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

(SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA)

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

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS
(2022-23)**

THIRTY-FIRST REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

March, 2022/ Chaitra, 1944 (Saka)

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Presented to Lok Sabha on 24.03.2022

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 24.03.2022



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

March, 2022/ Chaitra, 1944 (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 Yepthomi

Rajya Sabha

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

* Shri M. Mohamed Abdulla Resigned *w.e.f* 16.03.2022

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|------------------|
| 1. | Smt. Anita B. Panda | Joint Secretary |
| 2. | Smt Mamta Kemwal | Director |
| 3. | Shri Krishendra Kumar | Deputy Secretary |
| 4. | Shri Marshal Titto | Under Secretary |

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment (2021-2022) having been authorized by the Committee do present on their behalf this Thirty-First Report on 'Demands for Grants for 2022-23' pertaining to the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment).

2. The Committee considered the 'Demands for Grants for 2022-23' of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment) which were laid on the Table of the House on 9th February, 2022. After obtaining the Budget Documents, Explanatory Notes, etc., the Committee took evidence of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment) on 17th February, 2022. The Committee considered and adopted the Report at the sitting held on 22nd March, 2022.

3. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the Officers of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment) for tendering oral evidence and placing before them the detailed written notes and post evidence information as desired by the Committee in connection with the examination of the 'Demands for Grants for 2022-23'.

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

NEW DELHI;
22 March, 2022
01 Chaitra, 1944 (Saka)

SMT. RAMA DEVI
Chairperson,
Standing Committee on
Social Justice and Empowerment

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTORY

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 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 Beggar

1.3 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.

1.4 The target groups can be defined as follows:

- (i) Scheduled Castes
- (ii) Backward Classes
- (iii) Senior Citizen
- (iv) Victims of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse
- (v) Transgender Persons

- (vi) Beggars
- (vii) Economically weaker sections

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

- (i) Scheduled Castes: 20.14 crore (16.6 per cent)
- (ii) 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.
- (iii) Senior Citizens: 10.38 crore (8.57 per cent).
- (iv) 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.
- (v) Transgender Persons: 487803 (Population of 'others' during 2011)

1.6 There are two statutory National Commissions, one Non-Statutory Commissions, one Development Board, Two Foundations and three Finance and Development Corporations under the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment :

Commissions

- I. National Commission for Scheduled Castes.
- II. National Commission for Backward Classes
- III. National Commission for Safai Karamcharis
- IV. National Commission for Denotified Nomadic and Semi Nomadic Tribes
- V. Development and Welfare Board for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities (DWBDNCs).

Foundations

- I. Dr. Ambedkar Foundation
- II. Babu Jagjivan Ram National Foundation

Corporations

- I. National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC)
- II. National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC)
- III. National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC)

Institute

- I. National Institute of Social Defence (NISD)

CHAPTER II

BUDGETARY ALLOCATION AND UTILIZATION

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment presented their detailed Demands for Grants (Demand No. 93) for the financial year 2022-23 to Parliament on 9th February, 2022. The Budget Estimates (BE), Revised Estimates (RE) and Actual Expenditure (AE) for 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22 along with the Budget Estimates for 2022-23 is as follows:

(₹ in crore)

Year	BE	RE	AE
2019-20	8885.00	8885.00	8738.41
2020-21	10103.57	8207.56	8236.84
2021-22	10517.62	10180.00	2873.42 (As on 31.12.2021)
2022-23	11922.51	-	-

2.2. A Statement showing the scheme-wise details of plan outlays and actual expenditure during the last three years along with budget estimate for 2022-23 is as follows:

(₹ in crore)

S.No	Programme/ Schemes	2019-20			2020-21			2021-22			% of Shortfall/Excess Expenditure Year Wise			BE 2022- 23
		BE	RE	Actual Expenditure	BE	RE	Actual Expenditure	BE	RE	Actual Expenditure	2019- 20	2020- 21	2021- 22	
Schemes														
	SCD Division													
1	Post Matric Scholarship for SCs	2926.8 2	2690. 00	2711. 31	2987. 33	3815. 87	4010.1 6	3415. 62	4196. 59	258.13	-0.79	- 5.09	93.85	5660.00
2	Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM AJAY)							1800. 00	1800. 00	1293.0 7			28.16	1950.00

3	Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan	1100.00	1100.00	1114.73	1200.00	300.00	387.00	Merged with PM AJAY						
4	Pradhan Mantri Adharsh Gram Yojana	390.00	718.00	717.96	700.00	300.00	216.52							
5	Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana	107.76	25.00	25.00	30.00	30.00	56.40							
6	Pre Matric Scholarship for SCs and Others	355.00	355.00	352.70	700.00	600.00	569.52	725.00	725.00	241.16		5.08	66.74	500.00
7	Pre-matric Scholarships for the children of those engaged in unclean occupation	5.00	30.00	29.40	25.00	27.00	26.81	Merged with Pre Matric Scholarship for SCs and Others						
8	Strengthening of machinery for Enforcement of Protection of Civil Right Act 1955 and Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989	530.00	630.00	619.64	550.00	600.00	593.39	600.00	600.00	452.09	1.64	1.10	24.65	600.00
9	Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers	110.00	99.93	84.80	110.00	30.00	16.60	100.00	43.31	24.00	15.14	44.67	44.59	70.00
10	Scheme of Residential Education for Students in High School in Targeted Area (SRESHTA) for SCs (Earlier Assistance to Voluntary Organisations for SCs)	70.00	70.00	67.17	100.00	125.00	55.81	200.00	63.21	8.92	4.04	55.35	85.89	89.00
11	Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for SCs													
	11.01 National Fellowship for SCs	360.00	246.66	246.66	300.00	125.00	119.00	300.00	125.00	122.44	0.00	4.80	2.05	173.00
	11.02 Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs	30.00	30.00	13.26	30.00	30.00	11.97	50.00	30.00	6.18	55.80	60.12	79.40	47.00
	11.03 Top Class	40.50	40.50	39.70	40.00	50.00	52.88	70.00	70.00	18.79	1.98	-	73.16	108.00

	Education for SCs											5.75		
	11.04 National Overseas Scholarship for SCs	20.00	20.00	32.76	20.00	30.00	33.09	30.00	35.00	24.74	-63.80	-10.29	29.31	36.00
	Total: Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for SCs	450.50	337.16	332.38	390.00	235.00	216.93	450.00	260.00	172.15	-6.02	48.88	183.92	364.00
12	Assistance to State Scheduled Castes Development Corporations	30.00	20.00	20.00	50.00	20.00	15.86	25.00	0.01		0.00	20.72	100.00	0.01
13	Vanchit Ikai Samooh aur Vargon ki Arthik Sahayata (VISVAS) Yojana (Allocation for SCs)				0.00	32.13	10.00	100.00	10.00			68.88	100.00	50.00
14	Venture Capital Fund for SCs and OBCs (Allocation for SCs)	60.00	60.00	160.00	65.00	40.00	30.00	100.00	70.00		-166.67	25.00	100.00	70.00
15	Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi (PM DAKSH) Yojana (Allocation for SCs)							60.00	38.94	10.00			74.32	40.00
16	Credit Gurantee fund for SCs	0.01	0.01	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00	
17	Upgradation of Merit of SC Students	0.01	0.00	0.00	Scheme discontinued									
	Total SCD Division	6135.10	6135.10	6235.09	6908.33	6155.00	6204.98	7575.62	7807.06	2459.52	-1.63	-0.81	68.50	9393.01
	Social Defence, Media and Research													
18	Information, Monitoring, Evaluation and Social Audit	50.00	16.00	14.00	20.00	5.00	2.78	25.00	25.00	5.02	12.50	44.47	79.92	19.50
19	Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY) (Earlier National Action Plan for Senior	133.10	143.00	141.81	204.00	153.00	133.31	300.00	150.00	30.13	0.83	12.87	79.91	150.00

	Citizens)													
	Support from SCWF in AVYAY							50.00	149.48	2.08			98.61	0.00
	Amount Met from SCWF							-50.00	-149.48				100.00	0.00
20	National Action Plan on Drug Demand Reduction	265.99	245.00	243.81	260.00	180.00	149.43	260.00	200.00	40.84	0.49	16.98	79.58	200.00
21	Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood & Enterprise (SMILE)													
	Integrated Programme for Rehabilitation of Beggars	5.00	25.00	21.14	100.00	0.00	0.00	50.00	10.00	0.00	15.44	0.00	100.00	15.00
	Scheme for Transgender Persons	5.00	5.00	4.50	10.00	0.00	0.00	20.00	25.00	0.00	10.00	0.00	100.00	30.00
	Total: Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood & Enterprise (SMILE)	10.00	30.00	25.64	110.00	0.00	0.00	70.00	35.00	0.00	25.44	0.00	200.00	45.00
22	Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana	0.01	0.01	0.00	1.00	0.00	26.50	Scheme merged with AVYAY Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY)						
	Total Social Defence	459.10	434.01	425.26	595.00	338.00	312.02	655.00	410.00	78.07	2.02	7.69	80.96	414.50
	Backward Classes Division													
23	PM Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme for Vibrant India (PM YASASVI) for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs													
	Post-Matric Scholarship for OBCs	1360.00	1397.50	1299.19	1415.00	1100.00	1159.59	1300.00	1300.00	138.22	7.03	-5.42	89.37	1083.00
	Pre-matric Scholarship to OBCs	220.00	220.00	201.42	250.00	175.00	165.85	250.00	250.00	36.80	8.45	5.23	85.28	478.00
	Boys & Girls Hostels for OBCs	30.00	30.00	21.29	50.00	35.00	31.59	30.00	30.00	4.98	29.03	9.76	83.40	20.00

	Total: PM Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme for Vibrant India (PM YASASVI) for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs	1610.00	1647.50	1521.90	1715.00	1310.00	1357.02	1580.00	1580.00	180.00	44.51	9.57	258.05	1581.00
24	Assistance for Skill Development of OBCs, DNTs and EBCs	30.00	34.00	34.00	50.00	50.00	47.29	Scheme merged with PM DAKSH						
25	Scheme for Educational and Economical Development of De-notified and Nomadic Tribes	10.00	10.00	9.00	10.00	10.00	9.00	Schemes merged with components of PM YASASVI						
26	Post Matric Scholarship for Economically Backward Classes	23.00	13.00	13.99	25.00	25.00	25.00							
27	Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for OBCs and EBCs													
	National Fellowship for OBCs and EBCs	70.00	52.50	52.50	120.00	45.00	33.00	100.00	60.00	40.00	0.00	26.67	33.33	53.00
	Interest Subsidy on Overseas Studies of OBCs	15.00	26.09	26.09	35.00	35.00	32.61	30.00	30.00	0.00	0.00	6.83	100.00	27.00
	Total: Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for OBCs and EBCs	85.00	78.59	78.59	155.00	80.00	65.61	130.00	90.00	40.00	0.00	33.49	133.33	80.00
28	Vanchit Ikai SamooH aur Vargon ki Arthik Sahayata (VISVAS) Yojana (Allocation for OBCs)				0.00	32.00	10.00	50.00	10.00	0.00		68.75	100.00	30.00
29	Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi (PM							40.00	40.54	12.01			70.37	44.00

	DAKSH) Yojana (Allocation for OBCs)													
30	Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNT/NT/SNTs (SEED)							50.00	40.40	0.00			100.00	28.00
31	Venture Capital Fund for SCs and OBCs (Allocation for OBCs)	50.00	50.00	90.00	60.00	10.00	0.00	20.00	20.00	0.00	-80.00	100.00	100.00	40.00
	Total Backward Classes Division	1808.00	1833.09	1747.48	2015.00	1517.00	1513.92	1870.00	1780.94	232.01	4.67	0.20	86.97	1803.00
	Grand Total of all schemes of the Department	8402.20	8402.20	8407.83	9518.33	8010.00	8030.92	10100.62	9998.00	2769.60	-0.07	-0.26	72.30	11610.51

2.3 With regard to utilisation of only 35.03% allocated Budget during 2021-22, the Department inter-alia submitted in their note that:

“The release on the head of many schemes could not be utilized by various States and hence, no utilization certificate was produced by them thereby posing impediments on the way of further releasing of funds. Further, Post-Matric Scholarship scheme for Scheduled Castes constitutes more than 40% of total budgetary allocation. Due to COVID induced closure of schools/colleges, 67.93% of allocation of the scheme could not be disbursed in time. Secondly, States and Union Territories also delayed in sending their proposals for the purpose causing subsequent delay at the end of the central level. 7 major centrally Sponsored Schemes were approved by Cabinet only on 1st February, 2022”.

2.4 The Secretary submitted during the course of oral evidence before the Committee for dismal utilization of allocation during 2021-22 that:

“There are only three reasons. One, there are many big schemes which are meant for the SC welfare or the other schemes for scholarship. We have not got the continuation orders on time. We got the continuation orders on 1st February, that is almost at the fag end of the year. So, that was one reason why we could not go full hog and spend the money. That is one reason. Second, 90 per cent of the money is extended through the State Governments. So, this time, the Finance Ministry has made a change. This change is not only for us but also for all the departments and all the schemes. In this, you have to have what is called as a State Nodal Agency.

So, they brought in a new system. That means, we cannot release to the State unless that system is in place. So, many States resisted to start. They said that they will not do. Then, we convinced them. We had a lot of interaction. We have had almost a week's interaction. We sent people. So, now they have complied with that requirement, and in the process, we lost about six to seven months. So, that is another reason which has impacted all our centrally sponsored schemes. Third, about 40 per cent of our budget is only for one scheme, that is called Post Matric Scholarship for SCs. In that, we have again brought in a new revolutionary change where the Government will directly send the money. It will not give money through the State Government. It will give money through the Direct Benefit Transfer to the student. So, we have set up that process. We have transferred money to about 15 lakh people. We are going to transfer money for another 45 lakh in the next 45 days. We are basically working with that thing. So, there are some difficulties we faced in the scholarship schemes because the schools and colleges are closed. So, they could not register or verify the applications in time."

2.5 On being enquired about the steps being taken by the Department to spend the remaining Budget out of the Revised Estimates of ₹10,180.00 crore (RE) till 15.02.2022, the Department stated as under:

"During the FY 2021-22, the total allocation to Scholarship schemes of Department is ₹6,300.62 crore of total allocation of ₹10,180.00 crore. Among the Scholarship scheme, PMS-SC which is flagship schemes of the Department has major allocation of ₹4,196.59 crore which is 41.22 % of RE allocation. The Scheme of PMS-SC has been revised with the approval of the Cabinet with sharing pattern of 60:40 between Centre and State. As per revised PMS-SC scheme, 60% central share will be released to students after the State share of 40% is already released to eligible students. In the present year, which is the 1st year of the revised scheme, it is observed that the State Governments were not releasing the state share (40%). Hence, Department sought relaxation from Department of Expenditure for the present year for releasing the Central share upfront. On receipt of relaxation, keeping in view the interest of SC students, Central Government has initiated to disburse 60% central share after successful verification of SC students by the State Government on the NSP portal.

The revised scheme has provisions of DBT where the central share of the scholarship is released to Students' Bank account directly. The data/details of students are received from State after verification on NSP portal and PFMS. However, 2021-22 has also been the COVID pandemic year.

Hence, School/College/ Institutes were closed for most period, during the year. Now, School/College/ Institutes are gradually opening and proposals

from the States are being received in the Department. The same Covid situation is in respect of other scholarship scheme related to BC, EBC, DNTs and NFSC.

Further, Department of Expenditure has introduced revised procedure of fund release (for Centrally Sponsored Schemes) to the States through Single Nodal Agency (SNA) during the current FY 2021-22. Notification of Single Nodal Agency (SNA) and opening of SNA account and mapping of the same with PFMS are required to be done by State Government. Its implementation by the State Government has taken time. Now, after compliance of SNA procedure, the proposals from State Government have been received.

Overall, the COVID 19 pandemic and modifications in the manner of release under Centrally Sponsored Schemes has impacted release of funds. Department is making all efforts to ensure the release of funds after proper verification of proposals, settlement of pending Utilization Certificates etc.”

2.6 As per the Background note furnished by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, the Budget proposed and allocated in respect of the 2022-23 is as follow:

(₹ in Crore)

Scheme/Non-Scheme	Budget proposed by the Department	Budget Allocated (Budget Estimate)
Schemes	11,826.09	11,610.51
Non Schemes	307.00	312.00
Total	12,133.09	11,922.51

2.7. On being enquired about the steps to fill the gap between Budgetary Projections and Budgetary Allocation along with the criteria adopted for calculating Budgetary Projection under each head, the Department submitted in the written reply that:

“Ministry of Finance has allocated ₹ 11922.51 crore for the year 2022-23 against the annual plan proposal of ₹ 12133.09 crore. The gap between

projected demand of the Department and Budget allocated is not significant and the Department will undertake the envisaged schemes/non-schemes during the year 2022-23 within the allocated budget and if required, seek additional funds at Revised Estimates 2022-23 stage. Overall, at least 72 percent of allocated budget is kept for schemes for Scheduled Castes, for North Eastern Region (NER) budgetary provision of 2% of SCs Schemes and 10% of Other Schemes allocation is kept.”

2.8 On being enquired about the initiatives taken to ensure that the financial resources are optimally allocated among the schemes in comparison to the last Financial Year 2021-22, the Department submitted in the written reply that:

“From FY 2021-22, in the PMS-SC sharing pattern of 60:40 is introduced with the provision of DBT. The central share of 60 percent is being disbursed to the students’ bank account directly through DBT upon verification of details of students on portal by State and verification of bank account in PFMS. From the next FY 2022-23, DBT mechanism is proposed to be followed in Pre-Matric Scholarship for SC and others.

Further, in case of Centrally Sponsored Schemes, Department of Expenditure revised SNA procedure for release of funds for making effective mechanism which will help in tracking the utilization of funds by State Government. The Department has also setup Project Monitoring Unit (PMU) for inspecting the Grantee Bodies viz. NGOs, Coaching Institutes, Hostels and Beneficiaries etc.

Under Free Coaching Scheme, students have been given liberty to choose the institute of their own choice both in online and offline mode. Under Mode-1 of SHRESTHA scheme, selection of best schools is being done at the district level for providing better educational opportunity to SC students.

Under the PM-DAKSH scheme, PM-DAKSH Portal and PM-DAKSH Mobile App have been launched for enabling on-line registration for a Skill Development Training Programmes. The scheme has been made trainee centric by providing the facilities for (i) online registration, (ii) selection of job roles, (iii) selection of training institutes and (iv) place of training to trainees in PM-DAKSH portal.”

2.9 The Committee are disappointed that the Department has been able to spend only ₹ 2,873.42 crore till 31st December, 2021, out of the Revised Estimate of ₹10,180.00 crore during the year 2021-22 on various welfare schemes administered by them. They note the reasons submitted by the Department for the slow pace of expenditure, such as delay in getting continuation orders of many big schemes meant for the welfare of SCs as late as 1st February, 2022, six month time taken to convince State Governments to appoint a Single Nodal Agency (SNA) under various Schemes, delay in setting up the process to transfer funds from Central Share directly to the beneficiary account through DBT in Post Matric scholarship etc. While the cooperation from State Governments is a time taking process, the Committee feel that the Department should have been more pro-active to obtain orders for continuation of various Schemes. Nevertheless assuming that the ball has now been set rolling, the Committee hope that the initiatives taken by the Department would certainly streamline the system and provide maximum benefit to the needy beneficiaries of the Schemes with the funds releasing on time leaving no scope for their misuse. The Committee are though apprehensive as the Department, in general, is given to spending a large chunk of allocated funds at the fag end of the year particularly on Scholarship scheme component. They, therefore, exhort the Department to take steps to implement the new system, so painstakingly developed, with full sincerity. The Committee further hope that the appointment of single Nodal agency by State/ UT Governments under various Schemes would be completed in a time bound manner, and would like to be informed about the

State-wise position of the nodal agencies appointed by State/UT Governments under each Central Sector Scheme of the Department.

2.10 The Committee are pained to observe that the budget of the Department was downsized at RE stage in the last 2 years, as the BE of ₹ 10103.57 crore and ₹ 10517.62 crore was reduced to ₹8207.56 crore and ₹10180 crore at revised stage, during 2020-21 and 2021-22 respectively. The Committee are concerned that even a reduced budget was not utilized fully. They are unable to comprehend the logic behind submitting higher projections at the time of annual budget preparations and thereby even failing to fully spend the Revised Estimates. In 2022-23 also, the projections of the Department have been curtailed by the Ministry of Finance and as ₹11,922.51 crore has been allocated instead of the projected ₹12133.09 crore. The Committee have been assured that they would be able to spend the full allocation and if there is any gap they will seek additional funds at revised stage. The Committee earnestly feel that the welfare of the socially, educational and economically marginalised sections of the society must not be compromised. The Committee therefore, recommend that the appropriate and timely decisions should be taken for effective implementation of various Schemes so that even an unexpected situation such as COVID 19 pandemic does not become a hurdle in meeting the aspirations of the targeted persons. They would desire to be apprised of the overall utilization status of 2021-22 allocation too.

