

21

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
(2019-20)**

SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA

MINISTRY OF PLANNING

[Action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in Tenth Report of the Standing Committee on Finance on 'Demands for Grants (2020-21)']

TWENTY FIRST REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

September, 2020/ Bhadrapada, 1942 (Saka)

TWENTY-FIRST REPORT

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
(2019-2020)**

(SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF PLANNING

[Action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in Tenth Report of the Standing Committee on Finance on 'Demands for Grants (2020-21)']

Presented to Hon'ble Speaker on 9 September, 2020

Presented to Lok Sabha on _____, 2020

Laid in Rajya Sabha on _____, 2020



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

September, 2020 / Bhadrapada, 1942 (Saka)

CONTENTS

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE.....	
INTRODUCTION	
CHAPTER I	Report
CHAPTER II*	Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government
CHAPTER III*	Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies
CHAPTER IV*	Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee
CHAPTER V*	Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final reply of the Government is still awaited

ANNEXURE

Minutes of the Sitting of the Committee held on 08 September, 2020

APPENDIX

Analysis of Action Taken by the Government on the Recommendations Contained in the Tenth Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) of the Standing Committee on Finance on Demands for Grants (2020-21)

* *Not appended in the cyclostyled copy*

COMPOSITION OF STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE (2019-2020)

Shri Jayant Sinha - Chairperson

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Shri S.S. Ahluwalia
3. Shri Subhash Chandra Baheria
4. Shri Vallabhaneni Balashowry
5. Shri Shrirang Appa Barne
6. Dr. Subhash Ramrao Bhamre
7. Smt. Sunita Duggal
8. Shri Gaurav Gogoi
9. Shri Sudheer Gupta
10. Smt. Darshana Vikram Jardosh
11. Shri Manoj Kishorbhai Kotak
12. Shri Pinaki Misra
13. Shri P.V Midhun Reddy
14. Prof. Saugata Roy
15. Shri Gopal Chinayya Shetty
16. Dr. (Prof.) Kirit Premjibhai Solanki
17. Shri Manish Tewari
18. Shri P. Velusamy
19. Shri Parvesh Sahib Singh Verma
20. Shri Rajesh Verma
21. Shri Giridhari Yadav

RAJYA SABHA

22. Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar
23. Shri A. Navaneethakrishnan
24. Shri Praful Patel
25. Shri Amar Patnaik
26. Shri Mahesh Poddar
27. Shri C.M. Ramesh
28. Shri Bikash Ranjan
29. Shri G.V.L Narasimha Rao
30. Dr. Manmohan Singh
31. Smt. Ambika Soni

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri V.K. Tripathi - Joint Secretary
2. Shri Ramkumar Suryanarayanan - Director
3. Shri Kulmohan Singh Arora - Additional Director
4. Ms. Madhumita - Assistant Committee Officer

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Finance, having been authorized by the Committee, present this Twenty-first Report on action taken by Government on the Observations / Recommendations contained in the Tenth Report of the Committee (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2020-21) of the Ministry of Planning.

2. The Tenth Report was presented to Lok Sabha / laid on the table of Rajya Sabha on 12 March, 2020. The Action Taken Notes on the Recommendations were received from the Government *vide* their communication dated 11 June, 2020.

3. The Committee considered and adopted this Report at their sitting held on 8 September, 2020.

4. An analysis of the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Tenth Report of the Committee is given in the Appendix.

5. For facility of reference, the observations / recommendations of the Committee have been printed in bold in the body of the Report.

NEW DELHI
08 September, 2020
17 Bhadrapada, 1942 (Saka)

SHRI JAYANT SINHA,
Chairperson,
Standing Committee on Finance

REPORT

CHAPTER – I

This Report of the Standing Committee on Finance deals with action taken by Government on the recommendations/observations contained in their 10th Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2020-21) of the Ministry of Planning which was presented to Lok Sabha / Laid in Rajya Sabha on 12 March, 2020.

2. The Action Taken Notes have been received from the Government in respect of all the 4 recommendations contained in the Report. These have been analyzed and categorized as follows:

- (i) Recommendations/Observations that have been accepted by the Government:
Recommendation No. 1 and 3

(Total 02)
(Chapter- II)
- (ii) Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies:
Recommendation No.2

(Total 01)
(Chapter- III)
- (iii) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee:
NIL

(Total NIL)
(Chapter -IV)
- (iv) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies by the Government are still awaited:
Recommendation No.4

(Total - 01)
(Chapter- V)

3. The Committee desire that the replies to the recommendations/observations contained in Chapter-I may be furnished to them expeditiously.

4. The Committee will now deal with and comment upon the action taken by the Government on some of their recommendations.

