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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND
EMPOWERMENT (2019-2020)**

(SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

**(Department of Empowerment of Persons with
Disabilities)**

Action taken by the Government on the observations/recommendations contained in the Second Report of the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment) (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on 'Demands for Grants (2019-20)' of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities).

ELEVENTH REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

September, 2020/Bhadrapada, 1942 (Saka)

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Presented to Hon'ble Speaker on 10.09.2020

Presented to Lok Sabha on _____

Laid in Rajya Sabha on _____



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

September, 2020/Bhadrapada, 1942 (Saka)

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**COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL
JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2019-20)**

SMT. RAMA DEVI - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Smt. Sangeeta Azad
3. Shri Durga Prasad Rao Balli
4. Shri Shafiqur Rahman Barq
5. Shri Bholanath 'B.P. Saroj'
6. Shri Chhatar Singh Darbar
7. Shri Y. Devendrappa
8. Smt. Maneka Sanjay Gandhi
9. Shri Hans Raj Hans
10. Shri Abdul Khaleque
11. Smt. Ranjeeta Koli
12. Smt. Geeta Kora
13. Shri Dhanush M. Kumar
14. Shri Vijay Kumar
15. Shri Akshaibar Lal
16. Dr. Lorho S. Pfoze
17. Shri V. Srinivas Prasad
- #18. Shri Prince Raj
19. Shri Arjun Singh
20. Smt. Supriya Sule
21. Smt. Rekha Arun Verma

Rajya Sabha

22. Smt. Jharna Das Baidya
- *23. Smt. Ramilaben Bara
24. Shri Abir Ranjan Biswas
25. Shri N.Chandrasegharan
- *26. Shri Biswajit Daimary
- *27. Shri Ashok Gasti
- *28. Smt. Mamata Mohanta
29. Shri P. L. Punia
- *30. Shri Ram Nath Thakur
31. Shri Ramkumar Verma

Nominated to the Committee w.e.f. 09.12.2019.

* Nominated to the Committee w.e.f. 22.07.2020.

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------|---|------------------|
| 1. | Smt. Anita B. Panda | - | Joint Secretary |
| 2. | Smt. Mamta Kemwal | - | Director |
| 2. | Smt. Madhu Bhutani | - | Deputy Secretary |

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment (2019-20) having been authorized by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, do present this Eleventh Report on the action taken by the Government on the observations/recommendations contained in the Second Report of the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on 'Demands for Grants (2019-20)' of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities).

2. The Second Report was presented to Lok Sabha and laid in Rajya Sabha on 12th December, 2019. The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities have furnished their replies indicating action taken on the recommendations contained in that Report on 13th May, 2020. The Report was considered and adopted by the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment at their sitting held on 6th August, 2020.

3. An analysis of the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Second Report of the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) is given in Appendix.

4. For facility of reference observations/recommendations/comments of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report.

NEW DELHI;
6 August, 2020
15 Shravana, 1942 (Saka)

RAMA DEVI
Chairperson,
Standing Committee on
Social Justice and
Empowerment

CHAPTER - I

REPORT

1.1 This Report deals with the action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Second Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on "Demands for Grants (2019-20)" of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities).

1.2 The Second Report was presented to Lok Sabha/laid in Rajya Sabha on 12th December, 2019. It contained 12 observations/recommendations. Replies of Government in respect of all the observation/recommendations have been received and are categorized as under:-

- (i) Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government:
Paragraph Nos. 3.11, 3.12, 4.17, 4.19, 5.4, 5.5, 6.9 and 6.10
(Total: 8, Chapter II)
- (ii) Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's reply:
Nil.
(Total: Nil, Chapter III)
- (iii) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted and which require reiteration:
Paragraph No. 2.14
(Total: 1, Chapter IV)
- (iv) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government are of interim in nature:
Paragraph Nos. 2.13, 3.10 and 4.18
(Total: 3, Chapter V)

1.3 The Committee desire that Action Taken Replies on the Observations/Recommendations contained in Chapter-I and final action taken in respect of the Recommendations contained in Chapter V of this Report for which interim replies have been given by the Government may be furnished at the earliest and in any case not later than three months after the presentation of this Report.

1.4 The Committee will now deal with the replies received from the Ministry which need reiteration or merit comments.

A. Budgetary Provision and Utilization

Recommendation (Para No. 2.13)

1.5 The Committee in their Second Report had recommended as follows:

"The committee note that during the last three years i.e. 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19, the actual expenditure remained above 95%. In 2018-19, the allocation was ₹ 1070.00 crore and the actual expenditure was ₹ 1017.56 crore thus showing utilization of 95.10% of the total expenditure. The Committee would urge the Department to strive for 100% achievement under its flagship schemes/programmes as apart from benefitting more and more PwDs, it will strengthen the Department's demand for an enhanced budgetary allocation in next fiscal year. At the same time, the Committee feel concerned about the uneven flow of expenditure in the current fiscal year. They find from the presentation made by the Department for PwDs during the course of oral evidence of their representatives before the Committee that the actual expenditure under all the Schemes/Programmes as on 31.10.2019 is ₹ 373.21 crore, which is mere 30% of the total BE/RE of ₹ 1204.90 crore. The Department will be required to spend 70% of the BE/RE in the next 5 months which could ultimately result in rush of expenditure in the last quarter of 2019-20 fiscal. The Committee opine that if a large portion of RE remains unspent till last quarter then in the haste of achieving expenditure targets, not only the scrutiny and examination of proposals get compromised, but there remains hardly any scope of monitoring the progress too. The Committee feel that the Department had been setup separately in 2014 to focus on sole attention on Divyangjans and hence ensuring their welfare through timely and effective utilization of funds has an enhanced humanitarian angle too, apart from a Constitutional duty of the Department. They, therefore, impress upon the Department to continue handholding exercises to guide the State Governments so that better and timely

proposals are received and a balanced utilization of funds in all the four quarters of a financial year is ensured."

1.6 The Department of Empowerment of PwDs in their action taken reply have stated as follows:

"During the Financial year 2019-20, as against the revised allocation of ₹ 1100.00 crore, the Department has released an amount of ₹ 1016.18 crore which is 92.38% of the allocation.

2. As submitted earlier to the Committee, the schemes under this Department are all Central Sector Schemes, where funds are released to the implementing agencies. Also, the Department itself has to ensure the monitoring and utilization of the funds released unlike in Centrally sponsored Schemes. The Major schemes/non scheme namely SIPDA, DDRS, ADIP, Scholarship and National Institutes are demand driven based on the proposals received from States/UTs/Institutions/NGOs and individuals etc. Generally, proposals are received in the first 2 quarters which are examined resulting in major releases in the two subsequent quarters.

3. Under Scholarship Schemes, out of six components of Umbrella scheme- 'Scholarships for Students with Disabilities', Pre-Matric, Post-Matric and Top Class Educations Scholarships are being implemented through National Scholarship Portal. The schemes for other Ministries are also on boarded on the portal. The portal was open for students on 15.07.2019 and closed on 15.11.2019. The last date for verification of applications by the State Government was 31.01.2020. Therefore major chunk of funds were released in the last quarter of financial year.

