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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND
EMPOWERMENT (2020-21)**

(SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA)

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

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS
(2021-22)**

TWENTIETH REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

March, 2021/Phalguna, 1942 (Saka)

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DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (2021-22)

Presented to Lok Sabha on 16.03.2021

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 16.03.2021



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

March, 2021/Phalguna, 1942 (Saka)

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**COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL
JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2020-21)**

SMT. RAMA DEVI - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Smt. Sangeeta Azad
3. Shri Bholanath 'B.P. Saroj'
4. Smt. Pramila Bisoyi
5. Shri Thomas Chazhikadan
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 Vijay Kumar
14. Shri Akshaibar Lal
15. Shri Pashupati Kumar Paras
16. Shri V. Srinivas Prasad
17. Shri Arjun Singh
18. Smt. Supriya Sule
19. Shri K. Shanmuga Sundaram
20. Smt. Rekha Arun Verma
21. Shri Tokheho Yepthomi

Rajya Sabha

22. Smt. Jharna Das Baidya
23. Smt. Ramilaben Bara
24. Shri Abir Ranjan Biswas
25. Smt. Geeta *alias* Chandraprabha*
26. Shri N.Chandrasegharan
27. Shri Narayan Koragappa*
28. Smt. Mamata Mohanta
29. Shri Ram Nath Thakur
30. Shri Ramkumar Verma
31. Shri Ramji*

* Nominated w.e.f. 23.12.2020.

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. | Smt. Anita B. Panda | Joint Secretary |
| 2. | Smt. Mamta Kemwal | Director |
| 3. | Shri Krishendra Kumar | Deputy Secretary |
| 4. | Shri. Salil Saroj | Committee Officer |

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment (2020-21) having been authorized by the Committee to present on their behalf this Twentieth Report on 'Demands for Grants for the year 2021-22' pertaining to the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment).

2. The Committee considered the 'Demands for Grants (2021-22)' of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment) which were laid on the Table of the House on 13th February, 2021. After obtaining their Budget related Documents and Explanatory Notes, the Committee took evidence of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment) on 25th February, 2021. The Committee considered and adopted the Report at the sitting held on 15th March, 2021.

3. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the Officers of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment) for appearing before them and furnishing information in connection with the examination of the 'Demands for Grants (2021-22)'.

4. For ease of reference, the Observations and Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report.

NEW DELHI;

15 March, 2021
24 Phalguna, 1942 (Saka)

RAMA DEVI
Chairperson,
Standing Committee on
Social Justice and
Empowerment

REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTORY

1.1 The mandate of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is to empower the socially, educationally and economically marginalized sections of the society including Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes, Senior Citizens, Victims of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, Transgender Persons, Beggars, Denotified and Nomadic Tribes (DNTs) and Economically Backward Classes (EBCs).

1.2 The Department through its programmes and Schemes strive to build an inclusive society wherein members of the target groups are provided adequate support for their growth and development.

1.3 The policies and programmes of the Department aim towards:

- (i) Educational and economic development along with the social empowerment of Scheduled Castes (SCs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Denotified and Nomadic Tribes (DNTs), Transgender Persons and Economically Backward Classes (EBCs);
- (ii) Support to Senior Citizens by way of their maintenance, welfare, security, health care, productive and independent living;
- (iii) Prevention and treatment of Alcoholism and Substance (Drug) Abuse; and
- (iv) Rehabilitation of Beggars.

1.4 The target groups can be defined as follows:

- (i) **“Scheduled Castes”**- means such castes, races or tribes or parts of or groups within such castes, races or tribes as are deemed under Article 341 of the Constitution to be scheduled castes for the purposes of the Constitution.
- (ii) **“Backward Classes”**- socially and educationally backward classes means such backward classes as are so deemed under article 342A of the Constitution for the purpose of the Constitution.
- (iii) **“Senior Citizen”**- a citizen of India who has attained the age of 60 years or above.
- (iv) **“Victim of Substance Abuse”** - a person who is addicted to/ dependent on alcohol, narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances or any other addictive substances (other than tobacco), e.g. pharmaceutical drugs, etc., and generally includes the immediate family members also.
- (v) **“Economically weaker section”** shall be such as may be notified by the Government from time to time on the basis of family income and other indicators of economic disadvantage .[Article 15(6) of the Constitution]. For this purpose, persons who are not covered under the existing Scheme of reservations for the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and the Socially and Educationally Backward Classes and whose family has gross annual income below ₹ 8.00 lakh are to be identified as Economically Weaker Sections(EWSs) for the benefit of reservation. Family for this purpose will include the person who seeks benefit of reservation, his /her parents and siblings below the age of 18 years as also his/her spouse and children below the age of 18 years. The income shall include income from all sources i.e.

salary, agriculture, business, profession etc. and it will be income for the financial year prior to the year of application. Also, persons whose family owns or possesses any one of the following assets shall be excluded from being identified as EWSs irrespective of the family income: (i) 5 acres of Agricultural land and above. (ii) Residential flat of 1000sq fit and above. (iii) Residential plot of 100 sq yards and above in notified municipalities. (iv) Residential plot of 200 sq yards and above in areas other than the notified municipalities.

1.5 As per 2011 Census, the population of the main target groups is as follows:

- Scheduled Castes: 20.14 crore (16.6 per cent)
- Other Backward Classes: Caste Census has not been done since 1931.

The Mandal Commission had estimated OBC population at 52 per cent of the total population while NSSO (2009-10), 66th Round, had estimated it to be 41.7 per cent.

- Senior Citizens: 10.38 crore (8.57s per cent).
- Victims of Substance Abuse: As per the National Survey on extent and pattern of Substance Abuse, approximately 6.50 Crore persons are victims of substance abuse.

CHAPTER II

BUDGETARY PROVISIONS AND UTILIZATION

2.1 The Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment) for the year 2021-22 are given under Demand No. 92. The detailed Demands for Grants of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment were laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 13th February, 2021. The Department of Social Justice and Empowerment furnished the following statement showing the Budget Estimates (BE), Revised Estimates (RE) and Actual Expenditure (AE) for the last three years under Plan and Non Plan Expenditure along with the Budget Estimates for 2021-22 under Schemes and Non-Schemes allocation.

(₹ in crore)

Year	BE	RE	AE	Percentage of AE out of RE
2018-19	7750.00	9963.25	10070.76	101.08
2019-20	8885.00	8885.00	8738.41	98.35
2020-21	10103.57	8207.56	4601.95 (as on 24-02-2021)	56.07 (as on 24-02-2021)
2021-22	10567.62	--	--	-

2.2 The year 2020-21 witnessed global crisis due to COVID-19 pandemic. Hence, the Department were able to spend only 56.07 percent of the Revised Estimates in the year 2020-21 by 24th February 2021. On being enquired about the shortfall in expenditure, the Department submitted in a written reply that ₹ 4320.06 crore have been spent due to monthly expenditure ceiling of 5 per cent till September, 2020 as decided by Ministry of Finance in view of COVID-19 Pandemic situation. Further, it was submitted that COVID-19 has affected the running of educational/ coaching institutes due to complete lockdown and

subsequent decisions during the year 2020-21. In addition, due to non-receipt/incomplete proposals from State Governments/Implementing Agencies under various Schemes; funds could not be released. COVID - 19 caused the delay in inspection of voluntary organizations running for drug prevention and welfare of senior citizens and thereby the proposals got delayed from the implementing agencies. However, after relaxation in lockdown, proposals have started coming and funds are expected to be released to bridge the gap.”

2.3 During the deliberation of the Committee, the Secretary of the Department was asked to explain the action plan through which the Department proposed to spend the remaining amount till 31 March 2021. In this regard, the Secretary submitted as under:

“इस साल बहुत ही अच्छी तरह से तैयारी करके, सब स्कीम्स को इम्प्लीमेंट करने के लिए काफी तैयारी की थी , लेकिन कोविड की महामारी ने हमारे प्लान को पूरी तरह से ऊपर-नीचे कर दिया। हमारे टोटल एक्सपेंडीचर का करीब दो-तिहाई एक्सपेंडीचर एजुकेशन के ऊपर होता है। स्कूल्स बंद थे, कॉलेजेज बंद थे, हमारे इम्प्लीमेंटेशन में बहुत बाधा पहुँची है। फिर भी जो समय बचा है, हम राज्यों से मिलकर काम कर रहे हैं और हमारी उम्मीद यह है कि जो आर.ई. में हमें पैसा दिलाया गया है, उसको हम पूरी तरह यूटिलाइज करेंगे। अभी नम्बर थोड़ा कम दिख रहा है, लेकिन पोस्ट-मैट्रिक स्कॉलरशिप एससी का जो नया फॉर्मूला कैबिनेट ने अप्रूव किया है, उसकी वजह से राज्यों में भी बहुत उत्साह है और इंटरेस्ट भी है। इसका काम बहुत जोरदार तरीके से चल रहा है। मेरे ख्याल से 31 मार्च तक हमारा आर.ई. का एक्सपेंडीचर सौ परसेंट हो जाएगा।“

2.4 On being asked about the problems the Department came across during the lockdown in the implementation of the Schemes and initiatives taken so that the beneficiaries of the Schemes were least affected, the Department submitted in a written reply that they proactively consulted all States/UTs through video conference on regular intervals during the COVID-19 Pandemic crisis. In order to ensure that the States have sufficient funds at their disposal in the beginning of the year, 75% of Central assistance was released in the first quarter of 2020-21.

2.5 As regards to the budgetary allocation of ₹10567.62 crore for the year

2021-22 by the Ministry of Finance against the Budget Estimates proposal of ₹ 13257.05 crore projected by the Department, the Department submitted in a written reply as under:

“In pursuance of Ministry of Finance’s O.M no. 42(02)/PF-II/2014 dated 08.12.2020, the existing Schemes of the Department have been reviewed and rationalized and the proposals have accordingly been moved for appraisal/recommendation of Standing Finance Committee/Expenditure Finance Committee(SFC/EFC) for their continuation from 2021-22 to 2025-26. If the Schemes are recommended and approved by the Competent Authority, additional fund will be sought in Supplementary Demand for Grants.”

2.6 The Department elaborated the rationalization of their Schemes for 2021-22 as under:

Rationalization of Schemes to avoid overlap and bring more synergy (33 Schemes to 19 Schemes)

- PM-AJAY : merges SCA to SCSP, PMAGY and BJRCY
- SHREYAS (SC) merges 4 Schemes: Free coaching, Top class, NFSC and NOS Schemes
- SHREYAS (OBC) merges NFOBC and Interest Subsidy for Overseas Studies
- YASASVI (OBC) - merges the Pre, Post Matric Schemes for OBC, EBC and DNT
- SHRESHTA : Provision for Admission in Top Schools and VO to SC Scheme

2.7 Further, the Department have proposed the rationalization of the Schemes run by them for 2021-22 to 2025-26 with following details:

(a) “Self Employment Scheme for the Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers”

A proposal to revise and extend the “Self Employment Scheme for the Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers” for a period of five years from 2021-22 to

2025-26 with an outlay of ₹ 491.54 Crore is under submission to the Standing Finance Committee of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment.

(b) Free Coaching Scheme for SC and OBC students, National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for SC Students, National Fellowship Scheme for SCs and Top Class Education Scheme for SC Students.

Proposal for “Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS)” is under process for EFC recommendation. This Scheme is an Umbrella Scheme which seeks to merge existing four central sector Schemes namely Free Coaching Scheme for SC and OBC students, National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for SC Students, National Fellowship Scheme for SCs and Top Class Education Scheme for SC Students. The Department of Expenditure, M/o Finance, vide guidelines dated 8.12.2020, have directed that outlay of the revised Schemes cannot exceed 5.5 times the actual expenditure of the Schemes in 2019-20. Keeping these guidelines in view, the projected estimated budget outlay under the Umbrella Scheme of SHREYAS for the period 2021-22 to 2025-26 has now been reduced from ₹ 4300 Crore to ₹ 2469 Crore.

Time for approval of the Scheme cannot be specified at this stage as it depends on the receipt of comments of stakeholder Ministries/Departments e.g. NITI Aayog, Dept of Expenditure etc and approval of competent authority. It is however expected to be approved for implementation from 2021-22.