2.11 The Committee, after scrutiny of Budget documents of the Department, find that the structure of various Schemes stands changed as various Schemes meant for same purpose were merged in one Scheme from 2021-22 such as Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM AJAY), Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY), Scholarship for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS), Pradhan Mantri Dakshta or Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi (PM DAKSH), Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNT/NT/SNTS (SEED) and Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme for Vibrant India (PM-YASASVI). The Committee while appreciating the efforts made by the Department for revamping these Schemes, desire that the procedure/methodology for implementing these Schemes should be properly synchronized and communicated to States/UTs, implementing agencies and other stakeholders. The Committee would like to be apprised in this regard.

CHAPTER –III

POST MATRIC SCHOLARSHIP FOR SCHEDULED CASTE STUDENTS (PMS-SC)

Post Matric Scholarship for Scheduled Caste Students (PMS-SC) is a flagship Scheme of the Ministry to provide financial assistance to scheduled caste students studying at post matriculation or post-secondary stage to enable them to complete their education. It is a centrally sponsored scheme under which central assistance is released to State Governments/UTs and is in operation since 1944. The scholarships are available for Indian Nationals and whose parents/Guardian's income do not exceed ₹ 2.5 Lakh per annum studying in India only and are awarded by the Government of States/ Union Territories to which the applicant actually belongs. State Government being implementing agency invites the application and select the eligible applicants as per the guidelines issued by the Department.

3.2 The scheme has been recently revised by the Cabinet in December, 2020 for the period 2020-21 to 2025-26. The major modifications introduced to ensure effective implementation and better monitoring of the scheme are as follows:

- i. The existing committed liability system will be replaced with a fixed sharing ratio of 60:40 of the demand for the year between the Centre and the States/UTs (90:10 in case of North Eastern States), where 'demand for the year' is defined as the total requirement of funds (including Central and State share) for providing scholarships to all registered students for studies for the year.
- ii. There shall be a focus on increasing the enrolment of the target group and in this regard, special awareness drive shall be undertaken by the State Governments/UTs about the scheme through the Gram Panchayat Notice Boards, school committees, discussions in the parent-teacher association meetings and other public awareness measures, which will also minimize chances of any misuse.
- iii. The students belonging to the poorest SC households should be given top priority for coverage under the scheme. In this regard State Governments

will prioritize and include (i) students from SC households with three or more deprivations as per SECC-2011, (ii) the students from the households where one or both the parents are illiterate and (iii) the students who have passed 10th standard from a State Government/ Municipality/Local Body schools under the scheme.

- iv. Only such higher educational Institutions which maintain the laid down academic standards shall be covered under the Scheme. All such participating institutions shall be required to obtain NAAC/NBA accreditation before 2024 for continuation in the scheme from 2025-26 onwards. In case of schools and diploma institutions, only those which are recognised by the competent authority shall be considered under the scheme.
- v. The scheme shall be run on an online platform with robust cyber security measures that would assure transparency, accountability, efficiency, and timely delivery of the assistance without any delays. States shall be encouraged to use the National Scholarship Portal. However, if any State is already running an online portal that fulfils all the laid down parameters, they can continue with it, but share the data on real-time basis to the National Scholarship Portal or any other portal as specified by the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment for enabling constant monitoring.
- vi. The States shall undertake fool-proof verification of the eligibility, caste status, Aadhar identification and bank account details on the online portal. Apart from this, they shall maintain a complete database of the beneficiaries under various scholarship schemes to ensure de-duplication of the beneficiaries.
- vii. Transfer of financial assistance to the students under the scheme shall be on DBT mode, and preferably using the Aadhar Enabled Payment System.
- viii. The Central Share from 2021-22 and onwards will be directly released through the DBT mode to the students' accounts.
- ix. There shall be thorough evaluation of the outcomes of the scheme at regular intervals to ascertain the effectiveness of implementation and for tracking the progress of the students. This may include conduct of social audits once a year, annual third party evaluation, and half-yearly self-audited reports from each institution.

3.3 The BE, RE and AE during 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 alongwith achievements made is as follows:

(₹ in crore)

Year	BE	RE	AE	Achievement
2019-20	2926.82	2690.00	2711.31	52.86 lakh Beneficiaries
2020-21	2987.33	3815.87	4010.16	62.37 Lakh Beneficiaries
2021-22	3415.62	4196.59	258.13	Approx. 63 Lakh Beneficiaries are assumed to be covered
2022-23	5660	-	-	*

*No target was fixed as the Scheme is open ended.

3.4 On being enquired about the reasons due to which only ₹ 258.13 crore out of the Revised Estimates of ₹4196.59 could be spent by 31st December, 2021, the Department responded in their written reply that:

“As the admission of students in the colleges/schools was delayed due to the pandemic, the application portals have opened late resulting in delayed processing of applications and the verification process in most of the States/UTs is still ongoing. Thus, the first release of Central share was made on December 6th 2021 only, and till now, ₹ 720.45 crore (approx) has been spent. Further, in order to avoid hardships to students due to delay in disbursal, Central share is being released this year irrespective of the fact whether or not the State has released its share. With the opening of schools and colleges, the process of verification of the applications has gained momentum now and it is expected that the allotted budget will be completely utilized by the end of this financial year.”

3.5 In this context, the Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment deposed during the deliberation with the Committee that:

“इस बार बहुत ही अलग सा अकादमिक ईयर था, क्योंकि एग्जाम्स भी नहीं हुए हैं। अप्रैल से जुलाई तक एग्जाम भी नहीं हुआ है। कई जगहों पर अगस्त में एग्जाम हुआ है। जैसे ही वे एग्जाम पास करते हैं, तब उनके रिन्यूअल के लिए एलिजिबिलिटी बनता है। कई राज्य सरकार ने ऐसा

किया है कि नवंबर के बाद ही इस पोर्टल को खोला है। मैडम, यह हर साल होने वाला नहीं है। अगले साल से हम पूरा डेट्स तय कर चुके हैं। हम भगवान से प्रार्थनाकरते हैं कि यह सिस्टमेटिक तरीके से चले। अभी एक अच्छी बात हुई है कि हम एक अच्छा सिस्टम चालू कर चुके हैं। अभी यह चल रहा है। इसके लिए 1000 करोड़ रुपये कोई कम रकम नहीं है। अभी हमें 31 मार्च तक बहुत कुछ करना है। हमारे पास बहुत काम है। इसके लिए हम लगे हुए हैं।“

3.6 On being asked whether the funding ratio fixed for Central-State sharing of scholarship schemes is being strictly complied by the States/UTs and the status of share released by each State/UT to students in 2020-21, the Committee were informed by the Department in their written reply that:

“Department replied that during 2020-21, Central Assistance was released to the States/UTs treasuries and the State disbursed the Central share as well as State share of scholarship amount to the beneficiaries. The States are required to release their share of funds in the ratio fixed under the scheme. As per the information furnished by the States, most of them have released their share of funds.”

3.7 The status of the share released by the States/UTs to students in 2020-21 is attached below.

(₹ in Crore)			
SI No.	State/UT	2020-21 CA Released	SI No. State share*
1	Andhra Pradesh	450.01	430.55
2	Assam	18.00	0.09
3	Bihar	47.83	NIL
4	Chandigarh	0	0.35
5	Chhattisgarh	38.54	16.62
6	Daman & Diu	0	0.13
7	Delhi	0	0
8	Goa	0	78.99
9	Gujarat	170.32	NR
10	Haryana	0	NIL
11	Himachal Pradesh	11.35	7.5
12	Jammu & Kashmir	0	3.62
13	Jharkhand	13.42	20.69
14	Karnataka	252.79	230
14	Kerala	86.85	47.18

16	Madhya Pradesh	319.40	NR
17	Maharashtra	558.00	372.08
18	Manipur	6.89	0.59
19	Odisha	130.67	110.81
20	Puducherry	2.21	6.74
21	Punjab	191.58	152.8
22	Rajasthan	284.01	131.96
23	Sikkim	0.81	0.09
24	Tamil Nadu	120.23	430.37
25	Telangana	245.03	246.37
26	Tripura	30.37	3.06
27	Uttar Pradesh	892.36	380.74
28	Uttarakhand	9.76	6.26
29	West Bengal	128.17	NR
	Total	4008.60	2677.59

*As reported by the States

3.8 With regard to the timelines fixed for release of scholarships to the students and steps are being taken to ensure that the scholarship is received by the student in the same financial year, the Department informed to the Committee in their written reply that:

Dates of receiving of applications	Date by which State share (40%; 10% in case of NE States) should be released	Date by which Central share (60%; 90% in case of NE States) should be released
From 1st April to 31 st July	15th August	30th August
From 1st August to 30th November	30th December	26th January
From 1st December to 31st January	28th February	15th March
From 1st February to 31st March	With 75 days of application	Within 90 days of application

3.9 On being asked about the reasons due to which Budgetary Estimates of ₹5,660.00 crore has been made for 2022-23 particularly when the substantial amount of Revised

Estimates for the year 2021-22 is yet to be spent, the Department responded in their written reply that:

“For FY2020-21, ₹4,008.10 crore has been released to States for onward disbursement to beneficiaries. Further for FY 2021-22, as per the proposals submitted by the States, Central share amounting ₹5,476.70 has been approved on the basis of their anticipated demand. Accordingly, considering that there will be some increase in number of beneficiaries and per beneficiary cost, it is envisaged that for 2022-23, Central Assistance of around ₹ 5,660.00 crore shall be released to the beneficiaries.”

3.10 With regard to the revision of income criteria of ₹ 2.5 Lakh fixed for grant of scholarship, the Department submitted in their written reply that:

“The income criteria were last revised during 2013-14 from ₹ 2.00 lakhs per annum to ₹ 2.5 lakhs per annum. The objective of the scheme is to enroll more and more students from poor SC households by providing financial assistance to complete their education. Accordingly, Cabinet has approved the current income limit of ₹ 2.5 lakhs per annum after extensively considering all the facets of the Scheme.”

3.11 In this regard, the Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment informed the Committee during deliberations with the Committee that:

“इसमें इनकम क्राइटेरिया बदलने के बारे में चर्चा चल रही है। इसके ऊपर एक ग्रुप ऑफ मिनिस्टर्स गठित है। पोस्ट और प्री मैट्रिक एससीज़ का ही नहीं, वैसी दूसरी स्कॉलरशिप्स भी हैं। इसमें सब मिलाकर हम 3 करोड़ स्कॉलरशिप्स देते हैं। इसके बारे में निर्णय लेने के लिए एक ग्रुप ऑफ मिनिस्टर्स इस पर चर्चा कर रहा है। हमें आशा है कि इसमें कुछ अच्छी न्यूज आएगी।“

3.12 As regards to the monitoring and control over performance of the scheme, the Department has adopted the following system:

- (i) Online end to end processing, verification of eligibility credentials through online transaction to ensure greater transparency, control duplicity and wrongful claims by institutions.
- (ii) Mandatory payment of Central Share of maintenance allowance and non refundable fees through DBT to bank accounts of beneficiaries only.

- (iii) Regular follow up through correspondence, meeting with State Government officials and Regional Conferences organized to ensure timely and accurate submission of requisite documents to ensure close monitoring over the performance of the scheme.

3.13 The Committee note that the Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for Scheduled Caste students has been revised in December, 2020 for effective implementation and better monitoring of the Scheme. Despite the same, the Committee find that the Department has been able to spend only ₹720.45 crore till February, 2022 out of the Revised Estimate of ₹4,196.59 crore for the year 2021-22, while the Department have assured that the allotted budget will be completely utilised since the processing of applications has gained momentum. The Committee have been informed that the verification process in most of the States/ UTs is still progressing since the applications portal opened late due to delayed admissions in college/ schools in Covid 19 times. The extraordinary circumstances which derailed the process cannot be ignored, hence, the Committee feel that this trend of delay in spending of funds must be addressed now in order to achieve the goal. Further the Committee observe that the number of beneficiaries for 2021-22 is almost similar as that of 2020-21. A worried trend, they feel that the number of beneficiaries should increase to indicate that due care is being taken by the Department to ensure maximum benefits to the intended beneficiaries. The Committee would like the Department to take suitable measures in this regard, also the State/ UT Governments should reach out to the targeted sections of the society and popularise the scheme.

3.14 The Committee find that as per the ratio fixed for sharing of the Post Matric Scholarships between Centre and States, Central share of 60% is to be released after 40% State share is released. During the year 2021-22, the Central share had

to be released first irrespective of the fact whether or not the State has released its share, to avoid hardships to students. The Committee are perturbed to note from the details furnished by the Department that in 2020-21 Central share of Scholarship were not released to Chandigarh, Daman & Diu, Delhi, Goa, Haryana and Jammu & Kashmir. Also Bihar, Delhi and Haryana did not release their share in 2020-21. The Committee are also surprised to find that several States such as Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal failed to provide any information with regard to their share in Post Matric Scholarships. The Committee are of the opinion that such instances discourages students which ultimately affects the future of the young generation. The Committee would like the Department to take appropriate steps to ensure that such instances are not repeated. The Committee would like to recommend the Department to set up a high powered Committee to look into such matters and pursue with the State/UT Governments to release their shares timely.

3.15 The Committee find that the income criteria of ₹2.5 lakh annually fixed for grant of scholarship was revised in 2013-14. The Committee strongly believe that such a low income criteria fixed must have become a serious hurdle for many of the needy students. The Committee have been informed that a Group of Ministers is examining this issue and would suitably revise the annual income limit. The Committee are of the strong view that the income criteria for getting scholarship should be revised and also recommend that suitable mechanism should be

developed for the periodic revision of the amount of the scholarship. They would like to be apprised of the status on the matter.

CHAPTER-IV

PRE-MATRIC SCHOLARSHIPS FOR SCs AND OTHERS

The Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for SCs is implemented through States to support parents of SC children for education of their wards studying in classes IX and X in order to gradually reduce the drop-out rate, during the transitional phase between the elementary and secondary class stages, which could improve participation of SC children in classes IX and X of the pre-matric stage subsequently leading to preparation for Post Matric education.

4.2 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. 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 hostelle. The scholarship terminates at the end of class X. The duration in an academic year is ten months.

4.3 A Statement showing the details of plan outlays and actual expenditure during the last three years along with budget estimate for 2022-23 is as follows:

Pre Matric Scholarship for SCs and Others														<i>(₹ in crore)</i>	
S.No	Programme/ Schemes	2019-20			2020-21			2021-22			% of Shortfall/Excess Expenditure Year Wise			BE 2022- 23	
		BE	RE	Actual I Expen diture	BE	RE	Actual Expend iture	BE	RE	Actual Expend iture	2019- 20	2020 -21	2021- 22		
Schemes															
	SCD Division														

1	Pre Matric Scholarship for SCs and Others	355.00	355.00	352.70	700.00	600.00	569.52	725.00	725.00	241.16		5.08	66.74	500.00
2	Pre-matric Scholarships for the children of those engaged in unclean occupation	5.00	30.00	29.40	25.00	27.00	26.81	Merged with Pre Matric Scholarship for SCs and Others						

4.4 A statement showing the physical targets and achievements under the scheme is as follows:

Sl No.	Name of the Scheme/project/programme	Division	2019-20			2020-21			2021-22			% of achievements for last three years	2022-23
			Target	Achievement	Shortfall, if any, indicating reasons in brief	Target	Achievement	Shortfall, if any, indicating reasons in brief	Target	Achievement	Shortfall, if any, indicating reasons in brief		
Scheduled Cast Division													
1.	Pre-Matric Scholarship for SCs	SCD-B	*	27.80 Lakh	NA	*	30.68	NA	*	Over 30 Lakh** beneficiaries to be covered.	NA		
Note: (*) The scheme is open ended as regards beneficiaries, institutions, courses and reimbursement of fees. Hence, the nature of scheme is such that Physical targets can't be fixed.													
(**) Updated as on 31.12.2021													
2.	Pre-Matric Scholarship to the children of those engaged in occupations involving cleaning and prone to health hazards.		*	2 Lakh	NA	*	2.30 Lakh	NA	*	Over 3 lakh beneficiaries to be covered under this scheme.	NA		
Note: (*) The nature of the Scheme is such that Physical targets cannot be fixed.													

4.5 The major changes proposed in the revised scheme are as follows:

- (i) Change in sharing pattern from concept of 60:40 sharing ratio between Centre and State (90:10 In case of North Eastern States) or notional allocation, whichever is less, to a fixed sharing ratio.
- (ii) The central share would be paid directly to the account of beneficiary/guardian through DBT w.e.f. 2022-23 only after ensuring that the concerned State Government has released their share.

4.6 With regard to the achievements made under both the schemes, the Committee were informed by the Department that:

“During 2020-21, due to the effect of COVID-19 pandemic, the data regarding the number of beneficiaries reported by the States/UTs were on lower side. As the schools remained closed for almost complete year, many States/UTs were not able to utilize the funds and cover all the beneficiaries. As a result, over 30 lakh students were covered under the scheme. Further, with continuous follow-ups with the states implementing the Pre-Matric Unclean occupation scheme, it is highly expected that the States/UTs shall submit the comprehensive proposals under the combined scheme that may eventually increase the beneficiary coverage in the upcoming year. Further, in 2021-22, as it is expected that with the continuous efforts of the Governments, the schools shall reopen and the process of scholarships run smoothly. Also, with the re-design of the National Scholarship Portal and newly adopted approach under the combined scheme, increased coverage of the beneficiaries is highly anticipated. It is informed that the central release of funds under both the schemes for the FY 2020- 21 has been done and the continuous follow-ups with the States regarding complete utilization of the funds by the States is ensured. As communicated by the States/UTs, the disbursement of scholarships is under process and no eligible beneficiaries shall be left out from the coverage.”

4.7 On being enquired about the reasons due to which Pre-Matric Scholarships for the children of those engaged in unclean occupation have been merged with Pre Matric Scholarship for SCs and Others since 2021-22, the Department submitted in their written reply that:

- “(a). Both the existing Schemes are catering to same base group of students, i.e. children studying in Pre-Matric Stage with the prime objective of reducing the incidence of drop-outs.
- (b). For the last two years, under Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for the children of those engaged in unclean occupation, no proposals were received from the States except State of Gujarat. One of the prime reasons being the high financial burden on the States as the fund sharing pattern was based on the concept of Committed Liability. For this reason, recently the scheme has been merged with the Pre-Matric SC scholarship scheme and a fixed sharing pattern of 60:40 has been adopted from 2021-22, thus resulting in reduced financial burden on the States.”

4.8 On being asked about the measures taken so that merger would not adversely affect the target groups of both the different schemes, the Department submitted in their written reply that:

“The proposed merged scheme comprises of two separate and distinct components viz. Component-I relating to Pre Matric Scholarship for SC students for studying in class IX & X and Component-II relating to Pre-Matric Scholarships to the Children of those Engaged in occupations involving cleaning and prone to health hazards. The details of beneficiaries of respective components shall be sought exclusively from the State thereby ensuring that coverage of students under each component is not adversely affected.”

4.9 On being enquired about the reasons due to which the Budgetary Allocations could not be spent, the Department responded in a written reply:

“Due to the pandemic, there has been considerable delay in admission of students in the schools. Consequently, the portals have opened late resulting in delayed receiving and processing of applications. Further, the Central release under Pre-Matric SC scheme to the States could be done only after they had opened the Single Nodal Agency accounts and map them on PFMS, as per the directions of the Ministry of Finance. Also, many States reported huge unspent balances due to which further funds could not be released until the utilisation certificates were received. Nonetheless, till 10.2.2022, Central Assistance amounting to ₹ 362.07 crore has already been released to States under the scheme. It is anticipated that pending UCs from the States will be received and the budgetary allocation made under the Scheme shall be fully utilised by the end of this financial year.”

4.10 On being enquired about the reasons due to which Budgetary Allocation for the year 2022-23 has been reduced in comparison to 2021-22 and options available with the Department in case the demand exceeds the availability of funds, the Department submitted in their written reply:

“The budgetary allocation for the year 2022-23 has been recommended by EFC after considering all the facets of the proposal for merger of the existing schemes. Further from 2022- 23, the Central share is to be released directly to the beneficiaries through DBT so as to, inter alia, eliminate duplicate and fraudulent applications. This is likely to reduce the fund requirement. Accordingly, the Budgetary Allocation for the year

2022-23 has been reduced in comparison to 2021-22. In case the demand exceeds the availability of funds, supplementary budget shall be sought.”