4. There were several reasons attributable to the slow trend of expenditure seen in 2019-20:-

- a) Imposition of Model Code of Conduct as a result of General Elections due to which the pace of expenditure during the 1st quarter was slow.
- b) The scheme of NAP was reviewed so that the outgo reaches the correct beneficiaries as per laid down guidelines.
- c) Skill Training has been undergoing a rigorous overhaul this year to enable streamlining of the process, to check financial irregularities by Empanelled Training Partners (ETPs) and to ensure a robust and secure fund flow mechanism. These initiatives have slowed down the process of release of funds.

- d) Implementation of Centre guidelines including Aadhar Enabled Bio-Metric Attendance System (AEBAS), Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), Video Conferencing (VC) facility, trained trainers and accessibility as mandatory features at training centres.
 - e) Training is imparted through Empanelled Training Partners (ETPs). Validity of most of the ETPs has been expired.
 - f) UCs for from State Governments were not received under SIPDA Scheme.
5. Department has therefore taken steps to ameliorate this situation. These include:-
- a) Reviewed the Schemes to expand the outreach of the schemes running in the Department.
 - b) Implementation of Centre guidelines including Aadhar Enabled Bio-Metric Attendance System (AEBAS), Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), Video Conferencing (VC) facility, trained trainers and accessibility as mandatory features at training centre.
 - c) In the initial stage inspection of centres was carried out by the officers of the Department. However, in order to expedite the process the work of the centre validation has been assigned to a 3rd party agency Skill Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPwD).
 - d) To revalidate the empanelment of existing ETPs, efforts are being made to add new organisations as ETPs.
 - e) Adding Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) as Programme Implementation Agencies (PIAs).
 - f) Through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), the Department is exploring the possibilities of training of those Divyangjan employed in unorganised sector but not yet availed any formal training.
 - g) State/UT Governments letters have been written from Secretary, DEPwD to respective Chief Secretaries of the States to furnish Utilization Certificates for previous Grant released under SIPDA scheme.
 - h) Regular inspections, before, during and after the project are carried out to measure the work done, before grant is released.
 - i) Regular video conferences are held with States/UTs to review progress of work being made in the States.

- j) Screening Committee meetings are being held at short intervals to take up cases proposed by stakeholders for carrying out accessibility in Govt. buildings under the SIPDA scheme.
- k) Advertisements released by the Department across the Country in National and regional newspapers. In addition, an advertisement released in North East (NE) states in different regional languages.
- l) State Governments requested to popularize these schemes through advertisements by their Social Welfare Departments".

1.7 The Committee note that the final overall expenditure of the Department under various Schemes had been 92.38 per cent of the Budget allocation during 2019-20, whereas during the year 2018-19 it was 95.10 per cent. However, it is obvious that the figure has been arrived at the conclusion of the Financial Year 2019-20 hence the observation of the Committee on the slow and uneven pace of expenditure and the need to speed up procedures still holds good. The Department in their Action Taken Reply have submitted various reasons for slow trend of expenditure in 2019-20 such as reviewing of National Action Plan, overhauling of skill training, non-receipt of Utilization Certificates from State Governments under SIPDA Scheme etc. From the reply of the Government, the Committee note the steps taken by the Department to address various issues like implementation of Central Guidelines of Aadhar based bio-metric attendance, closed circuit TVs, Video Conferencing facility in training centres, assigning of revalidation of centres to 3rd party agency and adding Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) as programme Implementing Agencies (PIAs) etc. As the Committee has been continuously underlining the significance of physically inspecting the progress of schemes by Departmental officers, they particularly appreciate steps like regular inspections/ video conferencing for reviewing of work done by the State Governments under various schemes. The Committee are also satisfied to note the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) module in which the Department are exploring the possibilities to provide formal training to untrained Divyangjans working in unorganized sector which shows the sensitivity of the Department towards potential beneficiaries of their schemes. At the same time, the Committee feel that the Department should also provide regular training to their own personnel to enhance their skills in examining proposals received from State Governments so that the procedural aspects consume less time. The Committee also desire the Department to conduct an assessment at the conclusion of Financial Year 2020-21 to evaluate the impact of these measures towards improving the performance of the schemes as also the overall expenditure pattern and apprise them of the same.

B. Non-receipt of adequate proposals under major schemes

Recommendation (Para No. 2.14)

1.8 The Committee, in their Second Report had recommended as follows:

"The Committee note that during the year 2017-18 and 2018-19, the actual expenditure under some major schemes viz (i) Scholarships for Students with Disabilities (ii) Indian Spinal Injury Centre (iii) Establishment of Institute of Sign Language, Research & Training Centre (ISLRTC), (iv) Support of Establishment/Modernization of Braille Presses, (v) Establishment of College for Deaf in 5 regions of the country, (vi) Establishment of Centre for Disability Sports, (vii) Budgetary Support to National Trust (viii) Setting up of State Spinal Injury Centre, (ix) Establishment of National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation was very low and the allocated budgetary amount was underutilized. The Committee are anguished that the Department has been citing repeatedly procedural excuses like non receipt of adequate proposals/delayed receipt of proposals, insufficient funds and approval of schemes during the fag end of fiscals etc. for the same, which are not convincing enough. The Committee hence reiterate that the Department must adopt prudent fiscal management system and modify the procedures if required, to reduce multi-agency clearances and speed up submission of proposals."

1.9 The Department of Empowerment of PwDs in their action taken reply have stated as follows:

"(i) Scholarships for Students with Disabilities:- During 2017-18 and 2018-19, an amount of ₹ 56.95 crore and ₹ 108.22 crore were released respectively. Though, there is a shortfall in expenditure in 2017-18 and 2018-19, it may be noted that during FY 2018-19, Financial disbursement has increased by ₹ 51.27 crore i.e. by 90.03%.

2. For timely utilization of funds and to get sufficient number of applications under various components of the scheme, the Department has released two advertisements across the country on 20.7.2019 and 02.10.2019 to spread awareness and to sensitize all stake holders. A special advertisement was also released with special focus on NE States on 02.10.2019. Besides, a video conference was also held with the State Nodal Officers on 11.10.2019 in order to expedite verification of applications by the educational institutes and State Nodal Officers.

(ii) Indian Spinal Injury Centre:- SFC has approved the scheme at the fag end of the Financial Year 2018-19. Therefore, no funds were released from the financial year 2017-18 to 2018-19.

(iii) Establishment of Institute of Sign Language, Research & Training Centre (ISLRTC):- With regard to ISLRTC, it is submitted that ₹ 5.50 crore and ₹ 5.00 crore was allocated to the Institute during 2017-18 and 2018-19 respectively. Centre has utilized ₹ 4.50 crore and ₹ 4.85 crore during 2017-18 and 2018-19.

(iv) Support of Establishment/Modernization of Braille Presses:- During 2017-18, fund was released for establishing 6 new Braille Presses, Capacity Augmentation of 2 existing Braille Presses and Modernization of 1 existing Braille Press. Further to this, 12 organizations were supported for meeting their recurring expenditure. Though further request for recurring grant in aid was received, these could not be considered for insufficient supporting documents from implementing agencies. There was no proposal received for establishment of new Braille presses during the year 2018-19. In addition to this, the proposals received for recurring expenditure could not be considered for want of supporting documents from implementing agencies.