Recommendation (Serial No. 1)

Analysis of Demands for Grants (2020-21)

5. The Committee noted that the Budget Estimates (BE) of the Ministry of Planning under Demand No.76 for the year 2020-21 was Rs.650 crore, out of which Rs.649.22 crore was under Revenue Head and Rs.0.78 crore was under Capital Head. The scrutiny of the Budget of the Ministry of Planning revealed under-utilisation of funds in important area. Under the major head 3475 for Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO), out of the allocated fund of Rs.11 crore for BE stage of 2019-20, only Rs.6.18 crore was utilized till December 2019, which was 56.18% of the total allocation. Similarly, for the scheme named Official Development Assistance (ODA) from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), out of the allocated fund of Rs. 120 crores at BE stage of 2019-20, only Rs.61 crore, which was 50.83% of the total allocation, was utilized till December 2019.

The Committee had persistently pointed out the Ministry's inability to utilize funds in a timely and even manner in the earlier reports. The Committee were, therefore, constrained to reiterate their earlier recommendation that the Ministry exercise due diligence in their budget formulation and make concerted efforts to utilize their funds in a timely manner.

6. In their Action Taken Replies the Ministry of Planning have submitted as follows:-

“The NITI Aayog (Ministry of Planning) exercises due diligence while formulating Budget. However, all the spending authorities in the NITI Aayog have been sensitized time to time for ensuring proper utilization of Budget in timely manner in consonance with the instructions issued by the Ministry of Finance in this regard.”

7. The Committee have consistently pointed out the inability of the Ministry to utilize funds evenly and in a timely manner. They have learnt that the spending authorities in the Niti Aayog have been sensitized time to time for ensuring proper utilization of Budget. The Committee would expect the Ministry to devise a coherent and effective mechanism to ensure timebound utilization of budgetary allocation.

Recommendation (Serial No. 2)

Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO)

8. The Committee were constrained to note that even after four years of the constitution of DMEO, more than 100 positions were vacant out of the sanctioned strength of 157. The Committee were of the view that DMEO being provided with the critical function of evaluation and monitoring of important schemes and initiatives of the Government, that acute manpower shortage surely acted as an impediment to effectively carry out their assigned function. The Committee, therefore, urged the DMEO and the Ministry to fill those vacant posts at the earliest.

The Committee appreciated NITI's action of preparing the Output-Outcome Monitoring Framework (OOMF) for the year 2019-20 and thereafter for 2020-21. They expected the framework to act as a tool of judicious use and effective management of the resources and increased accountability for the Government/Ministries. While noting that the NITI had also developed a dashboard for updating the progress on certain output / outcome indicators, the Committee hoped that the dashboard would act as a comprehensive and superior tool for monitoring the progress and utilization of resources and allocate/ release budget based on scheme performance for other stakeholders viz. Ministry of Finance etc.

The Committee noted that a large number of private professionals and consultant firms were being engaged by the Ministry, especially for evaluation of schemes. Here, the Committee expected that the qualification were well laid down and recruitment was done in a transparent manner and open tendering process be followed for engaging the consultant firms. At the same time DMEO should work towards developing a pool of Human Resources, that was well-qualified, possessing skills and expertise to carry out the critical function of evaluation and monitoring.

9. In their Action Taken Replies the Ministry of Planning have submitted as follows:-

“Urged the DMEO and the Ministry to fill these vacant posts at the earliest.

Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO) was formed in September, 2015 after merging the erstwhile Program Evaluation Office (PEO) and Independent Evaluation Office (IEO). The sanctioned strength of DMEO is 157 out of which 53 are regular officials and 25 are contractual engagement. As on April, 2020 more than 100 positions at different level are vacant.

This was one of the reasons that DMEO was not able to undertake many activities which it planned including large scale evaluations among others. In August, 2019 DMEO has been allowed to engage additional eight consultants and all those have joined except one. Further two Director level officers have also joined in December, 2019. DMEO has also approached Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT) for the filling up the post of Joint Secretary and

Director through Central Staffing Scheme and similarly the posts of Under Secretary and Assistant Section Officers through Central Secretariat Services. In addition DMEO has also formulated its Recruitment Rules (RRs), for engaging positions of Directors General (DG), Deputy Director General (DDG), Director, Senior Research Officer/Research Officer, Economic Officer/EI on the pattern of NITI Aayog's flexi pool RRs. The same have been approved by Minister of State (I/C), M/o Planning (NITI Aayog). The proposal has been sent to the DoPT for their concurrence. Once approved, these RRs will enable DMEO to fill key positions.

Engagement of private professionals and Consultant firms

As regards to the engagement of private professionals, the same are being engaged under the engagement guidelines formulated by NITI Aayog for Consultants/Young Professionals (YPs). Under these qualifications and work experience requirements are clearly laid down. These positions are advertised in leading newspapers and the candidates are shortlisted based on objective criterion and interaction with high level committee in a very transparent way.

For engagement of Consultant firms, usually engagements are done through open tender process. Presently DMEO has been undertaking evaluations of 125 Central Sector Schemes under 10 packages. All consultant firms for each of these packages have been selected through open tender process only. In only few cases, depending upon the specific expertise or experience required, the firms are selected out of limited competent firms. Even these engagements, are done under the guidelines of NITI Aayog duly approved by the competent authority.