4.11 With regard to the monitoring and control over the performance of the Scheme, the Department informed that:

- “(i) Online end to end processing, verification of eligibility credentials through online transaction to ensure greater transparency, control duplicity and wrongful claims by institutions.*
- (ii) Mandatory payment of maintenance allowance to bank accounts of students beneficiaries only.*
- (iii) Regular follow up through correspondence, meeting with State Government officials and Regional Conferences organized to ensure timely and accurate submission of requisite documents to ensure close monitoring over the performance of the scheme*
- (iv) NSKFDC has been entrusted the task of coordinating with the States so that the benefits can be given to all identified beneficiaries of Pre-Matric Scholarships for the children of those engaged in unclean occupation.”*

4.12 The Committee find that two separate schemes i.e Pre Matric Scholarships Scheme for SCs and Pre Matric Scholarships for those Engaged in Unclean Occupation, have been merged into one Scheme, namely “Pre Matric Scholarships for SCs and others” since 2021-22. The Committee are surprised to know that the budgetary allocation made for 2022-23 is ₹500.00 crore which is much less in comparison to the budgetary allocation of ₹725.00 crore for 2021-22 and ₹700.00 crore for 2020-21. The Committee find no logic for reducing budgetary allocation for 2022-23 when two schemes have been merged and the Department is expecting to cover 33 lakh beneficiaries during 2021-22. The Committee, therefore, assume that the numbers of beneficiaries may come down in 2022-23, as during previous year too only 32.98 lakh persons could be covered with an expenditure of ₹596.33 crore. They would like to be apprised of any improvements in the methodology the Department will adopt to achieve the target fixed with the given budget. In so far as the transfer of funds through DBT mode is concerned, the Committee hope that it will eliminate duplicate/fraudulent cases. Nonetheless the Committee still are of the strong view that the Department would need more funds to achieve the target of 2022-23. The Committee would, therefore, like to recommend the Ministry to pursue for enhancement of the budgetary allocation for 2022-23 at RE stage so that the maximum beneficiaries get coverage under the Scheme.

4.13 The Committee further find that under this Head the Department have been able to spend ₹362 crore till date, out of the budgetary allocation of ₹725 crore for

the year 2021-22 and that they will strive to fully utilize the budgetary allocation as pending UCs from the States are anticipated to be received. The Committee are apprehensive about full utilisation of funds despite redesigning of National Scholarship Portal alongwith newly adopted approach under the continued scheme by the Department unless concrete steps are taken by the Department to remove the hindrances often faced by the students and the implementing agencies. The Committee strongly believe that the Department must have exhaustively examined the pros and cons of the merger of 2 schemes into one so that both the sections of the society do not get adversely affected by each other's presence in the implementation of merged Scheme. The Committee, therefore recommend the Department to have an in built mechanism to closely monitor the Scheme for its successful implementation and ensure that the task of coordination entrusted to NSKFDC is diligently carried out by them.

CHAPTER-V

PRADHAN MANTRI ANUSUCHIT JAATI ABHYUDAY YOJANA (PM AJAY)

Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM AJAY) is an umbrella scheme wherein three schemes namely Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY), Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCA to SCSP) and Babu Jagivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana (BJRCY) have been merged due to their similarity in nature and is entirely funded by Central Government. The details of these three merged schemes are:

- (i) Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCA to SCSP) Scheme is in operation since 1979-80 with an objective of increasing the income of the Scheduled Castes living below the poverty line by way of income generating schemes, infrastructure and skill development under which 100 per cent grant was given to the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations as an additive to their Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCSP).
- (ii) Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY) scheme ensures integrated development of selected villages having more than 50% SC population. States have been advised to work for declaring ten thousand villages as Adarsha Grams before August 2022.
- (iii) Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana (BJRCY) is implemented through the State Governments, Union Territory Administrations and the Central & State 19 Universities/Institutions with the objective to attract implementing agencies to undertake constructions of hostels, especially for SC Girls.

5.2. On being asked to justify the merger of erstwhile schemes in PM-AJAY, Department submitted in their written that:

“Since this is the first year of implementation of the merged scheme, it is very difficult to assess the comparisons in achievements. It will take time to assess

the same. However, since there is unified allocation of funds for these three schemes, any surrender of funds in one of the components may be utilized for other component, thus minimize the surrender to the funds.”

5.3 The budgetary allocations along with target/achievement for the last three years are as follows:

(₹ in crore)															
Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme	2019-20				2020-21				2021-22 (AS ON 31.12.2021)				2022-23	
		BE	RE	Actual Exp.	Target/Achievement	BE	RE	Actual Exp.	Target/Achievement	BE	RE	Actual Exp.	Target/Achievement	BE	Target/Achievement
1	Pradhan Mantri Anusukhit Jaati Abhyudaya Yojana (PM AJAY)									1800	1800	1293.07		1950	
2	Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan	1100	1100	1114.73	8.92 lakh/211818 (some states not reported beneficiaries data)	1200	300	387	7.48 lakh / 52177				Merged with PM AJAY		10 Lakh
3	Pradhan Mantri Adhars Gram Yojana	390	718	717.96	Physical target not fixed	700	300	216.52	Physical target not fixed				Physical target not fixed		Physical target not fixed
4	Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatras Yojana	107.76	25	25	12/1200 ----- --- 10/1000	30	30	56.4	20/2000 ----- 24/3250				20/2020 / to be reported after the end of the		25/2500

												Financial Year		
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5.4 On being enquired the reasons due to which funds sanctioned under PM-AJAY could not be spent in 2021-22 and measures being taken to ensure that the Budgetary Estimates for 2022-23 are fully utilized, the Department submitted their written reply that:

“Out of a total allocation of ₹1800.00 crore during current financial year, an amount of ₹1293 crore was utilized by December, 2021. This is more than the quarterly targets for incurring expenditure. The balance of funds is likely to be utilized by the end of current financial year. Since the merged scheme of PM-AJAY would be implemented in 2022-23, the allocated Budgetary Estimates under this scheme would be utilized in its components and in case of any likely savings in any of the component of the scheme, this may be utilized under the other component(s) of the scheme thereby leaving a minimum chance of surrender of funds.”

5.5 On being asked the methodology adopted to assess the performance of each scheme in the absence of specific allocation particularly where target cannot be fixed in Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana and the States/UTs are reluctant in submitting information of beneficiaries under SCA to SCSP, the Department submitted in their written reply that:

“The physical target under the Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana for the entire 15th Finance Cycle has already been fixed. As the State-wise selection of villages for implementation of scheme is dependent upon the availability of funds as well as utilization of allocated funds and actual progress achieved by the respective State/UTs, it is not feasible to fix the physical target year wise. As each and every stage of implementation of scheme is being reported by the implementing agencies on the online portal developed for this scheme, it facilitates the assessment of performance of the scheme at any given time.

Under Grants-in-aid to States/UTs component of PM-AJAY, erstwhile SCA to SCSP, States/UTs submit their annual action plan and the tentative number of beneficiaries to be assisted, at the beginning of financial year. When these

action plans are appraised and approved by the Project Appraisal Committee (PAC) of the Ministry, States/UTs implement different projects, as mentioned in the action plan, through various implementing agencies and collect information of beneficiaries from these implementing agencies and submit the consolidated data to this ministry. The whole process takes considerable amount of time and therefore, States/UTs do not submit the exact figure of beneficiaries on time. However, the States/UTs submit the tentative beneficiaries and also the Utilization Certificates (UCs) certifying therein that the funds are utilized for the purpose/activity for which it was sanctioned. Furthermore, since 2022-23, all the processes from project planning, preparation, submission, appraisal, approval, evaluation and to monitoring would be done through web portal. This would ensure transparency and real time monitoring of the data/information.”

5.6 With regard to sufficiency of funds allocated for 2022-23 to meet the proposed works of 2022-23, the Department submitted in their written reply that:

“Under Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana, central assistance is released for the construction of hostels on the basis of proposals furnished by different implementing agencies. During 2022-23, the allocated fund would be utilized for the construction of hostels based on the demand made by the implementing agencies. Likewise, under ‘Adarsh Gram’ component, the committed liability of the previous financial years would be meted out. Under Grants-in-aid to States/UTs component of PM-AJAY, erstwhile SCA to SCSP, 100 percent grant is given to the States/UTs as an additive to their Scheduled Castes Sub Plan (SCSP) for the welfare of Scheduled Caste persons living below the poverty line through various income generating, skill development and infrastructure development activities run by State level implementing agencies. States/UTs proposes different such activities in their Annual Action Plan(AAP), at the beginning of financial year, which are further appraised and approved by the Project Appraisal Committee(PAC) of the Ministry. During 2022-23 also, after due approval of AAP by PAC, funds would be released to these States/UTs as per extant norms.”

5.7 The Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment also informed during the course of evidence that:

“इस साल हमने अनुसूचित जाति अभ्युदय योजना के नाम से 10,000 करोड़ रुपये का एक बड़ा-सा स्कीम के लिए कैबिनेट से अप्रूवल माँगा और यह मिल भी गया है। इससे क्या होगा कि जहाँ अनुसूचित जाति का कंसन्ट्रेशन हैं, वहाँ पर कोई अच्छा प्रोजेक्ट लग सकता है। जैसे हमारे माननीय सदस्य है, उनके एरिया में किसी अच्छे प्रोजेक्ट के लिए हम तीन से 10 करोड़ रुपये

सैंक्शन कर सकते हैं। इससे बहुत फायदा होगा और सस्टेनबिलिटी भी बहुत होगी। इससे लॉन्ग टर्म में इनका आमदनी बढ़ेगी।“

5.8 The Committee find that three independent schemes namely Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY), Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Caste Sub-plan (SCA to SCSP) and Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana (BJRCY) have been merged into Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM AJAY) from 2021-22. The Committee are surprised to note that the Department was not able to achieve the target fixed for 2019-20 and 2020-21 under Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan. Hence, the Committee have strong doubt for the achievement of target of 10 lakh fixed under Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan for 2022-23 too. The Committee are also concerned about the performance of each of the Schemes after their merger since there is unified allocation of funds for these three Schemes unless performance is quantified, the success/performance cannot be assessed. The Committee would, therefore like the Department to ensure that all three Schemes are given equal weightage as they are equally important for the welfare of Scheduled Castes. In case there are less proposals under one Scheme, funds should not be utilized on other Scheme rather necessary steps should be taken to ensure that the scheme lagging behind is suitably attended to.

5.9 The Committee are pleased to note that under Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Aabyaday Yojana, ₹10,000 crore have been approved by the Cabinet for undertaking various projects for the next five years from 2021-22 to 2025-26 involving an expenditure of ₹ 3 to ₹ 10 crore each. The Committee expect that the funds sanctioned would be judiciously utilized to achieve the intended objectives.

They believe that necessary modalities must have been drawn to ensure that the funds are not left idle. The Committee desire that all necessary action may be taken by the Department to make people aware about the Scheme so that the Department get sufficient proposals. The Committee would like to be informed of the steps taken for fruitful utilisation of funds.

CHAPTER VI

SCHOLARSHIP FOR HIGHER EDUCATION FOR YOUNG ACHIEVERS SCHEME (SHREYAS) FOR SCs, OBCs and EBCs

6.1 SHREYAS for SCs has four schemes under its ambit namely:

- (i) National Fellowship for SCs: National Fellowship for SCs is a Central Sector Scheme under which 2000 new Fellowships (1500 Junior Research Fellows for Humanities/Social Sciences and 500 Junior Research Fellows for Science Stream) per year are provided to undertake advanced studies and research leading to M.Phil/ Phd Degrees.
- (ii) Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs: Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs Scheme provides coaching of good quality for economically disadvantaged SC and OBC candidates to enable them to appear in competitive examinations of Public/ Private sector. The Scheme is implemented in two distinct modes *i.e.*, in Mode 1 a total of 2000 seats are distributed amongst reputed coaching institutes empanelled under the Scheme. In Mode 2 Department directly selects a total of 2000 students on the recommendations of Selection Committee under the Scheme. The ratio of the SCs and OBCs provided coaching under the Scheme is 70:30, the ratio can be relaxed in case of non-availability of candidates.
- (iii) Top Class Education for SCs and: Top Class Education for SCs Scheme covers SC students for pursuing studies beyond 12th class having total annual family income from all sources upto ₹8.00 lakh and having secured admission in a full-time prescribed course in any of the notified institutions according to the general selection criteria prescribed by the concerned institution. Thirty percent (30%) of slots allotted to the Institution is reserved for eligible SC girl students as per their inter-se merit.
- (iv) National Overseas Scholarship for SCs: The Central Sector Scheme of National Overseas Scholarships for SCs is to facilitate the low income students belonging to the Scheduled Castes, Denotified Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes, Landless Agricultural Labourers and Traditional Artisans category whose Parent/Guardian's income does not exceed ₹ 8.0 lakh per annum are eligible for this scholarship to obtain higher education *viz.*, Master degree or Phd courses by studying abroad thereby improving their Economic and Social status.

6.2 Budgetary Allocation and expenditure under the scheme is as follows:

S.No	Programme/ Schemes	2019-20			2020-21			2021-22			BE 2022-23
		BE	RE	Actual Expenditure	BE	RE	Actual Expenditure	BE	RE	Actual Expenditure	
1.	National Fellowship for SCs	360.00	246.66	246.66	300.00	125.00	119.00	300.00	125.00	122.44	173.00
2.	Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs	30.00	30.00	13.26	30.00	30.00	11.97	50.00	30.00	6.18	47.00
3.	Top Class Education for SCs	40.50	40.50	39.70	40.00	50.00	52.88	70.00	70.00	18.79	108.00
4.	National Overseas Scholarship for SCs	20.00	20.00	32.76	20.00	30.00	33.09	30.00	35.00	24.74	36.00
	Total: Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for SCs	450.50	337.16	332.38	390.00	235.00	216.93	450.00	260.00	172.15	364.00

6.3 A statement showing the physical targets and achievements under the scheme for SCs are as follows:

SI No.	2019-20			2020-21			2021-22				2022-23
Target	Achievement	Shortfall, if any, indicating reasons in brief	Target	Achievement	Shortfall, if any, indicating reasons in brief	Target	Achievement		Shortfall, if any, indicating reasons in brief		
i	National Fellowship for SCs	2000	2000	NA	2000	4029\$	NA	2000	*	NA	2000
ii	National Overseas Scholarship for SCs	100	100	NA	100	100	NA	100	100*	NA	125
iii	Top Class Education for SCs	1500	1775	Complete proposals have not been received from the institute	4200	3118	Complete proposals have not been received from the institute	4200	2356	Complete proposals have not been received from the institute	
iv	Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs	4546	1345	Complete proposals have not been received from the	4000	2112	Complete proposals have not been received	3500	384	Complete proposals have not been received from the institute	3500

				institute			d from the institut e				
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6.4 With regard to the objective behind bringing all the four schemes under one umbrella scheme SHREYAS for SCs, the Department stated in their written reply that:

“SHREYAS, as an umbrella scheme, has been conceptualized to ensure convergence of resources across the 4 smaller Central Sector schemes of the Department catering to SC/OBC students desirous of pursuing higher education (in India and abroad) and/ or obtaining employment in Group A/ Group B services of Centre or State Governments. While the Free Coaching scheme for SC and OBC students affords opportunities to students to prepare for admission to higher educational institutions for technical and professional education, or for employment in Central / State Governments by way of financing the coaching fee and giving them stipend, the Top Class scholarship Scheme provides scholarships to meritorious SC students joining top class empanelled technical and professional institutions, and the National Fellowship Scheme provides scholarships to selected meritorious SC students to join, continue and complete M.Phil. and Ph.D. Degrees in science, humanities and social science streams. The National Overseas Scheme caters to similar aspirations of meritorious students desirous of joining overseas educational institutions for Masters and Ph.D courses. The proposed 10 convergence is likely to obviate duplication of efforts, beneficiaries and resources and shall streamline implementation machinery and disbursement of services to similar clientele.”

6.5 SHREYAS Scheme for OBCs and EBCs has following two Sub-schemes:-

- (i) National Fellowship for OBC & EBC students
- (ii) Interest Subsidy on Overseas Studies of OBCs

6.6 Budgetary allocation and expenditure under the scheme for OBCs and EBC is as follows:

Sl. No.	Programme/ Schemes	2019-20			2020-21			2021-22			BE 2022- 23
		BE	RE	Actual Expend iture	BE	RE	Actual Expendi ture	BE	RE	Actual Expenditu re	

1.	National Fellowship for OBCs and EBCs	70.00	52.50	52.50	120.00	45.00	33.00	100.00	60.00	40.00	53.00
2.	Interest Subsidy on Overseas Studies of OBCs	15.00	26.09	26.09	35.00	35.00	32.61	30.00	30.00	0.00	27.00
	Total: Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for OBCs and EBCs	85.00	78.59	78.59	155.00	80.00	65.61	130.00	90.00	40.00	80.00

6.7 A statement showing the physical targets and achievements under the SHREYAS scheme for OBCs and EBCs are as follows:

Sl No.	Name of the Scheme/project/programme	2019-20			2020-21			2021-22			2022-23
		Target	Achievement	Shortfall, if any, indicating reasons in brief	Target	Achievement	Shortfall, if any, indicating reasons in brief	Target	Achievement	Shortfall, if any, indicating reasons in brief	
i	Interest Subsidy on Overseas Studies of OBCs	3297	3297	No shortfall	1760	4342	Final beneficiary Data Awaited from State/UTs	2000	Beneficiary data are furnished by State/UTs along with following years proposal	2500	
ii	National Fellowship for OBCs	1193	1193	No shortfall	1100	1235	Final beneficiary Data Awaited from State/UTs	2900		2700	

6.8 On being enquired about the reasons due to which funds allocated under each of these schemes could not be utilized during 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22 and the measures taken in this regard, Department stated in their written reply that:

“The funds for National Fellowship for SCs are released to the UGC for implementation of the NFSC scheme. Under-utilization of funds is due to less

number of candidates joining/continuing the course against the selection. For betterment of the beneficiary under the scheme, it may be stated that for filling up of the previous year's vacant slots alongwith regular slots of 2000 in 2020-21, a total number of 4029 candidates were selected.

However, under National Overseas Scholarship (NOS), funds have been fully utilized each financial year.

Under Top Class Education Scheme to SC students, expenditure during 2020-21 was more than RE and during 2019-20 it was around 98% of RE. However for better implementation of the scheme and timely release of scholarship amount, Scheme guidelines have been revised in 2021-22. Now entire scholarship amount including fee and stipend will be paid directly into the bank account of beneficiary students. Earlier the fee component of scholarship was released to Institutes and they need to submit Utilization certificate etc. for processing of subsequent year scholarship. Non-submission of documents by Institutes was adversely affecting the expenditure under the scheme as well as timely processing of scholarship for students.

Under Free coaching for SCs and OBCs scheme, expenditure for 2019-20 and 2020-21 was around 40 to 45% of RE and the same was due to non-submission complete proposal by empanelled Institutes. To ensure proper implementation of scheme, guidelines were revised in 2020-21 and a new mode of selection i.e. Mode 2 was introduced. Under Mode 2 applications are invited directly from the students through a portal and scholarship will be released directly to beneficiary students selected as per merit in their respective category.”

6.9 With regard to the reasons due to which Budgetary Estimate has been decreased to ₹ 364.00 crore in 2022-23 from ₹ 450.00 crore during the year 2021-22 and the steps proposed to fulfil the commitment, the Department submitted in their written reply:

“As regards the scheme, National Fellowship for SCs, the fund requirement is raised by the UGC keeping in view the number of the candidates receiving the fellowship and accordingly the Budget Allocation is proposed so that the remaining funds, if any, could be utilized for the welfare of beneficiaries covered under other scheme of department for SCs. Under Top Class Education scheme to SCs, Budget Estimate for 2022-23 is ₹ 108/- crore i.e. higher than allocation for 2020-21 of ₹ 70.00 crore. Under the scheme of Free Coaching to SCs and OBCs, Budget allocation 2022-23 is ₹ 47.50 crore i.e. less than ₹ 50 crore in 2021-22. In this context it is submitted that keeping in view of trend of expenditure in past years and decreased number of targeted beneficiaries from 4000 (2021-22) to 3500 (2022-23), it is expected to fulfil the commitment.”

6.10 On being enquired about evaluation Study of these schemes conducted, the Department stated in their written reply that evaluation of all the schemes have been conducted, the recommendations contained have been examined and necessary action is being taken thereon.

