

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
(2021 - 22)**

(SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA)

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
(Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities)**

[Action taken by the Government on the observations/recommendations contained in the Twenty-first Report of the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment) (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on 'Demands for Grants (2021-22)' of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities)]

TWENTY-NINETH REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

December, 2021/Agrahaya, 1943 (Saka)

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Presented to Lok Sabha on 17.12.2021

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 17.12.2021



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

December, 2021/Agrahaya, 1943 (Saka)

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**COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL
JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2021-22)**

SMT. RAMA DEVI - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

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

Rajya Sabha

22. Shri M. Mohamed Abdulla
23. Smt. Jharna Das Baidya
24. Smt. Ramilaben Becharbhai Bara
25. Shri Abir Ranjan Biswas
26. Smt. Geeta *alias* Chandraprabha
27. Shri N.Chandrasegharan
28. Shri Narayan Koragappa
29. Smt. Mamata Mohanta
30. Smt. Chhaya Verma
31. Shri Ramkumar Verma

SECRETARIAT

1. Smt. Anita B. Panda - Joint Secretary
2. Smt. Mamta Kemwal - Director
3. Shri Krishendra Kumar - Deputy Secretariat
4. Smt. Shashi Bisht - Executive Officer

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment (2021-22) having been authorized by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, do present this Twenty-Ninth Report on the action taken by the Government on the observations/recommendations contained in the Twenty-First Report of the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on 'Demands for Grants (2021-22)' of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities).

2. The Twenty-first Report was presented to Lok Sabha and laid in Rajya Sabha on 16th March, 2021. The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities have furnished their replies indicating action taken on the recommendations contained in that Report on 26th July, 2021. The Report was considered and adopted by the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment at their sitting held on 15.12.2021.

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

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

NEW DELHI;

15 December, 2021
24 Agrahayana, 1943 (Saka)

RAMA DEVI
Chairperson,
Standing Committee on
Social Justice and
Empowerment

CHAPTER - I

REPORT

1.1 This Report deals with the action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Twenty-first Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on 'Demands for Grants (2021-22)' of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities).

1.2 The Twenty-first Report was presented to Lok Sabha/laid in Rajya Sabha on 16th March, 2021. It contained 8 Observations/Recommendations. Replies of Government in respect of all the observations/recommendations have been received and are categorized as under:-

- (i) Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government:
Paragraph Nos.: 5.6 and 8.11,
(Total: 2, Chapter - II)
- (ii) Observation/Recommendation which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's reply:
Paragraph No.: 4.23 **(Total: 1, Chapter III)**
- (iii) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted and which require reiteration:
Paragraph Nos.: 2.12, 3.7 and 7.7
(Total: 3, Chapter - IV)
- (iv) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government are of interim in nature:
Paragraph Nos.: 4.13 and 6.6
(Total: 2, Chapter - V)

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

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

A. Budgetary Provisions and Utilization

Recommendation (Para No. 2.12)

1.5 The Committee in their Twenty-first Report had recommended as follows:-

“The Committee note that the Department of Empowerment of PwDs utilized 92.38% of their allocation in 2019-20, still the Budgetary allocation at RE stage in 2020-21 was reduced from ₹ 1325.39 crore to ₹ 900 crore only, which was quite drastic in comparison to the previous two year. The Committee further note the Department’s stand that they could utilize only 73% of the allocated funds meant to cater to requirements of the PwDs in 2020-21, as on 19.02.2021 due to review of NAP and skill training, non-receipt of adequate number of State proposals etc. It was also stated by the Department that they have to ensure the monitoring and utilization of funds due to the nature of schemes run by them, all of which are Central Sector and not Centrally sponsored. The Department is stately still working on strengthening the mechanism by developing robust and secure fund flow mechanism, empanelling of Training Partners, the validity of most of whom is expired, receipt of UCs from State Government etc. so that the outgo reaches the genuine beneficiaries. The Committee acknowledge constraints in the implementation of schemes for which accessibility features are mandatory, still they are surprised to note that several proposals such as transfer of vocational rehabilitation centres from Ministry of Labour and Employment, Swavlamban Kendras, MIS Portal and E-Skill platform for PwDs remain at a conceptual stage, till now, despite the existence of the separate Department for PwDs since 2014. This obviously has negative impact on the overall performance, be it financial or physical, of the Department. The Committee also feel that perhaps the performance of the Department has a bearing on the reduction in budgetary allocation at RE stage not only in 2019-20 but also in 2020-21. The Committee however compensate for the fact that due to COVID-19 pandemic, funds under various schemes could not be utilized fully in 2020-21, which must have a

profound impact on the welfare of PwDs. As the pandemic situation has somewhat eased now with advent of vaccines and offices are working in full capacity, the Committee urge that the Department should make all out efforts for streamlining the skill training overhaul, expediting the inspections and transfer of centres from Ministry of Labour and Employment at least this year, as well as for effective implementation of Schemes like ADIP and other low performing ones, in first three to four months of the year 2021-22 so that the Department is able to justify their demand for more funds at RE stage for various schemes”.

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

“It is imperative to note that the major reforms/initiatives for strengthening the Skill Delivery mechanism under NAP which slowed down the release of fund in 2019-20 were change in fund flow done with a view to check parking of fund with ETPs and introduction of centre guidelines and validation process. Centre validation process through a 3rd party agency (SCPwD) started in November, 2019 is though a dynamic and ongoing process, it was affected severely after outbreak of Covid-19 Pandemic in February/March, 2020. However, the process was resumed and fast tracked after pandemic situation was eased and as on 17.06.2021 many training partners have got their 72 centres located in different states validated. These centres have annual capacity of training to around 33426 PwDs. Validation of many centres of various training partners are under process and will be completed shortly. In addition, training is allowed at centres accredited through SMART portal also and in so far as MIS Portal of NAP is concerned, this is now fully functional. Transfer of National Career Service Centres (NCSCs) for Differently Abled (erstwhile Vocational Rehabilitation Centres) from M/o Labour and Employment is in advance stage. 10 NSKs (NHFDCs Swavlamban Kendras) have also been made functional so far. An Online Portal for e-Skilling of PwDs is also under development process. During the year 2019-20, the Department was heavily engrossed in streamlining the process of skill delivery and introduced several initiatives with a view to give the scheme a firm grounding, in order to provide quality skill training to PwDs in a greater number. However, due to the unforeseen outbreak of the pandemic, training commenced by some ETPs of the Department in March 2020 could not be completed, whereas some other ETPs which had planned to commence the training could not even start it. This contributed to the reduction in PwDs trained during FY 2019-20 and the corresponding fund release.

