotified and Nomadic Tribes(DNTs), Economically Weaker Sections, Senior Citizens, Persons engaged in act of begging, Transgenders, Victims of Alcoholism and Substance abuse through various Schemes and programmes. The Committee find that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment was able to spend more than 85 per cent of revised allocation in 2022-23 and 2023-24. The Department has furnished various reasons for the shortfall in the expenditure <i>viz.</i> due to non- receipt of proposals from States, availability of lucrative Schemes in the States, submission of annual action plan with reduced targets by bigger States such as Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, Chattisgarh, Odisha and Gujarat. The Committee were informed that the Department have taken various steps such as monitoring through the periodic progress reports, organizing conferences of State Social Welfare Ministers, State Welfare Secretaries, regular capacity building programmes, field visits by the officers of the Department to ensure full utilization of enhanced BE of ₹13000.20 crore for 2024-25. The Committee appreciate the steps taken by Department of Social Justice and Empowerment and hope that these steps will help them in fixing the problems that may arise in implementation of various welfare Schemes of the</p>

		<p>Department by the State/UT Governments. Since active participation of State Governments and other implementing agencies is crucial for success of schemes of the Department, the Committee would not deter from recommending that the States/UTs that are not able to justify their role in implementing the welfare schemes should be dealt strictly, ensuring that the beneficiaries are not deprived of any of the welfare Scheme.</p>
2.	2.12	<p>The Committee find that the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment have fixed annual physical targets for various schemes such as Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarship Schemes, National Fellowships for SCs, National Overseas Scholarships for SCs, Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Samparna Hitgrahi (PM-DAKSH) etc. Simultaneously, the Committee also find that there are several schemes under which physical targets are not fixed by the Department, such as Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY), Babu Jagjiwan Ram Chatrawas Yojana (BJRCY) and Venture Capital Fund (VCF) for SCs and OBCs, etc. The Committee believe that the success of any scheme can be measured with the achievement of targets/ goals. In the absence of targets/goals it would not be possible to assess the outcome of any scheme. The Committee would be happy if the annual physical targets are fixed for such Schemes where the welfare measures can be quantified as the Committee have found that the schemes with targets perform better than the Scheme without annual targets. In view of the above, the Committee would like the Department of Social Justice</p>

		<p>and Empowerment to examine the viability and fix the physical targets of all the welfare schemes of the Department so that there is no laxity in the implementation of the Schemes at any stage by the States or other Implementing Agencies.</p>
3.	2.13	<p>The Committee note that the funds were surrendered in many schemes in 2023-24 due to multiple reasons. In Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarship Schemes, funds were surrendered due to less receipt of application/ proposals and in Top class education for SCs and Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs proposals were received late. Similarly, in Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM-AJAY) funds were surrendered due to the introduction of Single Nodal Account System and in Scheme of Residential Education for Students in High School in Targeted Area (SHRESHTA) for SCs it was due to revision in the scheme. The Committee believe that the changes introduced in the Schemes were to streamline the system and to prevent fraud and misuse of funds. The Committee, however, do not find that surrender of funds due to reduction in late receipt of application/ proposals from States is in the interest of beneficiary. The Committee feel that delay in submission of proposal reflects very poorly on the part of State/ UT Governments. The reduction in number of applications due to delay in processing of applications by the State/UT Governments is not acceptable and should be avoided by the State/UT Governments. The Committee expect that the Department would devise suitable mechanism for capacity building, handholding to various implementing institutions of the State</p>