6.11 The recommendation of the evaluation study and comments of the Department with regard to National Fellowship for SCs is as under:

S. No.	Recommendation	Comments of the Programme Division
1	Targets of number of beneficiaries needs to be enhanced.	The recommendation of the evaluation study has been noted for compliance as and when required.
2	The performance evaluation needs to be conducted at the JRF level also. This shall ensure that the awardees of the fellowship to produce quality research output.	UGC, the nodal agency for implementing the scheme is developing the portal for capturing the academic progress of the students annually. The annual progress report may be filled by the students on the portal accordingly.
3	The expenditure pattern of beneficiaries after / during availing the scheme indicates that the amount given in the form of fellowship is more than per scholar monthly expenditure. Thus, no further enhancement in rate of scholarship is recommended.	As per the scheme guidelines, the amount of fellowship and other financial benefits provided to the students is required to be fixed at par with the cost norms of UGC fellowship of D/o Education, therefore, whenever amount of fellowship is increased by D/o Education, under NFSC also the amount of fellowship has to be increased.
4	A contingency fund needs to be set up to meet the increasing demands.	The budget estimates are proposed based on the number of slots of likely expenditure in the Financial Year.
5	The scheme needs to be publicized in regional languages through local newspaper and local media platforms.	UGC publishes advertisement seeking applications for UGC-NET, CSIR-NET on the basis of which students under NFSC are also selected
6	The UGC may be directed to make the selection list public on its	The list is published by UGC.

	website.	
7	Online payment made by the nodal bank branch on the recommendations of the UGC should be monitored by the Ministry.	Every aspect of implementation of the scheme including disbursement of fellowship to the students under the scheme is monitored by this Ministry through various periodical meetings/ review meetings at the level of Joint Secretary and Secretary.
8	A Call Centre / Grievance Redressal mechanism needs to be established by the UGC under the guidance of the Ministry.	A Portal for National Fellowship Management and a Grievance Redressal Portal were launched on 6 th December, 2021, which will allow a student-centric administration of the fellowship and would substantially reduce the vexatious paper work for timely release of the fellowship. Similarly, the Grievance Redressal Portal will help in addressing expeditiously the problems being faced by the students.
9	Digital outcome report may be provided on the portal.	The output/ outcomes of the scheme are provided to the NITI Aayog on quarterly basis under the scheme.
10	The demand from Humanities and Social Sciences are more therefore, the slots may be divided proportionally.	As per the existing Scheme guidelines, out of the total allocated seats of 2000 per annum, 1500 seats i.e. 75% of the total seats has already been allocated to Social Science and Humanities. The same provision has been retained in the revised scheme guidelines.
11	An undertaking should be taken from the candidate that if a candidate does not complete the degree, he shall have to refund entire fellowship amount.	It may not be possible to implement this recommendation as the implementation procedure of the scheme is based on the norms finalized by D/o Education for UGC fellowship scheme.
12	Targets of number of beneficiaries needs to be enhanced.	The recommendation is noted for compliance as and when required.
13	The performance evaluation needs to be conducted at the JRF level also. This shall ensure that the awardees of the fellowship to produce quality research output.	UGC, the nodal agency for implementing the scheme is developing the portal for capturing the academic progress of the students annually. The annual progress report may be filled by the students on the portal accordingly.

6.12 The major findings of the evaluation study and recommendations in respect of National Overseas Scholarship (NOS) are as follows: -

- i. The Scheme should be continued because it provides the opportunity to the deserving scholars to receive global exposure and knowledge- based skill-set for improved employability.
- ii. For wider coverage under the Scheme, appropriate media to be selected for its quarterly publicity, attracting a sufficient number of applicants for selection. Apart from continuing with existing publicity platforms, the regional print media should also be used for wider coverage.
- iii. After completion of higher studies abroad, the Awardees should be required to stay back in India for at least five years, so that, their foreign experience can be utilized by the society as a whole.
- iv. The income ceiling may be revised keeping in view the Market Price Index (MPI).
- v. To ensure correctness of income certificates produced by beneficiaries, a copy of the tax return filed by all members of the household should be submitted to the Ministry along with income certificate and PAN Number. A system may also be put in place to conduct physical re-verification of income certificates of the selected candidates. An undertaking should also be taken from the selected candidates. An undertaking should also be taken from the selected candidates that after the selection to overseas scholarship, any discrepancy detected at any stage with regards to income certificate or otherwise, the award would be cancelled thereto and the entire amount with penal interest would be refunded to the Ministry.
- vi. To do away with the inability to complete academic courses, priority should be given to those candidates who have cleared GRE/GMAT.TOFEL, so that the selected candidates have required acumen to complete their courses. To ensure that the selected candidates complete their courses, the Indian Mission/ Embassies abroad may be requested to send a quarterly status report of beneficiaries to the Ministry. Based on the report, the Ministry may take appropriate decision/s. In case the candidate does not complete the course successfully and drops the studies midway without proper justification, the candidate may be required to refund the entire amount with penal interest.
- vii. An online format for the host institute/ university may be designed by the Ministry to receive any non-serious behaviour, the award may be cancelled and the candidate may be asked to refund the full amount with applicable interest.

- viii. The scrutiny of bi-annual progress report of awardees pursuing their studies abroad should be converted into quarterly progress report. A format of quarterly progress report may be designed including academic score, participation in extra-curricular activity/es , distinction / award/ honour received and publication brought out and sent to the Indian Mission abroad to help provide details to the Ministry.
- ix. After completion of the course, the scholars should be engaged with any industry/ institution in India for not less than five years. Those who are not willing to stay for five years may be required to pay the entire amount disbursed on him/ her including induced cost spent on administering the scheme with existing bank interest rate.
- x. The proportional representation of other social groups, namely de-notified, nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes, and landless agriculture labourers to the tune of six and four (already prescribed under the scheme), respectively should be ensured.

6.13 Many of the recommendations made in the Study report with regard to National overseas Scholarship (NOS) were incorporated in the revised Scheme guidelines for selection year 2020-21. However, following comments/observations on the evaluation report were submitted by NOS Cell:

- (i) Under the Evaluation study recommendations were for addressing the issue of insufficient number of scholars, lower outreach and strict scrutiny of the authenticity of the income certificates of the beneficiaries. However, no recommendation was made to address the issues identified as inability of the candidates to complete the Ph. D, non-serious behaviour of the selected candidates, scrutiny of bi-annual progress reports of the awardees pursuing his/her studies, evaluation, development of systematic strategy to select potential beneficiaries and inappropriate selection criteria.
- (ii) For strict scrutiny of the income certificates of the candidates, it has been suggested to collect Aadhaar Number, PAN and the information about the Aadhaar linked Bank Accounts of the candidates and his/her family members under the Evaluation Report. The suggestion of seeking PAN was not agreed to by the HMSJE. The information of Aadhaar linked Bank Accounts is personal information and its disclosure may not be enforced. Furthermore, even if this information is collected ascertaining the veracity of the collected information will require correspondence with the concerned bank authorities consuming significant time which will delay the processing of the Scholarship cases of the selected candidates.

- (iii) In respect of the low utilization of funds, it was informed that due to continuous persuasion of the Department with the Indian Missions/Embassies booking of the expenditure under the Scheme raised significantly and during the successive financial years, the fund allocated under NOS was increased and fully utilized.

6.14 Department's comments on observations in Evaluation Report in respect of Top Class Education to SC students are as follows:-

SL. NO.	Observations in Evaluation Report	Departments' Comments
1	It was observed that in general there was lack of proper awareness about various provisions and guidelines under the scheme. In general, it has been observed that there are information gaps among the beneficiaries.	Scheme guidelines is uploaded on the website of the Ministry, www.socialjustice.nic.in Since the scheme is implemented through NSP, Department of electronic and Information Technology is already taking action for advertisement of date of opening /closing of NSP portal. From time to time messages are sent to the applicant regarding status of their scholarship application.
2	Ministry may instruct institutes to ensure filling of all the seats so that the available provisions are fully utilized. Further, it is suggested that apart from merit of the students; the economic capabilities of students family may also considered as additional criteria while selecting students for award of scholarships.	As per scheme guidelines, institutes are very much aware about the approved course and slots. They are submitting details of applicants after verification through NSP portal.

3	Time gap between the submission of application and receipt of scholarship is too high. In some cases, students have not received their scholarship even after completion of course. This forces the students to go for education loan to meet the expenses of term fees.	Online process for receiving the applications through the NSP portal is already going on. Guidelines have also been revised in 2021-22 under which entire scholarship including fee and stipend will now be paid to students only. Earlier fee component was released to institutes and due to non-submission of UC etc, processing of scholarship was getting delayed.
4	During the course of study, it was a general submission by majority of students that the filing of online applications had some glitches and renewal could not be completed through portal resulting in students to create fresh application which was again in conflict to the prescribed guidelines. There needs to be smooth communication channel between Ministry and the institutes' nodal officer so that confusions/ queries can be addressed timely so that no one suffers	Issue relating to submission of renewal applications in NSP has already been taken up with technical team handling the portal. The institutes were also sensitized through video conferences meeting about the processing of applications and its verification in the portal.
5	There is serious need for addressing the portal related issues which can be resolved having stakeholder's workshops with objective to then tweaking the portal to accommodate the requirements. It is important that the portal which should be acting as facilitation for reliving the manual processing shouldn't itself start creating huddles. It is suggested that Ministry may take this on priority, as with improvement of portal functioning, many of the concerns raised by the institutes and beneficiaries would automatically get resolved.	Ministry is taking up all the technical issues needs to be resolved in consultation with NSP.
6	As per feedback of the beneficiaries, the responses with regards to helplines and grievance redressal were poor. It is suggested that Ministry may consider strengthening the present helpline systems so as to resolves the queries of the	This scheme is implemented through NSP. All the issues relating to processing of applications are time to time informed to the applicant through text messages by NSP

	<p>students then there itself. Further, the grievance redressal mechanism which helps to measure efficient and effectiveness of established systems as it provides important feedback on the working. No response or poor response discourages the affected to back out.</p>	<p>team. If there is any unresolved issue, applicant can approach DBT cell in the Ministry through mail at dbtcell.msje@nic.in . Team of DBT cell is taking action for resolving the same.</p>
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6.15 The Committee note that the Department was able to spend a substantial amount of budgetary allocation on all the four schemes falling under the ambit of Scholarship for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for SCs and OBCs in the year 2019-20 and 2020-21 except for 2021-22 where the Department lagged behind in spending under 3 schemes i.e., 'Free Coaching for SCs & OBCs', 'Top Class Education for SCs' and 'National Overseas Scholarship for SCs'. The Committee are surprised that the fund meant for National Fellowship for SCs was under utilized due to less number of candidates joining / continuing the course against the selection. Similarly, in case of Top Class Education Scheme, the funds sanctioned could not be utilized due to non submission of documents by Institutes and incase of 'Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs' Scheme, the expenditure could not be incurred due to non-submission of complete proposals by empanelled Institutes. There is no doubt that low utilisation of funds sanctioned not only keeps the funds idle but also deprives the students belonging to marginalized sections of the society for getting education opportunities provided by the Department through these Scholarship Schemes. The Committee feel that any slackness will further impact the implementation of free coaching for SCs & OBCs, Top class Education for SCs and National Overseas Scholarship for SCs schemes during 2020-21 and 2021-2022. Although steps have been taken by the Department to rectify the system so that similar problems do not recur in future, yet there is strong need for compliance and regular monitoring of the system by the Department/an independent agency. The Committee would like to see the budgetary provisions made for 2022-23, fully utilized in the interest of SC and OBC students.

6.16 The Committee find that the target fixed under National Fellowship for SCs, National Overseas Scholarship for SCs, Top Class Education for SCs and Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs is very less in comparison to their actual population. The Committee would like that the Department should consider the eligible students under each of these Schemes before fixing the target for each year. Similarly, the income criteria fixed for availing the benefits under the Scheme needs a revision in view of the rising inflation. The Committee feel that any person whose annual income is less than ₹8.00 lakh per annum cannot afford to study abroad, hence the income criteria of ₹8.00 lakh per annum is unrealistic. This income criteria discourages many students in availing the Scheme, hence its purpose would be served only when the income criteria is revised. The Department should also develop a suitable mechanism to assess the number of eligible students for National Fellowship for SCs, National Overseas Scholarship for SCs, Top Class Education for SCs and Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs, to fix the target so that maximum students gets coverage under the Schemes. The Committee would therefore recommend a review of the number of slots for each year fixed under each of these schemes as well as that of the income criteria. The Committee would like the Department to take requisite measures to attend to these issues with utmost sincerity.

6.17 The Committee are perturbed to note that the Budgetary Estimates for the year 2022-23 has been substantially reduced in comparison to 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22 under SHREYAS. The Committee find that the justification that

keeping in view of trend of expenditure in past years, there has been reduction in the budgetary allocation, as not convincing enough. The Committee feel that the failure of the Scheme in a particular year for no fault of beneficiary does not imply that there are no takers for the Schemes, hence, budget should not have been reduced. The Committee are, therefore, of the view that the evaluation study of all these Schemes and the recommendations/suggestions made therein need to be adopted to strengthen the Scheme. The Committee would, therefore, like the Department to take action on it now, apart from finding ways and means through which the beneficiaries of the Schemes can be maximized.

CHAPTER-VII

THE SCHEME FOR SELF EMPLOYMENT FOR THE REHABILITATION OF MANUAL SCAVENGERS (SRMS)

The Ministry is implementing a Self Employment Scheme for the Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS) through National Safai Karamcharis Finance & Development Corporation (NSKFDC) to provide the following benefits to the identified Manual Scavenger. Under this scheme the beneficiaries can avail the following benefits:

- (i) One-time cash assistance of ₹40, 000/- to the identified Manual Scavenger
- (ii) Loans for project cost upto ₹15.00 Lakh on concessional rates of interest.
- (iii) Credit linked up front capital subsidy upto ₹5,00,000/-.
- (iii) Skill Development Training upto two years with stipend of ₹3,000/- per month.

7.2 A statement showing the budgetary allocation and expenditure on the Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers in respect of last three financial years and Budget estimate for FY 2022-23 is as follows:

(₹ in crore)			
Year	BE	RE	AE
2019-20	110.00	99.93	84.80
2020-21	110.00	30.00	16.60
2021-22	100.00	43.31	24.00
2022-23	70.00	---	---

7.3 The Standing Finance Committee (SFC), under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Department of Social Justice & Empowerment in its meeting held on 15th March, 2021 has approved continuation of the Scheme for the next 5 years i.e upto 2025-26 with an estimated expenditure of ₹399.79 crore. SFC has also approved the following modifications in the Scheme:-

- (i) Increase in the project cost for self employment project from ₹10.00 Lakh to ₹15.00 Lakh.
- (ii) Enhancement of maximum amount of admissible capital subsidy from ₹3.25 Lakh to ₹5.00 Lakh.
- (iii) In addition to manual scavengers and their dependants, for sanitation related projects, sanitation workers and their dependants would also be eligible for capital subsidy and other benefits for project finance.
- (iv) Capital subsidy would be paid upfront unlike back-end capital subsidy earlier.
- (v) Group of beneficiaries would also be eligible for assistance for projects. Maximum group project cost will be ₹50.00 Lakh. Maximum project share per member would be ₹10.00 Lakh.

7.4 The Department submitted that the existing measures have since not succeeded in elimination of hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks and a more serious, stringent and focused strategy framework was required. Accordingly a 'National Action Plan' has been formulated in consultation with Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation to eliminate manual cleaning of Sewer system & Septic tanks and rehabilitation of workers engaged in manual cleaning. National Action Plan for Mechanised Ecosystem (NAMASTE) is a coordinated Action by the above mentioned Ministries, wherein the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment will act as the nodal Ministry for implementing the same. It would ensure the role of a coordinating Ministry dealing primarily with monitoring, rehabilitation and skilling of sanitation worker engaged in hazardous cleaning. The above interaction by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment involves no additional financial implication on its part. The intervention for promotion of mechanized cleaning would be through the ongoing Swachhta Udyami Yojana (SUY) a loaning scheme implemented by National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC)

7.5 Under its Skill Development Training Programmes, NSKFDC provides job oriented vocational /technical skill development training to the target group of NSKFDC i.e. Safai Karamcharis (including waste pickers), Manual Scavengers and their

dependants (in the age group of 18 years to 45 years) through Central/State Government/ Autonomous Government Training Institutes etc. and Sector Skill Councils in various trades having duration of 1 month to 1 year. The objectives of providing Skill Development Training Programme for the target group are:

- i. to make them self-reliant;
- ii. to enable them to take job employment/self-employment or engage in any other income generating activities;
- iii. to upgrade their skills for efficient management of the units set up by the SafaiKaramcharis (including waste pickers), Manual Scavengers and their dependants.

7.6 On being asked about the measures taken by the Department for safety of persons while cleaning sewer and septic tanks manually, the representative of the Department stated during course of evidence that:

“हमने पिछली बार भी आपको बताया था की हज़ार्स क्लीनिंग के आंकड़े पिछले दो साल से बहुत कम हैं। पहले 130 लोग मरते थे अब यह संख्या 19-20 हो गई है। पिछले साल 22 लोगों की मृत्यु हुई थी। इस साल अब तक किसी की डैथ रिपोर्ट नहीं हुई है। हमने इसे कम करने के लिए एक्शन प्लान बनाया था – नेशनल एक्शन प्लान फॉर मैकेनाइज्ड सेनिटेशन ईको सिस्टम। इसमें तीन मंत्रालय भागीदार थे- एक हमारा मंत्रालय है, हमारे साथ मिनिस्ट्री ऑफ हाउसिंग एंड अर्बन अफेयर्स और मिनिस्ट्री ऑफ ड्रिंकिंग वाटर एंड सेनिटेशन भी है। इसके अलावा डिपार्टमेंट ऑफ डीपीआईआईटी है। इन सबकी जवाबदेही म्युनिसिपेलिटीज़ में मेकेनाइजेशन को प्रमोट करने के प्रति थी। हमने इसमें अपने मंत्रालय की तरफ से स्वच्छता उद्यमी योजना स्कीम लांच की थी। इसके अंतर्गत जितने सफाई मित्र भाई थे, उनको छोटी मशीनें और 15 लाख तक लोन उपलब्ध करवाया गया था। इसमें सब्सिडी का कम्पोनेंट 3 लाख 25 हजार से बढ़कार पांच लाख कर दिया था, यानी कोई 15 लाख की मशीन लेगा तो भारत सरकार पांच लाख तक सब्सिडी प्रदान करेगी।“

7.7 On being enquired about the number of machines distributed, representative of the Department submitted before the Committee during the deliberation that:

“हमने लोन मेला के माध्यम से कई म्युनिसिपेलिटीज़ में अभियान चलाया था। अब तक हमने 16 म्युनिसिपेलिटीज़ में 183 व्यक्तियों को 129 मशीनें प्रदान की हैं।“

7.8 He further added:

“हम कुछ मशीनें तो डायरेक्टली म्यूनिसिपैलिटी को देते हैं। लेकिन, उनकी संख्या बहुत ही कम होती हैं। मिनिस्ट्री के पास इतना सोर्स नहीं होता कि हम दे सकें। इसका अधिकांश काम हाउसिंग एंड अर्बन अफेयर्स देखती है। लेकिन, हम जो मशीन अपने सफाई मित्र भाइयों को देते हैं, ये जो स्कीम है, इसमें उनको भी लाभ मिले, तो इसको हमने पिछले साल शुरू किया था। इसके बारे में अभी मैंने आपको ब्यौरा दिया है।”

7.9 As regards to the compensation paid to the persons who died during cleaning of sewer and septic tanks, the Committee were informed by the representative of the Department during the course of deliberation that:

“हमारे पास रिपोर्टेड है, हम नेशनल डेटा बैंक रखते हैं। वर्ष 1993 से लेकर आज तक 957 मौतें हुई हैं। इनमें 680 लोगों को सुप्रीम कोर्ट जजमेंट के अंतर्गत दस लाख देना था, हमने सबको प्रोवाइड कर दिया है। 139 लोग ऐसे थे जिनको दस लाख से कम दिया गया, क्योंकि सुप्रीम कोर्ट जजमेंट वर्ष 2014 में आया था। कई राज्य सरकारों ने अपनी स्कीमों के अंतर्गत तीन से छः लाख रुपये तक दिए हैं। हम सबको परस्यु करते हैं और कहते हैं कि सुप्रीम कोर्ट जजमेंट के अंतर्गत दस लाख रुपये देने हैं, इसलिए बैलेंस एमाउंट भी दिया जाए। कई लोगों को दस लाख रुपये से कम मिले हैं। हम अपनी तरफ से राज्य सरकारों को लिखते हैं और कमीशन का सहयोग लेते हैं। 104 लोगों को नहीं मिला है।”

7.10 On being enquired about the action taken in regard to the families who have not been paid compensation yet, the representative of the Department informed during the course of evidence that:

“हम निरंतर उनको लिख रहे हैं और हमने उनके साथ डिटेल्स तक शेयर की हैं। महाराष्ट्र सरकार का कहना था कि पैसा कहां से दें। हमने उनको बताया कि सुप्रीम कोर्ट जजमेंट बहुत साफ है कि स्टेट गवर्नमेंट इसे पे करेगी। हमारे पास ऐसी कोई निधि नहीं है, हम केवल इसे एन्शोर करते हैं कि उनको राइट्स मिलें, कम्पेनसेशन मिले।”

7.11 With regard to the rehabilitation of manual scavengers, the Committee were informed by the representative of the Department during the course of deliberation that:

“हमारे यहां Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers चल रहा था। इसके अंतर्गत ही हमने इनके लिए कोशिश की थी। हम इनके लिए स्कीलिंग का भी काम करते हैं।“

7.12 The representative of the Department further added that:

“स्कील ट्रेनिंग के लिए हमारे पास इम्पैनल्ड ट्रेनिंग इंस्टिट्यूट्स हैं, जो एम एस डी के द्वारा इम्पैनल किए गए हैं। ऐसे 58 पैन इंडिया इंस्टिट्यूट्स हैं, जहां हम कौशल-प्रशिक्षण का कार्य करते हैं। हमने जो नया पोर्टल बनाया है, उसका अनावरण पिछले साल अगस्त, 2021 में हुआ था। इस पोर्टल के माध्यम से कोई भी कैंडिडेट चाहे वह कहीं भी हो, वह उस पर लॉगिन कर सकता है। वह रजिस्ट्रेशन करने के बाद किसी भी स्थान से, किसी भी ट्रेड कोर्स में अप्लाई कर सकता है। उसमें कम से कम 216 ट्रेड कोर्सेज हैं। हमारे जो ट्रेनिंग इंस्टिट्यूट्स हैं, वे प्रयास करते हैं कि वे जहां रह रहे हैं, उनके आस-पास ही ट्रेनिंग की सुविधा उपलब्ध कराई जाए।“

7.13 The Committee are happy to find that a National Action Plan for Mechanised Ecosystem (NAMASTE) has been instituted by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in coordination with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation to eliminate manual cleaning of sewer system and septic tanks and rehabilitation of workers engaged in manual cleaning. The intervention for promotion of mechanized cleaning is to be done through ongoing Scheme 'Swachta Udyami Yojana' implemented by National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation. The Committee also find that there are various schemes such as skill development programme, loans at concessional rates, credit linked upfront Capital subsidy, implemented by the Department, In order to stop manual scavenging. The Committee are surprised to note that despite all these measures, deaths of persons, while cleaning of sewer and septic tanks, continues even today. The Committee are unable to comprehend the reasons due to which the initiatives of the Department are not making requisite impact. The Committee believe that the National Action Plan for mechanized Ecosystem (NAMASTE) initiated in coordination with the line Ministries would help ease out the problem of manual cleaning once all municipal bodies are made aware of the same and encouraged to implement mechanical cleaning. The Committee would like the Department to set up a mechanism for periodic scrutiny of the Scheme as there is a strong need to plug loopholes that are affecting the efforts of the Department, without any further delay. The Committee would also like the budgetary allocation meant for the implementation of the Schemes to be enhanced instead of reducing them at revised stage.