(c) Scheme of Special Central Assistance to the Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCA to SCSP), Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY) and Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yoajana (BJRCY)

At present the proposal for merger of the Scheme of Special Central Assistance to the Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCA to SCSP), Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY) and Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yoajana (BJRCY) is under consideration at EFC stage. The merged Scheme will be known as Pradhan

Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhuday Yojana (PM-AJAY). Once the proposal will be appraised by the EFC chaired by the Secretary Dept. of Expenditure the Cabinet Note for the proposed merger will be sent. It may take about 2-3 months for completing the above process. The merged Scheme of PMAJAY has been allocated ₹ 1800 Crore for 2021-22.

(d) The Scheme of Pre-Matric scholarship and others

The Scheme of Pre-Matric scholarship and others has been proposed to implement during the year 2021-22 by merging of the two Schemes namely (i) Pre-Matric Scholarship for SC students studying IX & X and (ii) Pre-Matric Scholarship to the Children of those engaged in occupations involving cleaning and prone to health hazards. The EFC proposal is being sent for approval of competent authority.

(e) SMILE - Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprises

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment proposes to formulate an umbrella Scheme “*SMILE - Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprises*”, which includes two sub-Schemes - ‘Central Sector Scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation for Welfare of Transgender Persons’ and ‘Central Sector Scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of Begging’. This umbrella Scheme would cover several comprehensive measures including welfare measures for both transgender persons and persons who are engaged in the act of begging with focus extensively on rehabilitation, provision of medical facilities, counseling, education, skill development, economic linkages etc. with the support of State Governments/UTs/Local Urban Bodies, Voluntary Organizations, Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and institutions and others. This Scheme is proposed to be implemented across the country. Concept note of Scheme has been sent to Department of Expenditure for mandatory In-principal approval on 03.02.2021. Comments from DoE are still awaited. Total

financial outlay proposed for 5 years is ₹ 992.58 crore and of financial year 2021-22 is ₹174.06 crore.

For effective implementation and better outreach, the Department has decided to revamp the existing Schemes as per following details:

(1) The Scheme PM- YASASVI is proposed to be implemented during the 2021-22 to 2025-26 by amalgamating four ongoing Centrally Sponsored Schemes for OBC, EBC and DNT namely- Pre- Matric Scholarship for OBCs, Post-Matric Scholarship for OBCs, Dr. Ambedkar Post Matric Scholarship for EBCs and Dr. Ambedkar Pre and Post-Matric Scholarship for DNTs, into two Schemes namely (i) Pre-Matric Scholarship for OBC, EBC and DNT students Post-Matric Scholarship for OBC, EBC and DNT students. The proposed outlay for five years is ₹ 8365 Crore. The Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) note of Scheme of PM- YASASVI was circulated to State Governments/ UT Administration on 4th February, 2021 and Central Ministries/Departments on 22nd January, 2021 respectively. The comments are still awaited except State Govt. of Bihar and Uttarakhand and Ministry of Tribal Affairs, School Education and NITI Aayog.

(2) The Scheme 'Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme' SHREYAS, has been proposed to implement during the years from 2021-22 to 2025-26 by placing two ongoing Central Sector Schemes for OBC and others namely – (i) National Fellowship for OBC

(3) Dr. Ambedkar Central Sector Scheme of Interest Subsidy on Educational Loans for Overseas Studies for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Economically Backward Classes (EBCs). The proposed outlay for five years is ₹ 430.00 crore. The Standing Finance Committee (SFC) note of Scheme 'Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme' SHREYAS was circulated to Central Ministries/Departments on 1st February, 2021. The comments are still awaited.

2.8 In a written reply, the Department explained the revised fund sharing pattern under Post-Matric Scholarship for SC students *inter alia* as below:

“Under the Post Matric Scholarship for SC Students, the Scheme has been revised from the concept of committed liability to a fixed sharing pattern of 60:40 between the Centre and States/UTs (90:10 in case of NE States) in a recent cabinet meeting held on 23.12.2020. The revised funding pattern is applicable w.e.f. 2020-21 and onwards and will result in a substantially increased Central share. Accordingly, higher allocation has been made at the RE stage under the PMS-SC. As per the revised PMS-SC Scheme, the States/UTs have been instructed to disburse their 40% share by 28.02.2021 and the GOI shall disburse the remaining 60% by 31.03.2021.”

2.9 On being enquired about the monitoring mechanism available in the Department to ensure financial resources are allocated optimally among the Schemes, the Department *inter-alia* informed:

- i. Performance of Schemes is monitored through the quarterly/annual progress reports furnished by the State Governments/UT Administrations.
- ii. For the effective monitoring of all the Schemes, Department of SJ&E have designated Divisional Heads as Nodal Officers for various regions and States/ UTs. During the field visits of Officers of this Department to States/UTs, discussions are held in order to identify constraints and to take corrective measures.
- iii. Financial and physical performance is reviewed by the Secretary (SJ&E) with Programme Divisions regularly to ensure that the allocations provided for the Schemes of the Department of SJ&E are fully utilized.
- iv. Selected high priority Schemes are monitored at the level of Minister (SJ&E) regularly.
- v. Department of SJ&E also organizes Conferences of State Social Welfare Ministers and the State Welfare Secretaries wherein all the Schemes of the Department of SJ&E are reviewed. States/ UTs are also advised to strengthen their monitoring mechanism. In addition, video conferences are also held with the States/UTs periodically.
- vi. Online system for monitoring of Schemes is also being developed. One such system has already been developed for Pradhan Mantri

Gramin Yojana(PMAGY) which ensure continuous monitoring at all level.

- vii. The Department of SJ&E also sponsor evaluation studies from time to time through independent evaluation agencies to check whether the benefits of the Schemes reach the target groups.
- viii. Department of SJ&E, in consultation with NIC has put in place a System for online submission of proposals of NGOs by State Governments to this Department in respect of the Schemes of Grant-in-Aid to Voluntary Organizations working for SCs and Integrated Programme for Older Persons.
- ix. With a view to ensuring quality of services rendered through the NGOs, the Department of SJ&E have prepared a Manual on Minimum Standards for the programmes under the Scheme 'Prevention of Alcoholism and Substance (Drugs) Abuse' with emphasis on facilities and services to be provided at the Rehabilitation Centre, roles and responsibilities of the staff, clients' rights and the code of ethics for the staff.
- x. The feedback from the stakeholders as well as the outcome of the independent evaluation of the Schemes/programmes is taken into consideration while undertaking the revision in the Schemes/ projects for effective implementation.

2.10 The Committee observe that while the budgetary allocations available to the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment in 2018-19 and 2019-20 were largely utilized on various Schemes/programmes run by them, the Department could not utilize their budgetary allocation of ₹ 8207.56 crore fully in 2020-21 due to the monthly expenditure ceiling of 5% till September, 2020 as well as other operational restrictions in the wake of COVID-19 Pandemic. The Committee note the assurance given by the Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment to spend the remaining allocation of 2020-21 by 31st March, 2021 and desire to be apprised of the amount finally utilised. Since the socially, educationally and economically marginalized sections of the society are still way behind despite availability of several welfare Schemes for decades, the Committee strongly feel that the Department needs to continue their efforts to effectively execute their Schemes/Programmes with requisite dedication. The fact that budgetary allocation made for the Department for 2021-22 is again less, i.e. ₹ 10,517.62 crore against the projected requirement of ₹ 13257.05 crore, the task for the Department ahead would remain as challenging as ever. The Committee are of the opinion that budgetary requirement projected by the Department for 2021-22 should have been positively considered by the Ministry of Finance, particularly in view of the proven fact that COVID-19 pandemic has the biggest negative impact on life and livelihoods of the deprived sections of the society. As the review of all Government sector Schemes for next five years is being undertaken, the Committee desire that after getting the approval of SFC/EFC for continuation of various Schemes of the Department from 2021-22 to 2025-26, the Department should prepare adequate ground to justify their demand for more funds at RE Stage in 2021-22. The Committee also feel that an online monitoring mechanism for various Schemes/programmes should have been in place a long time ago because given the educational and other inadequacies among deprived classes, it is easier for

unscrupulous elements to siphon off funds meant for their welfare. The Department must, therefore, ensure that the monitoring mechanism, being the heart and soul of any Scheme, should be implemented by the Department effectively so that any flaw/inconsistency in the implementation of any Scheme is identified immediately and rectified thus ensuring that the benefits of various Schemes reach to the target groups in a faster and transparent manner.

2.11 From the deposition of the representatives of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, the Committee note that for the year 2021-22, certain reforms have been brought in to ensure financial prudence. Now, 33 Schemes run by the Department have been readjusted into 19 Schemes, which, further, are brought under five major heads namely PM-AJAY, SHREYAS(SC), SHREYAS(OBC), YASASVI(OBC) and SHRESHTA, which is expected to bring rationalization to avoid overlap and invite more synergy. The Committee understand the basic idea behind the step, that is to cut the flab in various Schemes meant for educational upliftment, through coaching and scholarships, of the students belonging to SC, OBC, EBC and DNT categories as well as economic upliftment of these groups. While the desired impact of this rationalization can only be assessed in future financial years, the Committee understand that during the financial year 2020-21, most of the activities of the department were hampered due to the imposed lockdown due to COVID-19 pandemic in many States where the application invitation, processing and disbursement of scholarships had remained suspended, despite the Department releasing the first installment of 75% of the Central assistance in the first quarter of 2020-21 itself. Another substantial change in one of the most prominent Scheme of Post Matric scholarships for SC students, as observed by the Committee, is that the committed liability between the Centre and the States has been revised to a fixed sharing pattern of 60:40, in order to increase the Central share to

60%, with the rider that the States/UTs will have to disburse their 40% share by 28.2.2021 followed by the Central share disbursement of 60% by 31.3.2021. In the wake of aforesaid changes, the Committee desire to know whether this arrangement was followed by all States/UTs or not, and the defaulters, if any. Overall, the Committee feel that the present financial year is going to be extremely challenging to the Department as they will not only have to compensate for the loss suffered by students due to non-receipt/delayed receipt of scholarships but would also have to ensure that the said rationalization of Schemes actually works leading to more synergy for the educational upliftment of the deprived section of students all over the country. Hence, at the action taken stage, the Committee desire that the Ministry need to elaborate further on their overall financial performance for Financial Year 2020-21 and the progress made in the current Financial Year 2021-22 in running their Schemes in revised formats and utilizing given allocation in an optimal fashion.

CHAPTER III

THE POST MATRIC SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME FOR SC STUDENTS (PMS-SC)

3.1 The Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC Students (PMS-SC), in operation since 1944, is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme with the objective to provide/supplement financial assistance to the Scheduled Castes students studying at post matriculation or post-secondary stage to enable them to pursue post matric education. These scholarships are available for studies in India only and are awarded by the State/UT Governments to which the applicant actually belongs i.e. permanently settled or domiciled. Funds are provided to the State/UT Governments to meet their entire demand that is over and above their “Committed Liability”, where “Committed Liability” of the State/UT is defined as “the highest demand for any of the years of the previous Plan Period/Finance Commission Cycle”. For North East States, the Central Government bears the entire requirement of the States.

3.2 As per the eligibility criterion of this Scholarship Scheme

- (a) The student should be an Indian national belonging to SC community and studying in post matric classes; and
- (b) Parent/Guardian's income should not exceed ₹ 2.5 lakh per annum.

3.3 The amount of Scholarship is as follows:

- (i) Maintenance allowance amounting to ₹380/- to 1200/- per month for hostellers and ₹ 230/- to ₹ 550/- per month for day scholars
- (ii) Reimbursement of compulsory non-refundable fees.
- (iii) Study tour charges upto ₹ 1600.
- (iv) Thesis typing/printing charges for Research Scholars upto ₹ 1600.
- (v) Book allowance amounting to ₹ 1200 for students pursuing correspondence courses.

(vi) Book bank facility for specified courses ranging from ₹ 2400 to ₹ 7500.

(vii) Additional allowance for students with disabilities, for the completeduration of the course.

3.4 The Scheme was revised in April, 2018, wherein the definition of “Committed Liability” was changed from “Actual expenditure in terminal year of previous Plan Period” to “Highest demand for any of the financial years of the previous Plan Period/Finance Commission Cycle (FCC)”. Further, on-line end to end processing, verification of eligibility credentials to ensure greater transparency and to control duplication, wrong claims by institutions etc were also included. It also provided for mandatory payment of maintenance allowance and non-refundable fee to bank accounts of student beneficiaries only.