Furthermore, in FY2020-21, Training activities were not allowed till September 21, 2020. Thereafter, though training activities have been allowed, it is permitted in non-containment zones only and that also as per Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) requiring maintenance of proper social and physical distancing. This has reduced the overall capacity of training centres by almost half of the normal capacity. This had a significant bearing on the number of PwDs being trained in these circumstances despite the Department’s strenuous efforts to deal with the challenges arisen out of the pandemic which are as under:

- i. The ETPs are being allowed to conduct training in blended mode under which training is imparted online to the extent possible as per the course curricula and practical is conducted in offline/ physical mode.
- ii. Skill Council of Persons with Disabilities (SCPwD) has also been advised to conduct online assessment of PwDs on completion of training.
- iii. SCPwD has developed an exclusive online application for Centre inspection under NAP and also a Learning Management System (LMS) to facilitate the online trainings for the Trainers and Assessors (ToT and ToA).
- iv. Training partners whose validity of empanelment with the Department has expired are also being considered for extension of validity for one year with certain conditions.
- v. Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) having good industry connect in their sectors and empanelled training partners are being associated as PIA of the Department for conducting skill training”.

1.7 The Committee, expressing their displeasure on the delay in implementation of several proposals such as Validation of training partners, transfer of Vocational Rehabilitation Centres from Ministry of Labour and Employment, Swavlamban Kendras, MIS portal and E-skill platform for PwDs, had, *inter-alia*, urged the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities to expeditiously implement these proposals. The Committee however, find from the Action Taken reply of the Department that since the validation of various training partners is still under process, the transfer of vocational rehabilitation centres from Ministry of Labour and Employment is yet to be transferred. Further, the Department has been able to make only 10 NHFDC Swavlamban Kendras functional till date and online portal for skilling of PwDs is under process of development. The Committee are dismayed with the tardy progress in this context. They had expected that the Department would make all out efforts in execution of the proposals which would enhance the functioning of the Department for the welfare of the PwDs. In the light of reply of the Department, the Committee find that the validation process needs to be very efficient at the department's end. This is particularly required now as COVID 19 has already impacted all activities badly. They further recommend that the transfer of Vocational Rehabilitation Centres from Ministry of Labour and Employment should be completed urgently now and in any case not later than the next three months. The Committee feel that in order to make PwDs self reliant, skill training must be accelerated with wider coverage of PwDs. For this purpose, various skill training partners should be validated immediately as delay would continue to hamper skill training of PwDs. The Committee would appreciate if more NHFDCs Swavlamban Kendras (NSKs) are made functional in a time bound manner under a targeted action plan. The Committee would also desire that the work on an online portal for e-skilling of PwDs is expedited. The Committee feel that the Department has an onerous responsibility towards PwDs in the country and a lackadaisical approach would deprive PwDs from the benefits of the various Schemes meant for their welfare and make them lead a self-sufficient and dignified life.

B. Setting up/running of the District Disability Rehabilitation Centres (DDRCs)

(Recommendation Para No. 3.7)

1.8 The Committee in their Twenty-first Report had recommended as follows:-

“The District Disability Rehabilitation Centres (DDRCs) are to be set up by the Programme Implementing Agencies with the financial assistance under the Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme on the recommendation of the respective State Governments for the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities in each District of the Country. The Committee are surprised to note that out of 268 DDRCs envisaged in April, 2018, only 55 to 60 have become functional. From the foregoing, the Committee cannot fathom as to why and how DDRCs are being envisaged to be set up in every district of the Country, as this seems to be unrealistic target. The Committee also strongly feel that any Scheme of the Government, without fixing actionable and time-bound targets, is likely to be delayed. They, therefore, desire that based on the practical situation so far, a realistic timeline needs to be specified for making the DDRCs function and that such timelines must be adhered to, once fixed. The Committee recommend that the Department now needs to re-examine the constraints that have been delaying the setting up of DDRCs and address those suitably so that the objective of the Government to set up DDRCs is achieved at the earliest, the DDRCs start functioning properly and their intended purpose is served.”

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

“The objective of the DDRC scheme is to provide various types of rehabilitative support to Persons with Disabilities at the district level .Earlier, 325 DDRCs were approved to be setup but 269 only have been set up till date, of which only 55 to 60 are functional. During FY 2020-21, grants for setting up five new DDRCs has been given.

2. As per the scheme guidelines, once the District has been approved for setting up of DDRC, District Management Team (DMT) has to be formed by District Magistrate/Deputy Collector and building space has to be provided for running the DDRC. Along with this, the Implementing Agency (IA) needs to be selected for running the DDRC, in case the DMT does not intend to run it directly. Thereafter, the proposal needs to be sent to DEPwD for release of funds for setting up of DDRCs. If the proposal is found to be in order as per the scheme guidelines, the grant is released to the IA.

3. In continuing cases, DDRCs need to send proposals each year along with all necessary documents required as per scheme norms. The documents are

verified and if found to be in order, the grant is released. It is observed that these proposals are not being regularly sent and only 86 DDRCs have at least once sent proposal during last three years. Hon'ble Minister MSJE has sent letter dated 9th December,2020 (copy enclosed) to CM of States/UTs to send regular proposal every year for timely disbursement of grants. Further it has been advised to deploy all Rehabilitation professional as per scheme guidelines for effective services and regular monitoring by DMT for efficient running of DDRCs. Also States has been allowed to setup DDRCs in all districts for which DM/DC has to allot Building space to DDRC, DMT to be formed and proposal to be sent for release of grants.

4. To overcome the constraints found in setting up/running of DDRCs, the scheme is under revision for making it more effective.”

1.10 The Committee in their earlier recommendation had noted that the District Disability Rehabilitation Centres (DDRCs) are to be setup by the Programme Implementing Agencies with the financial assistance under the Deen Dayal Rehabilitation Scheme, on the recommendation of the respective State Governments for the rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities in each district of the Country from 2020-21. They, however, had expressed concern that out of 268 District Disability Rehabilitation Centres (DDRCs) set up in the country, only 55-60 could be made functional. In this regard, the Committee had felt that setting up of DDRC in each district is a unrealistic target and desired that the realistic timelines needs to be specified for making the DDRC functional and that the Department needs to re- examine the constraints that have been delaying the setting up of DDRCs. Now, the Committee have been informed that the Scheme is under revision to overcome the constraints found in setting up/running of DDRCs. The Committee find it quite apparent that even after the revision of the Scheme in 2018, it still could not take off in the absence of proposals from State Governments, which is disappointing. A letter from Minister to the State Chief Ministers in December 2020 also has not resulted in desired improvement in the number of proposals received from State Governments for setting up DDRCs and also for annual grant for running of DDRCs. Since the Scheme is reportedly being revised again, the Committee expect that all the issues would be addressed after exhaustive examination of each and every aspect and consultation with the State Governments & other stakeholders so that there is no difficulty/flaws in its implementation and the objectives of the Scheme are achieved. The Committee also desire to be furnished with a list of all DDRCs currently functional alongwith complete addresses and telephone numbers thereof.