7.14 The Committee are disappointed to note that compensation to 104 persons has not been granted, for deaths due to manual cleaning of sewer/septic tanks. They were aghast to know that some of the States such as Maharashtra has declined to pay compensation due to scarcity of funds. The Committee feel that the family of a bread-earner needs to be instantly compensated in case of death. However, there appears to be non-seriousness on the part of the Department as well as State Governments. The Committee desire that the Department should take suitable measures so that the family of the deceased does not have to suffer and they are compensated as per the norms. The Committee would also like that pending 104 cases for compensation are immediately settled. The Committee would also like to reiterate their earlier suggestion to establish a system to examine the cause of death so that the persons engaging them are also held responsible and penalty fixed on them for violating the laid down norms.

CHAPTER-VIII

VENTURE CAPITAL FUND (VCF) FOR SCs AND BCs

The Venture Capital Fund for Scheduled Castes (VCF-SC), a social sector initiative was launched in 2014-15 to promote entrepreneurship among the Scheduled Castes population in India. Initially a Capital of ₹ 200 crore, was provided for the purpose and is being supplemented every year. As per the guidelines of the scheme, preference is given on technology oriented innovative projects. The present corpus of VCF-SC is ₹ 648.18 crore with ₹ 579.22 crore contributed by Government of India and ₹ 66.96 crore contributed by IFCI Ltd.

8.2 Under VCF-SC, Financial assistance from ₹10 Lakhs up to ₹15 Crore can be extended and aggregate assistance may not be more than two times the current net worth of the Company. To boost entrepreneurship and innovation among the SC students and youth, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has launched Ambedkar Social Innovation Incubation Mission (ASIIM) on 30th September 2020 under VCF-SC Scheme.

8.3 Allocation and Utilisation of funds under Venture Capital Fund (VCF) for SCs and OBCs (Allocation for SCs)

(₹ in crore)

Year	BE	RE	AE
2019-20	60.00	60.00	160.00
2020-21	65.00	40.00	30.00
2021-22	100.00	70.00	NIL
2022-23	70.00	---	---

8.4 Allocation and Utilisation of funds for OBCs under Venture Capital Fund (VCF) for SCs and OBCs

(₹ in crore)

Year	BE	RE	AE
2019-20	50.00	50.00	90.00
2020-21	60	10.00	0.00
2021-22	20.00	20.00	0.00
2022-23	40.00	---	---

8.5 The Department submitted a statement on the achievements under the scheme of VCF-SC upto 31 December 2021 as under:

Total sanctions under the Fund	₹ 466.13 Crore
No. of companies where in the sanction have been granted	126
Total disbursements under the Fund	₹ 290.94 Crore
No. of disbursed companies	93
Achievements under ASIIM under VCF-SC (as on 31 December, 2021)	
Total sanctions under the Fund	₹ 6.90 Crore
No. of companies where in the sanction have been granted	23
Total disbursements under the Fund	₹ 0.87 Crore
No. of disbursed companies	15

8.6 The Venture Capital Fund for Backward Classes (VCF-BC) is a separate scheme under the ongoing scheme of Venture Capital Fund for Scheduled Castes (VCF-SC) and was launched in April 2018. Presently, the corpus of VCF-BC fund is ₹107.79 crore with ₹102.63 Crore contributed by Govt. of India and ₹5.16 crore contributed by IFCI Venture Capital Funds Ltd.

8.7 The achievements under the scheme (VCF-OBC) (as on 31 December 2021) are as under:

Total sanctions under the Fund	₹71.03 Crore
No. of companies where in the sanction have been granted	25
Total disbursements under the Fund	₹7.38 Crore
No. of disbursed companies	5

8.8. On being enquired about the reasons for nil utilization of Venture Capital Fund for SCs and OBCs, the Secretary informed the Committee during the course of evidence that:

“Sir, for venture capital, we can fund upto ₹ 5 crore in equity and debt in selected enterprises. So, enterprises have been selected but when we are contributing equity, we must ensure that our equity is below 49 per cent. If it exceeds, then we will become the owner. Although they are eligible for ₹ 5 crore, unless he gets the matching equity, we are not able to release the funds. This is the real problem.”

8.9 On being asked about the plan to utilize the allocated funds under both the Schemes, the Secretary submitted during the deliberation of the Committee that:

“Sir, we have two strategies. One is that we want to spend more on startups. Earlier, there were little bit space for the startups but mostly they are on enterprises which are established. They faced an existential crisis because of the market disruptions or supply chain disruptions. We are, definitely, sure that all these enterprises will come back to their feet this year because things have really settled down a lot.”

8.10 To promote entrepreneurship among the Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes, two schemes namely Venture Capital Fund for SCs (VCF-SC) and Venture Capital Fund for Backward Classes(VCF-BC) were launched in 2014-15 and 2018 respectively. On the scrutiny of the budgetary allocation and expenditure of both the Schemes, the Committee are quite disappointed to note that the Department was not able to spend a single penny under VCF-SC in 2021-22 and for VCF-BC in 2020-21 and 2021-22 as the owner of the Companies are not able to contribute equity, which should be more than 50 per cent. Since the Department cannot release more than 50 per cent equity to the owner of the Company, as otherwise it would make the Department owner of the enterprise, the Department needs to review and make alternate provision to tackle this issue so that the scheme is successfully implemented. The Committee are pleased to note that the Department is now taking necessary steps to encourage spending on Start Ups and they are sure that Start Ups would come out of the existential crisis they suffered due to market or supply chain disruptions. The Committee also find that under Ambedkar Social Innovation Incubation Mission (ASIIM) of the VCF-SC since September 2020 ₹6.90 crore sanctioned to 23 companies and out of this amount only ₹ 0.87 crore were disbursed to 15 companies upto 31 December, 2021. The Committee desire that the remaining amount sanctioned to the companies should be disbursed without any delay and Committee would also like to be apprised about the details of total amount disbursed out of the sanctioned funds in both the Schemes.

CHAPTER-IX

ATAL VAYO ABHYUDAY YOJANA (AVAY)

Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY) lays down, the vision, mission and the plan of action of the Government of India for welfare and well being of senior citizens of the country. It brings together articulation of each of the current schemes, future plans, strategies and targets and maps those with schemes/programmes, accountabilities, financials and clear outcomes. This scheme takes care of the top four needs of the senior citizens viz. financial security, food, health care and human interaction /life of dignity. It also includes the facets of safety/protection and general well being of the elderly beginning from awareness generation and sensitization of the society. The 'Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana' (AVYAY) consists of the following schemes:

- (i) Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC) an existing scheme is funded from Gross Budgetary Support (GBS).
- (ii) State Action Plan for Senior Citizens (SAPSrC) an existing scheme is funded from Gross Budgetary Support (GBS). This scheme was launched in 2019-20.

9.2 The genesis of the Scheme of AVYAY lies in the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (MWPSrC) Act, 2007. The following features of the Act are guiding principles for the scheme:

- (i) Maintenance of parents/ senior citizens by children/ relatives made obligatory and justifiable through Tribunals;
- (ii) Revocation of transfer of property by senior citizens in case of neglect by relatives;
- (iii) Penal provision for abandonment of senior citizens;
- (iv) Establishment of Old Age Homes for Indigent Senior Citizens;
- (v) Adequate medical facilities and security for Senior Citizens.

9.3 Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC) scheme facilitate grants upto 100% of project cost for running and maintenance of the following projects:-

- (i) Senior Citizens' Homes for 25 destitute Senior Citizens to provide food, care and shelter.
- (ii) Senior Citizens' Homes for 50 Elderly Women including those under Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) to provide food, care and shelter.
- (iii) Continuous Care Homes and Homes for senior citizens afflicted with Alzheimer's disease/ Dementia for a minimum of 20 Senior Citizens who are seriously ill requiring continuous nursing care and respite or those who are afflicted with Alzheimer's disease/ Dementia.
- (iv) Mobile Medicare Units to provide medical care to the Senior Citizens living in rural, isolated and backward areas.
- (v) Physiotherapy Clinics for Senior Citizens for a minimum of 50 Senior Citizens per month.
- (vi) Regional Resource and Training Centres (RRTCs) monitors and provides technical support, advocacy, networking, training and capacity building for effective delivery of service by the Centres for Senior Citizens, funded by the Ministry.
- (vii) Other activities considered suitable to meet the objectives of the scheme, including implementation of the provisions of National Policy for Senior Citizens (NPSrC)

9.4 Under State Action Plan for Senior Citizens (SAPSrC) scheme, assistance will be provided for Mobile Medicare Unit, Physiotherapy clinics for senior citizens, Media/ Advocacy, Convergence, State specific programs etc. Ministry will not start any new Physiotherapy and Mobile Medicare Unit project. However, ongoing projects would be continued.

9.5 The budgetary allocations for the last three years for the same are as follows:

(₹ in crore)

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme	2019-20			2020-21			2021-22 (AS ON 31.12.2020)			2022-23
		BE	RE	Actual	BE	RE	Actual	BE	RE	Actual	BE

				Exp.			Exp.			Exp.	
1.	Atal VayoAbhyuday Yojana (AVYAY) (Earlier National Action Plan for Senior Citizens)	133.10	143.00	141.81	204.00	153.00	133.31	300.00	150.00	30.13	150.00
2.	Support from SCWF in AVYAY							50.00	149.48	2.08	0.00
3.	Amount Met from SCWF							-50.00	-149.48		0.00

9.6 A statement showing the physical targets and achievements under the scheme are as follows:

Sl No.	Name of the Scheme/project/programme	2019-20			2020-21			2021-22			% of achievements for last three years	2022-23
		Target	Achievement	Shortfall, if any, indicating reasons in brief	Target	Achievement	Shortfall, if any, indicating reasons in brief	Target	Achievement	Shortfall, if any, indicating reasons in brief		
11	Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY)	48,000	41655	-	55000	136440		60000	41000		150000	
		Awaited from States/UTs	Awaited from States/UTs	NA	-	-	-	-	-		-	
<p>* State Action Plan for Senior Citizens (SAPSRc) was launched in 2019-20. Funds are released to State Govts. for implementing State Action Plans as per their requirements.</p>												

9.7 State-wise elderly population (60+) by sex as per census 2011 is as follows:

Sl.No.	States/ UTs	Total Population (approx.)		
		Persons	Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5
1	ANDHRA PRADESH	8278241	3906328	4371913
2	A & N ISLANDS	25424	14189	11235
3	ARUNAHAL PRADESH	63639	33189	30450
4	ASSAM	2078544	1054817	1023727
5	BIHAR	7707145	4106593	3600552

6	CHANDIGARH	67078	34833	32245
7	CHHATTISGARH	2003909	928159	1075750
8	D & N HAVELI	13892	6359	7533
9	DAMAN & DIU	11361	4873	6488
10	NCT OF DELHI	1147445	576755	570690
11	GOA	163495	74315	89180
12	GUJARAT	4786559	2245601	2540958
13	HARYANA	2193755	1088621	1105134
14	HIMACHAL PRADESH	703009	340875	362134
15	JAMMU & KASHMIR	922656	482580	440076
16	JHARKHAND	2356678	1181745	1174933
17	KARNATAKA	5791032	2747072	3043960
18	KERALA	4193393	1883595	2309798
19	LAKSHADWEEP	5270	2674	2596
20	MADHYA PRADESH	5713316	2769556	2943760
21	MAHARASHTRA	11106935	5253709	5853226
22	MANIPUR	187694	93137	94557
23	MEGHALAYA	138902	66939	71963
24	MIZORAM	68628	34345	34283
25	NAGALAND	102726	54779	47947
26	ODISHA	3984448	1994270	1990178
27	PUDUCHERRY	120436	53419	67017
28	PUNJAB	2865817	1443662	1422155
29	RAJASTHAN	5112138	2432263	2679875
30	SIKKIM	40752	22472	18280
31	TAMIL NADU	7509758	3661226	3848532
32	TRIPURA	289544	141920	147624
33	UTTAR PRADESH	15439904	8037133	7402771
34	UTTARAKHAND	900809	441897	458912
35	WEST BENGAL	7742382	3851314	3891068
TOTAL		103836714	51065214	52771500

Source: Census, 2011

9.8 A Statement Showing details of Grants released during 2021-22 under Atal Vayo Abhyudaya Yojana (AVYAY) as on 31.12.2021.

(₹ in Lakhs)										
S. No.	States/UTs	Funds released	No. of NGO Assisted	No. of Sr.CH	No. of Sr.CH 50/	No. of MMU	CCH	No. of Phy	Total	No. of beneficiaries covered

					MFCC					
1	Andhra Pradesh	564.53	38	48	7	4	0	0	59	20750
2	Bihar	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	Chhattisgarh	29.80	2	0	3	0	0	0	3	150
4	Goa	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Gujarat	45.94	4	1	3	0	0	0	4	175
6	Haryana	111.42	8	9	2	0	0	1	12	925
7	Himachal Pradesh	9.66	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	25
8	Jammu and Kashmir	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	Jharkhand	42.75	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	100
10	Karnataka	251.61	17	22	4	0	0	0	26	750
11	Kerala	9.45	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	25
12	Madhya Pradesh	80.10	7	5	4	0	0	0	9	325
13	Maharashtra	219.02	19	11	5	1	5		22	5425
14	Odisha	420.14	33	41	2	1	0	1	45	6575
15	Punjab	2.78	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	600
16	Rajasthan	69.36	5	1	6	0	0	0	7	325
17	Tamil Nadu	414.74	31	35	3	3	0	2	43	16625
18	Telangana	124.63	10	10	1	2	0	0	13	9900
19	Uttar Pradesh	240.00	18	13	10	0	1	0	24	845
20	Uttarakhand	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

21	West Bengal	91.58	8	6	2	3	0	0	11	14650
UTs										
22	A& N Island	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
23	Chandigarh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
24	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25	Daman and Diu	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
26	Lakshadweep	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
27	Delhi	8.85	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	50
28	Pondicherry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NE Region States										
29	Arunachal Pradesh	15.58	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	50
30	Assam	204.56	14	12	7	4	0	0	23	19850
31	Manipur	272.54	20	22	2	2	0	0	26	10250
32	Meghalaya	14.68	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	50
33	Mizoram	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
34	Nagaland	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
35	Sikkim	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
36	Tripura	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total		3243.72	242	238	66	20	6	5	335	108420

9.9. On being enquired about the reasons for their failure in achieving the target of providing benefits to the senior citizens in 2021-22 and increasing the target 2.5 manifolds in 2022-23, Department submitted in their written reply that:

“Target of 60,000 beneficiaries proposed to be achieved in the current F.Y. (2021-22). Till March, 2022, the Department would achieve the target fixed i.e. RE amounting to ₹ 150 crore of providing benefits to the senior citizens. Numbers of senior citizen homes are proposed to be increased during 2022-23. Therefore, accordingly number of beneficiaries will be increased. In addition to this, training programmes will be arranged.”

9.10 The Department has been able to spend only 1/5th of the RE in 2021-22 and almost nil funds received for Senior Citizen Welfare fund from AVYAY. When asked about for justification of the claim of the Department to achieve the objectives of Senior Citizens Welfare Fund under Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana(AVYAY), the Department submitted in their written reply that:

“At present, under AVYAY, total 52.83 crore has been sanctioned to the organizations during the year 2021-22 which is 1/3rd of the RE in 2021-22. Since, the physical inspection could not be carried out by PMU in time due to pandemic; therefore, there is delay in releasing funds to the organizations. It is further submitted that SCWF is held by the Department of Economic Affairs Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, through Inter Ministerial Committee, assesses proposals for welfare of the elderly people and then recommend them for funding through SCWF. The money from SCWF is sought from D/o Economic Affairs Status of funds released from SCWF is as under:

Expenditure made from SCWF (₹ In Crore)								
Sr. No.	Ministry/Department Scheme	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Total
Department of Social Justice and Empowerment								
1(i).	Scheme for Other Vulnerable Groups	16.00 #	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	16.00
1(ii).	RashtriyaVayoshri Yojana	0.00	1.50	106.51	0.00	26.50	0.00	134.51
1(iii).	National Helpline for Senior Citizens	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	27.88	15.00	42.88
Ministry of Civil Aviation								
2(i).	Purchase of Electric Operated Golf Carts for Senior Citizens at AAI Airports	0.00	0.00	0.98	0.00			0.98
	Total	16.00	1.50	107.49	0.00	54.38	15.00	194.37

₹ 16 crore were provided for implementation of RVY Scheme through ‘Scheme for Other Vulnerable Group’ on 31.3.2016.”

9.11 On being enquired about the target fixed by the Department under the scheme for 2022-23 and the measures taken to achieve the target, the Department submitted in their written reply that:

“For achieving the target fixed for the year 2022-23, Project Monitoring Unit (PMU) will be requested to carry out the physical inspection of the organizations running Senior Citizen Homes/ Mobile Medicare Units/ PHY under AVYAY well in time during the year 2022-23, so that grants may be released to the organizations in time. Further, regular meetings are held with the State Social Welfare Departments to review the implementation of schemes for Senior Citizen Homes and Implementation of Singal Nodal Agency (SNA) System for the welfare programmes.”

9.12 With regard to create awareness generation and sensitization of the society towards senior citizens of the country, Department submitted in their written reply that:

The Department creates awareness generation and sensitization in the following ways:

- (i) Through National Institute of Social Defence (NISD) – It is an autonomous institute under the Department with a vision of fostering public sensitivity towards issues related to marginalised sections of society, including old age persons, and strengthening effective service delivery. NISD carries out various awareness generation and sensitization programmes. Details of such programmes carried out by NISD in the last 3 years are as follows:

Sl. No.	Financial Year	No. of Programmes	No. of Beneficiaries	Methods of Programme
1.	2019-20 (Offline programmes)	233	18422	Lecture by experts, PPT, role play, street play, drawing/slogan competitions, etc.
2.	2020-21 (Online programmes due to COVID-19)	179	33581	Lecture by experts through virtual mode, PPTs, Discussions.
3.	2021-22 as on 10/2/2022 Online	200	19400	Lecture by experts through virtual mode, PPTs, Discussions.
	Offline	63	1575	Lecture by experts, PPT, role play, street play, drawing/slogan competitions, etc.
Total		675	72978	

- (ii) Radio programme namely 'Sanwanti Jayein, Jeevan ki raahein' – This bi-weekly programme raises issues related to senior citizens in the country and spreads awareness about programmes, schemes, legislation of this Department. The programme is being broadcasted through 94 stations of All India Radio in Hindi and 17 regional languages for the past 1 year.
- (iii) Vayoshreshtha Samman – National Awards for senior citizens. The Department confers National Awards for Senior Citizens on the occasion of International Day for Older Persons (IDOP) i.e. on 01st October, every year. The Honorable President of India/ Honorable Vice President of India is the Chief Guests on the occasion who confer upon the awards.

Awards are given in 13 different categories – 07 institutional categories and 06 individual categories. Due to the pandemic awards could not be conferred in 2020.

- (iv) A dedicated short film on the awardees is made since 2019, in collaboration with the National Film Development Corporation of India.
- (v) The Department of Social Justice and Empowerment spreads awareness on matters related to the senior citizens through social media handles, regularly.
- (vi) The Department has launched Elderline – National Helpline for Senior Citizens, with a toll free number 14567. The Elderline has been dedicated to the Nation by the Hon'ble Vice President of India on the occasion of the International Day on Older Persons i.e. 01.10.2021. It is being implemented through National Institute of Social Defence (NISD), in cooperation with the State/ UT Governments. As on 10.02.2022 the Elderline is operational in 26 States/ UTs.