3.5 The Scheme has been further revised from the concept of Committed Liability to a fixed sharing pattern of 60:40 between the Centre and States/UTs (90:10 in case of NE States) in a recent cabinet meeting held on 23.12.2020. The revised funding pattern is applicable w.e.f. 2020-21 and onwards and will result in a substantially increased Central share. Accordingly, higher allocation has been made at the RE stage under the PMS-SC. As per the revised PMS-SC Scheme, the States/UTs have been instructed to disburse their 40% share by 28.02.2021 and the GOI shall disburse the remaining 60% by 31st March, 2021.

3.6 As per the information provided by the Department in the written reply, ₹1.36 crore poorest students having one or both parents illiterate, passed from State Government/Municipality/Local Bodies schools are estimated to be covered in next five years and total of 4 crore students will be benefitted in the next five years. As per the Department, focus on poorest household will be to drastically reduce the drop-out rates and Quality Education will be provided with higher education standards. On the contrary, it is found that 60.29 lakh students were benefitted during 2018-19 and 52.86 lakh benefitted in 2019-20 up to

31st December, 2020.

3.7 The Department have furnished the following figures regarding BE, RE and AE for the last three years along with BE for 2021-22 under the Scheme:

(₹ in crore)

Year	BE	RE	AE	Beneficiaries (in Lakh)
2018-19	3000.00	6000.00	5928.16	60.29
2019-20	2926.82	2690.00	2711.31	52.86 (as on 31.12. 2020)
2020-21	2987.33	3815.87	1317.16 (as on 31.12.2020)	-
2021-22	3415.62			No target has been fixed as Scheme is demand driven

3.8 On being enquired during the deliberation of the Committee that how would the Department ensure that 100% funds meant for the purpose are actually spent by States/UTs, the Secretary submitted as under:

“पहले हम राज्य सरकार को पैसे दे देते थे और राज्य सरकार स्टूडेंट्स को अपने मन के अनुसार जब चाहें तब पैसा देती थीं। कैबिनेट का निर्णय यह है कि जब राज्य सरकार का 40 परसेंट शेयर स्टूडेंट के अकाउंट में जाएगा, कंप्यूटर सिस्टम का यूज करते हुए आप पता कर लीजिए कि 40 परसेंट उनके अकाउंट में कब गया है और 60 परसेंट डीबीटी के थ्रू स्टूडेंट को भेजना चाहिए।”

3.9 When further enquired how they intend to deal with the States which do not shell out even 40% of their share, the Secretary informed that

“हम राज्य सरकारों से बात कर रहे हैं और सब राज्य 40 परसेंट पैसा देने के लिए तैयार हैं। जहाँ तैयार नहीं हैं, संयुक्त सचिव के नेतृत्व में हमारी टीम एक-एक राज्य के साथ बैठकर बात कर रही है। हमारी कोशिश यह होगी कि कहीं बैकलॉग नहीं होना चाहिए। इस साल में जो केंद्र सरकार को देना है, वह भी देना चाहिए और राज्य सरकार को भी अपना 40 परसेंट देना चाहिए। राज्यों से उनको 40 परसेंट दिलाने की जिम्मेदारी भी हमारे ऊपर है। एक आईटी

टेक्नोलॉजी का सहारा लेकर हम इसको आगे बढ़ाएंगे। हम आत्मविश्वास के साथ इसलिए बोल रहे हैं कि कई राज्यों में अभी ऑलरेडी बच्चों को पैसे देने का कार्य चल रहा है , फरवरी अंत तक राज्य सरकार का शेयर स्टूडेंट के अकाउंट में डायरेक्टली जा रहा है।”

3.10 On being asked why not the Central Government can release 60% share at first, the Secretary submitted that

“इसके बारे में काफी चिंतन-मंथन हुआ है। ऐसा लगता है कि 60 परसेंट पहले डालने से कई राज्य देना बंद भी कर देंगे। इसलिए कैबिनेट का यह क्लियर डायरेक्शन था कि आप इनसे बात करिए और पहले 40 परसेंट कराइए। इससे कई राज्य खुश भी हैं। अभी इस समय उनका शेयर करीब 80 परसेंट से ज्यादा ही है। अब उनका शेयर कम हो गया, 40 परसेंट हो गया है। इसलिए इस फॉर्मूल से काफी राज्य खुश हैं। हमारी जोन गाइडलाइन्स हैं, उनको मानने के लिए भी राज्य तैयार हैं। इसको हम आगे बढ़ाएंगे।”

3.11 The Evaluation study of post-matric scholarship Scheme was conducted by Ecopie Services LLP, Hyderabad. When asked about the major findings of the study, the Department in their written replies submitted the following important recommendations:

- I. There is a need to revise the amount of scholarship on the basis of the type of courses taken up by the beneficiaries and the location of the institution in view of the increase in fee structures.
- II. As most of the students are from very poor background, they do not make regular transactions in their bank account and therefore the bank account becomes periodically inactive. In some cases the money transferred online is returned and no intimation is sent to students in this regard. The students have to run from pillar to post to get their scholarship. It is proposed that advisory may be issued by the Government of India to banks to evolve a mechanism where such accounts are not made dormant due to lack of periodic transactions.
- III. As the knowledge of students in English language and computer is generally very poor, workshops should be conducted at least once in

a year at school and college level. The detailed procedure of application online and offline should be explained in detail by the institution authorities and doubts of students should be addressed.

3.12 When asked about the action taken on the findings of the study, the Department submitted that the recommendations have been taken into consideration and the suggested changes have been incorporated in the Scheme.

3.13 On being enquired about the mechanism for disbursement of monthly scholarship amount, the representative of the Department submitted during the deliberation that

“अभी हम उसको सारी ट्यूशन फीस देंगे, जितना भी उनसे संस्थान के द्वारा चार्जस लिए जाएंगे, वह सारा का सारा हम उनको देंगे। उसके अलावा हम उनको साल में एक लम्पसम्प अमाउंट देंगे, जो कि डिपेंड करेगा कि वह किस कोर्स में पढ़ रहा है।“

3.14 The Secretary further added as under:-

“हमने जो नई चीजें स्कीम में की हैं, उसमें एक तो हमने टाइम-लाइन बहुत पक्की कर दी है कि 15 अगस्त और 26 जनवरी दो किश्तों में पैसा जाएगा। राज्य का भी और हमारा भी 15 अगस्त तक पहली किश्त हो जानी चाहिए, 26 जनवरी तक दूसरी किश्त पूरी हो जानी चाहिए। इसके लिए हमने क्या किया है कि सारा का सारा पैसा, चाहे वह फीस हो, चाहे वह बच्चे के लिए अपना अमाउंट हो, वह सारा का सारा पैसा बच्चे के अकाउंट में ही जाएगा, न कि संस्थान के अकाउंट में जाएगा। इसके लिए अब हम एक नई चीज़ लागू कर रहे हैं, जो कि कुछ राज्यों में पहले से ही है, वह एक फ्रीशिप कार्ड है। जब बच्चा आवेदन करेगा और जैसे ही उसकी पात्रता सत्यापित होगी, उसको एक फ्रीशिप कार्ड इश्यु कर दिया जाएगा। उस फ्रीशिप कार्ड के बेसिस के ऊपर वह किसी भी संस्थान में बिना कोई पैसा दिए प्रवेश ले सकता है और हॉस्टल का भी पैसा उसको नहीं देना पड़ेगा साथ ही फीस भी नहीं देनी पड़ेगी। जब उसके खाते में राज्य और केन्द्र का पैसा आ जाएगा, तब वह संस्थान को फीस रिलीज़ करेगा। इससे फायदा यह होगा कि बच्चों को कोई संस्थान मना नहीं कर पाएगा कि जब तक आप फीस नहीं देंगे, हम आपको प्रवेश नहीं देंगे, अब ऐसा नहीं होगा।”

3.15 The 60 year old Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for Scheduled Caste students guarantees financial assistance to fulfill the aspirations of those Scheduled Caste Students whose parents' income does not exceed ₹ 2.5 lakh annually. The Committee note that only 113.15 lakh students have benefitted during the last two years i.e., 2018-19 and 2019-20 upto 31st December, 2020 with an expenditure of ₹ 8639.47 crore under this Scheme. The Committee feel that the number of beneficiaries should be much more i.e., around 80 lakh per year to realize the number of 4 crore students, projected to be benefitted in the next 5 years. In the light of the decision that States have to give their share of 40 per cent of scholarships amount first and then the 60 per cent share of the Centre will be released to the students, the Committee were informed by the representatives of the Ministry that States liability has now been reduced and hence it is a welcome move. Nonetheless, all State Governments are not very efficient in giving their share on time, hence the Committee feel that an appropriate system may be developed so that the students are not deprived of Scholarship in the absence or delay in providing share by the States. The Committee, therefore, recommend that adequate awareness may be created amongst the students so that maximum number of students are able to take the benefit of the Scheme particularly in view of the target fixed for next five years. The Committee also recommend that since the suggestions made in the recently conducted Evaluation Study of the Scheme are practical and worthy of consideration, hence those may be examined and implemented. The Committee also appreciate the concept of issuing of FreeShip Card, after verification of eligibility of the candidates under the Scheme, as this will prove to be very beneficial for the students to take admission in the institution of their choice anywhere in the country without paying any fee. The Committee desire that the Department should direct all the States/UTs to issue FreeShip Card to all the eligible students who have applied under the

Scheme.

3.16 The Committee are quite disturbed by cases reported about the alleged misappropriation of funds under scholarship Schemes for underprivileged sections in some States, which is stated to be currently under enquiry. While the Ministry representatives have been claiming that the system is fail-safe due to all transactions/verifications done online, a dedicated Portal, DBT and similar measures, which are definitely the need of the hour, it is disconcerting for the Committee to observe that such instances, however minuscule, would dent the confidence of students on Government Scholarship Schemes. While the Committee desire the Ministry to further plug all identified loopholes in the system, strengthening privacy of data and passwords and reduce all manual interventions, be it school personnel, banking intermediaries, NGOs or unauthorised persons, they are of the strong opinion that the Department should counsel the State Governments to try to reach out to a sample size of beneficiary students directly to ascertain that they are not being duped in the pretext of Government scholarships, and that they are actually in receipt of the full amount of the entitled scholarship money for the term, as approved against their names in the Portal. The Committee are convinced that a minor's opinion can also lead to a major change at times and hence recommend that action should be taken on this aspect.

3.17 Now, as the COVID-19 vaccination is gaining speed, the Committee opine that the reopening of schools in full capacity and the resultant formalities and verifications etc. for disbursement of scholarships will perhaps pick up in the later part of the current Financial year. While the disbursement of scholarships has been made online, the Committee feel that fraudulent activity by unscrupulous elements in schools, banks, NGOs, VOs, etc., who

find ways to circumvent the processes for their personal gains, is still a bitter reality. Hence, the Committee recommend that the Department should not only ensure that the proposed revision in the Schemes are implemented effectively but the online portal for scholarships should also have enough security features to detect any tempering in the passwords/codes, in consultation with NIC.

CHAPTER IV

PRE-MATRIC SCHOLARSHIPS

4.1 The Department provide Pre-Matric Scholarship under the following heads: (i) Pre-Matric Scholarship for SCs; and (ii) Pre-Matric Scholarships for the children of those engaged in unclean occupation. These Schemes have been merged into Pre-Matric Scholarships for SCs and others in 2021-22. The Budgetary allocation under the Scheme is as follows:

(₹ in crore)											
Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme	2018-19			2019-20			2020-21 (AS ON 31.12.2020)			2021-22
		BE	RE	Actual Exp.	BE	RE	Actual Exp.	BE	RE	Actual Exp.	BE
1.	Pre-matric Scholarships for the children of those engaged in unclean occupation	5.00	4.00	3.12	5.00	30.00	29.40	25.00	27.00	21.35	725.00
2.	Pre Matric Scholarship for SCs	125.00	109.45	115.64	355.00	355.00	352.70	700.00	600.00	405.29	

4.2 The achievement under each of these Schemes is as follows:

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21 (AS ON 31.12.2020)	Target 2021-22
1.	Pre Matric Scholarship for SCs	26.30 lakh	27.80 lakh	Over 30 lakhs beneficiaries to be covered under the Scheme (Provisional figure has been updated as on 31.12.2020)	No target has been fixed as Scheme is demand driven
2.	Pre-matric Scholarships for the children of those engaged in unclean occupation	2000	2.00lakh	Over 0.5 lakh beneficiaries to be covered under the Scheme(Provisional data as on 31.12.2020)	No target has been fixed as Scheme is demand driven

4.3 The Scheme of Pre-matric Scholarship for SCs is implemented through States to support parents of SC children for education of their wards studying in classes IX and X so that the incidence of drop-out, especially in the transition from the elementary to the secondary stage is minimized, and to improve participation of

SC children in classes IX and X of the pre-matric stage so that they perform better and have a better chance of preparing for the Post Matric education. Under the Scheme, the scholarship at the rate of ₹ 225/- per month for day scholars and ₹ 525/- per month for hostellers is provided. The scholarship is available for 10 months in a year. There is also an ad-hoc grant of ₹ 750/- per annum for day scholars and ₹ 1000/- per annum for hostellers. Students with disabilities are also eligible for other assistance viz. Reader charges for the blind students etc. Central Assistance is released to State/UT at the fixed share of 60(Centre):40(States/UTs) (90:10 in case of North Eastern States) of the total demand for a year under this Scheme or Notional allocation whichever is lower. As per the eligibility criteria, the student should be an Indian national belonging to SC community and studying in pre-matric classes and family income should not exceed ₹ 2.5 lakh per annum.