(v) Establishment of College for Deaf in 5 regions of the country:- Proposals from only two deaf colleges namely National Institute of Speech and Hearing, (NISH) Thiruvananthapuram and Shakuntala Mishra National Rehabilitation University, Lucknow were received During 2017-18 and 2018-19. The proposal from National Institute of Speech and Hearing, (NISH) Thiruvananthapuram was only received for non-recurring grants. This was released to them. However, since 2019-20 no further proposals have been received from NISH or Shakuntala Mishra National Rehabilitation University, Lucknow.

(vi) Centre for Disability Sports:- XII Plan working group in its report, recommended establishment of Centre for Disability Sports (CDS). The project was included in the 12th plan and was also part of the Budget Speech of 2014-15. Since the proposal of setting up of CDS was under consideration from 2015-16 in pursuance to the announcement made in the budget speech of 2014-15, token provisions were made from the year 2015-16. The approval to set up first CDS at Gwalior was granted by the Cabinet in February 2019. Thus, the token budget provisions made from 2017-18 to 2018-19 could not be utilized. During the financial year 2019-20, an amount of ₹ 15.07 crore was released to CPwD.

(vii) Budgetary Support to National Trust:- During 2017-18, RE of ₹ 17 cr. was included ₹ 13 cr. under General Head and ₹ 4 cr. under NER. Though the entire allocation under General Head was utilized, the NER component could not be completely utilized due non-availability of sufficient number of Registered Organizations in NER. During the year 2018-19, the RE of ₹ 20 was included ₹ 16 cr. under General Head and ₹ 4 cr. under NER. Though the entire allocation under General Head was utilized, the NER component could not be completely utilized due to non-availability of sufficient number of Registered Organizations in NER.

2. In order to get sufficient proposals in NER, National Trust has been continuously undertaking awareness programmes like Regional Workshops / Seminars to motivate NGOs. In the North East Summit held in Guwahati on 12 to 13 July 2019, a presentation was made by the JS & CEO, National Trust about the schemes and activities of the National Trust. All the participants were requested to motivate NGOs for joining with the National Trust. A meeting of all ROs of the North Eastern states was conducted on 08.07.19 for expansion of coverage of schemes and activities of the National Trust in North Eastern States.

3. It may be noted that in Financial Year 2019-20, an amount of ₹ 20.00 crore was allocated to National Trust and the entire allocation was utilized by National Trust.

(viii) Setting up of State Spinal Injury Centre:- During the year 2017-18, entire allocation of ₹ 5.00 crore was utilised and during 2018-19, an amount of ₹ 2.82 crore was released and due to insufficient proposals under the scheme, entire allocation could not be utilized.

(ix) National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation:- In the budget announcement for the year 2014-15, Hon'ble Finance Minister declared Government's intention to establish NIMHR. Accordingly, the matter was pursued from 2015-16 onwards and token budget provision was made. Final decision to set up NIMHR, initially at Bhopal, was taken in May 2018 and subsequently in October 2018, it was decided to establish this Institute on a piece of 25 acres of land allotted by Government of Madhya Pradesh at Sehore along Bhopal-Indore Highway. Thus, token provisions made in the year 2017-18 was remained unutilized. The approval to establish NIMHR at Sehore was accorded in October 2018 and layout with other details were under finalization, only meagre amount could be utilized for some preparatory activities and substantial portion of allocation could not be utilized during 2018-19. NIMHR has been made functional from a temporary accommodation provided by Government of Madhya Pradesh at Sehore.

During the financial year 2019-20, an amount of ₹ 17.26 crore was released for construction of NIMHR.

However, observation of the Committee has been noted for compliance."

1.10 The Committee note the details of actual expenditure on all the nine heads pointed by them, which has been furnished by the Department of PwDs now in their Action Taken reply. It is a matter of concern that even after their repeated recommendations that the Department must adopt prudent fiscal management system, modify the procedure to reduce multi-agency clearance and speed up submission of proposals, there was delay in release of funds mostly as either the approvals were received late or there were no worthwhile proposals. While the department has rightly focused on NE region, the Committee desire an equal attention on other areas too in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, etc. The reply of the Department contains often repeated excuses for under utilization of funds e.g. approval of schemes by Standing Finance Committee (SFC) at the fag end of fiscal year, non-releasing of funds, non consideration of proposals due to required supporting documents, delay in approval of establishment of National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation (NIMHR) at Sehore/Madhya Pradesh etc. The Committee are also perturbed to observe that lack of adequate planning in formulation and launching of schemes as also their tardy implementation is leading to under utilisation of funds under many schemes. For example, as against the setting up of five regional colleges for Deaf, the Department could manage to get proposals for only two and subsequently failed to get proposals for recurring expenditure even for those two colleges. Similarly, the establishment of NIMHR was announced in the Budget speech of Finance Minister for the year 2014-15, but the site for accommodation of the same could be approved only 3 years later, i.e. in October, 2018 which led to non-utilization of funds in 2018-19. The Committee would, therefore, urge upon the Department to launch their schemes after due-diligence to obviate delay in execution and the scope of underutilization of funds under their schemes.

C. Motorized Tricycle

Recommendation (Para No. 3.10)

1.11 The Committee in their second Report had recommended as follows:

"As a vast majority of PwDs come from the economically and socially backward sections of the society, they neither have the resources to meet the cost difference of motorized tricycle nor the access to MPs/MLAs/CSR funds. The issue of the Department bearing full cost of motorized tricycle has been commented upon many times in the past, particularly in this committee's 48th and 55th Reports, 16th Lok Sabha. It seems that the Department has hitherto remained evasive on the matter. Now, the Department have statedly decided to consider the issue of revision of cost norms during the forthcoming appraisal for revision of ADIP Scheme, which is likely to be held during next financial year. As the next financial year is approaching now, the Committee are optimistic that the Department would sincerely take up this issue and bring it to the desired conclusion to mitigate the plight of PwDs in need of motorized tricycle."

1.12 The Department of Empowerment of PwDs in their action taken reply have stated as follows:

"The recommendation of the Committee is noted for compliance. The matter may be considered during appraisal of the ADIP Scheme."

1.13 The Committee in their earlier Reports have been repeatedly recommending that the Department must bear the entire cost of motorized tricycle to be provided under the ADIP Scheme. The Committee note with satisfaction that the Department have now expressed their intend to comply with the Committee's long pending demand and would consider it during appraisal of the ADIP Scheme. The Committee strongly recommend that the issue be presented for approval during the said appraisal and all the procedural pre-requisites for revision of cost norms be readied in right earnestness. The Committee desire to be apprised of the progress made in this regard.

D. Increase in Disability Pension Amount

Recommendation (Para No. 4.18)

1.14 The Committee in their Second Report had recommended as follows:

"The Committee is pained to find that some of the State Governments are giving less than ₹ 500/- per month as Disability Pension to PwDs. They fail to understand as to how can a person survive with this paltry amount which is not even sufficient to meet bare minimum basic needs of an individual. The Committee firmly believe that lack of any skill to earn and a meager amount as pension forces many PwDs to take up begging outside religious places, at traffic signals etc. in order to survive. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend that the Central Government must increase its contribution from ₹ 300/- to PwDs pensioners to a reasonable amount and also explore the possibility of making it mandatory for every State/UT Government to give some amount with a provision for revision periodically to help PwDs to cope up with inflation, as Disability Pension. In need be Central Government should have a relook at the existing policies too in this direction."