In the States of Chhattisgarh and Arunachal Pradesh the Elderline is expected to become operational by second week of March 2022.

In the following States/ UTs the Elderline is expected to become operational by the end of March 2022:-

- (a) Andaman and Nicobar Islands
- (b) Himachal Pradesh
- (c) Ladakh
- (d) Lakshadweep
- (e) Sikkim
- (e) Tripura
- (f) West Bengal
- (g) Haryana

- (vii) A one-minute forty five second film on the Elderline has been made in 2021 with actor Shri Amitabh Bachchan has been broadcasted on Youtube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMxFaNb4Qis>).”

9.13 The Committee note that the Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana(AVAY) consisting of Integrated Programme for senior citizens and State Action Plan for senior citizens takes care of financial security, food, healthcare and human interaction. The Committee are perturbed to note that the Department was able to spend only ₹133.31 crore out of the budgetary allocation of ₹204.00 crore in 2020-21 and in 2021-22, the Department could spend only ₹30.13 crore out of the Budgetary Allocation of ₹300.00 crore. The Committee are constrained to note that the Budgetary Allocation for 2022-23 has been kept at par with the Revised Estimate of 2020-21 and 2021-22 i.e ₹150.00 crore. Further surprising to the Committee is the fact that the targets fixed under the Scheme are nowhere is comparison to the population of elders and there are several States such as Bihar, Goa, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura where no funds were granted in 2021-22 upto 31.12.2021. The Committee feel that the Department need to do much more than what they have been doing for the welfare of senior citizens in the Country. After formulation of the Schemes, they should make their presence felt by continuously monitoring through their established mechanisms. The Committee, therefore, recommend to take suitable steps for implementation of welfare measures for senior citizens in a more dedicated manner with sympathetic approach and also desire that the budgetary allocation would be enhanced for 2022-23 alongwith the target so that maximum elderly people get social security through these Schemes.

CHAPTER -X

DEVELOPMENT AND WELFARE BOARD FOR DENOTIFIED, NOMADIC AND SEMI-NOMADIC COMMUNITIES (DWBDNCS)

A Development and Welfare Board for De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities (DWBDNCS) was constituted with following terms of reference:

- (i) To formulate and Implement Welfare and Development programme as required, for De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities.
- (ii) To identify the locations/areas where these communities are densely populated.
- (iii) To assess and identify gaps in accessing existing programmes and entitlements and to collaborate with Ministries/Implementing agencies to ensure that ongoing programmes meet the special requirements of De-notified Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities. States/UTs with reference to De-notified Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities.
- (iv) Any other related work as may be assigned by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

10.2 The Ministry informed that the ethnographic studies of DNT are being conducted by Anthropological Survey of India and in this regard ₹2.26 Crore has been sanctioned to them.

10.3 A Scheme namely “Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNT Communities (SEED)” has been formulated with total outlay of ₹ 200 Crore for next five years w.e.f.2021-22 to 2025-26, with following four components:

- (i) To provide coaching of good quality for DNT candidates to enable them to appear in competitive examinations,
- (ii) To provide Health Insurance to them,
- (iii) To facilitate livelihood initiative at community level and
- (iv) To provide financial assistance for construction of houses for members of these communities

10.4 The allocation and utilization of funds under the Scheme is as follows:

Year	BE	RE	AE
2021-22	50.00	40.40	0.00
2022-23	28.00	----	---

10.5 On being enquired about the status of the ethnographic study conducted to identify Denotified Tribes, the Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment informed the Committee during the deliberation that:

“इदाते कमीशन का 2014 में निर्माण हुआ और 2017 में इनकी रिपोर्ट आई। उसकी बेसिस में हमने एक डीएनटी बोर्ड शुरू किए.....”

10.6 He further added that:

“इसकी रिपोर्ट दिसंबर, 2017 में आई थी। क्योंकि कैबिनेट में जाकर 2019 में इसका बोर्ड गठित हुआ है। बोर्ड गठित होने के बाद दो चीजों के ऊपर काम हुआ है। 269 ऐसी घुमंतू जाति हैं, जिनका कोई रिजर्वेशन नहीं है। इन जातियों को हम कहां फिट करेंगे, बीसी में करेंगे, एससी में करेंगे या एसटी में करेंगे, इसके ऊपर राय देने के लिए एक बड़ा सा सर्वे अभी चल रहा है। इसमें करीब 60 इनवेस्टिगेटर लगे हुए हैं। यह काम काफी जोरदार तरीके से चल रहा है। घुमंतू जाति के एक लिए सीड की स्कीम तैयार हुई है। हम उसका अप्रूवल ले चुके हैं। Now we are in a position to really take off and go in for this.”

10.7 On being asked about the inclusion of these communities in SC/ ST or OBC category, the Committee were informed by the Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment during the oral evidence that:

“इन 269 जातियों के बारे में पूरी तरह स्टडी करके ही हम एक नतीजे में पहुंच सकते हैं कि इनको एससी में जोड़ा जाए, एसटी में जोड़ा जाए या ओबीसी में जोड़ा जाए।”

10.8 The Committee are constrained to note that the Scheme for economic empowerment of DNT communities formulated to provide coaching, health insurance, facilitate livelihood and financial assistance for construction of homes for the members of DNT, with total outlays of ₹200 crore for the period of five years from 2021-22 to 2025-26 and the Department could not spend even a single rupee in 2021-22 and the budgetary allocation has been reduced to ₹28.00 crore for 2022-23 against the budgetary allocation of ₹50.00 crore for 2021-22. The Committee are dismayed that the Department has already delayed in formulation of the Scheme for welfare of Denotified, Nomadic and semi nomadic communities. Any slackness on the part of the Department to execute the scheme would hamper the welfare measures of the Scheme. The Committee would like the Department to take necessary measures for effective implementation of the Scheme.

10.9 The Committee take note that the Development and Welfare Board for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic communities constituted in 2017 has been inter-alia assigned the responsibility to identify the locations where these communities were located. The Committee find that at present 269 such Denotified, Nomadic and semi-nomadic communities are specified and a survey is now in under process to place these castes in SC, ST and BC categories. The Committee are surprised to find that the Department has not been able to take any decision till date hence they would like the Department to take necessary action in this regard so that these castes are placed either under SCs, STs or BCs

and avail benefits. Delay in locating them would increase their suffering and they would not be able to get benefit of the prevailing Schemes meant for the welfare of SC/STs. The Committee would appreciate if this work is done in a time bound manner. The Committee would like to be apprised of the timelines fixed in this regard.

CHAPTER-XI

The Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 and the SCs and STs (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989

11.1 To check and deter crimes against members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, an Act of Parliament which also falls under the provisions of Article 17 of the Constitution namely the "the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989" was enacted and enforced on 30.01.1990. The PoA Act was amended by the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Act, 2015 (No.1 of 2016) with an objective to deliver members of SCs and STs, a greater justice as well as an enhanced deterrent to the offenders and was enforced on 26.01.2016. The PoA Act has been further amended by the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Act, 2018, and after section 18, section 18A inserted which reads as under:

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

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

11.2 The main objectives of the Act are as follows:

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

11.3 The prescribed minimum scale of relief and rehabilitation under the Rules have been last amended in April 2016 making it between ₹ 85,000/- to ₹ 8,25,000/- depending upon the nature of an offence. 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.

11.4 The following measures are to be taken by State Governments for effective implementation of the Act:

- (i) Economic and social rehabilitation of victims of the atrocities;
- (ii) Setting up of Committees at appropriate levels;
- (iii) Identification of atrocity prone areas;
- (iv) Legal aid to the persons subjected to atrocities to enable them to avail themselves of justice;
- (v) Appointment of officers for initiating or exercising supervision over prosecution for contravention of the provisions of the Act; and
- (vi) Periodic survey of the working of the provisions of the Act (Section 21 (2)).

11.5 The following structures and mechanisms have been put in place for implementation of the PoA Act in various States/UTs:

- (i) Special Courts and Exclusive Special Courts
- (ii) Special Public Prosecutor and Exclusive Special Public Prosecutors
- (iii) Setting up of SC/ST Protection Cells at State Headquarters:
- (iv) Special Police Stations
- (v) Appointment of Nodal Officers
- (vi) Setting up of State and District Level Vigilance and Monitoring Committees
- (vi) Identification of atrocity prone areas and taking consequential steps
- (vii) Appointment of Special Officers

11.6. The state wise cases registered under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 as follows:

Sl.No	State/Union Territory	Number of Cases registered during the year 2020			SC population as per 2011 Census and its % to total population (In lakhs)	ST population as per 2011 Census and its % to total population (In lakhs)	Number of Cases registered per lakh population as per 2011 Census	
		SC	ST	TOTAL			SC	ST
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
STATES								
1	Uttar Pradesh	10138	01	10139	413.5 (20.7)	11.3 (0.6)	24.52	0.09
2	Madhya Pradesh	6899	2399	9298	113.4 (15.6)	153.2(21.1)	60.84	15.66
3	Bihar	7367	94	7461	165.6 (15.9)	13.3 (1.3)	44.49	7.07
4	Rajasthan	6895	1849	8744	122.2 (17.8)	92.3(13.5)	56.42	20.03
5	Andhra Pradesh	1769	300	2069	84.5 (17.2)	26.3 (5.4)	20.93	11.41
6	Odisha	2046	605	2651	71.8 (17.1)	95.9 (22.8)	28.50	6.31
7	Karnataka	1263	269	1532	104.7 (17.1)	42.4 (7.0)	12.06	6.34
8	Maharashtra	2359	639	2998	132.7 (11.8)	105.1 (9.4)	17.78	6.08
9	Telangana	1842	545	2387	54.3 (15.4)	32.9 (9.3)	33.92	16.57
10	Gujarat	1258	289	1547	40.7 (6.7)	89.1 (14.8)	30.91	3.24
11	Tamil Nadu	1237	18	1255	144.3 (20.0)	7.9 (1.1)	8.57	2.28
12	Kerala	776	119	895	30.4 (9.1)	4.8 (1.5)	25.53	24.79
13	Jharkhand	367	167	534	39.8 (12.1)	86.4 (26.2)	9.22	1.93
14	Haryana	1132	0	1132	51.1(20.2)	Nil	22.15	0.00
15	Chhattisgarh	316	501	817	32.7 (12.8)	78.2 (30.6)	9.66	6.41
16	West Bengal	86	67	153	214.6(23.5)	52.9 (5.8)	0.40	1.27
17	Punjab	119	02	121	88.6 (31.9)	Nil	1.34	0.00
18	Himachal Pradesh	40	01	41	17.2 (25.2)	3.9 (5.7)	2.33	0.26
19	Uttarakhand	33	13	46	18.9 (18.8)	2.9 (2.9)	1.75	4.48

20	Assam	17	06	23	22.3 (7.2)	38.8 (12.4)	0.76	0.15
21	Goa	0	1	1	0.25 (1.7)	1.4 (10.2)	0.00	0.71
22	Sikkim	0	0	0	0.28 (4.6)	2.0 (33.8)	0.00	0.00
23	Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	0	Nil	9.5 (68.8)	0.00	0.00
24	Tripura	0	1	1	6.5 (17.8)	11.6 (31.8)	0.00	0.09
25	Manipur	0	2	2	0.97 (3.8)	9.0 (35.1)	0.00	0.22
26	Nagaland	0	0	0	Nil	17.1(86.5)	0.00	0.00
27	Meghalaya	0	0	0	0.17 (0.6)	25.5 (86.1)	0.00	0.00
28	Mizoram	0	0	0	0.1 (0.1)	10.3 (94.4)	0.00	0.00
29	Jammu&Kashmir	4	0	4	9.2 (7.4)	14.9 (11.9)	0.43	0.00
Union Territories								
30	Delhi	31	0	31	28.1 (16.8)	Nil	1.10	0.00
31	Puducherry	0	0	0	1.9 (15.7)	Nil	0.00	0.00
32	Dadra & Nagar Haveli & Daman & Diu	1	0	1	0.06 (1.8)	1.7 (52.0)	16.67	0.00
33	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	0	2	2	Nil	0.28 (7.5)	0.00	7.14
34	Chandigarh	0	0	0	1.9 (18.9)	Nil	0.53	0.00
35	Lakshadweep	0	1	1	Nil	0.61 (94.8)	0.00	1.64
	Total	45995	7891	53886	--	--	--	--

11.7 The cases with courts under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) {POA} Act, 1989 in Conjunction with IPC during the Year 2020 are as follows:

Scheduled Castes						
Sl. No.	State/UT	Number of cases in Courts including B.F. in 2020	Cases Compounded/ abated/ Withdrawn/ quashed/plea bargaining	Number of cases in which trials completed		Number of cases pending with Courts at the end of 2020
				Convicted	Acquitted or Discharged	

States						
1	Andhra Pradesh	4893	0	35	285	4573
2	Arunachal Pradesh	2	0	0	0	2
3	Assam	7	0	0	0	7
4	Bihar	34624	0	12	43	34569
5	Chhattisgarh	1404	0	23	25	1356
6	Goa	10	0	0	0	10
7	Gujarat	9557	1	3	57	9496
8	Haryana	2089	0	6	42	2041
9	Himachal Pradesh	131	0	1	1	129
10	Jharkhand	922	0	10	15	897
11	Karnataka	4156	1	14	131	4010
12	Kerala	3412	5	7	147	3253
13	Madhya Pradesh	27280	0	538	803	25939
14	Maharashtra	9853	4	37	267	9545
15	Manipur	3	0	0	0	3
16	Meghalaya	0	0	0	0	0
17	Mizoram	0	0	0	0	0
18	Nagaland	0	0	0	0	0
19	Odisha	11482	0	5	131	11346
20	Punjab	244	0	3	16	225
21	Rajasthan	16602	2	560	587	15453
22	Sikkim	5	0	0	0	5
23	Tamil Nadu	4432	10	123	354	3945
24	Telangana	4351	4	10	189	4148
25	Tripura	1	0	0	0	1
26	Uttar Pradesh	47445	0	1225	691	45529

27	Uttarakhand	198	0	0	0	198
28	West Bengal	549	0	0	2	547
Union Territories						
29	A & N Islands	0	0	0	0	0
30	Chandigarh	1	0	1	0	0
31	D & N Haveli and Daman & Diu	2	0	0	0	2
32	Delhi	126	0	0	1	125
33	Jammu & Kashmir	0	0	0	0	0
34	Ladakh	0	0	0	0	0
35	Lakshadweep	0	0	0	0	0
36	Puducherry	25	0	0	0	25
	Total	183806	27	2613	3787	177379

Source: National Crime Record Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs

11.8 The Central assistance under the Centrally sponsored scheme for implementation of the protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) {POA} Act, 1989, during 2019-20 to 2021-22 (as on 31.12.2021) is as follows:

(₹ in lakhs)

Sl. No.	States/UTs	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 (31.12.2021)
States				
1	Andhra Pradesh	4814.34	3429.9935	920.00
2	Assam	0.00	15.00	10.00
3	Bihar	1220.00	1505.0000	3500.00
4	Chhattisgarh	1696.40	2159.1850	370.00

5	Goa	4.00	3.0000	3.00
6	Gujarat	3981.16	3314.1600	1978.625
7	Haryana	1214.61	1360.0050	238.00
8	Himachal Pradesh	477.01	382.7500	314.955
9	Jharkhand	266.00	28.82463	319.3365
10	Jammu & Kashmir	-	-	93.20
11	Karnataka	6867.25	6542.7500	6185.26
12	Kerala	2746.08	1099.1500	223.00
13	Madhya Pradesh	7900.32	8349.19353	10341.53147
14	Maharashtra	6194.75	5813.5200	773.00
15	Odisha	3206.30	3508.7910	4408.705
16	Punjab	0.00	18.65672	780.49078
17	Rajasthan	2048.33	4770.0564	740.00
18	Sikkim	25.00	0.00	0.83
19	Tamil Nadu	1833.05	3852.4850	605.00
20	Telangana	1993.88	819.2000	371.00
21	Tripura	39.14	0.00	6.54
22	Uttar Pradesh	14136.04	11302.6200	12671.716
23	Uttarakhand	102.87	94.8225	78.30
24	West Bengal	897.61	37.40672	87.00
Union Territories				
25	Chandigarh	75.00	50.0000	-
26	NCT of Delhi	16.00	25.0000	7.45
27	Puducherry	209.00	787.55226	99.35
28	Lakshadweep	-	-	12.00
Total		61964.14	59269.12	45138.28

11.9 The allocation and utilisation of funds under the Scheme in last three years alongwith allocation of BE for 2022-23 is as follows:

(₹ in crore)

Year	BE	RE	AE
2019-20	530.00	630.00	619.64
2020-21	550.00	600.00	593.39
2021-22	600.00	600.00	452.09 As n 31.12.2021
2022-23	600.00	---	---

11.10 With regard to the mode of release of funds to the States/UTs, the Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted before the Committee during the deliberation that:

“हम राज्य सरकार को पैसा एडवांस में रिलीज करते हैं। जैसे ही वह पैसा खर्च होता है, उसका ब्यौरा हम उनसे मांगते हैं और उसके बाद अगर चाहिए तो हम और पैसा देते हैं।”

11.11 On being enquired the criteria fixed for release of funds to victims and the duration in which assistance is given, the Committee were informed by the representative of the Department that:

“47 तरह की एट्रोसिटीज को चिन्हित किया गया है। यदि उस कैटेगरी में से कोई अपराध होता है तो उसको उतना अमाउण्ट मिलता है। जैसे आपने कहा है कि जो हीनियस क्राइम होता है, जैसे मान लीजिए मर्डर कर दिया है तो उसमें 8 लाख 25 हजार तक का प्रावधान है। सर, आप कह रहे हैं कि यह उनको कब दिया जाता है तो इसमें एफआईआर होने के 7 दिन के अंदर पहली किश्त देते हैं। इसमें ज्यादातर मुआवजा तीन चरणों में दिया जाता है। इस नियम में पाबंदी है कि यह कलेक्टर को करना है। इसमें कलेक्टर और एसपी की जिम्मेदारी है कि उसको पैसा देना है। जैसे ही अत्याचार होता है और उसकी एफआईआर होती है तो 7 दिन के अंदर जिला प्रशासन को पैसा देना होता है।”

11.12 The Committee are astonished to find that despite existing constitutional provisions to check and deter crimes against members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes since 1990, they have not served the purpose as expected. The Committee are surprised to find from the figures of National Crime Records Bureau that there are several States where cases have not been registered during 2020 under Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. The Committee find that the relief and rehabilitation provided under the rules from the funds sanctioned is not being utilized fully as in 2020-21 and 2021-22, the Department could spend ₹593.39 crore and ₹452.09 crore (till 31st December, 2021) respectively. The budgetary allocation have also remained stagnant as RE for 2020-21 and 2021-22 was ₹600.00 crore and for 2022-23 the Budgetary Estimates is ₹600.00 crore. The Committee are highly disturbed with the way the issue is being dealt with particularly in regard to allocation of funds and also with respect to release of compensation for relief and rehabilitation of victims as substantial time is consumed in release of compensation to the victims. The Committee also feel that there is a need to review the compensation of ₹85,000/- to ₹ 8,25,000/- fixed in April, 2016 so that the compensation awarded can be utilised for a purpose. The Committee would therefore like the Department to direct all State/UT Governments to ensure that the relief is timely granted and the scale of compensation is also reviewed.

CHAPTER- XII

PM YOUNG ACHIEVERS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD FOR VIBRANT INDIA (PM YASASVI) FOR OBC, EBC AND DNT

12.1 An Umbrella Scheme namely- PM Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme for Vibrant India (PM-YASASVI) for OBC, EBC and DNT Students has been formulated having following five sub-schemes:

- (i) Pre-Matric Scholarship for OBC, EBC and DNT Students
- (ii) Post-Matric Scholarship for OBC, EBC and DNT Students
- (iii) Top Class School Education for OBC, EBC and DNT Students
- (iv) Top Class College Education for OBC, EBC and DNT Students
- (v) Construction of Hostel for OBC Boys and Girls

12.2 The existing Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Pre-Matric Scholarship for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) Students and PMS-OBC scheme were formulated in the year 1998-99. Further, the scheme for educational empowerment of EBC/DNT was launched in the year 2014-15. The Boys and Girls Hostels for OBCs Scheme which has been subsumed in PM YASASVI now, aims at providing hostel facilities to students belonging to socially and educationally backward classes, especially from rural areas to enable them to pursue secondary and higher education.