4.4 Pre-matric Scholarship for those engaged in unclean occupation is being implemented with the objective to provide financial assistance to pursue pre-matric education to the children of Manual Scavengers as defined under Section 2(I) (g) of Manual Scavengers Act 2013, Tanners & Flayers, Waste pickers and the Persons engaged in hazardous cleaning as defined in Section 2(I) (d) of Manual Scavengers Act 2013. Under the Scheme, the Scholarships is given to students enrolled in class I or any subsequent class or pre-matric stage in the case of day scholars, and class III or any subsequent class of pre-matric stage in case of hostellers. The scholarship terminates at the end of class X. The duration in an academic year is ten months. There are no income or caste restrictions on the beneficiaries of the Scheme. Under the Scheme, scholarship at the rate of ₹ 225 per month is granted to day scholars and ₹ 700 per month to the students of classes III to X standards for hostellers. Annual ad-hoc grant of ₹750 and ₹1000 is granted to day scholars and hostellers respectively.

4.5 As per the information provided by the Department in their Background Note, the number of beneficiaries under the Pre-Matric Scholarship for SC students

studying in classes IX and X is 26.30 lakhs , 27.80 lakhs and approximately 30.00 lakhs (provisional estimate till 31.12.2020) for the years 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21 respectively. Whereas for the Pre-Matric Scholarship to the children of those engaged in occupations involving cleaning and prone to health hazards, the number of beneficiaries is 2000, 2.00 lakhs and approximately 0.5 lakhs (provisional estimate till 31.12.2020) for the years 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21 respectively. However no target has been fixed for both of the Schemes for 2021-22 as the Schemes are demand driven.

4.6 As per the information furnished to the Committee, Evaluation of Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC and Evaluation of Pre-Matric Scholarships to the Children of those engaged in occupations involving cleaning and prone to health hazards were conducted by Aravali Institute of Development Research, Jaipur and Santek Consultants respectively during FY 2019-20. The recommendations of these Evaluation Studies have been stated to be received by the Department.

4.7 On being asked about the reasons due to which the budgetary allocation under pre matric scholarship for SCs was substantially increased in 2020-21 in comparison to 2018-19 to 2019-20, the Department in their written reply have stated as under:

“The budgetary allocation under Pre-Matric Scholarships for SCs was increased as the Scheme was revised during FY2019-20 vide which the concept of committed liability was replaced with fixed sharing pattern of 60:40 between the Centre and States/UTs (90:10 in case of NE States) or Notional Allocation based on Budget Allocated, whichever is less. During 2019-20, due to limited budget availability, funds release was based on notional allocation only and was lower as compared to 60 per cent of the actual requirement under the Scheme. During the current year 2020-21, based on the anticipated requirement under the Scheme, a higher budgetary outlay was proposed so as to enable meeting 60 per cent of the demand under the Scheme. So far, up to 19.2.2021 ₹ 476.03 crore have been released to the States/UTs. Keeping in view the impact of the pandemic situation which has led to most schools opening very late, the budget has been reduced to ₹ 600 crore at the RE stage.”

4.8 With regard to the impact on Scholarships during Covid-19 Pandemic, the Department *inter-alia* submitted as under:

“State Government is the implementing agency who invites applications and disburses the scholarships to eligible beneficiaries. As informed by the States, the application invitation, processing and disbursement of scholarships remained suspended due to the imposed lockdowns during COVID-19 pandemic. As the schools have started opening from the third quarter of 2020-21, the States/UTs have also opened the application process and have started the process of due verification and disbursement. However, in order to ensure that the State Governments have sufficient funds for the disbursement, the Department based on the anticipated demand for 2020-21, started releasing the first installment of 75 per cent of the Central assistance w.e.f the first quarter of 2020-21. Many of the States have unspent balance with respect to the release of 2019-20. However, as the application process and disbursement of scholarships has been started late by State/UT authorities, the release of central assistance to the remaining States/UTs is also expected shortly.”

4.9 The Committee find that the two Schemes viz. Scheme of Pre-Matric Scholarship for SCs and Scheme of Pre-Matric Scholarships for the children of those who are engaged in unclean occupation have now been merged into Pre-Matric Scholarship for SCs and Others. The budgetary allocation has also been combined from the years 2021-22. The Committee find that under the Scheme of Pre-matric Scholarship for SCs, 26.30 lakh and 27.00 lakh students were respectively benefitted in the years 2018-19 and 2019-20, and that 30 lakh beneficiaries are expected to be covered till 31 December, 2021 whereas in the Scheme of Pre-matric Scholarships for the children of those engaged in unclean occupation, the number of beneficiaries increased from 2000 to 2 lakh in 2019-20 in one year and 50 lakh beneficiaries are expected to be covered till 31 December, 2021. The Committee note that the expected figures of beneficiaries this year are much higher in Pre-matric Scholarships for the children of those engaged in unclean occupation as compared to the Pre-matric Scholarship Scheme for SCs, and desire to be apprised of the reasons thereof. The Committee feel that the number of beneficiaries in both the Schemes is much less as compared to their existing population and are, therefore, of the strong opinion that evaluation Study needs to be conducted periodically by an independent Research Organization and their recommendations should be expeditiously examined and implemented which, presently is not the case as action has been delayed on the study conducted in the year 2019-20. The Committee urge that delay in disbursement of scholarships to the beneficiaries in 2020-21 due to COVID-19 pandemic should be expedited this year so that the education of the beneficiaries is not disrupted.

4.10 The Committee would also like to highlight that in remote and backward areas of the country, broadband services are not available optimally to students due to which some delay can be expected in filing all requisite data

online for scholarships. The Committee feel that a reasonable relaxation in timelines can be considered by the Government for such areas, in consultation with the stakeholders, and hence desire that this matter may be discussed in the next meeting between the Department and the stakeholders/State Welfare Ministers & Secretaries.

CHAPTER V

PROTECTION OF CIVIL RIGHTS ACT 1955, AND SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES (PREVENTION OF ATROCITIES) ACT, 1989

5.1 The Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 was enacted in order to enforce the Constitutional provisions by which untouchability was abolished and its practice in any form forbidden. Further to check and deter crimes against members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, the another Act of Parliament namely the "the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989" was enacted and enforced on 30.01.1990. The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) {PoA} Rules, 1995 notified on 31.03.1995 in exercise of Powers conferred by Sub Section (i) of Section 23 of the PoA Act *inter-alia* prescribed minimum scale of relief and rehabilitation for the affected persons (between ₹ 20,000/- to ₹ 200,000/-) depending upon the nature of offence. The prescribed minimum scale of relief and rehabilitation under the Rules has been last amended in April 2016 making it between ₹ 85,000/- to ₹ 8,25,000/- depending upon the nature of an offence.

5.2 With an objective to deliver members of SCs and STs, a greater justice as well as an enhanced deterrent to the offenders, the PoA Act was amended by the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Act, 2015 (No.1 of 2016) and enforced on 26.01.2016.

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

amount for various offences of atrocities.

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

"18A. (1) For the purposes of this Act,—

- (a) preliminary enquiry shall not be required for registration of a First Information Report against any person; or
- (b) the investigating officer shall not require approval for the arrest, if necessary, of any person, against whom an accusation of having committed an offence under this Act has been made and no procedure other than that provided under this Act or the Code shall apply.

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

5.5 With a view to financially assist the States/UTs in implementation of provisions of the Acts; a Centrally Sponsored Scheme was introduced initially for implementation of the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 in 1974-75. The Scheme was later extended to cover implementation of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 as well in 1990-91. Under this Scheme, 50% of the total expenditure over and above the committed liability is provided to the State Governments by way of Central assistance. However, the Union Territory Administrations get 100% Central assistance. The Central assistance under the Scheme is mainly provided for strengthening of enforcement and judicial machinery, awareness generation, incentives for inter-caste marriages and relief and rehabilitation of the affected persons.

5.6 BE, RE and AE of the above mentioned Scheme since 2018-19 is as follows:

(₹ in crore)

Year	BE	RE	AE
2018-19	403.72	403.72	405.72
2019-20	530.00	630.00	619.64
2020-21	550.00	600.00	531.84 (as on 31.12.2020)
2021-22	600.00	--	--

5.7 As per the National Crime Record Bureau, the Number of atrocity cases reported against the persons from SC/ST communities State-wise under PoA Act, 1989 in conjunction with the IPC, during the year 2015 , 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 is as under:

S. No	States/UT	Cases registered under the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, in conjunction with the IPC														
		2015			2016			2017			2018			2019		
		SC	ST	Total	SC	ST	Total	SC	ST	Total	SC	ST	Total	SC	ST	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1.	Andhra Pradesh	226 3	362	2625	2335	405	2740	1969	341	2310	163 2	303	1935	1892	312	2204
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
3.	Assam	5	0	5	4	1	5	10	65	75	0	3	3	17	1	18
4.	Bihar	629 3	5	6298	5701	25	5726	6747	80	6827	686 3	64	6927	6540	97	6637
5.	Chhattisgarh	216	373	589	243	402	645	283	399	682	264	386	650	339	427	766
6.	Goa	13	8	21	10	11	21	10	2	12	4	3	7	3	1	4
7.	Gujarat	100 9	248	1257	1321	281	1602	1477	319	1796	132 1	299	1620	1295	310	1605
8.	Haryana	510	0	510	639	0	639	760	0	760	912	0	912	1034	1	1035
9.	Himachal Pradesh	91	6	97	115	2	117	108	3	111	34	0	34	30	0	30
10.	Jharkhand	736	266	1002	525	280	805	541	237	778	215	81	296	324	136	460
11.	Karnataka	184 1	386	2227	1866	371	2237	1869	401	2270	122 6	302	1528	1417	316	1733
12.	Kerala	695	165	860	810	182	992	915	144	1059	783	126	909	776	128	904
13.	Madhya Pradesh	354 6	135 8	4904	4922	182 3	6745	5892	228 9	8181	474 1	186 7	6608	5299	192 0	7219
14.	Maharashtra	179 5	481	2276	1736	403	2139	1688	464	2152	180 7	507	2314	1932	506	2438
15.	Manipur	0	0	0	2	1	3	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	2	2

16.	Odisha	182 1	691	2512	1796	681	2477	1969	700	2669	174 7	552	2299	1845	576	2421
17.	Punjab	147	0	147	132	2	134	118	0	118	136	0	136	130	1	131
18.	Rajasthan	591 1	140 9	7320	5134	119 5	6329	4238	984	5222	449 0	107 3	5563	6659	175 9	8418
19.	Sikkim	3	0	3	1	0	1	5	6	11	2	1	3	2	2	4
20.	Tamil Nadu	173 5	25	1760	1287	19	1306	1361	22	1383	133 1	13	1344	1060	28	1088
21.	Telangana	129 2	386	1678	1529	375	1904	1465	435	1900	133 7	383	1720	1545	494	2039
22.	Tripura	1	3	4	0	3	3	1	1	2	1	0	1	0	0	0
23.	Uttar Pradesh	835 7	6	8363	1042 6	4	1043 0	1123 2	88	1132 0	932 7	131	9458	9451	705	1015 6
24.	Uttarakhand	80	6	86	65	3	68	96	11	107	42	7	49	59	8	67
25.	West Bengal	150	84	234	119	83	202	138	122	260	100	76	176	100	76	176
26.	A & N Islands	0	3	3	0	6	6	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	1
27.	Chandigarh	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1
28.	D. & N. Haveli	0	3	3	0	2	2	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
29.	Daman & Diu	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
30.	Delhi	49	0	49	53	2	55	48	4	52	11	0	11	43	0	43
31.	Jammu and Kashmir	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0	0	0
32.	Lakshadweep	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
33.	Puducherry	2	0	2	2	1	3	26	0	26	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	3856 4	6275	4483 9	40774	6564	47338	42969	7125	50094	3832 7	6178	4450 5	4179 3	7807	4960 0

Note:- (i) SCs and STs (PoA) Act, 1989 has been extend to State of Jammu & Kashmir from 31.10.2019.