1.15 The Department of Empowerment of PwDs in their action taken reply have stated as follows:

"Ministry of Rural Development has been requested to review Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme for increasing quantum of Disability Person from ₹ 300/- per PwDs per month to a reasonable amount (Copy at Annexure A)."

1.16 Having noted the fact that some State Governments are giving less than ₹ 500/- per month as disability pension to PwDs, the Committee had recommended that the Central Government must increase its contribution from ₹ 300/- to PwDs pensioners to a reasonable amount. The Committee are happy to note that the Department have approached the Ministry of Rural Development for enhancing the quantum of Disability Pension being provided to PwDs under Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme in order to ensure increasing the amount of ₹ 300/- per month to a reasonable amount. The Committee would like to impress upon the Department to continuously pursue the matter with the Ministry of Rural Development till the amount of disability pension is enhanced sufficiently. The Committee, therefore, desire to be apprised of the progress made in this regard.

CHAPTER – II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Para No. 3.11)

2.1 From the deposition of the Department, the Committee find that they are confident on being able to achieve the expenditure target fully under ADIP scheme by 31st March, 2020 and have listed the activities to be undertaken during the remaining part of the financial year. However, the Committee have observed that the progress of expenditure has remained almost static between 30th September, 2019 and 31st October, 2019 as the actual expenditure in September, 2019 was shown as ₹ 74.51 crore and in October, 2019 it was ₹ 74.61 crore against the Budget allocation of ₹ 230.00 crore. The committee would, therefore, like the Department to submit their phased actual expenditure performance to the Committee in the last 4 months, to substantiate their claim on achieving 100 percent expenditure target.

Reply of the Government

2.2 Under the ADIP scheme, the Budget Estimate was ₹ 230.00 crore which was reduced to ₹ 222.50 crore at Revised Estimate (RE) stage due to demand of funds under other schemes of the Department. Out of RE of ₹ 222.50 crore, an amount of ₹ 213.83 crore was released during 2019-20. ₹ 8.67 crore (₹ 3.93 crore under ROC and ₹ 4.74 crore under NE) could not be released during 2019-20. Though, sufficient proposals were processed for release of funds , however, due to COVID-19 pandemic, funds could not be released as holding of camps for distribution of aids and assistive devices was not possible in terms of Govt. orders relating to lockdown and maintaining Social Distancing. Hence, to avoid parking of funds, grant-in-aid against the proposals of NGOs was not released during the month of March, 2020 on the advice of Integrated Finance Division of the Department.

Details of funds released under ADIP Scheme during the last five months is as under:-

Period	Funds released (₹ in crore)
Upto to 31.10.2019	74.61
From 1.11.2019 to 31.03.2020	139.22
Total	213.83

(Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) O.M. No.1/4/2019-20/Budget/DEPwD dated 13th May, 2020)

Recommendation (Para No. 3.12)

2.3 The committee find that the Department is in the process of awarding contract for conduction third party Impact Evaluation Study of all their schemes including ADIP scheme. The contract is expected to be awarded within this financial year and depending upon timeline provided by the awardee firm/institute, the study is expected to be completed by next financial year. The Committee is of the firm opinion that the phrase “depending upon the timeline” makes the entire process open-ended with hardly any fixed targets. Hence the Committee recommend that the study needs to be completed in a time bound manner and therefore, urge the Department to carry out the study within a stipulated time schedule and avoid undue extension of time-line. They would like to be apprised of the progress on the matter at action taken stage.

Reply of the Government

2.4 As submitted earlier, the Department had issued advertisement for third party Impact Evaluation Studies in respect of all its schemes/programmes including the ADIP Scheme. However, due to non-receipt of sufficient proposals, it was decided to expedite the evaluation process by nominations. The meeting for selecting a suitable agency/vendor for third party Impact Evaluation Study of all the Schemes by nomination is scheduled for the second week of May, 2020.

(Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) O.M. No.1/4/2019-20/Budget/DEPwD dated 13th May, 2020)

Recommendation (Para No. 4.17)

2.5 The Committee observe with concern that even though the Accessible India Campaign (AIC) project under the Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016 (RPwD Act) came into force on 19.04.2017, the execution at State/UT level is slow due to delay in submission of cost estimates and subsequent implementation of retrofitting projects of buildings by the concerned States/UTs/Public Works Department. So far only total of 480 buildings all over India have been completed under AIC which the number of buildings audited is 1662 and number of buildings funded for retrofitting is 1058. In view of thousands of Government buildings all over the country which are to be made accessible for PwDs, the work so far done is minuscule. The Committee

also find that initially many States like West Bengal, Manipur, Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh etc. did not embark upon the work of retrofitting of buildings. The committee are disappointed that at this pace, only a small fraction of the work under AIC can be accomplished by the year 2022 after which central assistance will no longer be available. The Committee, were later informed that 34 States/UTs are on board now to start work on 1058 buildings. They, therefore, urge upon the Department to take up work of converting all the Government buildings into accessible structures for PwDs all over the country at Mission mode and make every possible effort to persuade the States/UTs to accomplish the project with right earnestness, as it aims to make life easy and comfortable for PwDs and bring them into the mainstream.

Reply of the Government

2.6 Under the target of Built Up Environment of Accessible India Campaign (AIC) a total of 1662 selected State Govt. buildings have been audited in 34 participating States/UTs. UTs of Daman and Diu and Dadra Nagar Haveli are not participating in AIC. So far, funds amounting to ₹ 436.44 Crores have been released for retrofitting of 1151 such audited buildings, spread across 32 out of 34 participating States/UTs, with the exception of Manipur, due to pending UCs and Lakshadweep, due to pending revised cost estimates. Also, funds were not released for remaining 511 buildings, of the 1662 audited buildings, due to pending submission of revised cost estimates, fresh cost estimates and utilization certificates. Out of funds released so far, approximately, 25 Crores have been dispersed as 2nd instalment for 123 buildings in 3 States namely, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Punjab. Up till March 31st 2020, approximately 1100 Central and State Govt. buildings have been made completely accessible by CPWD and State/UT Govts, respectively.

2. To achieve the targets under AIC, Department has taken several initiatives. These include :-

- (i) Preparing a summarized compilation of 10 key accessibility features based on the Harmonized Guidelines and Space Standards. These have helped to bring clarity about the requirements of features. It has been circulated to all States and UTs for ease of reference during designing and planning for retrofitting of buildings.
- (ii) An online Management Information System (MIS) portal has been developed and launched by HMSJE on September 18, 2019 for monitoring the progress of targets and to create a centralized data source related to accessibility in built-up environment, transport

and ICT ecosystem under AIC. Provisions have been made to upload real time data of execution work along with pictures of the retrofitting work being carried out at site. After a series of training sessions with respective officials of States/UTs and Central Ministries/Departments, details of 757 buildings of States/UTs and CPWD, along with 733 photographs of 300 buildings have been uploaded on MIS portal. The data uploaded by CPWD and various State Govts. were scrutinized and the shortcomings noticed were communicated through letters so that the features of accessibility may be provided appropriately and complete correctness.

(iii) Department regularly takes follow ups with CPWD and participating States/ UTs. Monitoring is done through meetings, letters, telecommunications, video conferences and through the MIS portal. Issue specific letters were sent to all States/UTs for submission of physical & financial progress and Utilization Certificates. Specific issues are even followed up over telephones and whatsapp to elicit responses. This helped the Department to seek more funds at Revised Expenditure stage and against an initial Budget Expenditure of 105 crores, was able to release ₹ 134 crores.