Developing a pool of Human resource

As mentioned above the engagement of private professionals is being done under the engagement guidelines formulated by NITI Aayog for Consultants/YPs with specific experience required for monitoring & evaluation domain. In addition under the proposed RRs, provisions have been made to enable DMEO to tap best talent in government and private sector."

10. The Committee have time and again pointed out the large vacancies (more than 100 positions being vacant out of the sanctioned strength of 157) in Development Monitoring Evaluation Office (DMEO). It has been conceded that many activities as planned, including large scale evaluations among others, could not be undertaken because of staff shortage. The Committee, therefore, are not satisfied with the progress in this regard, especially taking into account the critical functions of monitoring and evaluation being assigned to it. The Committee while noting the measures undertaken by DMEO like formulating it's Recruitment Rules (RR) on the pattern of NITI Aayog's flexi pool RRs, expect it to actively pursue the matter with DoPT so that recruitment induction

could begin at the earliest. The Committee have been informed about the engagement of large number of professionals and consultant firms by DMEO. They would like to be apprised of the “engagement guidelines” formulated by the NITI Aayog for consultants/Young Professionals (YPs). While acknowledging the completion of the process of selecting consultant firms for undertaking evaluations of 125 Central Sector Schemes under 10 packages, the Committee would expect the process to be completed within the stipulated timeframe. Results of such an evaluation may be shared with the Committee.

Recommendation (Serial No. 4)

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) India Index

11. While the Committee appreciated NITI for bringing out SDG India Index 2019, covering all SDGs, unlike SDG India Index 2018, which covered only 13 SDGs, they recommended the Ministry to consider options of bringing out a similar index taking districts as the base. The Committee pointed out that there were huge differences among the different districts of a State and hence an Index ranking districts on the basis of their level of implementation of SDGs, would be an even better example of cooperative federalism, ensuring development at the grassroots level.

The Committee liked to further understand how the NITI efforts to prepare SDG India Index dovetailed with the efforts undertaken by the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation. In particular, data collection on the SDGs should be independently verified and then prepared at the District level. There should be enough field –level staff to ensure that these efforts were resulting in accurate data. SDG results for each District should then be provided in the public domain so that the performance of each District could be evaluated on a continuous basis.

The Committee noted that the NITI was increasingly engaging with international communities and bodies for the effective implementation of SDGs. The committee recommended that this engagement should be further deepened to ensure greater collaboration and financial assistance from developed countries and international bodies. This, according to the Committee, would help in faster implementation of SDGs, particularly in vulnerable areas and among the weaker sections of the society.

The Committee observed that the NITI had undertaken a number of steps to ensure SDGs localisation in the country entailing process of understanding, planning, implementing and monitoring the SDGs from national to local levels by relevant institutions. The Committee were of the opinion that the centuries-old indigenous knowledge with regard to food habits, mitigation and adaptation mechanisms against climate change and other hazards etc., that were known to the local population, particularly the tribal and rural population, should be made a part of the solution to different problems, particularly the local and regional ones, that would further assist in SDGs localisation in the country.

12. In their Action Taken Replies the Ministry of Planning have submitted as follows:-

“SDG India Index whereby NITI Aayog ranks all the States and Union Territories.

The SDG India Index measures the progress of the States and UTs on all SDGs and select indicators. It is stated that the indicators are basically a subset of the National Indicator Framework (NIF) developed by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI). So, the NIF has a set of 306 indicators, from which we have taken 100 indicators some perfectly aligned, while a few being close refinements, primarily for ranking the performance of States and Union Territories.

Whether NITI Aayog plan to do the similar thing in terms of ranking all the districts within the country on the SDG indicators.

It is submitted that while going by the spirit of cooperative federalism and the differences in the realities and the contextual specificity of different States, as we have the hilly States, we have the coastal States, the realities and the priorities of these States are quite different. So, what has been done is that all States have been encouraged and also guidelines have been issued that every State has to develop its own context-specific State Indicator Framework and a similar District Indicator Framework. Now, we are working with the States so that the States can do the similar ranking of their own districts at their level.

It is stated here that some of the States which have already done this ranking of their districts are Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu. Even Haryana and 16 Uttarakhand are in different stages of doing the same. We have just released the State Indicator Framework of eight of the North –Eastern States and they would also be coming out with a similar ranking of their districts at their level. So, NITI Aayog does not prepare a centralized ranking of districts on SDGs because these are very specific to the different States and the States are encouraged to undertake this exercise in the spirit of cooperative federalism.

How aligned is the data pertaining to the SDG India Index and the MoSPI’s National Indicator Framework.

Since the indicators are completely a subset of the National Indicator Framework, hence the data is also taken from the MoSPI sources, which are largely the sources developed by the Union Ministries whether it is the administrative data sources and the MIS systems or the National and Union Survey Reports on different subjects. So, the data is totally aligned

between the SDG India Index of NITI Aayog and the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.”

13. The Ministry in their action taken notes remained silent on two issues that were pointed out by the Committee. The first relates to the increasing engagement of NITI Aayog with international communities and the ways in which it can gain from such international collaborations. The second relates to the issue of SDG localisation and how indigenous knowledge could be made a part of the solution to different problems, particularly the local and regional ones. The Committee would like to be apprised of the action taken by the Ministry on these aspects within one month of presentation of this report.