Source: - National Crime Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs

5.8 The Department have furnished the State/UT-wise details of Publicity Programmes/Awareness Generation camps conducted under the PoA [Act] from 2015 to 2019 as under:

States	States/UTs	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
1	Andhra Pradesh	-	08	162	89	670
2	Chhattisgarh	-	-	88	26	13
3	Gujarat	05	05	05	06	-
4	Haryana	01	01	116	161	72
5	Himachal Pradesh	30	60	33	28	80
6	Jharkhand	-	24	36	-	64
7	Karnataka	55	1045	833	1059	-
8	Kerala	28 5	283	154	215	-

9	Madhya Pradesh	153	314	557	529	292
10	Maharashtra	175	125	125	198	303
11	Odisha	-	76	399	87	-
12	Punjab	-	-	-	1112	awaited
13	Telangana	19	-	-	1702	1583
14	West Bengal	70	168	64	189	189
NE Region						
15	Sikkim	20	-	-	-	-
16	Tripura		02	2	45	12
Union Territories						
17	Delhi	-	-	35	-	awaited
18	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	-	-	10	10	awaited
19	Chandigarh	-	-	-	01	-
20	Daman & Diu	-	-	-	42	
	Total		2111	2619	5499	3278

5.9 In context of steps taken by the Department for the provisions to protect the members of these Communities and the adequacy awareness programme, the Department submitted in a written reply as follows:

“The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities){PoA} Act, 1989, was enacted and brought into force on 31.01.1990 and was further amended in the year 2016 and 2018 to protect the members of these communities and to provide them greater justice. As such, time to time amendments are done and provisions are amended so that these communities' remains protected. Responsibility of implementation of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) {PoA} Act, 1989 rest primarily with the State Governments/UT Administrations. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has been addressing the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations to implement the provisions of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 in letter and spirit from time to time with specific emphasis on awareness generation also.

Due central assistance is provided to the respective State

Governments/Union Territory Administrations, *inter-alia* for awareness generation which is one of its components.”

5.10 On being asked about the provisions of financial relief to the affected persons under the Act and the monitoring mechanism to ensure appropriate relief within stipulated timeperiod to the affected parties, the Department in their written reply submitted that “Rule 12 (4) of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Rules, 1995 provides for the financial relief to the Victim and Rules 16, 17, 17- A stipulate monitoring mechanism.”

5.11 The Department further stated that a Committee for effective coordination to devise ways and means to curb offences of untouchability and atrocities against members of SCs and STs and effective implementation of the PCR Act and the PoA Act was constituted in March, 2006, under the Chairpersonship of Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment,. The Committee have so far held twenty five meetings wherein implementation of the two Acts in 24 States and 4 Union Territories has been reviewed. Further a National helpline for SCs/STs against atrocities is being set-up by the Ministry for redressal of grievances with provisions of tracking system, auto compliance of the Act, performance of States/UTs.”

5.12 On being inquired about the reasons due to which the Rules could only be framed in 1995, that is, 5 years after the Act came into force in 1992. The Department

inter-alia submitted in a written reply:

“The Centrally Sponsored Scheme was started in the year 1974-75 and initially the Scheme provided Central assistance to the State Governments and Union Territories towards effective implementation of the Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955 (22 of 1955). Subsequently, this Act was amended and renamed in the year 1976 as the Protection of Civil Rights {PCR} Act, 1955. Subsequently, another Act namely the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) {PoA} Act, 1989 was enacted and brought into force on 31.01.1990 to prevent commission of offences of atrocities against the member of the Scheduled Castes(SCs)

and the Scheduled Tribes(STs), to provide for Special Courts for the trial of such offences and for the relief and rehabilitation of the victims of such offences. The scope of the Scheme was extended to cover the PoA Act as well and assistance was released to the States to effectively implement the provisions under different component. However, the rules have been framed thereafter basically to regularize the uniform relief to the atrocity victims. The Department further informed that with the amendments in the Act from time to time, corresponding rules have also been amended in the years 2011, 2013, 2014 (twice), 2016 and 2018.”

5.13 On being asked the reasons due to which actual expenditure in 2020-21 is less in comparison to preceding two years, the Department submitted in their written reply:

“Central Assistance under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the implementation of PCR Act, 1955 and the SC/ST (PoA) Act, 1989 is released to the States/UTs on the basis of the demand of funds received from the State Govt./UT Administrations. In the F.Y 2020-21, the actual expenditure is less due to the less demand received from the States/UTs. However, as on 22.02.2021, Central assistance of ₹ 576.60 Crore has been released to the State Govt./UT Administrations. Moreover, in the F.Y 2019-20, reimbursement claims/arrears were released to the States and all pending arrears were cleared which gave rise to the actual expenditure in that financial year.”

5.14 The Centrally Sponsored Scheme, “Incentive for inter caste marriage”, where one of the spouses is a member of a Scheduled Caste is provided, is an effective instrument to promote social integration and harmony and dispel practice of ‘untouchability’ and caste-based discrimination. On being asked to explain the outcome of the Scheme, the Department submitted:

“During the last three years, inter caste marriages have shown increasing trend. During the year 2016-17, it was 17263, 2017-18 it was 20253 and in the 2019-20 it was 23355.”

5.15 When the Committee invited the attention on the press reports indicating sad instances of honour killing of girl/boy for marrying into lower castes, the Ministry stated as under:

“As far as honour killing is concerned, no such data is maintained by this Department.”

5.16 The Committee note with distress that while the Government is making tremendous efforts to get rid of the scourge of untouchability in the country by enacting various laws and rules, its practice still exists in various forms. As per National Crime Record Bureau, 2,02,427 atrocity cases against SCs and 33,949 cases against STs have taken place in the country from 2015 to 2019. Unfortunately, this figure may actually be higher as several cases go unreported. The Committee feel that sincere efforts at the execution level to create awareness as well as sensitize people to come out of their prejudices and biases against SCs and create an equal society are urgently required. Some of the States still have a glaring number of reported atrocity cases despite prevailing laws/rules. The Committee hence feel that the frequency of awareness programmes need to be enhanced and penal provisions under the law for offenders are required to be adequately publicized, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas. In line with the existing Scheme for incentivizing inter-caste marriages, more Schemes are required to be introduced particularly by the Governments of those States, where a very large number of cases are reported, with proper monitoring mechanism to promote social integration and harmony and remove practice of untouchability and caste based discrimination. The Committee also observe that many cases of atrocities keep on lingering in courts for several years despite the fact that financial provision is made every year with regard to the strengthening of courts to quickly dispose of the cases. The Committee, therefore, recommend that additional measures need to be developed in coordination with State Governments so that the objectives of the law against untouchability, as enshrined in the Constitution are achieved.

CHAPTER VI

SELF-EMPLOYMENT SCHEME FOR REHABILITATION OF MANUAL SCAVENGERS

6.1 Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers' (SRMS) was introduced by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in January 2007 with the objective of rehabilitating manual scavengers and their dependents by March, 2009. The above Scheme is implemented through National Safai Karamacharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC). Subsequent to coming into force of the "Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013" (MS Act, 2013), the Self Employment Scheme for the Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS) was revised in November, 2013 to provide the following benefits to the identified Manual Scavengers:

- (i) Onetime cash assistance of ₹40000/- to identified manual scavenger.
- (ii) Loans for project cost up to ₹15.00 lakhs on concessional rates of interest to the manual scavenger/dependent.
- (iii) Credit linked back-end capital subsidy up to ₹ 3,25,000/-.
- (iv) Skill Development Training up to two years with stipend of ₹3000/- per month to the manual scavenger/dependent who opts for such training.

6.2 As per the background note received from the Department, a National survey of manual scavengers was carried out in 194 districts of 18 States on the behest of NITI Aayog in 2018-19 and 43,610 manual scavengers have been identified through it. Voluntary organizations working for the welfare of manual scavengers and sanitation workers have reported that insanitary latrines still exist and being cleaned manually through manual scavengers. These manual

scavengers still remain to be rehabilitated. Taking cognizance of the reports of these organizations, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has launched a mobile app “Swachhata Abhiyaan” on 24.12.2020 to identify the insanitary latrines still existing and the manual scavengers cleaning them. All the district magistrates and Chief Secretaries of States have already been requested to give wide publicity to this app. DMs are also requested to ensure rehabilitation of the identified manual scavengers so that country becomes manual scavenging free. So far 49 districts have confirmed that they are manual scavenging free.

6.3 The BE, RE and AE for the last three year alongwith BE for 2021-22 under the Scheme is as follows:-

(₹ in crore)			
Year	BE	RE	AE
2018-19	20.00	70.00	85.76
2019-20	110.00	99.93	84.80
2020-21	110.00	30.00	11.10 (as on 31.12.2020)
2021-22	100.00	--	--

6.4 Beneficiaries benefited since 2013-14 upto 31.01.2021 is as under:

Year	Number of Beneficiaries		
	Onetime Cash assistance	Skill Development Training	Capital subsidy for self employment projects
2013-14	163	0	0
2014-15	1241	97	97
2015-16	8149	835	365
2016-17	1357	4373	196
2017-18	1171	334	151
2018-19	18079	1682	151
2019-20	13246	2532	108
2020-21	13990	4233	90
Total	57396	14086	1158

6.5 With reference to the study conducted to assess the outcomes of the Scheme since its revision in 2013 the Department informed that the two evaluation studies have been carried out one by Research and Development Initiative Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi during 2017-18 and other by Trans Rural Agri Consulting Services, Bihar during 2019-20.

6.6 It has been *inter-alia* recommended by Trans Rural Agri Consulting Services, Bihar in their Evaluation Study that:-

- I. Availability of intervention is at a distant location. Therefore, it can be suggested that this programme can be scaled up in SC concentrated areas.
- II. The focus of the program in the existing States of the implementation can be increased in the top five SC concentrated districts (in each State).
- III. The number of expected beneficiaries against 100 per VO during a year can be enhanced so that maximum and possible target group can be benefited.
- IV. The programme needs to be more gender sensitive. As the participation of females is very limited i.e. slightly more than one-third. Separate target for female and male beneficiaries may be given to VOs.
- V. The VOs can be incentivized through recognition/ appreciation as well as monetary benefits for ensuring a positive gender inclusiveness of female participants.

6.7 On being enquired about the compensation provided to the persons died while cleaning sewers and septic tanks manually in last 5 years and the action taken thereupon, the Department provided the details of death of persons along with compensation paid to the families of such deceased workers, as reported by the States/Union Territories is as follows:-

TABLE																
Details of death of persons in sewers and septic tanks during the last five years																
S.No.	Name of State/UT	2016			2017			2018			2019			2020 (upto 31.12.2020)		
		Total No. of death	Full compensation paid	Partial Compensation	Total No. of death	Full compensation paid	Partial Compensation	Total No. of death	Full compensation paid	Partial Compensation	Total No. of death	Full compensation paid	Partial Compensation	Total No. of death	Full compensation paid	Partial Compensation
1	Andhra Pradesh	3	2	1	2	2	0	9	8	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
2	Bihar	0	0	0	2	2	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	Chhatisgarh	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	Chandigarh	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Delhi	1	0	0	13	12	0	10	9	1	8	6	0	4	1	0
6	Goa	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	Gujarat	6	1	2	7	5	0	2	2	0	16	12	0	0	0	0
8	Haryana	0	0	0	11	11	0	6	4	2	14	6	4	0	0	0
9	Karnataka	9	9	0	4	4	0	3	3	0	6	6	0	2	2	0
10	Kerala	2	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	Maharashtra	4	2	2	4	0	0	7	2	0	15	3	0	4	0	0
12	Madhya Pradesh	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
13	Punjab	2	2	0	10	6	4	2	0	2	3	3	0	0	0	0
14	Rajasthan	5	2	3	6	6	0	2	0	2	5	0	0	0	0	0
15	Tamil Nadu	6	6	0	7	7	0	9	8	0	12	12	0	9	9	0
16	Telangana	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
17	Tripura	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
18	Uttar Pradesh	4	2	1	14	7	2	11	6	4	23	8	10	0	0	0
19	West Bengal	0	0	0	7	7	0	0	0	0	6	1	1	0	0	0
	Total	50	30	15	91	73	6	70	45	11	110	57	15	19	12	0

6.8 The Department have submitted that a National Policy for mechanized Sanitation Eco-system has been formulated in consultation with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Department of Drinking water and Sanitation which

inter-alia envisages the following:

- I. Appointment of Responsible Sanitation Authority in every District.
- II. Setting up of Sanitation (SRU) Response unit in each municipality.
- III. Equipping SRUs with necessary devices, machines and vehicles required for mechanized cleaning.
- IV. Professionally trained manpower for mechanized cleaning.
- V. 24x7 helpline to receive complaints regarding blockage of sewers and septic tanks.
- VI. Setting up facilities for evacuation, transportation and treatment of sludge from septic tanks.
- VII. Training to the staff of municipalities and contractors in the mechanized cleaning of sewers/septic tanks.

