

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

(SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA)

**Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
(Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities).**

Action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Twenty-Third Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on 'Assessment of Scheme for Implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (SIPDA)'

THIRTY SIXTH REPORT



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

August, 2022/ Sravana, 1944 (Saka)

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Disabilities).

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Presented to Lok Sabha on 5.8.2022

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 5.8.2022



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

August, 2022/Sravana, 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. Ramilaben Becharbhai Bara
23. Shri Abir Ranjan Biswas
24. Smt. Geeta *alias* Chandraprabha
25. Shri N.Chandrasegharan
26. Shri Narayan Koragappa
27. Smt. Mamata Mohanta
- *28. Vacant
- **29. Vacant
- ***30. Vacant
- ****31. Vacant

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

** Smt. Jharna Das Baidya retired *w.e.f* 02.04.2022

*** Smt. Chhaya Verma retired *w.e.f* 29.06.2022

**** Shri Ramkumar Verma retired *w.e.f* 04.07.2022

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

- | | | | |
|----|--------------------------|---|----------------------|
| 1. | Smt. Anita B. Panda | - | Additional Secretary |
| 2. | Shri T.S. Rangarajan | - | Joint Secretary |
| 3. | Smt. Mamta Kemwal | - | Director |
| 4. | Shri Krishendra Kumar | - | Deputy Secretary |
| 5. | Smt. Banani Sarker Joshi | - | Under Secretary |

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment (2021-22) having been authorized by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, do present this Thirty Sixth Report on the action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Twenty-Third Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on 'Assessment of Scheme for Implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (SIPDA)' relating to the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities).

2. The Twenty-Third Report was presented to Lok Sabha and laid in Rajya Sabha on 06th August, 2021. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities) furnished their replies indicating action taken on the observations/recommendations contained therein on 10th November, 2021. The Report was considered and adopted by the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment at their sitting held on 2nd August, 2022.

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

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

NEW DELHI;

02 August, 2022

11 Sravana, 1944 (Saka)

RAMA DEVI

Chairperson,
Standing Committee on
Social Justice and
Empowerment

CHAPTER - I

REPORT

The Report deals with the action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Twenty-Third Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on 'Assessment of Scheme for Implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (SIPDA)' relating to the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities).

2. The Twenty-Third Report was presented to Lok Sabha and laid in Rajya Sabha on 06.08.2021. It contained 20 observations/recommendations. Replies of Government in respect of all the observations/recommendations have been examined and are categorized as under: -

(i) Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government:-

Para No. 4.23, 4.26, 5.8, 6.17, 6.18, 6.20, 7.8, 8.11, 9.4, 11.3 & 13.5

(Total: 11, Chapter: II)

(ii) Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's reply: – **Para No. 2.8, 2.9, 2.10**

(Total: 03, Chapter: III)

(iii) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration: –

Para No. 3.13, 6.19, 10.4 & 12.3

(Total: 04, Chapter: IV)

(iv) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government are interim in nature: – **Para No.4.24 & 4.25**

(Total: 02, Chapter: V)

3. The Committee desire that action taken notes on the recommendations contained in Chapter-I and final action taken notes in respect of the recommendations contained in Chapter-V of this Report may be furnished to them at the earliest and in any case not later than three months of the presentation of this Report.

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

A. CREATION OF BARRIER FREE ENVIRONMENT FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Recommendation (Para No.3.13)

5. The Committee in their Report had recommended as follows:

“The Committee note that grant is provided to the Departments of the State Governments/Union Territories, Autonomous Bodies/Statutory Bodies/ Public Sector Undertakings set up by the Central/State Governments/ UT Administrations including Central and State Universities, to create Barrier Free Environment for the persons with disabilities, which includes making Government websites at the Central/State and District levels accessible to PwDs. The Department could, however, release only ₹44.30 crore during 2018-19 to 2020-21. Further, only 11 States/UTs could be benefitted under this component since 2017-18 and Grants-in-aid could be released to the Universities/Colleges/ Institutions etc. in 9 States only. Considering the number of States/UTs where no proposals have been undertaken so far, the Committee doubt as to when the entire Country would be covered. As there appears to be a lack of enthusiasm amongst State Governments/UT administrations on this sub-scheme, the Committee feel that the Department needs to make extra efforts than merely sending routine letters to raise awareness, sensitize and remind States/UTs every year for sending viable proposals, if they intend to make this sub-Scheme successful. This could also include offering expert advice on preparation of viable proposals, preparing ready Reckoners and setting of annual targets as being done under Accessible India Campaign (AIC) etc. particularly since the Scheme is proposed to continue till 2024-25, after merger of AIC. The Committee also note that the work of making websites accessible for the