		Governments so that all the Schemes are implemented effectively.
4.	2.14	National Institute of Social Defence (NISD) is undertaking work of training and research in the field of Social Defence and also addresses critical areas such as Drug Abuse prevention, Senior Citizens Welfare, transgender welfare, Beggary prevention and rehabilitation of socially marginalized and vulnerable groups. The Committee are happy to find that NISD has done remarkable work by conducting 2100 programmes during 2021-22 to 2024-25 for NGOs, GIA functionaries, social worker, schools, service providers and for different target groups on drug prevention. However, the Committee find that the Institute encounters certain challenges primarily due to shortage of human resources. The Committee find that the Institute has prepared a comprehensive plan for expansion of Rehabilitation centres, training and capacity building and to strengthen the infrastructure. The Committee appreciate the efforts of the Institute and expect that they would continue to increase their presence amongst Senior Citizens, transgenders, beggars and the persons suffering from drug abuse, etc. The Committee would recommend that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment will make all out efforts to ensure that the welfare activities undertaken by the Institute do not suffer for want of funds, human resources etc. and the Institute continues to contribute effectively in the welfare of the targeted persons.

5.	3.12	<p>The Committee note that under Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for SCs, the financial assistance is provided to Scheduled Caste students studying at Post matriculation or post-secondary stage to complete their education. The Committee find that the budgetary allocation under the Scheme was ₹3,415.62 crore, ₹5,660.00 crore, ₹6,359.14 crore, whereas the actual expenditure was ₹1,978.56 crore, ₹4,392.50 crore and ₹5,476.22 crore in 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24, respectively. The Committee also find that the funds allocated during these years could not be spent as bigger States such as Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar and Chattisgarh have submitted reduced annual action plan in terms of beneficiaries in 2022-23 and 2023-24 and large number of applications are pending with Rajasthan, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Punjab for 2022-23. The Committee find it hard to believe that despite the step wise mechanism established by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, the State Governments are not able to complete all the formalities on time. The Committee also find that several efforts have been made by the Department for active participation of State/UT Governments for implementation of Post Matric Scholarship Scheme. However, nothing fruitful seems to work out to avoid the delay in submission of proposals by the States. The Committee feel that the State Governments should own up their responsibility for proper implementation of the Scheme. The Committee recommend that the Department should make all-out efforts to establish a fool proof mechanism to deal with those States that are not performing well in terms of number of beneficiaries and expenditure under the</p>
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		<p>scheme so that the large number of Scheduled Castes students would be able to complete their higher education.</p>
6.	3.13	<p>The Committee note that Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC students was revised in 2020-21 to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of SCs in higher education from 23.0 per cent to the national average of 27.0 percent. The Committee have found that the GER of SC students has increased to 25.9 per cent in 2021-22 from 23.1 per cent in 2020-21 which is a significant improvement in GER of 18.9 per cent in 2014-15. However, the Committee are little apprehensive with regard to the target of 27 per cent fixed to be achieved by 2025-26 as several States are submitting reduced annual action plan and there is substantial delay in submitting the proposals by State/ UT Governments including the pendency with several States for 2022-23 and 2023-24. The Committee feel that unless the measures taken by the Department are stringently complied by the State Governments, the target of the Department to increase the GER of SCs in higher education to the national average of GER may not be achieved. The Committee are of the opinion that the criteria adopted by the Department to identify the poorest household may also supplement the efforts of the Department in enhancing the GER of SCs subject to the condition that the State/UT Governments efficiently execute them and enhance the enrollment of SC students. The Committee have no doubts about the efforts and the competency of the Department but the active participation of State/UT Governments is very essential to achieve the target. Hence, the Committee</p>