6.9 On the issue of deaths of persons while cleaning sewers and septic tanks manually, the representatives of the Department submitted during oral evidence before the Committee that:

“वर्ष 2019 में 112 लोगों की डेथ हुई, डेथ का मेन कारण हाजर्डस क्लिनिंग के दौरान बिना सेफ्टीगियर पहने हुए कंट्रैक्चुअलवर्कर्स द्वारा सेप्टिकटैंक की सफाई करना था, जब कि एमएसएक्ट, 2013 के प्रावधान में बहुत ही स्पष्ट है और यह इस एक्ट का उल्लंघन है। इसमें साफ लिखा हुआ है कि जब कोई आदमी इस तरह का काम करे तो उसको वहां के सीओ ऑफ दि म्युनिसपलिटी या ग्रामपंचायत के अध्यक्ष को सूचित करना पड़ता है। ग्राम पंचायत के अध्यक्ष एवं म्युनिसपलिटी के सीओ को लिखित रूप में देना पड़ता था कि उन्होंने हाजर्डस क्लिनिंग एक्टिविटीज क्यों एलाउ की।”

6.10 She further added with regard to awareness in this issue:

“हमने नेशनवाइड प्रोग्राम करके अभी तक 470 म्युनिसपलिटीज में एक सैन्सटाइजेशन अवेरनेस प्रोग्राम चलाया, जिसके अंतर्गत हम सारे सेनिटेशनवर्कर्स और सफाईमित्रों को बुलाते हैं। वहां हम उन को बताते हैं कि एमएस एक्ट क्या है, इसके अंतर्गत कोई सफाई करने को कोई बाध्य नहीं कर सकता है। अगर कोई बाध्य करेगा तो उसको रिटन में देना पड़ेगा कि आपसे यह कार्य क्यों करवाया गया। इसके उपरांत अगर आपकी इस हादसे में मौत हो जाती है तो आपके दस लाख रुपये मुआवजा दिया जाता है।“

6.11 The Department have further informed about the proposed coverage and likely expenditure during the year 2021-22 as mentioned hereunder:-

Sl. No.	Component of Scheme	Expenditure per unit (in ₹)	2021-22 (Number of Beneficiaries)
1	One Time Cash Assistance	40,000 per MS	500
2	Capital Subsidy	50,000 per beneficiary	500
3	Skill Development Training	25,000 per trainee	3000
4	Workshops-Hazardous Cleaning	20,000 per Workshop	200
5	Behavioral Training (RPL)	8,000 per trainee	2500
6	Subsidy on Loans for machines/vehicles for mechanize cleaning.	3,75,000/- per beneficiary	500
7	Health Insurance Coverage under PM-JAY	Total ₹ 1252/- per family	55000
	Total		62200

6.12 On being asked about the compensation paid to the family of persons on the deaths of persons while cleaning sewer and septic tanks, the representatives of the Department submitted before the Committee that

“पिछले पांच सालों में 336 डेथ हुए थे, उसमें 221 को पूरा मुआवजा दिया है।“

6.13 On being asked about the punishment meted to the persons held responsible for such deaths, she submitted before the Committee that

“सजा देने का काम हमारा नहीं है। अभी तक जितने भी केसेज हैं वे सभी अंडरट्रायल हैं। अभी तक कोर्ट ने कोई भी जजमेंट नहीं दिया है।”

6.14 The Committee are sad to find from the Survey Report of NITI Aayog about the existence of Manual Scavengers in 194 Districts of 18 States and only 49 Districts being Manual Scavenging free. The Committee are of the view that efforts made by the Department would fail to get the desired results unless sincere efforts are put in by all the executing agencies as Manual Scavenging still exists in 194 Districts of the Country. Skill Development Training needs to be enhanced to cover more persons and other measures of financial assistance needs to be popularized so that these people have vocational options for themselves. The Committee further, are very disturbed to find that 336 deaths have been reported of persons while cleaning sewer and septic tanks during the last five years, out of which in only 221 cases compensation has been provided. In this connection, the Committee note that awareness generation programmes have been conducted by the Department for 470 Municipalities to create awareness about the various provisions of the MS Act, 2013. The Committee also note that the Department have prepared a National Action Plan in consultation with concerned Ministries like the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation wherein a Responsible Sanitation Authority in every district as well as a Sanitation Response Unit equipped with machinery and trained persons to meet the emergencies, has been envisaged. The Committee desire that since mostly manual labour is employed by the contractors to clean septic tanks and the contractors are hired by the Municipal bodies, it is extremely important that the said Sanitation Response Unit or responsible Sanitation Authority is set up in the Municipalities instead of being any stand alone Units. It is further significant that the availability of machines for cleaning sewers and septic tanks are procured by all Municipalities well in time and the cleaning personnel are provided training to operate these machines urgently for regular deployment as well

as for attending to emergencies during Monsoon season natural calamities. As the Ministry has also proposed to amend the MS Act, 2013, the Committee urged the Ministry to explore the possibility of prescribing strict penal action therein on the contractors due to whose actions deaths of cleaning personnel occur in sewers and septic tanks. The Committee desire to have a note on the progress made in this direction at the action taken stage.

CHAPTER VII

NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION (NAPDDR)

7.1 National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction is an umbrella Scheme under which financial assistance is provided to (i) 'State Governments/ Union Territory (UT) Administrations for Preventive Education and Awareness Generation, Capacity Building, Skill development, vocational training and livelihood support of ex-drug addicts, Programmes for Drug Demand Reduction by States/UTs etc. and (ii) 'NGOs/VOs for running and maintenance of Integrated Rehabilitation Centres for Addicts (IRCA), Community based peer Led Intervention (CPLI) for early Drug Use Prevention among Adolescents and Outreach and Drop In Centres (ODIC) and Addiction treatment facilities (ATFs) in Government Hospitals'.

7.2 BE and RE allocated along with AE for the Scheme since 2018-19 is as under:

(₹ in crore)

Year	BE	RE	AE
2018-19	155.50	113.50	112.33
2019-20	135.00	135.00	134.89
2020-21	260.00	180.00	109.59 (as on 31.12.2020)
2021-22	260.00	-	-

7.3 The Scheme of Assistance for Prevention of Alcoholism and Substance (Drug) Abuse has been merged with the Scheme of National Action Plan for Drug

Demand Reduction (NAPDDR) from FY 2020-21. This Scheme had the objective of taking various measures for prevention of Substance Abuse for which Grants in aid were given to implementing agencies. The aim of the merger of the Schemes is to have one comprehensive Scheme under which all the initiatives towards the 'Drug Demand Reduction' in the country which can be carried out through collaborative efforts of the Government of India, State/UT Governments, implementing agencies like PRIs, NGOs, Trusts, ULBs, Autonomous organizations, Technical Forums, Hospitals, Prison Administration and so on. NAPDDR is conceived as a composite Scheme under which projects and measures can be implemented with the required flexibility of utilization of the funds and resources allocated for Drug Demand Reduction and shall also allow funding of State specific projects to fulfill the objectives under the overall ambit of NAPDDR.

7.4 On being asked about the impact of the 'Nasha-Mukt Bharat' e-campaign, the Department stated in their written reply that this Ministry has launched Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA) in 272 identified vulnerable districts with an aim to create awareness about ill effects of substance abuse among the youth, with special focus on higher education institutes, university campuses, schools and reaching out into the community and garnering community involvement and ownership of the Abhiyaan. States/Districts have launched NMBA on 15th August 2020 in their respective districts.

7.5 Many school children, particularly in urban centres, are slowly but steadily being sucked into drug & alcohol abuse. On being inquired about any study been conducted on it so far, number of ODICs (Outreach and Drop-In Centers) currently functional with their locations and any awareness programmes for the early drug users conducted, the Department in their written reply stated that:

“National Survey on magnitude of Substance use has been conducted by This Ministry through NDDTC, AIIMS and results have been published in the year 2019.”

7.6 According to the survey, the following are the estimated child users

Substance	Children(10-17 Years)	Estimated No. of Users
	Percentage (%)	
Cannabis	0.9	20,00,000
Opioids	1.8	40,00,000
Sedatives	0.58	20,00,000
Inhalants	1.17	30,00,000
Cocaine	0.18	2,00,000
ATS	0.18	4,00,000
Hallucinogens	0.07	2,00,000

However there is no study done so far usage/ addiction of children in schools.

Currently 94 ODICs are functional across the country. The details may be seen as below:

S.No.	Name of the State/ UT	No. of ODIC
1	Andhra Pradesh	4
2	A&N islands	1

3	Arunachal Pradesh	1
4	Assam	3
5	Bihar	0
6	Chandigarh	1
7	Chhatisgarh	3
8	D&N Haveli	0
9	Daman &Diu	0
10	Delhi	9
11	Goa	0
12	Gujarat	3
13	Haryana	5
14	Himachal Pradesh	1
15	Jammu & Kashmir	3
16	Jharkhand	0
17	Karnataka	0
18	Kerala	2
19	Lakshadweep	0
20	Madhya Pradesh	9
21	Maharashtra	2
22	Manipur	6
23	Meghalaya	2
24	Mizoram	2
25	Nagaland	2
26	Orissa	9
27	Puducherry	1
28	Punjab	2
29	Rajasthan	7
30	Sikkim	0
31	Tamil Nadu	0
32	Telangana	1

33	Tripura	2
34	Uttar Pradesh	10
35	Uttarakhand	1
36	West Bengal	2
	Total	94

7.7 Further, the Abhiyaan is running successfully in all the identified 272 vulnerable districts. District Collectors as Chairpersons of the District level Campaign Committees are leading the Abhiyaan in their Districts. Likewise every State has State level Campaign committees which monitor the progress in all the Districts. The efforts are to train responsible young population to increase community participation and public cooperation in the reduction of demand for dependence-producing substances and promote collective initiatives to prevent the usage of drugs in the first place. Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan has a strong social media presence on the platforms of Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and YouTube of both of the NMBA and that of Ministry. 180+ social media interns are working to promote awareness about substance abuse.

7.8 The following are the milestones so far:

- 18 + lakh people have been reached out so far
- 3 + lakh youth have participated and have been reached out
- 13 +lakh students have been reached out through various programmes
- Nearly 6,067 schools have participated in the Abhiyaan activities till now

- 4,000 youth groups such as Yuva Mandals, NYKS & NSS Volunteers, Youth Clubs have actively been involved with the Abhiyaan.
- Nearly 1.5 Lakh women have been actively involved
- Anganwadi & ASHA Workers, ANMs, Mahila Mandals & Women SHGs are some of the Women Groups are active in the Abhiyaan.
- Educational institutions such as schools & colleges have reached out to their students, teachers & parents through offline & online programmes.
- Universities and colleges like, Manipal University, and Vellore Institute of Technology, Christ College Bangalore, IIT Madras have submitted their detailed action plans as a part of Abhiyaan.

7.9 The Committee were informed with regard to the survey to assess the Drug-abuse by the Department that the National Survey on magnitude of Substance use has been conducted by this Ministry through NDDTC, AIIMS and results were published in the year 2019. However, there is no study done so far usage/ addiction of children in schools. Further, Survey is being conducted by NDDTC, AIIMS in the prisons on Drug-abuse. Currently 94 ODICs (Outreach and Drop in Centers) are functional across the country. According to the survey, the following are the estimated child users.