CHAPTER – II

RECOMMENDATIONS / OBSERVATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation Serial No. 1

Analysis of Demands for Grants (2020-21)

The Committee note that the Budget Estimates (BE) of the Ministry of Planning under Demand No.76 for the year 2020-21 is Rs.650 crore, out of which Rs.649.22 crore is under Revenue Head and Rs.0.78 crore is under Capital Head. The scrutiny of the Budget of the Ministry of Planning reveal under-utilisation of funds in important area. Under the major head 3475 for Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO), out of the allocated fund of Rs.11 crore for BE stage of 2019-20, only Rs.6.18 crore was utilized till December 2019, which is 56.18% of the total allocation. Similarly, for the scheme named Official Development Assistance (ODA) from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), out of the allocated fund of Rs. 120 crores at BE stage of 2019-20, only Rs.61 crore, which is 50.83% of the total allocation, was utilized till December 2019.

The Committee have persistently pointed out the Ministry's inability to utilize funds in a timely and even manner in the earlier reports. The Committee are, therefore, constrained to reiterate their earlier recommendation that the Ministry exercise due diligence in their budget formulation and make concerted efforts to utilize their funds in a timely manner.

Reply of the Government

The NITI Aayog (Ministry of Planning) exercises due diligence while formulating Budget. However, all the spending authorities in the NITI Aayog have been sensitized time to time for ensuring proper utilization of Budget in timely manner in consonance with the instructions issued by the Ministry of Finance in this regard.

Ministry of Planning (NITI Aayog) O.M. No.18/2/2020-Parl. dated 11.06.2020

(For Comments of the Committee Please refer para No.7 of Chapter I)

Recommendation Serial No. 3

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and Self Employment and Talent Utilisation (SETU)

The committee note that to promote innovation and research in the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector and Start-ups, AIM is going to launch a new initiative called Applied Research and Innovation for Small Enterprises (ARISE) along with partner Ministries/Departments. The Committee expect that the initiative would be implemented effectively and comprehensively, so that the MSME sector develops in a fast track manner leading to viable start-ups, that provide effective solutions to various sectoral problems.

While the Committee appreciate the creation of a dashboard 'MyATL' for providing latest information with regard to Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL), they recommend that there should be even greater use of latest technological tools like Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning etc. to monitor the labs, centres, conducting of challenges etc. These

latest technologies should also be made a part of the ATIs for the students to get skilled in modern technologies.

The Committee appreciate the independent evaluation of the AIM by the Quality Council of India (QCI) findings within the next 3 months so that Hearing can be conducted on this important program. In particular, Tinkering Labs and Incubation Centres should be appropriately benchmarked so that it is possible to determine which units are doing better relative to the median unit and why.

Reply of the Government:

3(1). The Committee's recommendation is duly noted. All efforts are being made to expedite launch of the ARISE program, in partnership with sectoral ministries; so that the MSME Sector develops in a fast track manner leading to viable start-ups, that provide effective solutions to various sectoral problems.

3(2). The recommendation from the Standing Committee is duly noted. AIM regularly launches curated modules for 21st century and technology skills for its beneficiaries. These modules are freely available on the AIM website for public consumption. Link: <https://aim.gov.in/resources-for-atl-incharge.php>. More modules are under development and shall be added periodically.

3(3). The recommendation from the Standing Committee is duly noted.

Summary of Assessment of Atal Incubation Centres by QCI

Recommendations and Suggestions from QCI	Improvements and potential solutions and suggestive action by AIM team
Use of Benefits of Scale: NITI Aayog can create a portal with shared network of ICs that will help in accessing: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Angel networks and VCs in India: Top 150 Angel Investors and 50 VC firms globally should be given access to the	AIM is already in the process of creating a similar tech-enabled platform for its incubator network in collaboration with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Wadhvani Foundation. The platform will enable all stakeholders of the innovation