(iv) Also, States/UTs were called for review meeting at the Department to present the proposals and status of work achieved by them while also troubleshooting specific issues being faced by the State Govt. in implementing the targets of AIC. As may be seen in the case of Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram, where it was observed that proposals did not include all accessibility features due to which holistic retrofitting was not being foreseen, the States were requested to revisit each proposal technically and make them holistic and compliant with accessibility standards. In this particular case the Department was able to curb duplication of work and delay in release of funds while also enhancing awareness amongst officials of the field.

(v) Specifically in regards to States mentioned in the observation which were reported to not have started retrofitting work, the status of progress is as follows:

- a. *West Bengal* - ₹ 1493.74 Lakhs have been released for retrofitting of 26 buildings in FY 2017-18 as well as 2018-19. Field visits for verifying work progress was conducted by Department in November 2019, when only 3 buildings were allowed to be inspected, where retrofitting work was observed to have been done in an ad-hoc manner. Even, after repeated follow ups no formal report on progress of work

has been submitted by the State Govt. Also, 9 revised and 1 fresh cost estimates are to be submitted to DEPwD for fund release. State Govt. has not submitted any UCs pertaining to AIC so far.

- b. *Manipur* – No funds could be released even after repeated follow up and discussions since the State has to submit UCs amounting to ₹ 157.52 Lakhs for FY 2013-14 and 2014-15, for which no record is traceable at the State Govt. level. State has also been informed that if need be this amount may be refunded to Government of India so that funds may be appropriated for benefit of Persons with Disabilities.
- c. *Himachal Pradesh* - ₹ 439.46 Lakhs have been released for retrofitting of 11 buildings in FY 2018-19 as well as 2019-20 and State has reported that work is in progress. However, 10 revised and 1 fresh cost estimates are to be submitted to DEPwD for fund release. State Govt. has not submitted any UCs pertaining to AIC so far
- d. *Andhra Pradesh* - ₹ 1436.33 Lakhs have been released for retrofitting of 38 buildings in FY 2018-19 and State has reported that work is in progress. However, 2 revised and 1 fresh cost estimates are to be submitted to DEPwD for fund release. State Govt. has not submitted any UCs pertaining to AIC so far.

(Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) O.M. No.1/4/2019-20/Budget/DEPwD dated 13th May, 2020)

Recommendation (Para No. 4.19)

2.7 The Committee note that the Department provides assistance for setting up and running District Disability Rehabilitation Centres in unserved and under-served districts of the country for providing specific training to rehabilitation professionals and for sensitizing PwDs about different welfare schemes implementing for them. The Committee further note that there is a huge shortage of nearly 20 lakh trained professionals today to provide rehabilitation services to the PwDs for which the Department has strived to develop curriculum in collaboration with Melbourne University, which is laudable. They would urge the Department to continue their

efforts. The Committee also feels that MPs and MLAs should be involved in the process of setting up of CRCs and DDRCs as they are well aware about the problems and needs of PwDs in their respective constituencies. The Department has seemingly evaded a reply on the issue of involvement of MPs/MLAs in this process. The Committee still feel that the input provided by the MPs/MLAs could be of immense use as they are well aware of the local conditions and special needs of the PwDs in their areas. The specific inputs provided by the public representatives about their area can be of vital importance in planning and setting up of such centres. The Committee, therefore, urge upon the Department to seek inputs from all MPs/MLAs and ensure that these inputs are utilised during the Departmental meetings for practical decision. The Committee further desire to be apprised about the progress in this regard.

Reply of the Government

2.8 1) Observations of Standing Committee regarding seeking inputs from all the MPs/MLAs and ensuring that these inputs are utilized during Departmental meetings for practical decisions in so far as the setting up of DDRCs are concerned have been noted with due regards. Each DDRC functions under the supervision of DMT headed by the District Magistrate/Collector. It also comprises of district officials from the Department of Social Welfare, Health, Panchayati Raj, Women & Child Welfare Department, Nodal officer from implementing agency and representative from reputed NGOs/public representatives for better coordination and monitoring. In order to comply with the observation/recommendations of the Standing Committee, each DDRC receiving GIA from this Department has been advised to invite Hon'ble MPs/MLAs of the respective constituency as a special invitee to the meeting of District Management Team (DMT) at-least once in a year (copy at Annexure-B).

2) For setting up of Composite Regional Centres for Skill Development, Rehabilitation & Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (CRCs), concerned State Governments/UTS are requested to provide land (free of cost) and also temporary built up accommodation to run the CRC till the time of construction own building. Keeping in view the provision of land and built up accommodation by State Government, decision to set up CRC in respective State/UT is taken. In this process, suggestions received from people's representatives are also considered.

(Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) O.M. No.1/4/2019-20/Budget/DEPwD dated 13th May, 2020)

Recommendation (Para No. 5.4)

2.9 The Committee observe that under the three scholarship schemes for students with Disabilities, viz., Pre-matric scholarship, Post-matric Scholarship and Top Class Education, the Department have released funds for the left out students of the previous financial year, i.e., 2018-19 which is impinging upon the budget allocation of current year, i.e., 2019-20. On the other hand funds earmarked for SC, ST Category and North East Region remained unutilized for want of sufficient demand. The Committee are unable to understand why the Department is not re-appropriating the surplus funds to the general category after the closing date of application. Committee feel it is undesirable on one hand to allow surplus funds of one category to lapse and on the other, allow the left out of other category under the same scheme to spill over to the next financial year. The Committee, therefore, would like to be apprised of the specific decisions of the Department on this matter and recommend the Department to make necessary modifications in the scheme to correct this undesirable scenario.

Reply of the Government

2.10 As per Government instructions, certain percentage of funds of the total budget is required to be earmarked for SC, ST category and NE Region mandatorily. The funds earmarked for these categories can't be re-appropriated for the General category as per the Government instructions.

2. In order to avoid this undesirable scenario, enhanced allocation has been allocated under General Category for the Financial Year 2020-21.

(Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) O.M. No.1/4/2019-20/Budget/DEPwD dated 13th May, 2020)

Recommendation (Para No. 5.5)

2.11 The Committee observe with concern that under the Scheme of National fellowship for PwDs (NFPwD), the University Grant Commission (UGC) released the first list of the selected students on 14.08.2019 and the award letters were issued to the selected students on 21.10.2019. The UGC is still in the process of selecting students for the year 2018-19 and 2019-20 even though the third quarter of the current fiscal is about to close. The Committee deprecate this kind of inordinate delay on the part of UGC as delay has been depriving PwDs to the benefits of the scheme. The Committee, therefore, strongly urge upon the Department to convey their concern to the selection authority, i.e., UGC and get the selection process completed for 2018-19 and 2019-20 without further delay and stipulate a time-frame to complete the selection process for 2018-19 and 2019-20.

Reply of the Government

2.12 i. The Department has been continuously pursuing the matter with University Grant Commission (UGC) for selection of candidates for National Fellowship for Persons with Disabilities for the year 2018-19 & 2019-20. UGC has already invited online applications for NFPwD 2018-19 and 2019-20. The last date of submission of online application was 29th February, 2020. As per the information received from UGC, applications received, have been verified by UGC and the list of selected candidates for 2018-19 and 2019-20 will be sent by UGC during month of May, 2020.

(Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) O.M. No.1/4/2019-20/Budget/DEPwD dated 13th May, 2020)

Recommendation (Para No. 6.9)

2.13 The Committee are sad to note that the National Trust for the welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities, a statutory body under the Department of Empowerment of PwDs, has been receiving less grants against the actual requirement. As per the Department, since the interest income from its corpus fund was also falling due to fall in interest rates, the trust has to reduce the funding pattern under its schemes and no new projects could also be sanctioned because of the paucity of funds. However now the committee note that during the financial year 2019-20, the trust is restoring the initial funding pattern and has asked for an additional budgetary support of ₹ 14.93 crore at RE stage. Considering the facts, the Committee would like to impress upon the Department to provide the Trust with requisite funds as it has been dealing with diseases like autism, cerebral palsy, mental retardation etc. which are long term and need sophisticated treatments and to ensure sufficient budgetary support in future also so that the Trust carry out its mandate effectively.

Reply of the Government

2.14 Budgetary requirement and allocations of funds to National Trust during the financial year 2017-18 to 2019-20 are as under:-

(₹ in crore)		
Financial year	Requirement by National Trust	Funds allocated
2017-18	17.00	17.00
2018-19	20.00	20.00
2019-20	20.00	20.00

2. From the above table, it is seen that the funds to the National Trust had been allocated as per the requirement in the past. Keeping in view of the additional budget requirement of National Trust to carry out its activities, an amount of ₹ 39.50 crore has been allocated for the Financial year 2020-21 which is ₹ 19.50 crore more as compare to the financial year 2020-21.

3. In addition to the Budgetary support from the Department, The National Trust has a corpus fund of ₹ 100.00 crore and interest of fund is also used for meeting the expenditure of National Trust.

(Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) O.M. No.1/4/2019-20/Budget/DEPwD dated 13th May, 2020)

Recommendation (Para No. 6.10)

2.15 The Committee are happy to note that AIIMS has been operating a toll-free helpline (No. 1800-11-7776) for the parents to understand and identify the symptoms of autistic disorder in their child. The helpline provide telephone based consultation and can be accessed by any one from any part of India. The Committee feel even though this helpline is operational for the last one and a half year, in the absence of a regular awareness generation activity, most of the parents may not be aware of its existence. The Committee would, therefore, desire the Department to undertake concerted awareness generation programme at national level through audio-visual, print and if found suitable, the social media. In Committee's view, through this programme the parents could also be made aware of the specific indicative symptoms and behavioural disorder in their ward well in time so that they are able to immediately identify the type of disability and consult the helpline for further course of action. This will prove helpful in early identification, intervention and treatment of their autistic child.

Reply of the Government

2.16 The Department has noted the helpline number and accordingly it will post it in it's social media platforms as well as it will urge all State Govt's to post it in their websites as well as social media and gradually it can be done through print media (DAVP) across all States. The Department is also striving to send the helpline number in Doordarshan through scroll which will reach all States.

The National Trust has been taking concerted awareness generation programme on Autism Spectrum Disorder at national level through audio-visual, print and the social media. In this regard, the following booklets have been developed in collaboration with Dr. Shefali Gulati, Head, Child Neurology Department, AIIMS, Delhi and uploaded in the download section of the website of the National Trust (www.thenationaltrust.gov.in) -

1. Autism - The Fact (A comprehensive guide for parents and health care providers).
2. Indian Scale for Assessment of Autism (ISSA)
3. Tools for Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder

The National Trust, in collaboration with Child Neurology Department, AIIMS, Delhi has conducted 4 Master Training Programmes for doctors (Psychiatrists, Paediatricians and Clinical Psychologists) for assessment, diagnostic and certification of Autism in the country, in which

more than 300 such doctors have been trained. The 5th Master training programme for the doctors was planned on 15th,16th and 17th April, 2020 in Vigyan Bhavan, Delhi. But, due to COVID-19, the same has been postponed.

A dedicated WhatsApp group of Experts in Autism has been created by the National Trust to gather up to date information on prevention, assessment and research on Autism on global basis.

The National Trust will also prepare more such materials in the form of audio-visual and print in collaboration with Dr. Shefali Gulati, Head, Child Neurology Department, AIIMS, Delhi and other experts in the field and disseminate these information to the parents through online mechanism and social media.

In addition to this, the Department also operates Awareness Generation and Publicity Scheme and aim of this scheme is to give wide publicity of Govt. of India's schemes relating to welfare of persons with disabilities through organising National/ International workshop/events, street plays, film shows, Print Media, road shows, vocational training, disability benefit, providing assistive devices subsidized utility, autistic disorder Childs, support services including language interpreter, helpline, rehabilitation etc. including their social, economic and educational environment across the country. At the beginning of the financial year, Secretaries/Chief Secretaries of the States/UTs are requested to encourage the Govt./Non Governmental Organisations of their State/UT to send their more and more proposals for publicity/promotion of Government of India's schemes relating to PwDs including autistic disorder child, so that the enthusiasm in the PwDs, self-esteem is increased and to ensure confidence building in the PwDs, so that they can realise aspirations.

(Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) O.M. No.1/4/2019-20/Budget/DEPwD dated 13th May, 2020)

CHAPTER – III

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

-NIL-

CHAPTER – IV

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED AND WHICH REQUIRE REITERATION

Recommendation (Para No. 2.14)

4.1 The Committee note that during the year 2017-18 and 2018-19, the actual expenditure under some major schemes viz (i) Scholarships for Students with Disabilities (ii) Indian Spinal Injury Centre (iii) Establishment of Institute of Sign Language, Research & Training Centre (ISLRTC), (iv) Support of Establishment/Modernization of Braille Presses, (v) Establishment of College for Deaf in 5 regions of the country, (vi) Establishment of Centre for Disability Sports, (vii) Budgetary Support to National Trust (viii) Setting up of State Spinal Injury Centre, (ix) Establishment of National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation was very low and the allocated budgetary amount was underutilized. The Committee are anguished that the Department has been citing repeatedly procedural excuses like non receipt of adequate proposals/delayed receipt of proposals, insufficient funds and approval of schemes during the fag end of fiscals etc. for the same, which are not convincing enough. The Committee hence reiterate that the Department must adopt prudent fiscal management system and modify the procedures if required, to reduce multi-agency clearances and speed up submission of proposals.

Reply of the Government

4.2 **(i) Scholarships for Students with Disabilities:-** During 2017-18 and 2018-19, an amount of ₹ 56.95 crore and ₹ 108.22 crore were released respectively. Though, there is a shortfall in expenditure in 2017-18 and 2018-19, it may be noted that during FY 2018-19, Financial disbursement has increased by ₹ 51.27 crore i.e. by 90.03%.

2. For timely utilization of funds and to get sufficient number of applications under various components of the scheme, the Department has released two advertisements across the country on 20.7.2019 and 02.10.2019 to spread awareness and to sensitize all stake holders. A special advertisement was also released with special focus on NE States on 02.10.2019. Besides, a video conference was also held with the State Nodal Officers on 11.10.2019 in order to expedite verification of applications by the educational institutes and State Nodal Officers.

(ii) Indian Spinal Injury Centre:- SFC has approved the scheme at the fag end of the FY 2018-19. Therefore, no funds were released from the financial year 2017-18 to 2018-19.