		<p>would like the Department to direct all the State/ UT Governments for expediting the process of identifying the poorest households from various sources and enroll the eligible SC students under the Scholarship schemes in a mission mode so that the Department would achieve the target of GER of SCs fixed to be achieved by 2025-26.</p>
7.	4.28	<p>The Scholarship for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for SCs is the Umbrella Scheme which has four existing sub-Schemes viz. National Fellowships for SCs, National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for SCs, Top Class Education Scheme for SCs and Free Coaching Scheme for SC and OBC Students. The Committee note that the budgetary allocation for 2022-23 and 2023-24 was less in comparison to 2021-22 but the actual expenditure has been constantly increasing since 2021-22, as it was ₹271.21 crore, ₹293.77 crore and ₹363.31 crore in 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24, respectively. The Committee find that the Free Coaching Scheme for SCs and OBCs is not available on the National Scholarship Portal and onboarding of the Scheme on the portal is under consideration. The Committee also find that the Scheme is being implemented by Dr Ambedkar Foundation through empanelled Central Universities after revision of the Scheme in 2023-24 and only 19 Central Universities have signed the MoU with the Foundation. The Committee desire that the Department should take necessary steps to onboard the Free Coaching Scheme for SCs and OBCs on National Scholarship Portal and more Central Universities should be empanelled so that a large number of students of SC</p>

		and OBC communities are able to appear in competitive and entrance examinations for obtaining jobs in Public/Private Sector as well as to secure admission in reputed higher educational institutions.
8.	5.9	<p>The Committee note that Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhodaya Yojana (PM-AJAY) is an Umbrella scheme wherein 3 centrally sponsored schemes, namely, Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PM-AJAY), Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan (SCA to SCSP) and Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana (BJRCY) have been merged in 2021-22 due to similarity in nature. The Committee find that since 2021-22, 6282 villages in the country have been declared Adarsh Grams, ₹1023 crore provided to 18,4815 beneficiaries under GIA component and ₹114.23 crore sanctioned for 44 hostels covering 4985 beneficiaries. The Committee appreciate the efforts of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment for taking several steps for effective implementation of the Scheme. The Committee are however, slightly worried with the pace of actual expenditure incurred during 2022-23 and 2023-24. The Committee feel that the gap between Budgetary Estimate and Actual Expenditure should be narrowed down so that the objectives of the Scheme are fully achieved. The State Governments should be guided to take necessary steps so that more and more villages are declared Adarsh Grams in their States as it has happened in Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh. Similarly, the construction of hostels in educational institutions should also be prioritized as large number of students belonging to SC community are not able to join good educational institutions due to</p>

		limited availability of hostels.
9.	6.13	<p>As abolition of untouchability is enshrined in the Constitution of India, the Government of India has taken several measures such as enactment of Protection of Civil Rights (PCR) Act, 1955 and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. The Committee note that a centrally sponsored scheme was introduced to financially assist the States/UTs for strengthening the machinery for implementation of these Acts. The Committee find that the Central assistance of ₹535.70 crore was released to various States during the year 2023-24 for functioning and strengthening of the SC/ST Protection Cell and Special Police Stations, strengthening and enforcement of judicial machinery, relief and rehabilitation of atrocity victims, incentive for inter-caste marriages and awareness generation and publicity. In this regard, the Committee have found that maximum financial assistance has been released to Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Odisha and Bihar during the year 2023-24. However, the Committee have observed that several States have not been able to set up the requisite system to effectively implement the provisions contained in the Acts and to deal with the cases of atrocities against SCs. The Committee were also made to understand that there is no financial constraints with the Government of India, and they are ready to release more funds to the States for the establishment of the machinery required for effective implementation of the Acts. The Committee are of the opinion that the issue of atrocities against the persons belonging to Scheduled castes should be sincerely tackled by the State</p>

		<p>Governments. The Committee, therefore, recommend that all the State Governments should be pursued by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment to establish and strengthen the machinery required for enforcement of the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, effectively.</p>
10.	7.9	<p>The Committee note that the Scheme of Residential Education for Students in High School in Targeted area (SRESHTA) for SCs came into existence in 2021-22 in place of Grants-in-aid to Voluntary and Other Organizations working for Scheduled Caste to provide environment for Socio-economic upliftment and overall development of Scheduled Castes. The Committee find that the Scheme is operated in two modes, as per the established norms, every year 3000 meritorious SC students (1500 for IXth class and 1500 for Xth Class) are selected for admission in the best private residential schools under Mode-I whereas under Mode-II schools/hostels run by VOs/NGOs are provided Grants-in-aid for 13500 SC Students per year. The Committee are happy to note that annual allocation of ₹428.00 crore made for 2024-25 is much higher in comparison to the allocation of ₹371.00 crore made in 2023-24 and ₹364.00 crore made in 2022-23 but the quantum of actual expenditure for 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 is little discouraging for the Committee. Further, only 2405 students were selected under Mode-I in 2022-23 against 3000 Students fixed for selection. The Committee also note that large number of VOs/ NGOs from Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh received Grants-in-aid under Mode-II from 2020-21 to</p>