12.3 The following changes have been recommended by EFC in the exciting Scheme :-

Sl. No.	Existing Provisions	Changes recommended by the EFC	Remarks, if any
1.	Four scholarship Schemes: (i) Pre-Matric for OBC (ii) Post-Matric for OBC (iii) Post –Matric for EBC (iv) Pre and Post-Matric for DNT	Merged and added two new sub schemes and also Hostel Scheme for OBC added. Now Five sub-schemes are as under: (i) Pre Matric for OBC,	

		EBC and DNT (ii) Post matric for OBC, EBC, DNT (a) Top Class School (b) Top Class College (iii) Hostels for OBC	
2.	Eligible beneficiaries – Presently in pre-matric, class I to X covered. Post matric- Class XI and above	Pre-Matric- Class (IX-X) (in Government Schools only) Post matric- Class XI and above	Year-wise students target fixed. EBC added in pre-matric scheme.
3.	Income Limit- Existing Annual Income Limit for eligibility of scholarship schemes for OBC, EBC and DNT students is ₹ 2.50 lakh for 2020-21 only.	Rs 2.5 lakh per annum for all five years from 2021-22 to 2025-26.	Prior to 2020-21 the income limit was as under: (i) PMS BC- 1.50 lakh (ii) Pre-Matric OBC 2.50 lakh (iii) PMS EBC- 1.00 Lakh (iv) Pre and Post DNT 2.00 Lakh
4.	Sharing Pattern- Centre: State, present sharing pattern under the schemes is as under: PMS OBC- Centre- 100 (above committed liability of State Govt.) 60:40 between Centre and States and UTs with Legislature 90:10 between Centre and NE/ Uttarakhand & Himachal PRE OBC- Centre-50%: State- 50% EBC- Centre-100% DNT- - Centre- 75%: State 25%	100% in UTs without Legislature	
5.	Scholarship amount: Presently per month different scholarship amount, for day scholars and hostellers, is fixed for each category.	Fixed Academic allowance ₹ 4000/per annum for pre-matric students. For post matric, fixed academic allowance plus tuition fee ranging from 5000 to 20000/per annum	Academic Allowances/Tuition Fee will remain fixed for all five years period from 2021-22 to 2025-26.

		depending upon course.	
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12.4 The budgetary allocations, targets/achievements under the Scheme for the last three years are as follows:

(₹ in crore)

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme	2019-20				2020-21				2021-22 (AS ON 31.12.2020)				2022-23	
		BE	RE	Actual Exp.	Target/achievement	BE	RE	Actual Exp.	Target/achievement	BE	RE	Actual Exp.	Target/achievement	BE	Target/achievement
1.	Post-Matric Scholarship for OBCs	1360.00	1397.50	1299.19	40.94 Lakh/40.94 lakh	1415.00	1100.00	1159.59	44.00 Lakh/19.95 Lakh	1300.00	1300.00	138.22	80 Lakh	1083.00	45.10 Lakh
2.	Pre-Matric Scholarship for OBCs	220.00	220.00	201.42	94.17 Lakh/107.90 Lakh	250.00	175.00	165.85	27.50 Lakh/29.38 Lakh	250.00	250.00	36.80	200 lakh	478.00	102 lakh
3.	Boys & Girls Hostels for OBCs	30.00	30.00	21.29	1750 seats/1750 seats	50.00	35.00	31.59	1650 seats/3000 seats	30.00	30.00	4.98	1500 seats	20.00	7000 seats
4.	Scheme for Educational and Economical Development of De-notified and Nomadic Tribes	10.00	10.00	9.00		10.00	10.00	9.00					Schemes merged with components of PM YASASVI		
5.	Post Matric Scholarship for Economically Backward Classes	23.00	13.00	13.99		25.00	25.00	25.00							

12.5 On being enquired about the Objective of merger of five schemes under PM YASASVI for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs with specific Budgetary Allocation under each head the Department submitted in their written reply:

“It was envisaged that these Scholarship Schemes which are similar in nature may be merged under an umbrella Scheme to bring synergies, streamlining of various activities/services and rationalization of resources. To socially and economically empower Other Backward Classes (OBC), Economically Backward Class (EBC) and De-notified, Nomadic and Semi Nomadic Tribes (DNT) by enhancing their access to education by way of

scholarship for class 9th to 12th, under graduate and professional diploma/polytechnic/nursing/degree courses. The Scheme is approved by the Competent Authority.”

12.6 The Budget for Top Class School Education for OBC, EBC and DNT Students (as Per EFC) for 2021-22 and projection of funds allocation for the next four years is as follows:

(₹ in Crore)					
2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Total
178.75	357.50	357.50	357.50	357.50	1608.75

12.7 The salient features of the Scheme are as under:-

- 1) The Scheme will be funded by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment on 100% basis.
- 2) The school/organization/institution should be of good reputation and are recognized by the State Government and affiliated to State/Central Boards.
- 3) The students and the schools will be recommended by the District Administration. The students will be selected through an open competitive examination/transparent selection process by the District Administration.
- 4) The admissions would be in Class 9 and Class11 and would be automatically renewed up to class 12.
- 5) Parent Income Limit: 2,50,000/- per annum.
- 6) The grants will be provided for tuition fee and residential charges as required by the school, subject to a ceiling of ₹ 75,000/- per annum per student of class 9 and 10 and ₹ 1,25,000/- per annum per student of class 11 and 12.

12.8 The Budget for Top Class College Education for OBC, EBC and DNT Students (as Per EFC) for 2021-22 and projection of funds allocation for the next four years is as follows:

					In Crore
2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Total
383.65	422.01	464.21	510.63	561.70	2342

The salient features of the Top Class College Scheme for OBC, EBC and DNT students are as under:-

- 1) The Scheme will be funded by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment on 100% basis.
- 2) The Scheme will operate in all the institutions notified by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment for every financial year 2021-22 onwards.
- 3) Annual family income ₹ 2,50,000/- lakh per annum
- 4) All the IIMs/IITs/ IIITs / AIIMSs/ NITs/NIFTs/ NIDs/ Indian Institutes of Hotel Management, National Law Universities and other Central Government Institutions will be eligible to be included in the Scheme.
- 5) The overall number of fresh scholarships would be capped as per budget earmarked of that financial year.
- 6) The number of slots shall be distributed among types of institutions as per recommendation of the committee to be chaired by the Secretary, D/o SJ&E and having members from different Ministries.
- 7) Payable- full tuition fee and non-refundable charges (there will be a ceiling of ₹ 2.00 lakh per annum per student for private sector institutions and ₹ 3.72 lakhs per annum per student for the private sector flying clubs for Commercial Pilot Training and Type Rating Courses)
 - (a) living expenses to the beneficiary @ ₹ 3000/- per month per student
 - (b) books and stationery @ ₹ 5000/- per annum per student and
 - (c) a latest computer/laptop of reputed brand with accessories like UPS and printer limited to ₹ 45000/- per student as one time assistance during the course."

12.9 On being enquired about the reasons due to which very less expenditure could be made in Post-Matric Scholarship, Pre-Matric Scholarship and Boys & Girls Hostels in 2021-22 and the monitoring mechanism available with the Department for better implementation of the scheme the Department submitted in their written reply that:

"During the year 2021-22, State/UTs/Implementing Agencies were asked to comply with monitoring mechanism on procedure for release of fund and

monitoring of fund released under Centrally Sponsored Schemes as per the newly issued guidelines of Department Expenditure in the matter. According to the new guidelines, SG inter-alia are required to notify the SNA, open the SNA account and map the same with PFMS. With regular pursuance SG are complying the guideline. However, there are several states which are yet to comply completely. Ministry is following up with States/UTs/IA vigorously to comply the same so that the disbursement of funds can be improved and better utilization of allocated fund. The implementing agencies are asked to submit the utilization certificate of previous year grants before the subsequent year grants are released to them. The Department also undertakes periodic review of the progress of implementation of the Schemes through third party evaluation studies for recommendation on continuation of Schemes”.

12.10 On being asked about the target fixed by the Department under PM YASASVI for 2022-23 and the initiatives taken, the Department submitted in their written reply that:

Schemes	BE 2022-23	2022-23 Beneficiary Target
Pre matric	478.00	10230000
Post matric	1083.00	4510000
Top Class Colleges	New Component under PM YASASVI	16500
Top Class Schools		30000

12.11 The Committee find a declining trend in the expenditure incurred under Post Matric and Pre Matric Scholarships for OBC Boys and Girls hostels of OBCs as the expenditure has gone down since 2019-20. In 2019-20 and 2020-21, the Department could spend ₹1,521.90 crore and ₹1,357.02 crore respectively and in 2021-22, the expenditure of mere ₹180.00 crore could be incurred till date. The Committee note that two schemes namely Top Class School and Top Class College have been added to the Scheme. Further, two more independent Schemes having separate budgetary allocation upto 2020-21 have also been merged under the Scheme from 2021-22. The Committee are dismayed to note that even after the merger, the budgetary allocation under the Scheme have not changed much. The Committee feel that bringing together of so many Schemes may help in utilizing the available funds under the scheme but will adversely affect the effectiveness and scrutiny of each Scheme. Keeping into consideration the budgetary allocation and trend in expenditure, the Committee would like the Department to keep a check on the performance of each Scheme so that the objectives of each scheme are not lost and adopt a mechanism which would ensure the effective implementation of Scheme in the given budget without diluting the objective of the individual Scheme.

12.12 The Committee note that the existing eligible income limit of ₹2.5 lakh for scholarship schemes for OBC, EBC and DNT students for 2020-21 has been recommended for all five years form 2021-22 to 2025-26. The Committee feel that with the rising inflation the annual income limit should be regularly reviewed so that the needy students are not deprived of the Schemes. The Committee strongly

believe that during the period 2021-22 and 2025-26, the annual income of family would have increased and thus exclude many OBC, EBC and DNT students from availing the benefits of the Schemes, even though they may not be genuinely in a position to afford the education in good schools/ colleges, hostels etc. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the income criteria should be regularly reviewed to absorb the inflation effect in the annual income.

CHAPTER-XIII

VANCHIT IKAI SAMOOH AUR VARGON KI ARTHIK SAHAYATA (VISVAS) YOJANA FOR SCs AND OBCs

13.1 Vanchit Ikai Samooh aur Vargo ko Arthik Sahayata (VISVAS) scheme earlier named as Interest Subvention Scheme (ISS) was launched by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment for interest subvention on loan/credit upto ₹ 4.00 Lakh at 5% interest per annum to the Self Help Groups/ Individual member belonging to Other Backward Classes and Scheduled Caste community with annual family income up to ₹ 3.00 Lakh. The scheme will be significantly helpful to expand the outreach to OBC and SC members and reduce interest burden on them in these times of pandemic. This Scheme will be implemented for welfare of persons or self help groups belonging to Scheduled Castes and persons or Self Help Groups belonging to Other Backward Classes by the following apex corporations of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment respectively:

- (i) The National Scheduled Castes Finance Development Corporation (NSFDC) and
- (ii) The National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC).

13.2 This scheme will provide direct benefit of lower rate of interest to the eligible Self-Help Groups (SHGs) formed under National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) or National Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM) or NABARD/ individual beneficiaries who have availed loans through Public Sector Banks (PSBs), Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) and similar financial institutions hereinafter referred to as Lending Institutions.

13.3 Interest subvention for loan tenure up to a maximum of 5 years shall be provided under the scheme. Beneficiaries can claim the subvention amount by filling the format online on VISVAS Portal at www.nbcfdc.gov.in. The transfer of subvention amount into

SHGs/Individual beneficiaries' operational bank accounts would be done through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) process along with SMS carrying information on their mobile.

13.4 The budgetary allocation and expenditure under VISVAS Yojana for SCs and OBCs is as follows:

(₹ in crore)

Schemes/Non Schemes	Budget Estimates 2021-22	Revised Estimates 2021-22	Expt. up to 15.02.2022	BE 2022-23 (Proposed)	BE 2022-23 (Allocated)
Vanchit Ikai Samooh aur Vargon ki Arthik Sahayata (VISVAS) Yojana for SCs	100.00	10.00	0.00	60.00	50.00
Vanchit Ikai Samooh aur Vargon ki Arthik Sahayata (VISVAS) Yojana for OBCs	50.00	10.00	0.00	40.00	30.00

13.5 On being enquired by the Committee about the reasons of zero utilization of allocated funds on the head of the VISVAS Scheme for SCs, the representative of the Department replied during oral evidence that:

“इसका कारण यह है कि हमें इस स्कीम को एक साल तक चलाने की ही अनुमति मिली थी और वित्त मंत्रालय ने कहा था कि उसके बाद उसका इवैल्यूएशन करवाने के बाद ही इसको आगे चलाने देंगे तो अभी इसका इवैल्यूएशन करवा लिया गया है।”

The Secretary of the Department further stated that:

“Sir, it is like interest subvention on the loans which are given by the banks. If the banks give it 10 or 12 per cent rate of interest, we give interest subvention upto 5 per cent. Then, that amount will go directly into the account of the beneficiary. There is some hesitation on the part of the banks

in participation. Only some small banks have participated. Big banks like SBI and others have not participated in this scheme.”

13.6 On being asked by the Committee about steps taken to revive the scheme, the Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted before the Committee during the course of oral evidence that:

“one thing is that a rigorous effort was made. It is because I have personally spoken to all the CMDs of the banks and told them this is a great opportunity for them to restructure your loans so that they will all be regular accounts. Many of them have said that they will participate in it. Then, they finding it there are better opportunities for the banks like for example, the refinance. In a refinance, banks will get the money. In this scheme, the beneficiary is getting the money. So, the banker is not showing interest.”

13.7 On being enquired by the Committee about likely relinquishment of the scheme, Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment submitted during evidence that:

“we are restructuring the scheme and then we have asked NAPCON to do a study on this and come out with a solution. They have proposed a solution. This will be implemented from 2022-23 onwards.”

13.8 The Committee find that the interest subvention on loan/ credit upto ₹ 4.00 lakh is provided under Vanchit Ikai Samooh aur Vargho ko Arthik Sahayata (VISVAS) scheme to Self Help Groups/ Individual Members belonging to other Backward Classes and Scheduled Caste Community. The benefit of low rate of interest is provided to Self-Help Groups formed under National Rural Livelihood Mission or National Urban Livelihood Mission or NABARD and to individual beneficiaries who availed loans through Public Sector Banks, Regional Rural Banks and similar financial institutions. The Committee are surprised to note that the funds allocated under VISVAS Yojana for SCs was reduced from ₹100 crore

in 2021-22 to ₹50.00 crore in 2022-23 and from ₹50.00 crore in 2021-22 to ₹30.00 crore in 2022-23 under VISVAS Yojana for OBC's. The Committee were shocked to find that no expenditure was made under these Schemes upto 15th February, 2022. The Committee cannot find any significant reason for the failure of the scheme except that the Department failed in persuading Banks to participate in the Scheme. The Committee are of the opinion that sincere efforts should be made by the Department in implementing the Schemes as these would help SCs and OBCs in reducing their interest burden in difficult time and in promoting self help groups for common good. The Committee would, therefore, like the Department to make sincere efforts in making the Scheme successful and ensure that the budget sanctioned for 2022-23 is utilized and the situation of 2021-22 is not repeated.

NEW DELHI;

22 March, 2022
01 Chaitra, 1944 (Saka)

RAMA DEVI
Chairperson,
Standing Committee on
Social Justice and
Empowerment

MINUTES OF THE FOURTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2021-22) (DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT) HELD ON THURSDAY, 17TH FEBRUARY, 2022

The Committee met from 1100 hrs. to 1315 hrs. in Committee Room No. '3', Parliament House Annexe Extension Building, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SMT. RAMA DEVI - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Thomas Chazhikadan
3. Shri Chhatar Singh Darbar
4. Shri Y.Devendrappa
5. Smt. Ranjeeta Koli
6. Shri Vijay Kumar
7. Shri Tokheho Yepthomi

Rajya Sabha

8. Smt. Jharna Das Baidya
9. Smt. Ramilaben Bara
10. Shri Abir Ranjan Biswas
11. Shri Ramkumar Verma

SECRETARIAT

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

WITNESSES

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

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Shri R. Subrahmanyam | Secretary |
| 2. | Ms. Kalyani Chaddha | Joint Secretary |

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed Secretary and other officers representing the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment (Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment) to the sitting of the Committee convened to discuss 'Demands for Grants for 2022-23' of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment. In her opening remarks, Chairperson drew attention of the representatives of the Department for delay/non-disbursement of funds under various schemes. She expressed her concern on the implementation of the schemes such as Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana, Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (Amendment) Bill, Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes etc.

3. The Chairperson then drew attention of the representatives of the Department to Direction 55 (1) of the 'Directions by the Speaker of Lok Sabha' about maintaining confidentiality of the proceedings of the Committee until the report is presented to the House. Thereupon, Chairperson requested the Secretary to introduce other officers and to brief the Committee on the various schemes of the Department.

4. Accordingly, Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment briefed the Committee through a power point presentation highlighting the performance of the Department during the financial year 2021-22 and proposals for financial year 2022-23.

5. The Committee, thereafter, *inter alia* deliberated on the following issues:

- (i) Budgetary allocation, expenditure and shortfall in expenditure etc. for the financial year 2021-22 and budgetary estimation regarding financial 2022-23.
- (ii) Disbursal of scholarship amount to beneficiaries under Post Matric and Pre-Matric scholarship schemes.
- (iii) Dissemination of information to control Drug abuse;
- (iv) Implementation of revamped scheme namely Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jati Abhyuday Yojana (PM AJAY);
- (v) Scholarship for students pursuing Higher Education under the scheme of Scholarship for Higher Education for Young Achievers (SHREYAS) Scheme for SCs and OBCs;

- (vi) Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers and introduction of National Action Plan for Mechanised Ecosystem (NAMASTE);
- (vii) Venture Capital Funds for SCs and OBCs;
- (viii) Rehabilitation of the Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes.

6. The Chairperson, then thanked the Secretary and other representatives of the Department for providing valuable information on the subject and also asked the Secretary to furnish written replies on the issues that remained unanswered during the sitting.

A copy of the verbatim proceedings of the sitting has been kept on record.

The witnesses then withdrew.

(The Committee then adjourned)

MINUTES OF THE NINTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2021-22) HELD ON TUESDAY, 22nd MARCH, 2022

The Committee met from 1030 hrs. to 1100 hrs. in Chairperson's Chamber, Room No. 113, Parliament House Annex, Extension Building, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SMT. RAMA DEVI - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Smt. Sangeeta Azad
3. Shri Bholanath B.P. Saroj
4. Shri Abdul Khaleque
5. Smt. Ranjeeta Koli
6. Smt. Geeta Kora
7. Smt. Supriya Sule

RAJYA SABHA

8. Smt. Jharna Das Baidya
9. Smt. Ramilaben Bara
10. Shri Abir Ranjan Biswas
11. Smt. Geeta alias Chandraprabha
12. Shri Narayan Koragappa
13. 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 to the sitting of the Committee and apprised them that the sitting has been convened to consider and adopt the following draft Reports:

(i) Thirty-first Report on 'Demands for Grants (2022-23)' of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment).

(ii) xxxx xxxx xxxx xxxx

(iii) xxxx xxxx xxxx xxxx.

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

4. Before the conclusion of the Meeting, some of the Members proposed to organize study tour of the Committee after the Budget Session. The Chairperson consented to the proposal and directed to prepare viable study tour programme for her consideration and approval.