disabled is languishing as no funds have been released in this regard during the last three years. Further, the progress in making the private websites accessible is moving at a snail pace as the guidelines are yet to be framed. With on-line work becoming a norm in recent times, the Committee are of the strong opinion that the methodology adopted for fund allocation/release may be reworked to speed up these objectives. The Committee also recommend that the proposals received from States currently pending with the Department should be expeditiously processed and if handholding is required on some aspects, support must be forthcoming from them so that the proposals could be approved and implemented in coordination with respective State/UT. The Committee would like to be apprised of the action taken in this regard.”

Reply of the Government

6. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities) in their Action taken reply have submitted as under:

“While efforts are made to seek proposals from States/UTs, Implementing Agencies (IAs), SIPDA is a Central Sector Scheme hence it depends on States/UTs also to send proposals with complete documentation as prescribed under the scheme. They are requested to also clear the pending Utilization Certificates (UCs) of the previous releases before any further releases can be made. The Department takes serious efforts to sensitize the States/UTs to send the proposals under Barrier Free component. In the beginning of every financial year, the Department invariably writes to all States/UTs to send the proposals under Creation of Barrier Free Environment for persons with disabilities under SIPDA scheme. In 2020-21, the letter was issued to States/UTs only on 16.09.2021 due to the proceedings of EFC for the appraisal of the continuation of SIPDA scheme being underway earlier. States/UT Governments are advised to send the proposals (in original) in correct format along with the documents referred to in the checklist as per applicable guidelines prescribed in SIPDA scheme. Further, the Department regularly writes to States/UTs and takes up the issue at every level including during visits at the level of Hon’ble Minister, Hon’ble Ministers of States, Secretary, Joint Secretary and other officials. Video Conferencing sessions with States/UTs invariably feature this issue to clear their pendency of Utilization Certificates so that any new proposal would not be on hold for want of the submission of utilization certificates. Demi-official letters are regularly written to States/UTs for example 23.02.2021, 30.06.2021, 05.08.2021 and 27.08.2021 for clearing the pending UCs. These efforts have helped to bring down the pendency of UCs of Institutions/Autonomous organizations from ₹32.52 crore to ₹10 crore and of States/UTs from ₹305.78 crore to ₹254.44 crore in the period March, 2021 to September 2021. The accessibility of websites in Barrier Free Environment depends upon proposals received. However, the Barrier Free sub scheme has a set of eligibility criteria and the guidelines,

following which the proposals need to be sent for grants. These are conveyed to States/UTs who are required to follow the procedures while submitting proposals. If any State/UT sends the proposal in the correct format as per requirements laid down, then it helps in processing it expeditiously. However, all 58 proposals of the States/UTs go through technical scrutiny and if some documents/information is required, then the same is asked for and thereafter the proposal is placed before the Screening Committee of the Department for recommendation.”

7. Keeping in view the lukewarm response by the implementing agencies for creation of Barrier Free Environment both in physical and virtual terms as the Ministry could release ₹ 44.30 crore during 2018-19 to 2020-21, the Committee had recommended to the Ministry to evaluate the objectives/methodology of the Scheme and analyse the reasons for its poor performance and take corrective actions. The Ministry in their action taken reply have submitted that they were undertaking regular correspondence and holding video conferencing sessions with the State Governments/UTs for initiating steps for ensuring accessibility for PwDs. Further, the Committee also note that the Ministry were regularly reminding States/UTs for urgent need to clear pendency of utilization certificates which is a pre-requisite for this Scheme. The Committee, however, feel that these efforts, perhaps, are not proving to be adequate as only 11 States have so far benefitted from the Scheme. They believe that the Ministry needs to constantly sensitise the State Governments on the requirement of a Barrier Free Environment for disabled persons to increase their reach and mobility, empower them and make them independent and productive members of the society instead of remaining dependent on others. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should bring some out of box ideas for effective implementation of this component. There should also be continuous efforts to make States aware about the eligibility criteria of proposals so that those are devoid of any technical infirmities to the maximum possible extent. While reiterating their earlier recommendation, the Committee would like the Ministry to move beyond simply corresponding with States on this matter and take effective measures for expediting the process to ensure that the PwD gets wide accessibility in the physical and virtual world across the country in a comfortable manner without any impediments.

B. NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT FOR PwDs.

Recommendation (Para No.6.19)

8. The Committee in their Report had recommended as follows:

“The National Action Plan for Skill Development for PwDs was launched to enable persons with disabilities to become self reliant, productive and contributing members of the Society. However, it has been found that only 41931 PwDs have been employed so far out of 1.27 lakh trained. The Committee are unable to understand the reasons for such a low level of employment despite several measures taken by the Department such as instruction to ETPs to ensure employment after training, NHFDC extending loans to PwDs, establishment of NSK’s in various States, etc. Moreover, the Department also has the sub-scheme of providing incentives to private employers for providing jobs to PwDs, under SIPDA, which should be used for trained PwDs. The Committee would also emphasize that if training is imparted in a trade that already exists in that area and the loan procedures are simplified, the Scheme would attract more persons for the training which will make them self reliant. The Committee, therefore, recommend that a comprehensive study may be conducted to identify the reasons for such a low employability despite several initiatives of the Department and suggest suitable remedy.”

Reply of the Government

9. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities) in their Action taken Reply, have submitted as under:

“Regarding placement of PwDs trained under NAP, it is stated that the scheme is implemented as per Common Norms issued by M/o Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE). As per the existing guidelines/norms, the payment of final installment is linked to placement and it is released to ETPs on the basis of their performance on placement criteria only. As per extant criteria, 3rd instalment is not released to ETPs with placement below 40% whereas it is released on Pro-rata basis to ETPs with placement between 40 to 70% and full amount of 3rd instalment is released only to such ETPs achieved a target of 70% placement. 3rd instalment has not been released to any ETP for want of authentic data and documents. In order to determine the actual number of placed/employed persons with disabilities against trained PwDs under “National Action Plan for Skill Development of PwDs” as of date, the Department is in the process of collecting data from all the ETPs provided fund for skill training to PwDs since 2016-17.

With a view to encouraging ETPs for placement, there is also a provision of incentive in Common Norms for ETPs which is ₹3,000/- per candidate for placement above 70% and ₹ 5000/- per candidate for placement above 85%. As per Common Norms, ETPs are also provided fund for organizing job outreach activities. Association of Sector Skill Councils as Project Implementing Agencies will also help in enhancement of employment opportunities as these organizations have good industry connect in their sectors. The Department has also been taking initiatives in this regard. NHFDC keeps organizing job fairs on regular basis. In order to explore and enhance employment opportunities for PwDs, the Department is exploring the possibilities to associate e-commerce companies such as Flipkart and Amazon. The Department also envisages to holding National level Webinars with speakers from ETPs and big companies to explore placement opportunities in private/public sectors and understand the issues involved in placement of persons with disabilities in such companies and resolve them.”

10. The Committee had directed the Ministry to undertake a comprehensive study to identify the reasons for low employment rates, as less than one-third of persons with disabilities received gainful employment, in spite of being trained under the National Action Plan for Skill Development of PwDs. In their reply, the Ministry have submitted that several steps such as incentives to ETPs for placement of trained PwDs, association of Sector Skill Councils as project implementing agencies, job fairs by NHFDC are being taken by them. The Ministry are also statedly in the process of collecting data from all ETPs for skill training to PwDs since 2016-17 under National Action Plan for Skill Development of PwDs. Appreciably, they are further exploring the possibilities for inclusion of the skilled PwDs in the burgeoning e-commerce segment. While taking into consideration the efforts being made by the Ministry in this regard and desiring to be apprised of progress thereon, the Committee wish to impress upon the Ministry to intensify the measures already initiated, strengthen the collaborative efforts and take corrective action so that the purpose of imparting training is well served. The Committee would like to be apprised about the status of collecting data of actual number of placed/employed trained PwDs under National Action Plan for PwDs for Skill Development of PwDs since 2016-17.