C. Modernization of ALIMCO

Recommendation (Para. 7.7)

1.11 The Committee in their Twenty-first Report had recommended as follows:-

“The Committee note that the project of modernization of ALIMCO, a public sector enterprise set up way back in 1976, was initiated with a view to benefit higher number of PwDs, in the year 2018, with the initial budget allocation of ₹ 286 crore out of which ₹200 Crore was to be provided by the Department. However, on re-evaluation of the project in 2018, the cost escalated to ₹338.04 crore with the contribution from Government remaining static at ₹200 crore and rest to be accrued from internal resources. The Committee are saddened to note that even afterwards, the project of modernization of ALIMCO turned out to be never-ending. Initially, the project was to be completed in 37 months from date of release of 1st installment of grant-in-aid in 2015 but after re-evaluation, the deadline was extended to 2020-21, unfortunately, which was the COVID-19 pandemic year. Subsequently, the Department has extended the deadline to March, 2022 and there is every possibility of a revision in the cost of the same again, which the Committee fear, is again to be borne by internal resources, as the expected Government contribution has not changed since 2018 and perhaps the ALIMCO will ultimately have to bear a very large sum from their internal accruals, which would definitely impact their financial position adversely. The Committee find the delay to be unjustified as the pandemic struck in 2019-20 only. Hence, the Committee are of the view that the Department need to fix specific responsibility on their officers to expedite the modernization of ALIMCO to avoid any further delay. The Committee strongly recommend that the Department should do continuous monitoring also of the established timelines for various steps so that work of the modernization of ALIMCO project progresses within the revised time frame.”

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

“Status of activities carried out by ALIMCO under the project of Modernization of ALIMCO as on 31.03.2021 is as under:-

Activities	Approved Estimate(s)	Actual Expenditure as on Date	%age
For Civil Infrastructure	Rs. 122.99 Cr	Rs. 118.5 Cr	96.35%
For Plant & Machinery	Rs. 173.52 Cr	Rs. 27.14Cr.	15.64%
For ARFCs, JVs & TOTs, IT etc	Rs. 41.53 Cr	Rs. 15.67 Cr.	37.73%
Total Project Cost	Rs. 338.04 Cr	Rs. 161.31 Cr	47.72%

As per the table above, 96% of the Civil Infrastructure works have been completed.

Delay in the completion of Civil Infrastructure Works which consequently affected the procurement of machinery is on account of the following reasons :-

1. The Civil Plant & Machinery Consultants engaged in April, 2016 worked out the details of the project. The revised estimate of the proposed modernization project was approved by the Board of Directors of ALIMCO on 19th January, 2017. The process of getting no objection certificate (NOCs) from various Government Departments viz., Kanpur Development Authority (KDA), Forest, Jalkal Nigam, Railways, Pollution Control, Fire etc. was initiated so as to begin the construction activity.
2. KDA gave approval to start the construction, subject to getting NoCs from all other State Govt. Departments as stated above. After a lot of persuasion and follow up, NoCs were obtained from various State Govt. Departments and the last NoC was received from IIT Kanpur on 01.11.2017. Consequently, construction work could be started only after 01.11.2017.
3. Central Building Research Institute (CBRI) was engaged on 28.05.2018 for third party inspection of construction work to ensure quality of construction.
4. Prolonged Pandemic conditions due to Covid-19 and the resultant intermittent lock down since March, 2020 has been a contributing factor to the delay caused in the execution of the project.

Notwithstanding the above, all out efforts are being made to complete the modernization project by March, 2022.

ACTION PLAN FOR COMPLETION OF MODERNIZATION PROJECT

For Completion of Civil Infrastructure Works-

The civil infrastructure work is nearing completion. Balance work will be completed within 2 months after 33KV line charging by KESA, which is being followed regularly.

For Completion of Procurement of Plant & Machinery

Total approved budget for procurement of Plant and Machinery is Rs.173.52crores.

Status of Procurement of Plant & Machinery is as under: –

SNo.	Description(s)	Estimated Value (Rs. in crores)
1.	Purchase Order Placed	44.25
1.1.	Plant/Machinery Commissioned	(25.27)

1.2.	Plant/Machinery Under Commissioning	(1.87)
1.3.	Plant/Machinery for which Purchase Orders are placed	(17.11)
2.	Tenders published	71.15
3.	Tender under Finalization	31.73
4.	Technical Specifications for plant and machinery under preparation	32.00

For Completion of Works under ARFCs, JVs & TOTs, IT etc

The tender regarding study and implementation of ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) Solution has been floated for an estimated value of Rs.12.30 crores.

As regards the revision of cost, it is submitted that the civil work of the project has almost been completed within the allocated amount of Rs.122.99 crores and there is no cost overrun. Similarly, the machines/equipment expected to be procured/installed is also within allocated funds of Rs.173.52 crores. From these facts, it is clear that there would not be any need for the Corporation to bear any extra sum out of its internal accruals to complete the project.

As far as monitoring of the Project is concerned, the senior management of the Corporation is periodically reviewing the progress of the project with the Project Management consultants and other stakeholders. Constant follow up is being done with vendors for the orders placed for procurement and commissioning of Plant and Machinery. Since the project needs to be completed in a time bound manner, the status of the project is also being apprised and reviewed by the Board of Directors of the Corporation in all its meetings since September, 2017. Hence, every effort is being made to meet the current project deadline of 31.3.2022. .

1.13 The Committee had observed that the project of modernization of ALIMCO was to be completed in 37 months from date of release of 1st installment of grant-in-aid in 2015 but after re-evaluation of the project in 2018, the deadline was extended to 2020-21. The Committee, had accordingly, recommended that the Department needs to fix specific responsibility on their officers to expedite the modernization of ALIMCO to avoid any further delay. The Committee had also recommended that the Department should do continuous monitoring of the established timelines for various steps so that work of the modernization of ALIMCO project progresses within the revised time frame. In their action taken reply, the Department has now furnished detailed action plan for completion of modernization project of ALIMCO from which the Committee note the satisfactory progress of construction work of the project as 96% of the civil infrastructure have been completed. All out efforts are also statedly being made to complete the modernization of project by March, 2022. However, the Committee find that the work relating to procurement of plants and machinery is lagging far behind as out of the total budget of ₹ 173.52 crore, tenders to the tune of ₹ 71.15 crore only have so far been published, tenders of ₹ 31.73 crore are under finalization and technical specifications for plant and machinery for ₹ 32.00 crore are under preparation. Only plant/machinery of ₹ 25.27 crore value has so far been commissioned and purchase orders worth ₹ 17.11 crore been placed. In this backdrop the Committee strongly feel that if tendering, finalizing technical specifications of machinery etc. are not expedited, modernization work of ALIMCO may not be completed by the extended date i.e. March, 2022 and in all probability said date would have to be extended once again. The Committee would therefore reiterate that all out efforts should be made to ensure that the

Machineries/Plants/Equipments are procured on time and the modernization work is executed by the extended date so that the purpose of modernization and target of serving higher number of beneficiaries with better and technologically advanced assistive devices could be achieved at least on time now.