		<p>2023-24 but many States did not receive any grant. The Committee believe that the SRESHTA Scheme is crucial for the SC students to get proper education from the best schools in the country. Hence, the Committee desire that the Scheme should be well publicized so that large number of students get the benefit of the scheme. Since, the Scheme under Mode-II appears to be popular in some States only, the Committee would like the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment to take suitable steps to increase awareness about the Scheme in the country to increase the footprints of the Scheme among the SC students. The Committee hope necessary action will be taken by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment in this regard.</p>
11.	8.11	<p>The Committee note that the Pre-Matric Scholarship for children of parents/guardians engaged in unclean and hazardous occupation was merged with Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for SCs in 2021-22 with the objective of streamlining the implementation and optimizing resources. The Committee find that prior to the merger the Central share was released only to Gujarat during 2019-20 & 2020-21 and now the proposals have been received from 11 State/UT Governments in 2024-25. The Committee find that the merger has increased the number of beneficiaries from the children of persons engaged in hazardous occupation from 234592 in 2020-21 to 332969 in 2021-22. However, the actual expenditure has been less than the Budgetary Estimate in 2022-23 and 2023-24. The Committee also find that States such as Haryana, Goa, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra did not have a single beneficiary and Central share was also not</p>

		<p>released to them in 2023-24. Further, some of the States/UTs such as Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Ladakh, Lakshadweep, Mizoram, Nagaland and Telangana are not implementing the Scheme. The Committee believe that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment must have taken appropriate measures with regard to the reasons due to which actual expenditure was less than the Budgetary Estimate and if any action is yet to be taken, then the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment may expedite it. Similarly, in regard to the non-achievement of targets fixed for 2022-23 and 2023-24, the Committee are sure that the measures taken to enhance the actual expenditure would certainly help the Department in achieving the target of 27 lakhs set up for 2024-25. The Committee desire that the States that are not implementing the Scheme and non-release of Central Share to certain States requires to be examined and the necessary action taken so that the objective of promoting literacy and uninterrupted education of the Pre-matric level amongst the SC students and children of persons engaged in hazardous occupation is achieved. The Committee would like to be informed of the action taken by the Department in this regard.</p>
12.	9.22	<p>National Action Plan for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem Scheme (NAMASTE) was launched in July, 2023 to formalize the Sewer and Septic Tank Workers (SSWs) and to ensure safety and dignity of sanitation workers in Urban India. It is implemented in convergence amongst key stakeholders including Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Ministry</p>

of Housing and Urban Affairs, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation and Ministry of skill Development and Entrepreneurship. As per the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, there are likely to be one lakh Sewer and Septic Tank Workers (SSWs) in the country. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs are required to converge for interventions such as profiling of SSWs through MIS portal, nomination of Responsible Sanitation Authority, setting up of Emergency Response Sanitation Unit, etc. In view of the involvement of several Ministries/ Departments/ Organisations, the Committee are of the opinion that for the success of the NAMASTE, it is important that there is proper coordination amongst them so that the responsibilities entrusted over them are carried out smoothly. Unless all the SSWs are validated they would be deprived from the benefits of the Scheme. The Committee find that out of 43961 profiled SSWs, 37407 SSWs have been validated by the concerned Urban Local Bodies. The Committee, therefore, desire that all the SSWs should be profiled and validated urgently. Further, the pace of the distribution of PPE Kits, Safety devices and Ayushman Bharat Cards to SSWs is required to be increased as only 16741 PPE Kits, 42 Safety Devices and 13412 Ayushman Bharat Cards have been provided to them. The Committee expect that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment would take all necessary steps for the welfare of the SSWs and effective implementation of NAMASTE in a time bound manner.