(iii) Establishment of Institute of Sign Language, Research & Training Centre (ISLRTC):- With regard to ISLRTC, it is submitted that ₹ 5.50 crore and Rs. 5.00 crore was allocated to the Institute during 2017-18 and 2018-19 respectively. Centre has utilized ₹ 4.50 crore and ₹ 4.85 crore during 2017-18 and 2018-19.

(iv) Support of Establishment/Modernization of Braille Presses:- During 2017-18, fund was released for establishing 6 new Braille Presses, Capacity Augmentation of 2 existing Braille Presses and Modernization of 1 existing Braille Press. Further to this, 12 organizations were supported for meeting their recurring expenditure. Though further request for recurring grant in aid was received, these could not be considered for insufficient supporting documents from implementing agencies. There was no proposal received for establishment of new Braille presses during the year 2018-19. In addition to this, the proposals received for recurring expenditure could not be considered for want of supporting documents from implementing agencies.

(v) Establishment of College for Deaf in 5 regions of the country:- Proposals from only two deaf colleges namely National Institute of Speech and Hearing, (NISH) Thiruvananthapuram and Shakuntala Mishra National Rehabilitation University, Lucknow were received During 2017-18 and 2018-19. The proposal from National Institute of Speech and Hearing, (NISH) Thiruvananthapuram was only received for non-recurring grants. This was released to them. However, since 2019-20 no further proposals have been received from NISH or Shakuntala Mishra National Rehabilitation University, Lucknow.

(vi) Centre for Disability Sports:- XII Plan working group in its report, recommended establishment of Centre for Disability Sports (CDS). The project was included in the 12th plan and was also part of the Budget Speech of 2014-15. Since the proposal of setting up of CDS was under consideration from 2015-16 in pursuance to the announcement made in the budget speech of 2014-15, token provisions were made from the year 2015-16. The approval to set up first CDS at Gwalior was granted by the Cabinet in February 2019. Thus, the token budget provisions made from 2017-18 to 2018-19 could not be utilized. During the financial year 2019-20, an amount of ₹ 15.07 crore was released to CPwD.

(vii) Budgetary Support to National Trust:- During 2017-18, RE of ₹ 17 cr. was included ₹ 13 cr. under General Head and ₹ 4 cr. under NER. Though the entire allocation under General Head was utilized, the NER component could not be completely utilized due non-availability of sufficient number of Registered Organizations in NER. During the year 2018-19, the RE of ₹ 20 was included ₹ 16 cr. under General Head and ₹ 4 cr. under NER. Though the entire allocation under General Head was utilized, the NER component could not be completely utilized due to non-availability of sufficient number of Registered Organizations in NER.

2. In order to get sufficient proposals in NER, National Trust has been continuously undertaking awareness programmes like Regional Workshops / Seminars to motivate NGOs. In the North East Summit held in Guwahati on 12 to 13 July 2019, a presentation was made by the JS & CEO, National Trust about the schemes and activities of the National Trust. All the participants were requested to motivate NGOs for joining with the National Trust. A meeting of all ROs of the North Eastern states was conducted on 08.07.19 for expansion of coverage of schemes and activities of the National Trust in North Eastern States.

3. It may be noted that in Financial Year 2019-20, an amount of ₹ 20.00 crore was allocated to National Trust and the entire allocation was utilized by National Trust.

(viii) Setting up of State Spinal Injury Centre:- During the year 2017-18, entire allocation of ₹ 5.00 crore was utilised and during 2018-19, an amount of ₹ 2.82 crore was released and due to insufficient proposals under the scheme, entire allocation could not be utilized.

(ix) National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation:- In the budget announcement for the year 2014-15, Hon'ble Finance Minister declared Government's intention to establish NIMHR. Accordingly, the matter was pursued from 2015-16 onwards and token budget provision was made. Final decision to set up NIMHR, initially at Bhopal, was taken in May 2018 and subsequently in October 2018, it was decided to establish this Institute on a piece of 25 acres of land allotted by Government of Madhya Pradesh at Sehore along Bhopal-Indore Highway. Thus, token provisions made in the year 2017-18 was remained unutilized. The approval to establish NIMHR at Sehore was accorded in October 2018 and layout with other details were under finalization, only meagre amount could be utilized for some preparatory activities and substantial portion of allocation could not be utilized during 2018-19. NIMHR has been made functional from a temporary accommodation provided by Government of Madhya Pradesh at Sehore.

During the financial year 2019-20, an amount of ₹ 17.26 crore was released for construction of NIMHR.

However, observation of the Committee has been noted for compliance.

(Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) O.M. No.1/4/2019-20/Budget/DEPwD dated 13th May, 2020)

Comments of Committee

(Please see Para 1.10 of Chapter – I of the Report)

CHAPTER – V

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT ARE INTERIM IN NATURE

Recommendation (Para No. 2.13)

5.1 The committee note that during the last three years i.e. 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19, the actual expenditure remained above 95%. In 2018-19, the allocation was ₹ 1070.00 crore and the actual expenditure was ₹ 1017.56 crore thus showing utilization of 95.10% of the total expenditure. The Committee would urge the Department to strive for 100% achievement under its flagship schemes/programmes as apart from benefitting more and more PwDs, it will strengthen the Department's demand for an enhanced budgetary allocation in next fiscal year. At the same time, the Committee feel concerned about the uneven flow of expenditure in the current fiscal year. They find from the presentation made by the Department for PwDs during the course of oral evidence of their representatives before the Committee that the actual expenditure under all the Schemes/Programmes as on 31.10.2019 is ₹ 373.21 crore, which is mere 30% of the total BE/RE ₹ 1204.90 crore. The Department will be required to spend 70% of the BE/RE in the next 5 months which could ultimately result in rush of expenditure in the last quarter of 2019-20 fiscal. The Committee opine that if a large portion of RE remains unspent till last quarter then in the haste of achieving expenditure targets, not only the scrutiny and examination of proposals get compromised, but there remains hardly any scope of monitoring the progress too. The Committee feel that the Department had been setup separately in 2014 to focus on sole attention on Divyangjans and hence ensuring their welfare through timely and effective utilization of funds has an enhanced humanitarian angle too, apart from a Constitutional duty of the Department. They, therefore, impress upon the Department to continue handholding exercises to guide the State Governments so that better and timely proposals are received and a balanced utilization of funds in all the four quarters of a financial year is ensured.

Reply of the Government

5.2 During the Financial year 2019-20, as against the revised allocation of ₹ 1100.00 crore, the Department has released an amount of ₹ 1016.18 crore which is 92.38% of the allocation.

2. As submitted earlier to the Committee, the schemes under this Department are all Central Sector Schemes, where funds are released to the implementing agencies. Also, the Department itself has to ensure the monitoring and utilization of the funds released unlike in Centrally sponsored Schemes. The Major schemes/non scheme namely SIPDA, DDRS, ADIP, Scholarship and National Institutes are demand driven based on the proposals received from States/UTs/Institutions/NGOs and individuals etc. Generally, proposals are received in the first 2 quarters which are examined resulting in major releases in the two subsequent quarters.

3. Under Scholarship Schemes, out of six components of Umbrella scheme- 'Scholarships for Students with Disabilities', Pre-Matric, Post-Matric and Top Class Educations Scholarships are being implemented through National Scholarship Portal. The schemes for other Ministries are also on boarded on the portal. The portal was open for students on 15.07.2019 and closed on 15.11.2019. The last date for verification of applications by the State Government was 31.01.2020. Therefore major chunk of funds were released in the last quarter of financial year.