CHAPTER-II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Para No. 5.6)

2.1 The Committee note that the National Action Plan (NAP) is meant for imparting Skill Training to PwDs under SIPDA, which as launched by the Department in collaboration with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) in 2015, with an objective to empower PwDs with skills to earn their livelihood independently. The Committee appreciate that Department have so far trained approx. 1.5 lakh Divyangjan. But to their utter dismay, in the financial year 2019-20, the NAP has not been able to meet the set physical target of 20,000 beneficiaries as it served only 1434 beneficiaries which meant that there was a huge shortfall of 92.83 percent. The Department acknowledging the shortfall, attributed it to rigorous overhauling in monitoring mechanisms and fund process. The Committee note that many ETPs were found to indulge in financial irregularities and it is now thought to have those assessed again by a Third Party agency namely Skill Council for Persons with Disabilities. The Committee hope that this year atleast there won't be a shortfall on these accounts. They further are of the view that Department should not only aim at training PwDs in various skills but should also take steps to assure job warranty on completion of their training. This will give a sense of financial and social security to Divyangjan. In this regard, the Committee applaud the Government's efforts to encourage private sector employers to give employment to Divyangjan by giving them concessions/relaxation this Scheme with private sector employers more. The Committee find that the Department have issued a notification on 04.01.2021 in which 3,566 different types of categories of posts suitable for PwDs have been notified. The Committee desire that above posts should be widely publicized so that the eligible PwDs are made aware of available job opportunities and at the same time probable employers also get to know about the types of jobs which PwDs are found to be capable of. The Committee urge the Department to strive harder to achieve targets set under NAP and to strengthen the employability of the beneficiaries on completion of their skill training. The Committee, would further urge the Department to meticulously maintain data of beneficiaries who get employed after getting skill training under the programme. The Committee, at the same time, reiterate that no ETP should be allowed to indulge in any financial irregularity and all suggestions received, post their assessment by Third Party, must be implemented.

Reply of the Government

2.2 As explained in response to observation 2.12, various initiatives taken towards streamlining the skill echo system to provide quality training to PwDs under NAP and ensure better utilization of fund, release under scheme was slowed down during FY 2019-20 and it was further affected severely in subsequent year (2020-21) due to outbreak of Covid 19 pandemic due to which training was not allowed till September, 2020 and it was resumed thereafter with various restrictions resulting in reduced capacity of training partners. Under these circumstances, target could not be achieved

in 2019-20 and 2020-21. However, now situation is getting improved gradually and various initiatives/steps have been taken to achieve the target in future.

To avoid parking of fund situation, fund flow has already been changed and now 1st instalment is released on commencement of training in batch wise mode and to ensure suitability of centres, 3rd party assessment has been put in place. So far, 72 centres of various ETPs with annual capacity of training to around 33000 PwDshas been validated as per centre guidelines. Though training is being conducted at many such centres with reduced capacity due to Covid related restrictions. Validation of centres is an ongoing process and SCPwD is now conducting it in online mode also so that it could continue even in Covid caused situations.

Various other initiatives such as implementation of RPL, transfer of NCSC for DA (VRCs), development of Online Portal, associating SSCs as PIA etc. will definitely help the Department in achieving its target in future.

In order to promote employment opportunities for PwDs under NAP, the Department has proposed the merger of the scheme – “Incentive to Employers in the Private Sector” with NAP. The objective of the Incentive to Employers in the Private Sector Scheme is to encourage private sector to employ persons with disabilities. Some of the features of the Incentive Scheme are:

- payment of employer’s contribution for 10 years to the EPF and ESI by the Government (with no salary ceiling) is being made
- Also, the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) will bear one-third of the gratuity amount due and admissible to PwD employees.
- The administrative charges applicable on EPF/ESI contribution (at the extant rates) presently being deposited by the employers shall be borne by DEPwD
- Payment of stipend during the apprenticeship period

In addition, the Media Cell of the Department shall be involved and coordinated actively with the task of popularizing the scheme for wider publicity and awareness of the same, wherever necessary.

Also, the suggestions of the Committee have been noted for compliance in order to ensure a seamless and streamlined skill delivery process; with more number of PwDs receiving quality skill training whilst keeping records for the employment of PwDs under the Incentive Scheme (post-merger) and/or otherwise under NAP.

(Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) O.M.
No.1/4/2021-22/Budget/DEPwD dated 26th July, 2021)

Recommendation (Para No. 8.11)

2.3 The Committee note that while the year 2020-21 did witness severe constraints in utilization of funds, there is a trend of persistent underutilization of funds in the four scholarship Schemes run by the Department for students with disabilities viz. National Fellowship Scholarship, Pre-Matric Scholarship, Post-Matric Scholarship and Top-class Scholarship during the last three years. The submission of the Department that the funds remained unutilized mainly due to non-receipt of sufficient number of scholarship applications from students belonging to SC/ST categories and North-East region is very disheartening as this must have led to many Divyang students missing out on opportunity for educational upliftment. The Committee are of the strong view that in such circumstances, the Department needs to focus on these categories and the North Eastern States for creating awareness among students. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry, instead of justifying paucity of applications, should publicize their scholarship Schemes among various State Departments as the financial package under those schemes are much better. Moreover, as this is a vast Country with huge population of students with disabilities, the Committee desire them to avail such benefits and become a self-reliant community.

Reply of the Government

2.4 In order to sensitize the State Governments about the Scholarship Schemes of the Department, various communications are sent to all the Principal Secretaries of Social Welfare Department dealing with disability related matters. They have also been requested to spread awareness among all the stake holders through advertisements and also through their websites. Apart from issuing advertisements by the Department in leading newspapers, the Department also sensitizes the State Government Nodal Officers for proper implementation of the scheme by way of Video Conferencing . However, the observations of the Committee for creating awareness about the Scholarship Schemes among various State Departments is noted for compliance and the Department is committed to make all out efforts for popularizing the scheme.

(Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) O.M.
No.1/4/2021-22/Budget/DEPwD dated 26th July, 2021)

CHAPTER-III

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

Recommendation (Sl. No IV Para No 4.23)

3.1 The Committee note that the UDID project is envisaged to be the national database for the PwDs, for issuance of UDID Cards/Disability Certificates in order to enable PwDs to avail various concessions under schemes meant for their welfare. The Department have issued 51,32,493 UDID cards against the 1,65,99,752 disability certificates across the country. The Committee feel that the progress of issuing UDID cards is slow as a large numbers of disabled persons have not been able to get the disability certificates. Such delay in the attainment of the objective of UDID due to reasons like lack of online system till recently or absence of a guideline to allow private medical doctors to certify disability in case unavailability of Government doctors, is unjustified. The Committee is further surprised that the State of West Bengal is yet to come on board and Nagaland has shown very tardy progress in this regard and they have no information on whether any efforts have been made by the Department to ensure that the said State Governments complete this task in a time bound manner. The Committee feel that the sooner all States/UTs come on board, the better for the Divyangjan. The ultimate objective of the Scheme for tracking of physical and financial progress of delivery of benefits/services to the Divyangjan can only be achieved thereafter. Hence, the Committee desire that the Department should pursue with all the State Governments/UTs, particularly those States who are lagging, and fix State wise annual targets for issuing of UDID cards so that more and more PwDs get their due.

Reply of the Government

3.2 As on 11.07.2021, 58.66 lakhs UDID cards have been generated. The guidelines for assessment of disability was notified on 4th January 2018, which inter-alia provide for composition of a Medical Board for assessment of each category of disability. Disability is a State subject. Issuance of certificates of disability is the primary responsibility of the States/UTs. The State Governments are empowered to notify the medical authorities for certification of disability. Therefore, it is for the States/UTs to

ensure availability of specialized medical experts as required. They have been asked to mobilise specialists from adjacent Districts/States/institution, if specialized doctors are not available in their district. For this purpose, the Department has issued instruction vide letters dated 8th July 2019 dated 8th July 2019 (Copy Enclosed) & 13th August 2019 (Copy Enclosed).

2. Department is monitoring the status of UDID project with all States/UTs regularly through video conferences, letters and daily through whatsapp as well. The latest Video Conference meeting was held with States/UTs on 8th to 12th March 2021 wherein West Bengal also participated. They were asked to submit their plans to come on board for all districts and start issuing cards. Continuous reminder letters have been sent to Government of West Bengal for implementation of UDID project in all districts, latest being on 31st May, 2021. All districts of Nagaland have started generating UDID and progress has also been noticed since out of 1752 Disability Certificates as per the data of the office of Chief Commissioner of Persons with Disabilities (CCPD), 769 (43.89) have been issued by Nagaland.

3. As per target set under New India @75, 55 lakh UDID cards were to be generated by the 31st March 2021, which was achieved with 55.80 Lakhs UDID cards being generated. 65 lakhs UDID cards are to be generated by December 2021 and 80 lakh UDID cards to be generated by August 2022. In the Video Conference meeting held with all States/UTs on 8th March 2021- 12th March 2021, they have been asked to submit their plans to achieve the targets for issuance of UDID cards to all Persons with Disabilities. As per the responses received from States/UTs, the targets set under New India @75, are likely to be achieved if the COVID pandemic is under control since Medical Authorities are involved in the issuance of UDID cards also.

(Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) O.M. No.1/4/2021-22/Budget/DEPwD dated 26th July, 2021)

CHAPTER-IV

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

Recommendation (Sl. No II Para No 2.12)

4.1 The Committee note that the Department of Empowerment of PwDs utilized 92.38% of their allocation in 2019-20, still the Budgetary allocation at RE stage in 2020-21 was reduced from ₹ 1325.39 crore to ₹ 900 crore only, which was quite drastic in comparison to the previous two year. The Committee further note the Department's stand that they could utilize only 73% of the allocated funds meant to cater to requirements of the PwDs in 2020-21, as on 19.02.2021 due to review of NAP and skill training, non-receipt of adequate number of State proposals etc. It was also stated by the Department that they have to ensure the monitoring and utilization of funds due to the nature of schemes run by them, all of which are Central Sector and not Centrally sponsored. The Department is statedly still working on strengthening the mechanism by developing robust and secure fund flow mechanism, empanelling of Training Partners, the validity of most of whom is expired, receipt of UCs from State Government etc. so that the outgo reaches the genuine beneficiaries. The Committee acknowledge constraints in the implementation of schemes for which accessibility features are mandatory, still they are surprised to note that several proposals such as transfer of vocational rehabilitation centres from Ministry of Labour and Employment, Swavlamban Kendras, MIS Portal and E-Skill platform for PwDs are remain at a conceptual stage, till now, despite the existence of the separate Department for PwDs since 2014. This obviously has negative impact on the overall performance, be it financial or physical, of the Department. The Committee also feel that perhaps the performance of the Department has a bearing on the reduction in budgetary allocation at RE stage not only in 2019-20 but also in 2020-21. The Committee however compensate for the fact that due to COVID-19 pandemic, funds under various schemes could not be utilized fully in 2020-21, which must have a profound impact on the welfare of PwDs. As the pandemic situation has somewhat eased now with advent of vaccines and offices are working in full capacity, the Committee urge that the Department should make all out efforts for streamlining the skill training overhaul, expediting the inspections and transfer of centres

from Ministry of Labour and Employment at least this year, as well as for effective implementation of Schemes like ADIP and other low performing once in first three to four months of the year 2021-22 so that the Department is able to justify their demand for more funds at RE stage for various schemes.

Reply of the Government:

4.2 It is imperative to note that the major reforms/initiatives for strengthening the Skill Delivery mechanism under NAP which slowed down the release of fund in 2019-20 were change in fund flow done with a view to check parking of fund with ETPs and introduction of centre guidelines and validation process. Centre validation process through a 3rd party agency (SCPwD) started in November, 2019 is though a dynamic and ongoing process, it was affected severely after outbreak of Covid-19 Pandemic in February/March, 2020. However, the process was resumed and fast tracked after pandemic situation was eased and as on 17.06.2021 many training partners have got their 72 centres located in different states validated. These centres have annual capacity of training to around 33426PwDs. Validation of many centres of various training partners are under process and will be completed shortly. In addition, training is allowed at centres accredited through SMART portal also and in so far as **MIS Portal** of NAP is concerned, this is now fully functional. Transfer of National Career Service Centres (NCSCs) for Differently Abled (erstwhile Vocational Rehabilitation Centres) from M/o Labour and Employment is in advance stage. 10 NSKs (NHFDCs Swavlamban Kendras) have also been made functional so far. An Online Portal for e-Skilling of PwDs is also under development process.

During the year 2019-20, the Department was heavily engrossed in streamlining the process of skill delivery and introduced several initiatives with a view to give the scheme a firm grounding, in order to provide quality skill training to PwDs in a greater number. However, due to the unforeseen outbreak of the pandemic, training commenced by some ETPs of the Department in March 2020 could not be completed, whereas some other ETPs which had planned to commence the training could not even start it. This contributed to the reduction in PwDs trained during FY 2019-20 and the corresponding fund release.