<p>portal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network with government agencies: Government networks should be provided available to connect start-ups to various governmental, non-governmental, and international bodies. • All mentors engaged with the Atal Innovation Mission: All the mentors engaged across all the ICs under AIM should be made accessible to the incubatees by creating a pool • Best practices followed at both Incubator and Incubatee level: Best practices followed by some ICs can be shared with the rest so that all can learn from the same and can inculcate into their system to the extent possible. • A platform for the ICs to connect with others via messages, e-mails etc. 	<p>and entrepreneurship ecosystem to network, exchange knowledge & information and collaborate through multiple avenues. The platform will have separate functionalities for investors, government agencies, incubators, start-ups and mentors, enabling all stakeholders to effectively leverage the scale benefits of the AIM Incubator network.</p>
<p>Reduce response time: Response time especially for the funding from NITI Aayog to the ICs should be reduced. Many ICs have exhausted the first tranche of AIM funds and are awaiting the second tranche. Next tranche needs to be disbursed. ICs should be allowed to provide seed funding to the incubatees from other heads also. The response time of the queries of the ICs also needs to be reduced</p>	<p>The AIM team has already put in place robust procedures to ensure timely and efficient processing all Grant-in-Aid requests (including subsequent tranches), based on its learnings / takeaways from issues faced in previous disbursements as well as feedback form the incubators. Moreover, in order to expedite the due diligence and disbursement process even further, the AIM team will look to strengthen its finance and legal capabilities either through in-house team expansion or by empaneling external agencies.</p>
<p>Focused group trainings: ICs face difficulties w.r.t. PFMS portal interface. PFMS portal trainings and support could be made available to ICs. As the number of ICs grow, trainings should be split into senior team training and new team training. In-depth trainings should be done rather than training on general topics.</p>	<p>The AIM team regularly conducts capacity building training programs for all incubators in its network (with at least two such training programs being conducted annually). Given the feedback received regarding the challenges faced by the incubators on the PFMS portal, AIM team organised a detailed and comprehensive training program for all the AIM incubators on 28th May 2020. The same was attended by all the operational AIM Incubators and was very useful and very well received by the AIM incubators.</p>
<p>Creating structured mentor management programme: Since ICs have different scale of mentor management, NITI Aayog can</p>	<p>Currently each incubator part of the AIM network has its own mentorship program in place. Given the feedback regarding</p>

come up with a structured mentor management program for incubators to follow.	some incubators not being able to successfully develop and implement an effective mentorship program, AIM has already initiated the process to create a pan-India mentorship platform for its network. The program is currently in a pilot stage with the official launch being scheduled in 2020.
---	--

Summary of Assessment of Atal Tinkering Labs by QCI

Recommendations and Suggestions from QCI	Ongoing Interventions, improvements and potential solutions and suggestive action by AIM team
<p>Academic Management:</p> <p>a. ATL In charge –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer of ATL in charge breaks continuity. • Difficulty in managing academics and ATL. <p>b. Integration in school schedule -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining a timetable and activity logbook. • Obtaining permissions from parents for post school extra classes for ATLS. <p>c. ATL Teacher training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training of Teachers on ATL philosophy, concepts, technology, soft skills and equipment is critical for the ATLS to thrive is required • A formal and periodic training mechanism must be in place for the ATL teachers. <p>d. Engagement plan/content/curriculum –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dedicated plan/calendar of activities and ATL course content/curriculum must be created and mandated for each ATL school. <p>Encouraging participation:</p> <p>a. Students from the ATL school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irregular participation and dropouts due to academic pressure. <p>b. Students from other schools/community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non ATL students are not able to 	<p>Academic Management:</p> <p>a. ATL In charge – AIM shall direct the schools to maintain continuity of ATL teachers as far as possible and ensure proper mode of knowledge transfer during transfers.</p> <p>b. Integration in school schedule – Directions from AIM to maintain regular ATL interactions in their timetable along with a logbook is present in the AIM guidelines, also, various Parent engagement activities are being planned to sensitize parents regarding the ATL activities</p> <p>c. ATL Teacher Training – AIM organises regular Teacher training sessions across the country. AIM has also designed and is implementing a training mechanism with its partners for the same.</p> <p>d. Engagement plan/content/curriculum -AIM has designed an annual calendar of ATL activities and relevant content. AIM is also working on designing and launching more such content periodically.</p> <p>Encouraging participation:</p> <p>a. Students from the ATL schools are being introduced to ATL through a formal inclusion of ATL activities in the timetable which shall improve participation.</p> <p>b. AIM is exploring stronger community outreach activities through events such as Community Day which will</p>

<p>manage ATL and regular classes simultaneously. Further, lack of mentorship from teacher, parental pressure discourages them to take part in ATL activities.</p> <p>c. Participation in external events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students must be encouraged to participate in various science and technology research-based competitions by both government and private organisers. 	<p>sensitize and encourage the parents as well as students from Non ATL schools to participate in ATL events and activities.</p> <p>c. AIM is encouraging schools to leverage ATL funds to participate in external events endorsed by AIM or any Govt. body. AIM also regularly shares information about all such events and contests being held in India and abroad.</p>
<p>External Collaborations</p> <p>a. Majority of the schools seek assistance from local academic institutions and industry. 14% of the schools are connected to the AIC network.</p> <p>b. Schools need to try their best so as to host more competitions and create awareness so that more children from nearby communities can visit the ATLs.</p> <p>c. Few patents created. IP mentorship needed.</p> <p>d. Adoption of ATL by a corporate partner heavily improves the impact.</p>	<p>External Collaborations</p> <p>a. To leverage external collaborations schools are directed to independently explore corporate partnerships. Along with the above AIM is also parallelly exploring ways in which India Inc. can participate and help the ATLs in their journey towards building the future of India.</p> <p>b. AIM has also created a calendar of activities to engage the ATL community along with conducting challenges and creating awareness on their own.</p> <p>c. AIM has created a free IPR module with CIPAM, DIPP. AIM is exploring further areas of collaboration with CIPAM to help the ATLS students in their journey of creating patents.</p> <p>d. More than 100 schools across India are already adopted by corporate partners. AIM is strengthening its partner base to increase the number of adopted schools as it realizes the importance and impact of such partnerships.</p>
<p>Improving AIM operations</p> <p>a. Mentor of Change Network:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More active participation of the Mentor of Change needs to be ensured. <p>b. Training Sessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More teacher training sessions must be conducted on ATL tools and technologies. • More digital training sessions on ATL operational aspects like PFMS, ATL Dashboard, Fund Utilization, GeM. 	<p>Improving AIM operations</p> <p>a. Mentor of change – AIM is continuously allocating and reallocating mentors and schools through an effective matchmaking process along with providing the mentors with continuous engaging programs to improve participation</p> <p>b. ATL Teacher Training – AIM organises regular Teacher training sessions across the country. AIM has also designed and is implementing a training mechanism with its partners for the same. AIM has conducted 32 teacher training sessions across the country and is planning the next phase of online and offline teacher training sessions in</p>