13.	9.23	<p>The aim of NAMASTE is to ensure that there is zero fatalities in sanitation work in India, all sanitation work is performed by formalized skilled workers and no sanitation workers come in direct contact with human faecal matter, occupational safety training to SSWs, etc. However, the Committee have found that the Department is lagging behind in this regard as several instances of death of unskilled sanitation workers due to negligence/ non-availability of safety equipments are reported every year in the press. There is utmost need for capacity building of sanitation workers by enhancing their occupational skills. The Committee therefore, desire that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment should ensure that all the sanitation workers are adequately trained and conduct comprehensive campaign to increase awareness amongst sanitation service seekers to obtain services for cleaning of sewer septic tanks from trained SSWs. The Committee also desire that the minimum wages may be ensured for SSWs and the State/UT Governments may be suitably directed to ensure that SSWs get minimum wages prescribed.</p>
14.	10.13	<p>The Committee note that 32097, 42002, 33021 and 80135 persons were trained in 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24, respectively under Pradhan Mantri Dakshta aur Kushalta Sampaan Hitgrahi (PM-DAKSH) for SCs, OBCs and others. The Committee are happy to find that 24652, 31033 and 21552 persons trained under the Scheme secured employment in 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23. The Committee appreciate the performance of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment under the Scheme but strongly feel that the number of</p>

		<p>persons trained/employed is not sufficient to cater to the large percentage of population belonging to SCs, OBCs, EWSs, DNTS, Safai Karamcharis, waste pickers, etc. It is true that there are several other Schemes under which people receive training but it is also a fact that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment is a nodal Department for these sections of the society, hence, they cannot absolve themselves from their responsibility. The Committee feel that ₹450 crore approved by the Standing Finance Committee would be prudently utilized during the period from 2021-22 to 2025-26 and all measures will be taken to ensure that the target fixed are achieved. The Committee trust that the norms fixed by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment for the selection of candidates for training will be meticulously applied in selection of candidates and also expect that the Institutes imparting training will be properly monitored so that qualitative training is provided to the candidates for their gainful employment and suitable action would be taken against Institutes not complying to the norms fixed for training, infrastructure, etc.</p>
15.	11.10	<p>The Committee note that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment are running various programmes for the welfare of the senior citizens such as Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC) , Rastriya Vayoshree Yojana (RVY), Elderline, Senior-care Ageing Growth Engine(SAGE), Training of Geriatric Care Givers under Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY). The Committee find that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment have not been able to spend the</p>

		<p>allocated funds in the programmes where State Governments are involved, as ₹59.32 crore could only be spent out of ₹92.15 crore allocated under Rastriya Vayoshree Yojana and ₹118.96 crore could be spent out of ₹275.05 crore allocated under Integrated Programme for senior citizens in 2023-24. The Committee believe that the role of State Governments is very crucial for effective implementation of all the component of the Scheme, hence, concerted efforts should be made to make the State Governments proactive for identifying the beneficiaries under RVY and IPSrC. The Committee are happy to note that the programmes falling under Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana were evaluated regularly. The suggestions/ recommendations received on evaluations are required to be exhaustively examined and implemented. The Committee also expect that with the expansion of Rastriya Vayoshree Yojana by increasing distribution of devices from 8 to 17 would cover large number of the senior citizens. The Committee feel that in view of increasing number of the senior citizens, the responsibility of the Central Government increases multiple times, hence, it is required that the Central and State Governments should justify their role and carry out their responsibilities with proper coordination so that senior citizens are not made to suffer due to any reason.</p>
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