Furthermore, in FY2020-21, Training activities were not allowed till September 21, 2020. Thereafter, though training activities have been allowed, it is permitted in non-

containment zones only and that also as per Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) requiring maintenance of proper social and physical distancing. This has reduced the overall capacity of training centres by almost half of the normal capacity. This had a significant bearing on the number of PwDs being trained in these circumstances despite the Department's strenuous efforts to deal with the challenges arisen out of the pandemic which are as under:

- i. The ETPs are being allowed to conduct training in blended mode under which training is imparted online to the extent possible as per the course curricula and practical is conducted in offline/ physical mode.
- ii. Skill Council of Persons with Disabilities (SCPwD) has also been advised to conduct online assessment of PwDs on completion of training.
- iii. SCPwD has developed an exclusive online application for Centre inspection under NAP and also a Learning Management System (LMS) to facilitate the online trainings for the Trainers and Assessors (ToT and ToA).
- iv. Training partners whose validity of empanelment with the Department has expired are also being considered for extension of validity for one year with certain conditions.
- v. Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) having good industry connect in their sectors and empanelled training partners are being associated as PIA of the Department for conducting skill training.

(Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) O.M. No.1/4/2021-22/Budget/DEPwD dated 26th July, 2021)

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Para No. 1.7 of Chapter-I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 3.7)

4.3 The District Disability Rehabilitation Centres (DDRCs) are to be set up by the Programme Implementing Agencies with the financial assistance under the Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme on the recommendation of the respective State Governments for the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities in each District of the Country. The Committee are surprised to note that out of 268 DDRCs envisaged in

April, 2018, only 55 to 60 have become functional. From the foregoing, the Committee cannot fathom as to why and how DDRCs are being envisaged to be set up in every district of the Country, as this seems to be an unrealistic target. The Committee also strongly feel that any Scheme of the Government, without fixing actionable and time-bound targets, is likely to be delayed. They, therefore, desire that based on the practical situation so far, a realistic timeline needs to be specified for making the DDRCs function and that such timelines must be adhered to, once fixed. The Committee recommend that the Department now needs to re-examine the constraints that have been delaying the setting up of DDRCs and address those suitably so that the objective of the Government to set up DDRCs is achieved at the earliest, the DDRCs start functioning properly and their intended purpose is served.

Reply of the Government

4.4 The objective of the DDRRC scheme is to provide various types of rehabilitative support to Persons with Disabilities at the district level. Earlier, 325 DDRRCs were approved to be set up but 269 only have been set up till date, of which only 55 to 60 are functional. During FY 2020-21, grants for setting up five new DDRRCs has been given.

2. As per the scheme guidelines, once the District has been approved for setting up of DDRRC, District Management Team (DMT) has to be formed by District Magistrate/Deputy Collector and building space has to be provided for running the DDRRC. Along with this, the Implementing Agency (IA) needs to be selected for running the DDRRC, in case the DMT does not intend to run it directly. Thereafter, the proposal needs to be sent to DEPwD for release of funds for setting up of DDRRCs. If the proposal is found to be in order as per the scheme guidelines, the grant is released to the IA.

3. In continuing cases, DDRRCs need to send proposals each year along with all necessary documents required as per scheme norms. The documents are verified and if found to be in order, the grant is released. It is observed that these proposals are not being regularly sent and only 86 DDRRCs have at least once sent proposal during last three years. Hon'ble Minister MSJE has sent letter dated 9th December, 2020 (copy enclosed) to CM of States/UTs to send regular proposal every year for timely disbursement of grants. Further it has been advised to deploy all Rehabilitation professional as per scheme guidelines for effective services and regular monitoring by DMT for efficient running of DDRRCs. Also States has been allowed to set up DDRRCs in all districts for which DM/DC has to allot Building space to DDRRC, DMT to be formed and proposal to be sent for release of grants.

4. To overcome the constraints found in setting up/running of DDRRCs, the scheme is under revision for making it more effective.

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No.1/4/2021-22/Budget/DEPwD dated 26th July, 2021)

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Para No. 1.10 of Chapter-I of the Report)

Recommendation (Sl. No VII Para No 7.7)

4.5 The Committee note that the project of modernization of ALIMCO, a public sector enterprise set up way back in 1976, was initiated with a view to benefit higher number of PwDs, in the year 2018, with the initial budget allocation of ₹ 286 crore out of which ₹200 Crore was to be provided by the Department. However, on re-evaluation of the project in 2018, the cost escalated to ₹338.04 crore with the contribution from Government remaining static at ₹200 crore and rest to be accrued from internal resources. The Committee is saddened to note that even afterwards the project of modernization of ALIMCO turned out to be never-ending. Initially, the project was to be completed in 37 months from date of release of 1st installment of grant-in-aid in 2015 but after re-evaluation, the deadline was extended to 2020-21, unfortunately, which as COVID-19 pandemic year. Subsequently, the Department has extended the deadline to March, 2022 and there is every possibility of a revision in the cost of the same again, which the Committee fear, is again to be borne by internal resources, as the expected Government contribution has not changed since 2018 and perhaps the ALIMCO will ultimately have to bear a very large sum from their internal accruals, which would definitely impact their financial position adversely. The Committee find the delay to be unjustified as the pandemic struck in 2019-20 only. Hence, the Committee are of the view that the Department need to fix specific responsibility on their officers to expedite the modernization of ALIMCO to avoid and further delay. The Committee strongly recommend that the Department should do continuous monitoring also of the established timelines for various steps so that work of the modernization of ALIMCO project progresses within the revised time frame.

Reply of the Government

4.6 Status of activities carried out by ALIMCO under the project of Modernization of ALIMCO as on 31.03.2021 is as under:-

Activities	Approved Estimate(s)	Actual Expenditure as on Date	%age
For Civil Infrastructure	Rs. 122.99 Cr	Rs. 118.5 Cr	96.35%
For Plant & Machinery	Rs. 173.52 Cr	Rs. 27.14Cr.	15.64%

For ARFCs, JVs & TOTs, IT etc	Rs. 41.53 Cr	Rs. 15.67 Cr.	37.73%
Total Project Cost	Rs. 338.04 Cr	Rs. 161.31 Cr	47.72%

As per the table above, 96% of the Civil Infrastructure works have been completed. Delay in the completion of Civil Infrastructure Works which consequently affected the procurement of machinery is on account of the following reasons :-

1. The Civil Plant & Machinery Consultants engaged in April, 2016 worked out the details of the project. The revised estimate of the proposed modernization project was approved by the Board of Directors of ALIMCO on 19th January, 2017. The process of getting no objection certificate (NOCs) from various Government Departments viz., Kanpur Development Authority (KDA), Forest, Jalkal Nigam, Railways, Pollution Control, Fire etc. was initiated so as to begin the construction activity.
2. KDA gave approval to start the construction, subject to getting NoCs from all other State Govt. Departments as stated above. After a lot of persuasion and follow up, NoCs were obtained from various State Govt. Departments and the last NoC was received from IIT Kanpur on 01.11.2017. Consequently, construction work could be started only after 01.11.2017.
3. Central Building Research Institute (CBRI) was engaged on 28.05.2018 for third party inspection of construction work to ensure quality of construction.
4. Prolonged Pandemic conditions due to Covid-19 and the resultant intermittent lock down since March, 2020 has been a contributing factor to the delay caused in the execution of the project. Notwithstanding the above, all out efforts are being made to complete the modernization project by March, 2022.