C. STATE COMMISSIONER FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Recommendation (Para No.10.4)

11. The Committee in their Report had recommended as follows:

“As stipulated in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, all the State Governments are required to appoint a State Commissioner for persons with disabilities. Also, the State Governments, with the concurrence of the Chief Justice of the High Court, by notification, are required to specify for each district, a Court of Session to be a Special Court to try the offences under this Act for the purpose of providing speedy justice to PwDs. The Committee are surprised to note that only 18 States/UTs have appointed independent Commissioners/officers holding additional charge till date and 23 States/UTs have designated special Courts in terms of the Act, in the last 5 years. The Committee are of the view that in the absence of full time State Commissioners and designated special Courts, the Scheme is bound to suffer as both the Institutions have important role to play as envisaged in the Act. The Committee also observe that since the State Commissioner is supposed to have special knowledge or practical experience in respect of matters relating to rehabilitation, hence appointment of officers with additional charge violates the provisions of the Act and defeats the intended purpose of this office. The Committee would therefore like the Department to pursue with the States for the appointment of State Commissioners and designation of Special Courts without further delay.”

Reply of the Government

12. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities) in their Action taken reply have submitted as under:

“Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) has been continuously emphasizing the need of full time State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities for dealing with matters concerned with persons with disabilities in all review meetings with States/UTs on earlier occasions. It is also one of the recommendations of the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities on order to monitor the status of implementations of provisions of the Act. This was also communicated in writing to the Chief Secretaries of States/UTs vide D.O. letters dated 16.05.2018 and 03.09.2020. The inputs on the observation/recommendation are as under:

Special Courts for PwDs in the States/UTs Twenty-nine States/UTs have reported availability of Special Courts for PwDs to try the offences under RPwD

Act, 2016 for the purpose of providing speedy justice to persons with Disabilities.
The list is as under:

Status of Availability of Special Court for PwDs in the States/ UTs

S.No.	Names of the State / UTs	Status of ConstitutionSpecial Court Yes / No
1.	Andaman & Nikobar	Yes
2.	Andhra Pradesh	Yes
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	No
4.	Assam	Yes
5.	Bihar	Yes
6.	Chandigarh (UTs)	Yes
7.	Chhatisgarh	Yes
8.	Dadar & Nagar Haveli (UTs) & Daman & Diu	No
9.	Delhi (UTs)	Yes
10.	Goa	Yes
11.	Gujarat	Yes
12.	Haryana	No
13.	Himachal Pradesh	Yes
14.	Jammu & Kashmir	No
15.	Jharkhand	Yes
16.	Karnataka	Yes
17.	Kerala	Yes
18.	Ladshadweep (UTs)	Yes
19.	Madhya Pradesh	Yes
20.	Maharashtra	Yes
21.	Manipur	No
22.	Meghalaya	Yes
23.	Mizoram	Yes
24.	Nagaland	Yes
25.	Odisha	Yes
26.	Puducherry (UTs)	Yes
27.	Punjab	Yes
28.	Rajasthan	Yes
29.	Sikkim	Yes
30.	Tamilnadu	Yes
31.	Telangana	Yes
32.	Tripura	Yes
33.	Uttar Pradesh	Yes
34.	Uttrakhand	Yes
35.	West Bengal	No

Appointment of independent Commissioner in States/UTs Sixteen States/UTs have reported the availability of Full Time State/UT Commissioners whereas in the 20 States/UTs the Commissioners have an Additional Charge. Hence, all States have in place a Commissioner. It is also pertinent to mention here that in the erstwhile Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 under Section 58 (a), "Coordinate the work of Commissioners" is one of the Prime functions of the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD)" whereas under RPwD Act, 2016 the same has not been mentioned under Section 75. Hence as directed by the Committee, the Department will also pursue with the States/UTs on this matter."

13. Concerned about the violation of the Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016, where it is imperative to have a State Commissioner for persons with Disabilities in each State, the Committee had recommended that the Ministry should pursue with States for appointment of State Commissioner for PwDs and designation of Special Courts for PwDs expeditiously. From the reply provided by the Ministry, the Committee find that as many as six States are yet to designate Special Courts to try the offences under RPwD Act, 2016. Besides, over 20 States / UTs have State Commissioners for PwDs with additional charge. The Committee are unhappy with the manner in which the provisions of the Act are being flouted. They wish to remind the Ministry that redressal of grievances is one of the most important rights envisaged under this Act and dilution in establishing an appropriate mechanism for the same would be an injustice to PwDs, who are one of the most marginalised sections in the Country. In view of the crucial and urgent need involved in the establishment of special courts in every State of the country, the Committee urge the Ministry to accord focused attention in this regard so that they make substantial progress in protecting the rights of Persons with Disabilities.