4. There were several reasons attributable to the slow trend of expenditure seen in 2019-20:-

g) Imposition of Model Code of Conduct as a result of General Elections due to which the pace of expenditure during the 1st quarter was slow.

h) The scheme of NAP was reviewed so that the outgo reaches the correct beneficiaries as per laid down guidelines.

i) Skill Training has been undergoing a rigorous overhaul this year to enable streamlining of the process, to check financial irregularities by Empanelled Training Partners (ETPs) and to ensure a robust and secure fund flow mechanism. These initiatives have slowed down the process of release of funds.

j) Implementation of Centre guidelines including Aadhar Enabled Bio-Metric Attendance System (AEBAS), Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), Video Conferencing (VC) facility, trained trainers and accessibility as mandatory features at training centres.

k) Training is imparted through Empanelled Training Partners (ETPs). Validity of most of the ETPs has been expired.

l) UCs for from State Governments were not received under SIPDA Scheme.

5. Department has therefore taken steps to ameliorate this situation. These include:-

- m) Reviewed the Schemes to expand the outreach of the schemes running in the Department.
- n) Implementation of Centre guidelines including Aadhar Enabled Bio-Metric Attendance System (AEBAS), Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), Video Conferencing (VC) facility, trained trainers and accessibility as mandatory features at training centre.
- o) In the initial stage inspection of centres was carried out by the officers of the Department. However, in order to expedite the process the work of the centre validation has been assigned to a 3rd party agency Skill Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPwD).
- p) To revalidate the empanelment of existing ETPs, efforts are being made to add new organisations as ETPs.
- q) Adding Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) as Programme Implementation Agencies (PIAs).
- r) Through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), the Department is exploring the possibilities of training of those Divyangjan employed in unorganised sector but not yet availed any formal training.
- s) State/UT Governments letters have been written from Secretary, DEPwD to respective Chief Secretaries of the States to furnish Utilization Certificates for previous Grant released under SIPDA scheme.
- t) Regular inspections, before, during and after the project are carried out to measure the work done, before grant is released.
- u) Regular video conferences are held with States/UTs to review progress of work being made in the States.
- v) Screening Committee meetings are being held at short intervals to take up cases proposed by stakeholders for carrying out accessibility in Govt. buildings under the SIPDA scheme.
- w) Advertisements released by the Department across the Country in National and regional newspapers. In addition, an advertisement released in North East (NE) states in different regional languages.

- x) State Governments requested to popularize these schemes through advertisements by their Social Welfare Departments.

(Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) O.M. No.1/4/2019-20/Budget/DEPwD dated 13th May, 2020)

Comments of Committee

(Please see Para 1.7 of Chapter – I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 3.10)

5.3 As a vast majority of PwDs come from the economically and socially backward sections of the society, they neither have the resources to meet the cost difference of motorized tricycle nor the access to MPs/MLAs/CSR funds. The issue of the Department bearing full cost of motorized tricycle has been commented upon many times in the past, particularly in this committee's 48th and 55th Reports, 16th Lok Sabha. It seems that the Department has hitherto remained evasive on the matter. Now, the Department have statedly decided to consider the issue of revision of cost norms during the forthcoming appraisal for revision of ADIP Scheme, which is likely to be held during next financial year. As the next financial year is approaching now, the Committee are optimistic that the Department would sincerely take up this issue and bring it to the desired conclusion to mitigate the plight of PwDs in need of motorized tricycle.

Reply of the Government

5.4 The recommendation of the Committee is noted for compliance. The matter may be considered during appraisal of the ADIP Scheme.

(Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) O.M. No.1/4/2019-20/Budget/DEPwD dated 13th May, 2020)

Comments of Committee

(Please see Para 1.13 of Chapter – I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 4.18)

5.5 The Committee is pained to find that some of the State Governments are giving less than ₹ 500/- per month as Disability Pension to PwDs. They fail to understand as to how can a person survive with this paltry amount which is not even sufficient to meet bare minimum basic needs of an individual. The Committee firmly believe that lack of any skill to earn and a meager amount as pension forces many PwDs to take up begging outside religious places, at traffic signals etc. in order to survive. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend that the Central Government must increase its contribution from ₹ 300/- to PwDs pensioners to a reasonable amount and also explore the possibility of making it mandatory for every State/UT Government to give some amount with a provision for revision periodically to help PwDs to cope up with inflation, as Disability Pension. In need be Central Government should have a relook at the existing policies too in this direction.

Reply of the Government

5.6 M/o Rural Development has been requested to review Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme for increasing quantum of Disability Person from ₹ 300/- per PwDs per month to a reasonable amount (Copy at Annexure A).

(Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) O.M. No.1/4/2019-20/Budget/DEPwD dated 13th May, 2020)

Comments of Committee

(Please see Para 1.16 of Chapter – I of the Report)

NEW DELHI;

6 August, 2020
15 Shravana, 1942 (Saka)

RAMA DEVI
Chairperson,
Standing Committee on
Social Justice and
Empowerment

MINUTES OF THE FIFTEENTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2019-20) HELD ON THURSDAY, 6TH AUGUST, 2020

The Committee met from 1100 hrs. to 1300 hrs. in Main Committee Room Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SMT. RAMA DEVI - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Shri Y. Devendrappa
3. Smt. Ranjeeta Koli
4. Shri Akshaibar Lal
5. Smt. Rekha Arun Verma

RAJYA SABHA

6. Smt. Ramilaben Bara
7. Shri Ashok Gasti
8. Shri P.L. Punia
9. Shri Ram Nath Thakur
10. Shri Ramkumar Verma

SECRETARIAT

1. Smt. Anita B. Panda - Joint Secretary
2. Smt. Mamta Kemwal - Director

2. At the outset, Hon'ble Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee to the sitting of the Committee convened for consideration and adoption of four Draft Action Taken Reports of the Committee on "Demands for Grants 2019-20" and taking evidence of the representatives of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice

and Empowerment) on “The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (Amendment) Bill, 2019”.

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

(i) *** *** ***

(ii) Eleventh Report on Action Taken by the Government on the observations/recommendations contained in the Second Report on “Demand for Grants 2019-20” of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Persons with Disabilities).

(iii) *** *** ***

(iv) *** *** ***

4. The Committee adopted the aforesaid draft Reports without any amendment and authorised the Chairperson to present the Reports to Parliament or to the Hon’ble Speaker, Lok Sabha.

5. *** *** ***

6. *** *** ***

7. *** *** ***

8. *** *** ***

(The Committee then adjourned.)

*** Matter not related to this Report.

APPENDIX

**ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE
RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE SECOND REPORT OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2019-20)
ON 'DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (2019-20)'
OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
(DEPARTMENT OF EMPOWERMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES)
(SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA)**

	Total	Percentage
Total number of Recommendations	12	
(I) Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government : Paragraph Nos. - 3.11, 3.12, 4.17, 4.19, 5.4, 5.5, 6.9 and 6.10.	8	66.67%
(ii) Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies of the Government : Paragraph No. - Nil	0	0%
(iii) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted and which require reiteration: Paragraph No. - 2.14	1	8.33%
(iv) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government are of in nature: Paragraph NoS. - 2.13, 3.10 and 4.18.	3	25%