The Committee then adjourned.

xxxx Does not pertain to this Report

APPENDIX

STATEMENT OF OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Sl. No.	Para	Observations/Recommendations
1	2	3
1	2.9	<p>The Committee are disappointed that the Department has been able to spend only ₹ 2,873.42 crore till 31st December, 2021, out of the Revised Estimate of ₹10,180.00 crore during the year 2021-22 on various welfare schemes administered by them. They note the reasons submitted by the Department for the slow pace of expenditure, such as delay in getting continuation orders of many big schemes meant for the welfare of SCs as late as 1st February, 2022, six month time taken to convince State Governments to appoint a Single Nodal Agency (SNA) under various Schemes, delay in setting up the process to transfer funds from Central Share directly to the beneficiary account through DBT in Post Matric scholarship etc. While the cooperation from State Governments is a time taking process, the Committee feel that the Department should have been more pro-active to obtain orders for continuation of various Schemes. Nevertheless assuming that the ball has now been set rolling, the Committee hope that the initiatives taken by the Department would certainly streamline the system and provide maximum benefit to the needy beneficiaries of the Schemes with the funds releasing on time leaving no scope for their misuse. The Committee are though apprehensive as the Department, in general, is given to spending a large chunk of allocated funds at the fag end of the year particularly on Scholarship scheme component. They, therefore, exhort the Department to take steps to implement the new system, so painstakingly developed, with full sincerity. The Committee further hope that the appointment of single Nodal agency by State/ UT Governments under various Schemes would be completed in a time bound manner, and would like to be informed about the State-wise position of the nodal agencies appointed by State/UT Governments under each Central Sector Scheme of the Department.</p>
2	2.10	<p>The Committee are pained to observe that the budget of the Department was downsized at RE stage in the last 2 years, as the BE of ₹ 10103.57 crore and ₹ 10517.62 crore was reduced to ₹8207.56 crore and ₹10180 crore at revised stage, during 2020-21 and 2021-22 respectively. The Committee are concerned that even a reduced budget was not utilized fully. They are unable to comprehend the logic behind submitting higher projections at the time of annual budget preparations and thereby even</p>

		<p>failing to fully spend the Revised Estimates. In 2022-23 also, the projections of the Department have been curtailed by the Ministry of Finance and as ₹11,922.51 crore has been allocated instead of the projected ₹12133.09 crore. The Committee have been assured that they would be able to spend the full allocation and if there is any gap they will seek additional funds at revised stage. The Committee earnestly feel that the welfare of the socially, educational and economically marginalised sections of the society must not be compromised. The Committee therefore, recommend that the appropriate and timely decisions should be taken for effective implementation of various Schemes so that even an unexpected situation such as COVID 19 pandemic does not become a hurdle in meeting the aspirations of the targeted persons. They would desire to be apprised of the overall utilization status of 2021-22 allocation too.</p>
3	2.11	<p>The Committee, after scrutiny of Budget documents of the Department, find that the structure of various Schemes stands changed as various Schemes meant for same purpose were merged in one Scheme from 2021-22 such as Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM AJAY), Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY), Scholarship for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS), Pradhan Mantri Dakshta or Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi (PM DAKSH), Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNT/NT/SNTS (SEED) and Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme for Vibrant India (PM-YASASVI). The Committee while appreciating the efforts made by the Department for revamping these Schemes, desire that the procedure/methodology for implementing these Schemes should be properly synchronized and communicated to States/UTs, implementing agencies and other stakeholders. The Committee would like to be apprised in this regard.</p>
4	3.13	<p>The Committee note that the Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for Scheduled Caste students has been revised in December, 2020 for effective implementation and better monitoring of the Scheme. Despite the same, the Committee find that the Department has been able to spend only ₹720.45 crore till February, 2022 out of the Revised Estimate of ₹4,196.59 crore for the year 2021-22, while the Department have assured that the allotted budget will be completely utilised since the processing of applications has gained momentum. The Committee have been informed that the verification process in most of the States/UTs is still progressing since the applications portal opened late due to delayed admissions in college/ schools in Covid 19 times. The extraordinary circumstances which derailed the process</p>

		cannot be ignored, hence, the Committee feel that this trend of delay in spending of funds must be addressed now in order to achieve the goal. Further the Committee observe that the number of beneficiaries for 2021-22 is almost similar as that of 2020-21. A worried trend, they feel that the number of beneficiaries should increase to indicate that due care is being taken by the Department to ensure maximum benefits to the intended beneficiaries. The Committee would like the Department to take suitable measures in this regard, also the State/ UT Governments should reach out to the targeted sections of the society and popularise the scheme.
5	3.14	The Committee find that as per the ratio fixed for sharing of the Post Matric Scholarships between Centre and States, Central share of 60% is to be released after 40% State share is released. During the year 2021-22, the Central share had to be released first irrespective of the fact whether or not the State has released its share, to avoid hardships to students. The Committee are perturbed to note from the details furnished by the Department that in 2020-21 Central share of Scholarship were not released to Chandigarh, Daman & Diu, Delhi, Goa, Haryana and Jammu & Kashmir. Also Bihar, Delhi and Haryana did not release their share in 2020-21. The Committee are also surprised to find that several States such as Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal failed to provide any information with regard to their share in Post Matric Scholarships. The Committee are of the opinion that such instances discourages students which ultimately affects the future of the young generation. The Committee would like the Department to take appropriate steps to ensure that such instances are not repeated. The Committee would like to recommend the Department to set up a high powered Committee to look into such matters and pursue with the State/UT Governments to release their shares timely.
6	3.15	The Committee find that the income criteria of ₹2.5 lakh annually fixed for grant of scholarship was revised in 2013-14. The Committee strongly believe that such a low income criteria fixed must have become a serious hurdle for many of the needy students. The Committee have been informed that a Group of Ministers is examining this issue and would suitably revise the annual income limit. The Committee are of the strong view that the income criteria for getting scholarship should be revised and also recommend that suitable mechanism should be developed for the periodic revision of the amount of the scholarship. They would like to be apprised of the status on the matter.
7	4.12	The Committee find that two separate schemes <i>i.e</i> Pre Matric

		<p>Scholarships Scheme for SCs and Pre Matric Scholarships for those Engaged in Unclean Occupation, have been merged into one Scheme, namely “Pre Matric Scholarships for SCs and others” since 2021-22. The Committee are surprised to know that the budgetary allocation made for 2022-23 is ₹500.00 crore which is much less in comparison to the budgetary allocation of ₹725.00 crore for 2021-22 and ₹700.00 crore for 2020-21. The Committee find no logic for reducing budgetary allocation for 2022-23 when two schemes have been merged and the Department is expecting to cover 33 lakh beneficiaries during 2021-22. The Committee, therefore, assume that the numbers of beneficiaries may come down in 2022-23, as during previous year too only 32.98 lakh persons could be covered with an expenditure of ₹596.33 crore. They would like to be apprised of any improvements in the methodology the Department will adopt to achieve the target fixed with the given budget. In so far as the transfer of funds through DBT mode is concerned, the Committee hope that it will eliminate duplicate/fraudulent cases. Nonetheless the Committee still are of the strong view that the Department would need more funds to achieve the target of 2022-23. The Committee would, therefore, like to recommend the Ministry to pursue for enhancement of the budgetary allocation for 2022-23 at RE stage so that the maximum beneficiaries get coverage under the Scheme.</p>
8	4.13	<p>The Committee further find that under this Head the Department have been able to spend ₹362 crore till date, out of the budgetary allocation of ₹725 crore for the year 2021-22 and that they will strive to fully utilize the budgetary allocation as pending UCs from the States are anticipated to be received. The Committee are apprehensive about full utilisation of funds despite redesigning of National Scholarship Portal alongwith newly adopted approach under the continued scheme by the Department unless concrete steps are taken by the Department to remove the hindrances often faced by the students and the implementing agencies. The Committee strongly believe that the Department must have exhaustively examined the pros and cons of the merger of 2 schemes into one so that both the sections of the society do not get adversely affected by each other’s presence in the implementation of merged Scheme. The Committee, therefore recommend the Department to have an in built mechanism to closely monitor the Scheme for its successful implementation and ensure that the task of coordination entrusted to NSKFDC is diligently carried out by them.</p>
9	5.8	<p>The Committee find that three independent schemes namely Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY), Special Central</p>

		<p>Assistance to Scheduled Caste Sub-plan (SCA to SCSP) and Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana (BJRCY) have been merged into Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM AJAY) from 2021-22. The Committee are surprised to note that the Department was not able to achieve the target fixed for 2019-20 and 2020-21 under Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan. Hence, the Committee have strong doubt for the achievement of target of 10 lakh fixed under Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan for 2022-23 too. The Committee are also concerned about the performance of each of the Schemes after their merger since there is unified allocation of funds for these three Schemes unless performance is quantified, the success/performance cannot be assessed. The Committee would, therefore like the Department to ensure that all three Schemes are given equal weightage as they are equally important for the welfare of Scheduled Castes. In case there are less proposals under one Scheme, funds should not be utilized on other Scheme rather necessary steps should be taken to ensure that the scheme lagging behind is suitably attended to.</p>
10	5.9	<p>The Committee are pleased to note that under Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana, ₹10,000 crore have been approved by the Cabinet for undertaking various projects for the next five years from 2021-22 to 2025-26 involving an expenditure of ₹ 3 to ₹ 10 crore each. The Committee expect that the funds sanctioned would be judiciously utilized to achieve the intended objectives. They believe that necessary modalities must have been drawn to ensure that the funds are not left idle. The Committee desire that all necessary action may be taken by the Department to make people aware about the Scheme so that the Department get sufficient proposals. The Committee would like to be informed of the steps taken for fruitful utilisation of funds.</p>
11	6.15	<p>The Committee note that the Department was able to spend a substantial amount of budgetary allocation on all the four schemes falling under the ambit of Scholarship for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS) for SCs and OBCs in the year 2019-20 and 2020-21 except for 2021-22 where the Department lagged behind in spending under 3 schemes i.e., 'Free Coaching for SCs & OBCs', 'Top Class Education for SCs' and 'National Overseas Scholarship for SCs'. The Committee are surprised that the fund meant for National Fellowship for SCs was under utilized due to less number of candidates joining / continuing the course against the selection. Similarly, in case of Top Class Education Scheme, the funds sanctioned could not be utilized due to non submission of documents by Institutes and incase of 'Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs' Scheme, the</p>

		<p>expenditure could not be incurred due to non-submission of complete proposals by empanelled Institutes. There is no doubt that low utilisation of funds sanctioned not only keeps the funds idle but also deprives the students belonging to marginalized sections of the society for getting education opportunities provided by the Department through these Scholarship Schemes. The Committee feel that any slackness will further impact the implementation of free coaching for SCs & OBCs, Top class Education for SCs and National Overseas Scholarship for SCs schemes during 2020-21 and 2021-2022. Although steps have been taken by the Department to rectify the system so that similar problems do not recur in future, yet there is strong need for compliance and regular monitoring of the system by the Department/an independent agency. The Committee would like to see the budgetary provisions made for 2022-23, fully utilized in the interest of SC and OBC students.</p>
12	6.16	<p>The Committee find that the target fixed under National Fellowship for SCs, National Overseas Scholarship for SCs, Top Class Education for SCs and Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs is very less in comparison to their actual population. The Committee would like that the Department should consider the eligible students under each of these Schemes before fixing the target for each year. Similarly, the income criteria fixed for availing the benefits under the Scheme needs a revision in view of the rising inflation. The Committee feel that any person whose annual income is less than ₹8.00 lakh per annum cannot afford to study abroad, hence the income criteria of ₹8.00 lakh per annum is unrealistic. This income criteria discourages many students in availing the Scheme, hence its purpose would be served only when the income criteria is revised. The Department should also develop a suitable mechanism to assess the number of eligible students for National Fellowship for SCs, National Overseas Scholarship for SCs, Top Class Education for SCs and Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs, to fix the target so that maximum students gets coverage under the Schemes. The Committee would therefore recommend a review of the number of slots for each year fixed under each of these schemes as well as that of the income criteria. The Committee would like the Department to take requisite measures to attend to these issues with utmost sincerity.</p>
13	6.17	<p>The Committee are perturbed to note that the Budgetary Estimates for the year 2022-23 has been substantially reduced in comparison to 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22 under SHREYAS. The Committee find that the justification that keeping in view of trend of expenditure in past years, there has been reduction in</p>

		<p>the budgetary allocation, as not convincing enough. The Committee feel that the failure of the Scheme in a particular year for no fault of beneficiary does not imply that there are no takers for the Schemes, hence, budget should not have been reduced. The Committee are, therefore, of the view that the evaluation study of all these Schemes and the recommendations/suggestions made therein need to be adopted to strengthen the Scheme. The Committee would, therefore, like the Department to take action on it now, apart from finding ways and means through which the beneficiaries of the Schemes can be maximized.</p>
14	7.13	<p>The Committee are happy to find that a National Action Plan for Mechanised Ecosystem (NAMASTE) has been instituted by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in coordination with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation to eliminate manual cleaning of sewer system and septic tanks and rehabilitation of workers engaged in manual cleaning. The intervention for promotion of mechanized cleaning is to be done through ongoing Scheme 'Swachta Udyami Yojana' implemented by National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation. The Committee also find that there are various schemes such as skill development programme, loans at concessional rates, credit linked upfront Capital subsidy, implemented by the Department, In order to stop manual scavenging. The Committee are surprised to note that despite all these measures, deaths of persons, while cleaning of sewer and septic tanks, continues even today. The Committee are unable to comprehend the reasons due to which the initiatives of the Department are not making requisite impact. The Committee believe that the National Action Plan for mechanized Ecosystem (NAMASTE) initiated in coordination with the line Ministries would help ease out the problem of manual cleaning once all municipal bodies are made aware of the same and encouraged to implement mechanical cleaning. The Committee would like the Department to set up a mechanism for periodic scrutiny of the Scheme as there is a strong need to plug loopholes that are affecting the efforts of the Department, without any further delay. The Committee would also like the budgetary allocation meant for the implementation of the Schemes to be enhanced instead of reducing them at revised stage.</p>
15	7.14	<p>The Committee are disappointed to note that compensation to 104 persons has not been granted, for deaths due to manual cleaning of sewer/septic tanks. They were aghast to know that some of the States such as Maharashtra has declined to pay</p>

		<p>compensation due to scarcity of funds. The Committee feel that the family of a bread-earner needs to be instantly compensated in case of death. However, there appears to be non-seriousness on the part of the Department as well as State Governments. The Committee desire that the Department should take suitable measures so that the family of the deceased does not have to suffer and they are compensated as per the norms. The Committee would also like that pending 104 cases for compensation are immediately settled. The Committee would also like to reiterate their earlier suggestion to establish a system to examine the cause of death so that the persons engaging them are also held responsible and penalty fixed on them for violating the laid down norms.</p>
16	8.10	<p>To promote entrepreneurship among the Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes two schemes namely Venture Capital Fund for SCs (VCF-SC) and Venture Capital Fund for Backward Classes(VCF-BC) were launched in 2014-15 and 2018 respectively. On the scrutiny of the budgetary allocation and expenditure of both the Schemes, the Committee are quite disappointed to note that the Department was not able to spend a single penny under VCF-SC in 2021-22 and for VCF-BC in 2020-21 and 2021-22 as the owner of the Companies are not able to contribute equity, which should be more than 50 per cent. Since the Department cannot release more than 50 per cent equity to the owner of the Company, as otherwise it would make the Department owner of the enterprise, the Department needs to review and make alternate provision to tackle this issue so that the scheme is successfully implemented. The Committee are pleased to note that the Department is now taking necessary steps to encourage spending on Start Ups and they are sure that Start Ups would come out of the existential crisis they suffered due to market or supply chain disruptions. The Committee also find that under Ambedkar Social Innovation Incubation Mission (ASIIM) of the VCF-SC since September 2020 ₹6.90 crore sanctioned to 23 companies and out of this amount only ₹ 0.87 crore were disbursed to 15 companies upto 31 December, 2021. The Committee desire that the remaining amount sanctioned to the companies should be disbursed without any delay and Committee would also like to be apprised about the details of total amount disbursed out of the sanctioned funds in both the Schemes.</p>
17	9.13	<p>The Committee note that the Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana(AVAY) consisting of Integrated Programme for senior citizens and State Action Plan for senior citizens takes care of financial security, food, healthcare and human interaction. The Committee are</p>

		<p>perturbed to note that the Department was able to spend only ₹133.31 crore out of the budgetary allocation of ₹204.00 crore in 2020-21 and in 2021-22, the Department could spend only ₹30.13 crore out of the Budgetary Allocation of ₹300.00 crore. The Committee are constrained to note that the Budgetary Allocation for 2022-23 has been kept at par with the Revised Estimate of 2020-21 and 2021-22 i.e ₹150.00 crore. Further surprising to the Committee is the fact that the targets fixed under the Scheme are nowhere is comparison to the population of elders and there are several States such as Bihar, Goa, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura where no funds were granted in 2021-22 upto 31.12.2021. The Committee feel that the Department need to do much more than what they have been doing for the welfare of senior citizens in the Country. After formulation of the Schemes, they should make their presence felt by continuously monitoring through their established mechanisms. The Committee, therefore, recommend to take suitable steps for implementation of welfare measures for senior citizens in a more dedicated manner with sympathetic approach and also desire that the budgetary allocation would be enhanced for 2022-23 alongwith the target so that maximum elderly people get social security through these Schemes.</p>
18	10.8	<p>The Committee are constrained to note that the Scheme for economic empowerment of DNT communities formulated to provide coaching, health insurance, facilitate livelihood and financial assistance for construction of homes for the members of DNT, with total outlays of ₹200 crore for the period of five years from 2021-22 to 2025-26 and the Department could not spend even a single rupee in 2021-22 and the budgetary allocation has been reduced to ₹28.00 crore for 2022-23 against the budgetary allocation of ₹50.00 crore for 2021-22. The Committee are dismayed that the Department has already delayed in formulation of the Scheme for welfare of Denotified, Nomadic and semi nomadic communities. Any slackness on the part of the Department to execute the scheme would hamper the welfare measures of the Scheme. The Committee would like the Department to take necessary measures for effective implementation of the Scheme.</p>
19	10.9	<p>The Committee take note that the Development and Welfare Board for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic communities constituted in 2017 has been inter-alia assigned the responsibility to identify the locations where these communities were located. The Committee find that at present 269 such Denotified, Nomadic and semi-nomadic communities are specified and a survey is now in under process to place these</p>

		<p>castes in SC, ST and BC categories. The Committee are surprised to find that the Department has not been able to take any decision till date hence they would like the Department to take necessary action in this regard so that these castes are placed either under SCs, STs or BCs and avail benefits. Delay in locating them would increase their suffering and they would not be able to get benefit of the prevailing Schemes meant for the welfare of SC/STs. The Committee would appreciate if this work is done in a time bound manner. The Committee would like to be apprised of the timelines fixed in this regard.</p>
20	11.12	<p>The Committee are astonished to find that despite existing constitutional provisions to check and deter crimes against members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes since 1990, they have not served the purpose as expected. The Committee are surprised to find from the figures of National Crime Records Bureau that there are several States where cases have not been registered during 2020 under Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. The Committee find that the relief and rehabilitation provided under the rules from the funds sanctioned is not being utilized fully as in 2020-21 and 2021-22, the Department could spend ₹593.39 crore and ₹452.09 crore (till 31st December, 2021) respectively. The budgetary allocation have also remained stagnant as RE for 2020-21 and 2021-22 was ₹600.00 crore and for 2022-23 the Budgetary Estimates is ₹600.00 crore. The Committee are highly disturbed with the way the issue is being dealt with particularly in regard to allocation of funds and also with respect to release of compensation for relief and rehabilitation of victims as substantial time is consumed in release of compensation to the victims. The Committee also feel that there is a need to review the compensation of ₹85,000/- to ₹ 8,25,000/- fixed in April, 2016 so that the compensation awarded can be utilised for a purpose. The Committee would therefore like the Department to direct all State/UT Governments to ensure that the relief is timely granted and the scale of compensation is also reviewed.</p>
21	12.11	<p>The Committee find a declining trend in the expenditure incurred under Post Matric and Pre Matric Scholarships for OBC Boys and Girls hostels of OBCs as the expenditure has gone down since 2019-20. In 2019-20 and 2020-21, the Department could spend ₹1,521.90 crore and ₹1,357.02 crore respectively and in 2021-22, the expenditure of mere ₹180.00 crore could be incurred till date. The Committee note that two schemes namely Top Class School and Top Class College have been added to the Scheme. Further, two more independent Schemes having separate budgetary</p>

		<p>allocation upto 2020-21 have also been merged under the Scheme from 2021-22. The Committee are dismayed to note that even after the merger, the budgetary allocation under the Scheme have not changed much. The Committee feel that bringing together of so many Schemes may help in utilizing the available funds under the scheme but will adversely affect the effectiveness and scrutiny of each Scheme. Keeping into consideration the budgetary allocation and trend in expenditure, the Committee would like the Department to keep a check on the performance of each Scheme so that the objectives of each scheme are not lost and adopt a mechanism which would ensure the effective implementation of Scheme in the given budget without diluting the objective of the individual Scheme.</p>
22	12.12	<p>The Committee note that the existing eligible income limit of ₹2.5 lakh for scholarship schemes for OBC, EBC and DNT students for 2020-21 has been recommended for all five years from 2021-22 to 2025-26. The Committee feel that with the rising inflation the annual income limit should be regularly reviewed so that the needy students are not deprived of the Schemes. The Committee strongly believe that during the period 2021-22 and 2025-26, the annual income of family would have increased and thus exclude many OBC, EBC and DNT students from availing the benefits of the Schemes, even though they may not be genuinely in a position to afford the education in good schools/ colleges, hostels etc. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the income criteria should be regularly reviewed to absorb the inflation effect in the annual income.</p>
23	13.8	<p>The Committee find that the interest subvention on loan/ credit upto ₹ 4.00 lakh is provided under Vanchit Ikai Samooh aur Vargo ko Arthik Sahayata (VISVAS) scheme to Self Help Groups/ Individual Members belonging to other Backward Classes and Scheduled Caste Community. The benefit of low rate of interest is provided to Self-Help Groups formed under National Rural Livelihood Mission or National Urban Livelihood Mission or NABARD and to individual beneficiaries who availed loans through Public Sector Banks, Regional Rural Banks and similar financial institutions. The Committee are surprised to note that the funds allocated under VISVAS Yojana for SCs was reduced from ₹100 crore in 2021-22 to ₹50.00 crore in 2022-23 and from ₹50.00 crore in 2021-22 to ₹30.00 crore in 2022-23 under VISVAS Yojana for OBC's. The Committee were shocked to find that no expenditure was made under these Schemes upto 15th February, 2022. The Committee cannot find any significant reason for the failure of the scheme except that the Department failed in</p>

		<p>persuading Banks to participate in the Scheme. The Committee are of the opinion that sincere efforts should be made by the Department in implementing the Schemes as these would help SCs and OBCs in reducing their interest burden in difficult time and in promoting self help groups for common good. The Committee would, therefore, like the Department to make sincere efforts in making the Scheme successful and ensure that the budget sanctioned for 2022-23 is utilized and the situation of 2021-22 is not repeated.</p>
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