<p>c. Need of dedicated ATL Helpline</p> <p>d. Translation of ATL content in local languages.</p> <p>e. More funds for honorarium:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More funds need to be allocated for honorarium; it would incentivize more dedication since ATL In-charge takes up dual responsibilities of the ATL and the school. <p>f. Student/Teacher engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devise ATL calendar for the schools' ease to get informed about external events. • Increase national and regional level activities like competitions, hackathons, trainings etc. so as to acknowledge students' efforts 	<p>collaboration with GeM, PFMS, and corporate partners.</p> <p>c. ATL Helpline – AIM has created an online query resolution portal to provide necessary assistance to the ATL schools</p> <p>d. Translation – AIM has successfully translated the ATL handbook in 6 Indian languages and is in the process of translating the guidelines, content and modules available on AIM website in Hindi.</p> <p>e. More funds for honorarium – AIM is exploring better recognition strategies for the ATL In-Charge</p> <p>f. Student/Teacher engagement – AIM has created an annual calendar of activities for ATLs. Further, ATL contests, events and trainings are scheduled and notified periodically to the schools.</p>
<p>Improvising School operations</p> <p>a. Infrastructure - In majority schools the infrastructure is available at ATLs according to the AIM guidelines (area, Wi-Fi, safety first aid, power backup)</p> <p>b. Adherence to ATL guidelines</p> <p>c. Communications – Presence on Social Media, Whatsapp, phone, email.</p> <p>d. Equipment – Almost all of total schools assessed are satisfied with the equipment procured. Procurement on GeM is mandated</p> <p>e. Document and record maintenance Documentation for Audit and Inventory management needs to be robustly done and maintained.</p>	<p>Improvising School operations</p> <p>AIM has directed the schools to maintain records of regular classes conducted for students within the school and for students from other schools and community. Also, a proper record is to be maintained for all the workshops, events, trainings and seminars conducted by the schools.</p> <p>Necessary instructions to the schools for guideline adherence are sent periodically and verified through the data collected through the dashboards.</p>
<p>To ensure schools are adhering to the AIM guidelines, AIM must conduct periodic evaluation of ATL schools and support wherever necessary. This activity will also enable AIM to understand ground level insights and do the needful action for course correction.</p>	<p>AIM is Monitoring the ATL performance on ATL Dashboard which gives it a visual insight on the progress of the program. Adding the element of periodic onsite evaluations gives AIM team more connect to the ground and more control on the program to take necessary course correction measures quickly.</p>

CHAPTER - III

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT'S REPLIES

Recommendation Serial No. 2

Development Monitoring and Evaluations Office (DMEO)

The Committee are constrained to note that even after four years of the constitution of DMEO, more than 100 positions are vacant out of the sanctioned strength of 157. The Committee are of the view that DMEO being provided with the critical function of evaluation and monitoring of important schemes and initiatives of the Government, this acute manpower shortage surely acts as an impediment to effectively carry out their assigned function. The Committee, therefore, urge the DMEO and the Ministry to fill these vacant posts at the earliest.

The Committee appreciate NITI's action of preparing the Output-Outcome Monitoring Framework (OOMF) for the year 2019-20 and thereafter for 2020-21. They expect the framework to act as a tool of judicious use and effective management of the resources and increased accountability for the Government/Ministries. While noting that the NITI has also developed a dashboard for updating the progress on certain output / outcome indicators, the Committee hope that the dashboard would act as a comprehensive and superior tool for monitoring the progress and utilization of resources and allocate/ release budget based on scheme performance for other stakeholders viz. Ministry of Finance etc.

The Committee note that a large number of private professionals and consultant firms are being engaged by the Ministry, especially for evaluation of schemes. Here, the Committee expect that the qualification are well laid down and recruitment be done in a transparent manner and open tendering process be followed for engaging the consultant firms. At the same time DMEO should work towards developing a pool of Human Resources, that is well-qualified, possessing skills and expertise to carry out the critical function of evaluation and monitoring.

Reply of the Government:

Urged the DMEO and the Ministry to fill these vacant posts at the earliest.

Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO) was formed in September, 2015 after merging the erstwhile Program Evaluation Office (PEO) and Independent Evaluation Office (IEO). The sanctioned strength of DMEO is 157 out of which 53 are regular officials and 25 are contractual engagement. As on April, 2020 more than 100 positions at different level are vacant.

This was one of the reasons that DMEO was not able to undertake many activities which it planned including large scale evaluations among others. In August, 2019 DMEO has been allowed to engage additional eight consultants and all those have joined except one. Further two Director level officers have also joined in December, 2019. DMEO has also approached Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT) for the filling up the post of Joint Secretary and Director through Central Staffing Scheme and similarly the posts of Under Secretary and Assistant Section Officers through Central Secretariat Services. In addition DMEO has also formulated its Recruitment Rules (RRs), for engaging positions of Directors General (DG), Deputy Director General (DDG), Director, Senior Research Officer/Research Officer, Economic Officer/EI on the pattern of NITI Aayog's flexi pool RRs. The same have been approved by Minister of State (I/C), M/o Planning (NITI Aayog). The proposal has been sent to the DoPT for their concurrence. Once approved, these RRs will enable DMEO to fill key positions.

Engagement of private professionals and Consultant firms

As regards to the engagement of private professionals, the same are being engaged under the engagement guidelines formulated by NITI Aayog for Consultants/Young Professionals (YPs). Under these qualifications and work experience requirements are clearly laid down. These positions are advertised in leading newspapers and the candidates are shortlisted based on objective criterion and interaction with high level committee in a very transparent way.

For engagement of Consultant firms, usually engagements are done through open tender process. Presently DMEO has been undertaking evaluations of 125 Central Sector Schemes under 10 packages. All consultant firms for each of these packages have been selected through open tender process only. In only few cases, depending upon the specific expertise or experience required, the firms are selected out of limited competent firms. Even these engagements, are done under the guidelines of NITI Aayog duly approved by the competent authority.

Developing a pool of Human resource

As mentioned above the engagement of private professionals is being done under the engagement guidelines formulated by NITI Aayog for Consultants/YPs with specific experience required for monitoring & evaluation domain. In addition under the proposed RRs, provisions have been made to enable DMEO to tap best talent in government and private sector.

Ministry of Planning (NITI Aayog) O.M. No.18/2/2020-Parl. dated 11.06.2020

(For Comments of the Committee Please refer para No.10 of Chapter I)

CHAPTER – IV
RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF
GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

Recommendation Serial No. 4

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) India Index

While the Committee appreciate NITI for bringing out SDG India Index 2019, covering all SDGs, unlike SDG India Index 2018, which covered only 13 SDGs, they would like to recommend the Ministry to consider options of bringing out a similar index taking districts as the base. The Committee would like to point out that there are huge differences among the different districts of a State and hence an Index ranking districts on the basis of their level of implementation of SDGs, would be an even better example of cooperative federalism, ensuring development at the grassroots level.

The Committee would like to further understand how the NITI efforts to prepare SDG India Index dovetail with the efforts undertaken by the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation. In particular, data collection on the SDGs should be independently verified and then prepared at the District level. There should be enough field –level staff to ensure that these efforts are resulting in accurate data. SDG results for each District should then be provided in the public domain so that the performance of each District can be evaluated on a continuous basis.

The Committee note that the NITI is increasingly engaging with international communities and bodies for the effective implementation of SDGs. The committee recommend that this engagement should be further deepened to ensure greater collaboration and financial assistance from developed countries and international bodies. This, according to the Committee, would help in faster implementation of SDGs, particularly in vulnerable areas and among the weaker sections of the society.

The Committee observe that the NITI has undertaken a number of steps to ensure SDGs localisation in the country entailing process of understanding, planning, implementing and monitoring the SDGs from national to local levels by relevant institutions. The Committee are of the opinion that the centuries-old indigenous knowledge with regard to food habits, mitigation and adaptation mechanisms against

climate change and other hazards etc., that are known to the local population, particularly the tribal and rural population, should be made a part of the solution to different problems, particularly the local and regional ones, that would further assist in SDGs localisation in the country.

Reply of the Government:

SDG India Index whereby NITI Aayog ranks all the States and Union Territories.

The SDG India Index measures the progress of the States and UTs on all SDGs and select indicators. It is stated that the indicators are basically a subset of the National Indicator Framework (NIF) developed by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI). So, the NIF has a set of 306 indicators, from which we have taken 100 indicators some perfectly aligned, while a few being close refinements, primarily for ranking the performance of States and Union Territories.

Whether NITI Aayog plan to do the similar thing in terms of ranking all the districts within the country on the SDG indicators.

It is submitted that while going by the spirit of cooperative federalism and the differences in the realities and the contextual specificity of different States, as we have the hilly States, we have the coastal States, the realities and the priorities of these States are quite different. So, what has been done is that all States have been encouraged and also guidelines have been issued that every State has to develop its own context-specific State Indicator Framework and a similar District Indicator Framework. Now, we are working with the States so that the States can do the similar ranking of their own districts at their level.