ACTION PLAN FOR COMPLETION OF MODERNIZATION PROJECT

For Completion of Civil Infrastructure Works-

The civil infrastructure work is nearing completion. Balance work will be completed within 2 months after 33KV line charging by KESA, which is being followed regularly.

For Completion of Procurement of Plant & Machinery

Total approved budget for procurement of Plant and Machinery is Rs.173.52crores.

Status of Procurement of Plant & Machinery is as under –

SNo.	Description(s)	Estimated Value (Rs. in crores)
1.	Purchase Order Placed	44.25
1.1.	Plant/Machinery Commissioned	(25.27)
1.2.	Plant/Machinery Under Commissioning	(1.87)
1.3.	Plant/Machinery for which Purchase Orders are placed	(17.11)
2.	Tenders published	71.15
3.	Tender under Finalization	31.73
4.	Technical Specifications for plant and machinery under preparation	32.00

For Completion of Works under ARFCs, JVs & TOTs, IT etc

The tender regarding study and implementation of ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) Solution has been floated for an estimated value of Rs.12.30 crores.

As regards the revision of cost, it is submitted that the civil work of the project has almost been completed within the allocated amount of Rs.122.99 crores and there is no cost overrun. Similarly, the machines/equipment expected to be procured/installed is also within allocated funds of Rs.173.52 crores. From these facts, it is clear that there would not be any need for the Corporation to bear any extra sum out of its internal accruals to complete the project.

As far as monitoring of the Project is concerned, the senior management of the Corporation is periodically reviewing the progress of the project with the Project Management consultants and other stakeholders. Constant follow up is being done

with vendors for the orders placed for procurement and commissioning of Plant and Machinery. Since the project needs to be completed in a time bound manner, the status of the project is also being apprised and reviewed by the Board of Directors of the Corporation in all its meetings since September, 2017. Hence, every effort is being made to meet the current project deadline of 31.3.2022.

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Comments of the Committee

(Please see Para No. 1.13 of Chapter-I of the Report)

CHAPTER-V

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

Recommendation (Para. 4.13)

5.1 The Committee note that the Scheme for implementation of Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016 (SIPDA), one of the most prominent schemes enacted to provide financial assistance to undertake the activities outlined in the Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016, has subsumed various stand-alone Schemes in 2019-20 onwards, yet the allocation has been reduced from ₹ 300 crore in 2018-19 to ₹ 209.77 crore in 2021-22. The Committee further find that out of the much reduced RE allocation of ₹ 122.89 crore in 2020-21, the Department could only spend ₹ 37.54 crore. While acknowledging the reasons stated by the Department for less utilization in 2020-21, the Committee notice that even in 2019-20, the AE was nearly ₹ 43 crore less than the RE under SIPDA. The Committee now hope that at least the remaining amount of unspent balance out of the allocation for 2020-21 should be utilized by the end of that financial year. The Committee cannot comprehend reduction in the Budgetary allocation particularly when several other stand-alone Schemes have been incorporated under SIPDA. They further feel that the justification for slow progress given by the Department due to paucity of proposals does not hold good as it is the responsibility of the Department to make the Scheme perform once all financial and other planning is done after detailed deliberations. They feel that the Department should have sensitized all the Implementing Agencies towards completing the necessary formalities under the Scheme on time. Also, the Department cannot absolve themselves from their responsibility of making the buildings, railway stations, etc. accessible by simply stating that they fall under the purview of State Government, other Central Ministries/Departments, etc. The Committee are aware that there has been a verification audit of the 70 railway stations selected for being disabled friendly, which has not projected a very positive picture too and desire to be apprised as to whether Railways have submitted action taken report on the same, and further action taken on the same by the Department of PwDs. Overall, the Department is required to take suitable steps to so that the objectives of the Schemes are timely achieved. The Committee desire that in case of non-cooperation from other concerned Ministries/Departments or State Governments, the matter may be taken up at the next higher level so that the delay as reported in case of Ministry of Railways as well as others is avoided. The Committee are of the view that the merger of several Schemes under SIPDA may defeat the very purpose of the Act, if those are not monitored/followed up effectively.

Reply of the Government

5.2 For Accessible India Campaign, a sub-scheme of SIPDA, there has been no shortfall in the utilization of funds for FY 2018-19 and 2019-20, as has been tabulated below:

	BE(Notional)	RE(Notional)	Actual Expenditure
2018-19	93	100	112.40
2019-20	105	112	134.19
2020-21	105	56.37*	54.02*

In fact for both FY 2018-19 and 2019-20, the RE was more than the BE and Actual Expenditure further exceeded RE. However, for FY 2020-21, owing to the pandemic situation, a slowdown was caused in the construction sector, affecting the response from States/UTs in submission of UCs for earlier grants and fresh proposals. Consequently, reducing release of funds to States/UTs. In FY 2020-21, in view of the overall cut in the budget of the department due to the pandemic, against the BE allocation of Rs. 105.00 crore revised allocation of RE was Rs. 56.37 crore. Rs.54.02 crore (95.8%) was released in FY 2020-21 through concerted efforts of the Department by constant monitoring, follow up, and providing pro-active assistance.

With regards to sensitizing the Implementing Authorities and Stakeholders for ensuring time bound completion of the targets of the Campaign, the Department has taken the following initiatives:

- i. Video Conferences – Sensitization workshops through VCs are regularly conducted under AIC with the latest being conducted with States/UTs in December 2020-January 2021 and with Nodal Central Ministries/Departments in March 2021. During the VCs all stakeholders including representatives of implementing agencies were informed about the targets and timelines of the Campaign, accessibility standards and SoPs as well as formats of submission of documents/proposals.
- ii. Sugamya Bharat App – On 2nd March 2021, as per the directions of Hon'ble Prime Minister, the Sugamya Bharat APP - a Crowd sourcing Mobile Application was launched by HMSJE. This user-friendly and accessible App would enable anyone, anywhere, anytime to bring to notice accessibility related issues being faced by them while using public-centric infrastructure, facilities and services which require redressal. To ensure accountability and resolution of complaints, all Central Ministries/Departments and States/UTs at State and District level have been requested to nominate Nodal Officers responsible for management of the complaints being registered on the App. Trainings and sensitization workshops in regards to applicability and implications of the App have been given to all nodal officers.
- iii. Literacy Material for professionals – The Department had already published an easy reckoner, a summary of the requirements and specifications of 10 key features of accessibility to be provided in public-centric buildings as derived from the Harmonized