Substance	Children(10-17 Years)	Estimated No. of Users
	Percentage (%)	
Cannabis	0.9	20,00,000
Opioids	1.8	40,00,000

Sedatives	0.58	20,00,000
Inhalants	1.17	30,00,000
Cocaine	0.18	2,00,000
ATS	0.18	4,00,000
Hallucinogens	0.07	2,00,000

7.10 With regard to the awareness programmes for the early Drug-users, the Committee were informed that as per NAPDDR guidelines, Preventive education and awareness generation programmes are being organized to address and sensitise the target groups and the community about the impact of drug addiction and the need to take professional help for treatment. There is provision of addressing high-risk groups like commercial sex workers, mobile population like tourists and truck drivers, children of alcoholics and drug addicts, children of HIV affected parents, street children, prisoners and school dropouts etc. through these programmes. Community Peer Led Intervention (CPLI) programmes are playing important role in awareness generation programme among vulnerable and at risk children.

7.11 The Secretary of the Department submitted before the Committee with regard to the inspections of Nasha-Mukti Kendras that

“आपको यह जानकर खुशी होगी कि इस साल हमने एक प्रोजेक्ट मॉनिटरिंग यूनिट खड़ा कर दिया है। अच्छे इंस्टिट्यूशंस से जो अच्छे बच्चे आए, उनसे हमने फिजिकल इंस्पेक्शन पूरी इंस्टिट्यूशन का कराया है। जहाँ पर नहीं चल रहा है, उसका ग्रांट भी हम स्टॉप कर चुके हैं। इस साल जो काम नहीं कर रहे हैं, उनके ऊपर हमने बहुत कड़ी कार्रवाई किए हैं। सभी एनजीओ इंस्टिट्यूशंस को बिदाउट नोटिस सरप्राइज इंस्पेक्शन कराया है। इससे यह पाया गया है कि जो

एनजीओ काम नहीं कर रहे हैं, उनमें करीब 200 से ज्यादा इंस्टिट्यूशंस के ग्रांट को हम खत्म कर चुके हैं। इस साल बहुत ही अच्छा काम हुआ है तथा इसको हम और आगे बढ़ाएंगे।”

7.12 The Committee commend the fact that the Department have been utilizing nearly entire allocation of funds meant for the Umbrella Scheme of NAPDDR, under which financial assistance is provided to States/UTs for preventive education and awareness programmes for drug demand reduction except in the year 2020-21 where expenditure was less due to COVID-19 related lockdown. However, the outcome has not been very encouraging so far despite the Department sanctioning grants to State/UT Governments, NGOs etc. for preventive education, awareness generation, running and maintenance of integrated rehabilitation centres. The drug abuse problem has been growing dangerously in the country. The Committee feel that lack of sincerity on the part of executing agencies, lack of coordination/monitoring of the executing agencies as well as lack of awareness about the ill-effects of drugs could be the possible reasons. The situation seems to be alarming in the country now as NDDTC, AIIMS have found in 2019 that 1 crore 18 lakh children in the age-group of 10-17 years were addicted to drugs. The Committee are perturbed to note that despite such a precarious situation, the Department had to close down several drug de-addiction Centres across the Country due to irregularities found after their inspection. In such circumstances, the Committee cannot but recommend that stringent mechanism should be developed with an element of fixing responsibility on the concerned officers so that the objectives laid down to achieve the goals are accomplished. The Committee desire that the educational awareness programmes are required to be launched at school/college level so that the young generation do not get trapped in drug abuse and unscrupulous persons luring impressionable teenagers to try drugs for a short-term pleasure are nabbed and severely punished. The Committee also urge the Department to explore seeking cooperation of various Parents Associations in addressing the increasing trend of party drugs, tobacco and alcohol among school children/young adults, which,

according to the Ministry, were 118,00,000 in number as per a 2019 survey. For child addicts among rag pickers and other vulnerable sections, NGOs/VOs having a successful track record in the field, can be explored. The Committee find that the Department have launched 'Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan' in 272 identified vulnerable districts with an aim to create awareness about the ill effects of substance abuse among the youth, with special focus on higher education institutes, university campuses, schools and reaching out into the community and garnering community involvement and ownership of the Abhiyan. The Committee desire to know its achievement this year. Further, they recommend that the Department should direct all the State Governments/UT Administrations to identify the districts for conducting such Abhiyans at all the levels in their respective States/UTs, and involve peoples' representatives too in mobilizing their constituents to take part in such campaigns. The ODICs in various States, which are currently 94 only, can also be set up in hitherto unserved States like Bihar, Jharkhand, Goa, Karnataka etc. The Committee urge the Department to bring these States on board too.

NEW DELHI;

15 March, 2021

24 Phalguna, 1942 (Saka)

RAMA DEVI

Chairperson,

Standing Committee on

Social Justice and Empowerment

**MINUTES OF THE SIXTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2020-21) HELD ON
THURSDAY, 25TH February, 2021**

The Committee met from 1030 hrs. to 1230 hrs. in Committee Room 'D', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SMT. RAMA DEVI - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Smt. Sangeeta Azad
- 3 Smt. Pramila Bisoyi
4. Shri Chhatar Singh Darbar
5. Shri Y. Devendrappa
6. Shri Abdul Khaleque
7. Smt. Ranjeeta Koli
8. Shri Vijay Kumar
9. Shri Akshaibar Lal
10. Shri Pashupati Kumar Paras
11. Smt. Rekha Arun Verma

Rajya Sabha

12. Shri Abir Ranjan Biswas
13. Smt. Geeta *alias* Chandraprabha
14. Shri Ram Nath Thakur
15. Shri Ramkumar Verma

SECRETARIAT

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

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

Sl. No.	Name	Designation and Organisation
1.	Shri R. Subrahmanyam	Secretary
2.	Ms. Upma Srivastava	Additional Secretary
3.	Shri Surender Singh	Joint Secretary
4.	Shri Ram Prasad Meena	Joint Secretary
5.	Ms. Radhika Chakravarthy	Joint Secretary
6.	Ms. Kalyani Chadha	Joint Secretary
7.	Shri Sanjay Pandey	Joint Secretary & Financial Adviser
8.	Ms. Yogita Swaroop	Economic Adviser
9.	Shri M.K. Ujjainia	Dy. Director General
10.	Shri K. Narayan	CMD-NSFDC, NBCFDC and NSKFDC
11.	Shri Rajnish Kumar Jenaw	CMD-NSFDC

2. At the outset, the Hon'ble Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee and the representatives of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment) to the sitting of the Committee convened to have briefing by the representatives of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment) on Demands for Grants (2021-22) pertaining to their Department. In her address, the Chairperson *inter-alia* drew attention towards under-utilization of funds in 2020-21, efforts made so that the target groups do not suffer due to COVID-19 Pandemic and PM-DAKSH Scheme.

3. The Chairperson, thereafter, referring to the Direction 55(1) of Directions by the Speaker, Lok Sabha to keep the proceedings of the Committee 'Confidential', till a Report on the subject is presented to the House and asked the Secretary of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment to introduce his team and give an overview of the subject matter.

4. Thereupon, the Secretary in his power-point presentation briefed the Committee about overall performance of the Department, budgetary allocations, actual expenditure incurred as well as the physical targets set and achieved under various schemes/programmes. The major issues discussed at the meeting relating to Demands for Grants (2021-22) of the Department are as follows:-

- (i) New schemes launched by the Department may be made effective within one year of their implementation instead of current period of 3-4 years.
- (ii) Scholarships to be timely released so that the beneficiaries do not suffer and mechanism to be evolved to simplify the procedure and to release scholarship amounts due to beneficiaries.
- (iii) Measures taken during COVID-19 Pandemic to ensure that the implementations of various schemes are not hampered.
- (iv) Effective implementation of schemes meant for Senior Citizens such as "Atal Vayo Abhyudaya" Scheme and Senior Citizens Welfare Fund.
- (v) Popularization of National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for SC students across the country so that States like Bihar and North Eastern States avail the scheme.
- (vi) Creation of awareness about "Nasha Mukti Kendra" (De-addiction Centres) among the vulnerable groups.
- (vii) Implementation of provisions contained in Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 and Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of

Atrocities) 1989 to eradicate caste based discrimination.

(viii) Steps for Mechanization of sewer and septic tanks cleaning.

(ix) Minimize delay or fix time period to extend financial assistance for the promotion of inter-caste marriages.

5. The Secretary also responded to the queries raised by the Members on the above-mentioned issues.

6. The Chairperson desired that the local Members of Parliament of respective areas may also be associated with the Schemes of the Ministry so that these are effectively implemented.

7. Before concluding the meeting, the Chairperson directed the Department to furnish written replies to all the queries raised by Members to the Secretariat at the earliest for early finalization of the Report. Copy of the verbatim proceedings of the sitting has been kept on record.

The witnesses then withdrew.

(The Committee then adjourned.)

**MINUTES OF THE NINTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2020-21) HELD ON MONDAY,
15TH MARCH, 2021**

The Committee met from 1500 hrs. to 1530 hrs. in Chairpersons Chamber, Room No. 113, PHA Extension Building, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SMT. RAMA DEVI - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Shri Bholanath 'B.P. Saroj'
3. Smt. Pramila Bisoyi
4. Shri Y. Devendrappa
5. Smt. Ranjeeta Koli
6. Shri Pashupati Kumar Paras
7. Smt. Supriya Sule

RAJYA SABHA

8. Smt. Ramilaben Bara
9. Smt. Geeta *alias* Chandraprabha
10. Shri Narayan Koragappa
11. Shri Ram Nath Thakur
12. Shri Ramkumar Verma

SECRETARIAT

1. Smt. Anita B. Panda Joint Secretary
2. Smt. Mamta Kemwal Director
3. Shri Krishendra Kumar Deputy Secretary

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee.
3. The Committee then took up for consideration the draft Reports of the Committee on 'Demands for Grants (2021-22) of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (I. Department Social Justice and Empowerment and II. Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities) and Ministry of Minority Affairs.
4. The Chairperson then requested the Members to give their suggestions, if any, on the draft Reports. The Reports were adopted by the Committee without any modifications. The Committee then authorized the Chairperson to finalize the draft Reports in the light of consequential changes that might arise out of factual verification of the draft Reports and to present the same to both the Houses.

(The Committee then adjourned)

APPENDIX

STATEMENT OF OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Sl. No.	Para	Observations/Recommendations
1	2	3
1.	2.10	<p>The Committee observe that while the budgetary allocations available to the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment in 2018-19 and 2019-20 were largely utilized on various Schemes/programmes run by them, the Department could not utilize their budgetary allocation of ₹ 8207.56 crore fully in 2020-21 due to the monthly expenditure ceiling of 5% till September, 2020 as well as other operational restrictions in the wake of COVID-19 Pandemic. The Committee note the assurance given by the Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment to spend the remaining allocation of 2020-21 by 31st March, 2021 and desire to be apprised of the amount finally utilised. Since the socially, educationally and economically marginalized sections of the society are still way behind despite availability of several welfare Schemes for decades, the Committee strongly feel that the Department needs to continue their efforts to effectively execute their Schemes/Programmes with requisite dedication. The fact that budgetary allocation made for the Department for 2021-22 is again less, i.e. ₹ 10,517.62 crore against the projected requirement of ₹ 13257.05 crore, the task for the Department ahead would remain as challenging as ever. The Committee are of the opinion that budgetary requirement projected by the Department for 2021-22 should have been positively considered by the Ministry of Finance, particularly in view of the proven fact that COVID-19 pandemic has the biggest negative impact on life and livelihoods of the deprived sections of the society. As the review of all Government sector Schemes for next five years is being undertaken, the Committee desire that after getting the approval of SFC/EFC for continuation of various Schemes of the Department from 2021-22 to 2025-26, the Department should prepare adequate ground to justify their demand for more funds at RE Stage in 2021-22. The</p>

		<p>Committee also feel that an online monitoring mechanism for various Schemes/ programmes should have been in place a long time ago because given the educational and other inadequacies among deprived classes, it is easier for unscrupulous elements to siphon off funds meant for their welfare. The Department must, therefore, ensure that the monitoring mechanism, being the heart and soul of any Scheme, should be implemented by the Department effectively so that any flaw/inconsistency in the implementation of any Scheme is identified immediately and rectified thus ensuring that the benefits of various Schemes reach to the target groups in a faster and transparent manner.</p>
2	2.11	<p>From the deposition of the representatives of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, the Committee note that for the year 2021-22, certain reforms have been brought in to ensure financial prudence. Now, 33 Schemes run by the Department have been readjusted into 19 Schemes, which, further, are brought under five major heads namely PM-AJAY, SHREYAS(SC), SHREYAS(OBC), YASASVI(OBC) and SHRESHTA, which is expected to bring rationalization to avoid overlap and invite more synergy. The Committee understand the basic idea behind the step, that is to cut the flab in various Schemes meant for educational upliftment, through coaching and scholarships, of the students belonging to SC, OBC, EBC and DNT categories as well as economic upliftment of these groups. While the desired impact of this rationalization can only be assessed in future financial years, the Committee understand that during the financial year 2020-21, most of the activities of the department were hampered due to the imposed lockdown due to COVID-19 pandemic in many States where the application invitation, processing and disbursement of scholarships had remained suspended, despite the Department releasing the first installment of 75% of the Central assistance in the first quarter of 2020-21 itself. Another substantial change in one of the most prominent Scheme of Post Matric scholarships for SC students, as observed by the Committee, is that the committed liability between the Centre and the States has been revised to a fixed sharing pattern of 60:40, in order to increase the Central share to 60%, with the rider that the States/UTs</p>