It is stated here that some of the States which have already done this ranking of their districts are Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu. Even Haryana and Uttarakhand are in different stages of doing the same. We have just released the State Indicator Framework of eight of the North –Eastern States and they would also be coming out with a similar ranking of their districts at their level. So, NITI Aayog does not prepare a centralized ranking of districts on SDGs because these are very specific to

the different States and the States are encouraged to undertake this exercise in the spirit of cooperative federalism.

How aligned is the data pertaining to the SDG India Index and the MoSPI's National Indicator Framework.

Since the indicators are completely a subset of the National Indicator Framework, hence the data is also taken from the MoSPI sources, which are largely the sources developed by the Union Ministries whether it is the administrative data sources and the MIS systems or the National and Union Survey Reports on different subjects. So, the data is totally aligned between the SDG India Index of NITI Aayog and the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

Ministry of Planning (NITI Aayog) O.M. No.18/2/2020-Parl. dated 11.06.2020

(For Comments of the Committee Please refer para No.13 of Chapter I)

CHAPTER- V

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL REPLIES
OF THE GOVERNMENT ARE STILL AWATED

NIL

**New Delhi;
8 September 2020
17 Bhadrapada, 1942 (Saka)**

**SHRI JAYANT SINHA,
Chairperson,
Standing Committee on Finance**

Minutes of the Sixteenth sitting of the Standing Committee on Finance (2019-20)
The Committee sat on Tuesday, the 8th September, 2020 from 1500hrs. to 1600 hrs
in Main Committee Room, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Jayant Sinha – Chairperson

LOK SABHA

2. Shri Subhash Chandra Baheria
3. Shri Vallabhaneni Balashowry
4. Smt. Sunita Duggal
5. Smt. Darshana Vikram Jardosh
6. Shri Manoj Kishorbhai Kotak
7. Shri Gopal Chinayya Shetty
8. Shri Manish Tewari
9. Shri Rajesh Verma

RAJYA SABHA

10. Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar
11. Shri Amar Patnaik
12. Shri G.V.L Narasimha Rao
13. **Smt. Ambika Soni**

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri V.K Tripathi - Joint Secretary
2. Shri Ramkumar Suryanarayanan - Director
3. Shri Kulmohan Singh Arora - Additional Director
4. Shri Kh. Ginalal Chung - Under Secretary

PART I

(1500 hrs – 1545 hrs)

2. XX XX XX XX XX XX
- XX XX XX XX XX XX

PART II

(1545 hrs onwards)

3. The Committee thereafter took up the following draft reports for consideration and adoption:

- (i) Draft Report on the subject 'Financing the startup ecosystem'.
- (ii) Draft Action Taken Report on the recommendations contained in 1st Report on Demands for Grants (2019-20) of the Ministry of Finance (Departments of Economic Affairs, Financial Services, Expenditure and Investment and Public Asset Management).
- (iii) Draft Action Taken Report on the recommendations contained in 2nd Report on Demands for Grants (2019-20) of the Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue).
- (iv) Draft Action Taken Report on the recommendations contained in 3rd Report on Demands for Grants (2019-20) of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.
- (v) Draft Action Taken Report on the recommendations contained in 4th Report on Demands for Grants (2019-20) of the Ministry of Planning (NITI)
- (vi) Draft Action Taken Report on the recommendations contained in 5th Report on Demands for Grants (2019-20) of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
- (vii) Draft Action Taken Report on the recommendations contained in 7th Report on Demands for Grants (2020-21) of the Ministry of Finance (Departments of Economic Affairs, Financial Services, Expenditure and Investment and Public Asset Management).
- (viii) Draft Action Taken Report on the recommendations contained in 8th Report on Demands for Grants (2020-21) of the Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue).
- (ix) Draft Action Taken Report on the recommendations contained in 9th Report on Demands for Grants (2020-21) of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.
- (x) Draft Action Taken Report on the recommendations contained in 10th Report on Demands for Grants (2020-21) of the Ministry of Planning (NITI)
- (xi) Draft Action Taken Report on the recommendations contained in 11th Report on Demands for Grants (2020-21) of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
- (xii) Draft Action Taken Report on the 50th Report (16th Lok Sabha) on the subject "Review of NSSO and CSO and Streamlining Of Statistics Collection Machinery

in the Country, including Management Information System for Project Monitoring/Appraisal'

After some deliberations, the Committee adopted the above draft Reports and authorised the Chairperson to finalise them and present the Report to the Hon'ble Speaker / Parliament.

The Committee then adjourned.

A verbatim record of the proceedings has been kept.

APPENDIX

(Vide Para 4 of the Introduction)

ANALYSIS OF THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE TENTH REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE (SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA) ON DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (2020-21) OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING

	Total	% of total
(i) Total number of Recommendations	04	
(ii) Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government (vide Recommendation at Sl.Nos. 1 & 3)	02	50%
(iii) Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies (vide Recommendation at Sl.No. 2)	01	25%
(iv) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee	Nil	0.00
(v) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final reply of the Government are still awaited(vide Recommendation at Sl. No. 4)	01	25%