Guidelines. Following this, the Department also launched on 2nd March 2021, the first volume of the handbook series titled ACCESS- The Photo Digest which is an easy to comprehend compilation for professionals to understand the concept and requirements of accessibility in public- centric buildings. The booklet provides illustrative explanations of the specifications of the key accessibility features of buildings, special accessibility provisions, the good-bad practices and examples of on-ground implemented retrofitment works. The second volume of this series on the Civil Aviation sector is under finalisation.

iv. Internal Audit of data uploaded on MIS Portal – The Department undertook internal audit of the data uploaded on the MIS to check for correctness of the information provided as well as the viability of the work being executed on ground. The exercise was conducted for the data pertaining to buildings uploaded by all States/UTs and CPWD. The gaps observed were communicated for corrective measures.

v. Standard formats – Observing the repetitive shortcomings in the documents, UCs and Proposals being submitted by States/UTs and delay caused in taking corrective measures, a need was felt to standardize the process of submission of various documents under the Campaign, which would help process proposals of AIC in a time bound manner. The Department has prepared and circulated standard formats for submission of UCs, proposals, drawings and other documents required to process various instalments of funds.

vi. Regular Communication – For the purpose of sensitization and to ensure continuous follow up and monitoring of work being executed on ground, the Department regularly communicates through letters at the levels of Secretary, Joint Secretary and Director, telephonic discussions, VCs and one to one meetings. The latest letters reminding of actions that are to be taken by States/UTs were sent out in December 2020 and again in Mar 2021.

As regards to the verification audit of 70 selected Railway Stations, the action taken report is still awaited from Railways. In this regard, DEPwD has sent several reminders, latest letters being sent on 12.03.2021, 19.02.2021 and 03.12.2020 and meetings has been done at various levels, including at the level of Hon'ble Minister held on 19.12.2019.

Under the Accessible India Campaign, regular status updates from Central Ministries/Departments and States/UTs are taken through meetings, letters and video conferences. Letters have been written to Ministers of respective Central Ministries/Departments, including at the level of Hon'ble Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment. The status of the Accessible India Campaign is also discussed in the Central Advisory Board meeting chaired by Hon'ble Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment, last held on 26.11.2020. Further, reminder letters for pending actions are also sent to Secretaries at the level of Secretary DEPwD. For States/UTs, letters and VCs are held at the level of Chief Secretaries and Principal Secretaries of Social Welfare Departments.

The Accessible India Campaign and performance of all stakeholders is being monitored from Hon'ble Prime Minister's Office through PRAGATI, Central Advisory Board headed

by Hon'ble MSJE and Cabinet Secretariat through Committee of Secretaries. Hon'ble MSJE, Hon'ble MoS MSJE and Secretary, DEPwD have also reviewed the progress of AIC regularly at their level. The key review meetings are as follows:

- i. Pragati: AIC is regularly being monitored by the Hon'ble Prime Minister's Office through Pragati. The last meeting was held on 31.07.2019. The key directions given included expedited retrofitting of all identified Central & State Govt. buildings; development of an App through which Divyangjan facing problems can upload picture with details and making offices, transport systems, Central/State Governments websites etc. accessible for Divyangjan.
- ii. Central Advisory Board Meeting: The Campaign was thoroughly reviewed with all States/UTs and Central Government Ministries/Departments during the last meeting of the Central Advisory Board held on 26.11.2020 at the level of Hon'ble Minister. During this meeting, the targets and timelines of the Campaign were reviewed and readjusted.
- iii. Meeting of Committee of Secretaries: The Cabinet Secretary chaired the Committee of Secretaries meeting to review AIC, the last being held on 27.11.2020 wherein directions were given for ensuring all government buildings are made accessible within stipulated timeframe, strict monitoring of the progress of the Campaign and development of accessibility standards in a time bound manner.

(Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) O.M.
No.1/4/2021-22/Budget/DEPwD dated 26th July, 2021)

Recommendation (Para. 6.6)

5.3 The Committee are happy that the Department, taking cognizance of Divyangjan sportspersons, have decided to establish Sports Canters with international level of facilities in different zones of the Country. Surprisingly, the two CDS proposed by the Department in Madhya Pradesh and Meghalaya are yet to see the light of the day. The Committee find no reasons for the delay in laying of foundation stone for Centre at Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh in September, 2020 after a gap of 16 months, when the project was approved in February 2019. The Committee can only hope that the work of the Centre will be completed by the target date of June, 2022. They also recommend that the decision with regard to setting up of the Centre at Shillong, Meghalaya may be followed up and timelines may be drawn so that the work of the Centre is not delayed and there is no cost overrun either. In view of the above, the Committee recommended that the Department should make sincere efforts in accomplishing the tasks undertaken by them and must draw the timelines for completion of the work. The Committee also recommend that suitable action may also be initiated for setting up more Centres across the Country after due assessment as conceived, once the two Centres start functioning satisfactorily.

Reply of the Government

5.4 The Department is making all efforts to complete the ongoing work in respect of the Centre for Disability Sports at Gwalior and in this regard weekly progress report is

called for from CPWD, the executing agency of the project. The Centre is likely to be completed by June, 2022.

A Project Monitoring Committee for monitoring and overall supervision of the project/Centre has been constituted with Secretary, DEPwD as the chairperson. Recently, its meeting was held on 17th May 2021 when it was emphasized by the Secretary, DEPwD that the project must be completed within scheduled timelines with proper synchronization of completion of all aspect of the project including procurement of furniture equipment, fitting, fixtures etc.

A separate proposal for setting up of another Center for Disability Sports, at Shillong is being appraised in consultation with Department of expenditure for a suitable decision.

(Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) O.M.
No.1/4/2021-22/Budget/DEPwD dated 26th July, 2021)

NEW DELHI;

December, 2021
Agrahayan, 1943 (Saka)

RAMA DEVI
Chairperson,
Standing Committee on
Social Justice and Empowerment

APPENDIX

ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE TWENTY-FIRST REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA) ON 'DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (2021-22)' OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (DEPARTMENT OF EMPOWERMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES)

(SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA)

	Total	Percentage
Total number of Recommendations	8	
(I) Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government : Paragraph Nos. – 5.6 and 8.11	2	25%
(II) Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies of the Government : Paragraph No. – 4.23	1	12.5%
(III) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted and which require reiteration: Paragraph No. – 2.12, 3.7 and 7.7	3	37.5%
(IV) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government are of in nature: Paragraph Nos. – 4.13 and 6.6	2	25%