		<p>will have to disburse their 40% share by 28.2.2021 followed by the Central share disbursement of 60% by 31.3.2021. In the wake of aforesaid changes, the Committee desire to know whether this arrangement was followed by all States/UTs or not, and the defaulters, if any. Overall, the Committee feel that the present financial year is going to be extremely challenging to the Department as they will not only have to compensate for the loss suffered by students due to non-receipt/delayed receipt of scholarships but would also have to ensure that the said rationalization of Schemes actually works leading to more synergy for the educational upliftment of the deprived section of students all over the country. Hence, at the action taken stage, the Committee desire that the Ministry need to elaborate further on their overall financial performance for Financial Year 2020-21 and the progress made in the current Financial Year 2021-22 in running their Schemes in revised formats and utilizing given allocation in an optimal fashion.</p>
3	3.15	<p>The 60 year old Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for Scheduled Caste students guarantees financial assistance to fulfill the aspirations of those Scheduled Caste Students whose parents' income does not exceed ₹ 2.5 lakh annually. The Committee note that only 113.15 lakh students have benefitted during the last two years i.e., 2018-19 and 2019-20 upto 31st December, 2020 with an expenditure of ₹ 8639.47 crore under this Scheme. The Committee feel that the number of beneficiaries should be much more i.e., around 80 lakh per year to realize the number of 4 crore students, projected to be benefitted in the next 5 years. In the light of the decision that States have to give their share of 40 per cent of scholarships amount first and then the 60 per cent share of the Centre will be released to the students, the Committee were informed by the representatives of the Ministry that States liability has now been reduced and hence it is a welcome move. Nonetheless, all State Governments are not very efficient in giving their share on time, hence the Committee feel that an appropriate system may be developed so that the students are not deprived of Scholarship in the absence or delay in providing share by the States. The Committee, therefore, recommend that adequate awareness may be created amongst the</p>

		<p>students so that maximum number of students are able to take the benefit of the Scheme particularly in view of the target fixed for next five years. The Committee also recommend that since the suggestions made in the recently conducted Evaluation Study of the Scheme are practical and worthy of consideration, hence those may be examined and implemented. The Committee also appreciate the concept of issuing of FreeShip Card, after verification of eligibility of the candidates under the Scheme, as this will prove to be very beneficial for the students to take admission in the institution of their choice anywhere in the country without paying any fee. The Committee desire that the Department should direct all the States/UTs to issue FreeShip Card to all the eligible students who have applied under the Scheme.</p>
4	3.16	<p>The Committee are quite disturbed by cases reported about the alleged misappropriation of funds under scholarship Schemes for underprivileged sections in some States, which is stated to be currently under enquiry. While the Ministry representatives have been claiming that the system is fail-safe due to all transactions/verifications done online, a dedicated Portal, DBT and similar measures, which are definitely the need of the hour, it is disconcerting for the Committee to observe that such instances, however minuscule, would dent the confidence of students on Government Scholarship Schemes. While the Committee desire the Ministry to further plug all identified loopholes in the system, strengthening privacy of data and passwords and reduce all manual interventions, be it school personnel, banking intermediaries, NGOs or unauthorised persons, they are of the strong opinion that the Department should counsel the State Governments to try to reach out to a sample size of beneficiary students directly to ascertain that they are not being duped in the pretext of Government scholarships, and that they are actually in receipt of the full amount of the entitled scholarship money for the term, as approved against their names in the Portal. The Committee are convinced that a minor's opinion can also lead to a major change at times and hence recommend that action should be taken on this aspect.</p>

5	3.17	<p>Now, as the COVID-19 vaccination is gaining speed, the Committee opine that the reopening of schools in full capacity and the resultant formalities and verifications etc. for disbursement of scholarships will perhaps pick up in the later part of the current Financial year. While the disbursement of scholarships has been made online, the Committee feel that fraudulent activity by unscrupulous elements in schools, banks, NGOs, VOs, etc., who find ways to circumvent the processes for their personal gains, is still a bitter reality. Hence, the Committee recommend that the Department should not only ensure that the proposed revision in the Schemes are implemented effectively but the online portal for scholarships should also have enough security features to detect any tampering in the passwords/codes, in consultation with NIC.</p>
6	4.9	<p>The Committee find that the two Schemes <i>viz.</i> Scheme of Pre-Matric Scholarship for SCs and Scheme of Pre-Matric Scholarships for the children of those who are engaged in unclean occupation have now been merged into Pre-Matric Scholarship for SCs and Others. The budgetary allocation has also been combined from the years 2021-22. The Committee find that under the Scheme of Pre-matric Scholarship for SCs, 26.30 lakh and 27.00 lakh students were respectively benefitted in the years 2018-19 and 2019-20, and that 30 lakh beneficiaries are expected to be covered till 31 December, 2021 whereas in the Scheme of Pre-matric Scholarships for the children of those engaged in unclean occupation, the number of beneficiaries increased from 2000 to 2 lakh in 2019-20 in one year and 50 lakh beneficiaries are expected to be covered till 31 December, 2021. The Committee note that the expected figures of beneficiaries this year are much higher in Pre-matric Scholarships for the children of those engaged in unclean occupation as compared to the Pre-matric Scholarship Scheme for SCs, and desire to be apprised of the reasons thereof. The Committee feel that the number of beneficiaries in both the Schemes is much less as compared to their existing population and are, therefore, of the strong opinion that evaluation Study needs to be conducted periodically by an independent Research Organization and their recommendations should be expeditiously examined and implemented which, presently</p>

		is not the case as action has been delayed on the study conducted in the year 2019-20. The Committee urge that delay in disbursal of scholarships to the beneficiaries in 2020-21 due to COVID-19 pandemic should be expedited this year so that the education of the beneficiaries is not disrupted.
7	4.10	The Committee would also like to highlight that in remote and backward areas of the country, broadband services are not available optimally to students due to which some delay can be expected in filing all requisite data online for scholarships. The Committee feel that a reasonable relaxation in timelines can be considered by the Government for such areas, in consultation with the stakeholders, and hence desire that this matter may be discussed in the next meeting between the Department and the stakeholders/State Welfare Ministers & Secretaries.
8	5.16	The Committee note with distress that while the Government is making tremendous efforts to get rid of the scourge of untouchability in the country by enacting various laws and rules, its practice still exists in various forms. As per National Crime Record Bureau, 2,02,427 atrocity cases against SCs and 33,949 cases against STs have taken place in the country from 2015 to 2019. Unfortunately, this figure may actually be higher as several cases go unreported. The Committee feel that sincere efforts at the execution level to create awareness as well as sensitize people to come out of their prejudices and biases against SCs and create an equal society are urgently required. Some of the States still have a glaring number of reported atrocity cases despite prevailing laws/rules. The Committee hence feel that the frequency of awareness programmes need to be enhanced and penal provisions under the law for offenders are required to be adequately publicized, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas. In line with the existing Scheme for incentivizing inter-caste marriages, more Schemes are required to be introduced particularly by the Governments of those States, where a very large number of cases are reported, with proper monitoring mechanism to promote social integration and harmony and remove practice of untouchability and caste based discrimination. The Committee also observe that many cases of atrocities

		<p>keep on lingering in courts for several years despite the fact that financial provision is made every year with regard to the strengthening of courts to quickly dispose of the cases. The Committee, therefore, recommend that additional measures need to be developed in coordination with State Governments so that the objectives of the law against untouchability, as enshrined in the Constitution are achieved.</p>
9	6.14	<p>The Committee are sad to find from the Survey Report of NITI Aayog about the existence of Manual Scavengers in 194 Districts of 18 States and only 49 Districts being Manual Scavenging free. The Committee are of the view that efforts made by the Department would fail to get the desired results unless sincere efforts are put in by all the executing agencies as Manual Scavenging still exists in 194 Districts of the Country. Skill Development Training needs to be enhanced to cover more persons and other measures of financial assistance needs to be popularized so that these people have vocational options for themselves. The Committee further, are very disturbed to find that 336 deaths have been reported of persons while cleaning sewer and septic tanks during the last five years, out of which in only 221 cases compensation has been provided. In this connection, the Committee note that awareness generation programmes have been conducted by the Department for 470 Municipalities to create awareness about the various provisions of the MS Act, 2013. The Committee also note that the Department have prepared a National Action Plan in consultation with concerned Ministries like the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation wherein a Responsible Sanitation Authority in every district as well as a Sanitation Response Unit equipped with machinery and trained persons to meet the emergencies, has been envisaged. The Committee desire that since mostly manual labour is employed by the contractors to clean septic tanks and the contractors are hired by the Municipal bodies, it is extremely important that the said Sanitation Response Unit or responsible Sanitation Authority is set up in the Municipalities instead of being any stand alone Units. It is further significant that the availability of machines for cleaning sewers and septic tanks are</p>

		<p>procured by all Municipalities well in time and the cleaning personnel are provided training to operate these machines urgently for regular deployment as well as for attending to emergencies during Monsoon season natural calamities. As the Ministry has also proposed to amend the MS Act, 2013, the Committee urged the Ministry to explore the possibility of prescribing strict penal action therein on the contractors due to whose actions deaths of cleaning personnel occur in sewers and septic tanks. The Committee desire to have a note on the progress made in this direction at the action taken stage.</p>
10	7.12	<p>The Committee commend the fact that the Department have been utilizing nearly entire allocation of funds meant for the Umbrella Scheme of NAPDDR, under which financial assistance is provided to States/UTs for preventive education and awareness programmes for drug demand reduction except in the year 2020-21 where expenditure was less due to COVID-19 related lockdown. However, the outcome has not been very encouraging so far despite the Department sanctioning grants to State/UT Governments, NGOs etc. for preventive education, awareness generation, running and maintenance of integrated rehabilitation centres. The drug abuse problem has been growing dangerously in the country. The Committee feel that lack of sincerity on the part of executing agencies, lack of coordination/monitoring of the executing agencies as well as lack of awareness about the ill-effects of drugs could be the possible reasons. The situation seems to be alarming in the country now as NDDTC, AIIMS have found in 2019 that 1 crore 18 lakh children in the age-group of 10-17 years were addicted to drugs. The Committee are perturbed to note that despite such a precarious situation, the Department had to close down several drug de-addiction Centres across the Country due to irregularities found after their inspection. In such circumstances, the Committee cannot but recommend that stringent mechanism should be developed with an element of fixing responsibility on the concerned officers so that the objectives laid down to achieve the goals are accomplished. The Committee desire that the educational awareness programmes are required to be launched at school/college level so that the young generation do not get trapped in drug abuse and</p>

	<p>unscrupulous persons luring impressionable teenagers to try drugs for a short-term pleasure are nabbed and severely punished. The Committee also urge the Department to explore seeking cooperation of various Parents Associations in addressing the increasing trend of party drugs, tobacco and alcohol among school children/young adults, which, according to the Ministry, were 118,00,000 in number as per a 2019 survey. For child addicts among rag pickers and other vulnerable sections, NGOs/VOs having a successful track record in the field, can be explored. The Committee find that the Department have launched 'Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan' in 272 identified vulnerable districts with an aim to create awareness about the ill effects of substance abuse among the youth, with special focus on higher education institutes, university campuses, schools and reaching out into the community and garnering community involvement and ownership of the Abhiyan. The Committee desire to know its achievement this year. Further, they recommend that the Department should direct all the State Governments/UT Administrations to identify the districts for conducting such Abhiyans at all the levels in their respective States/UTs, and involve peoples' representatives too in mobilizing their constituents to take part in such campaigns. The ODICs in various States, which are currently 94 only, can also be set up in hitherto unserved States like Bihar, Jharkhand, Goa, Karnataka etc. The Committee urge the Department to bring these States on board too.</p>
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