D. HELPLINE FOR PwDs

Recommendation (Para No.12.3)

14. The Committee in their Report had recommended as follows:

“The Central Advisory Board on disability, in November, 2020, had inter-alia urged the States/UTs to set up helpline numbers for the disabled persons. The Committee are surprised to note that only 10 States have established helpline till date which does not include Delhi, and desire that the matter should be vigorously pursued with all the remaining States/UTs to ensure that helpline is established in all the States/UTs within three months. The Committee would like to be apprised of the status at the Action Taken stage.”

Reply of the Government

15. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities) in their Action taken reply have submitted as under:

“The Department issued Comprehensive Disability Inclusive Guidelines for Protection and Safety of Persons with Disabilities on 26.03.2020 which, inter-alia, mandates the States/UTs to setup helpline for them. The matter was also discussed in the meeting of Central Advisory Board on Disability held in November, 2020. The Board urged the States/UTs to take measures for the implementation of these guidelines and submit a detailed consolidated report. As per information available from various States/UTs, following 11 States/UTs have so far established helpline for persons with disabilities:-

Sl. No.	State/UT	Status
1.	Bihar	Helpline number set up for Divyangjan- 8448385590, 0612-2215041
2.	Chandigarh	Helpline Number -181 set up for Women, Children, Senior Citizens and PwDs kept active during COVID 19.
3.	Haryana	Helpline number set up for Divyangjan: 9888176357 (For Sign Language), 9876377800, 9888888363
4.	Jharkhand	Helpline number set up for Divyangjan: 0651-2401825
5.	Karnataka	Toll Free counseling Helpline number for Mental Health: 18001212830

6.	Nagaland	Helpline set up for Divyangjan except Hearing Impaired - 8258953837, For Hearing Impaired 9862300893
7.	Odisha	Helpline set up for Divyangjan – 0674-2392803
8.	Rajasthan	Helpline number set up for Divyangjan – 18001806127
9.	Tamil Nadu	Helpline number set up for Divyangjan – 18004250111
10.	Telengana	Toll free helpline for PwDs – 18005728980
11.	Uttar Pradesh	Helpline number set up for Divyangjan – 18001801995

The Department requested other States/UTs which have, so far, not set up helpline for PwDs vide letter no. 02-01/2021-DD-III dated 06/09/2021 to expedite setting up of helpline for PwDs.”

16. The Committee had recommended for pro-active measures to encourage more States in setting up helplines so that coverage is pan-India as only 10 States have set up helplines for addressing the queries/ problems of PwDs. The Committee, however, find that there has been almost no progress in this sphere as the coverage has extended to a mere 11 States now. The Committee fail to understand this lethargic attitude of the Ministry to enthuse more States in undertaking this simplest of tasks. In view of the imperatives involved in the setting up of helplines for effective redressal/ resolution of queries of PwDs in all States/UTs, the Committee call upon the Ministry to dynamically track the status of implementation with the State Governments/ UTs so that the requisite actions are taken in a time bound manner.

CHAPTER-II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

(Recommendation Para No. 4.23)

The Committee are constrained to note that the overall progress of the AIC or Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan has been rather slow. Only 494 buildings (29.7%) out of a total of 1662 identified buildings have been made accessible by 9 States/UTs and 558 websites (64.61%) out of 917 websites have been made accessible under this Abhiyan since its inception in December, 2015. Despite postponing initial target date of July, 2016, several States viz. Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Punjab and Tripura still do not have any targets/timelines for making 193 buildings accessible by the extended date of June, 2022. The Committee are also not satisfied with the pace of work of the line Ministries as Railways are lagging much behind the schedule of making model Railway Stations or providing complete facilities for Pwds in their identified stations. Similarly the progress in other transportation sector i.e. Airports and road transport is discouraging as mostly 'partial' accessibility has been ensured. The Committee also find that penal provisions under the Act exist, however those have not been invoked in the cases where performance of States/UTs and line Ministries is not satisfactory and in its stead, target dates are being extended continuously. The Committee hope that there would not be any further extension beyond June, 2022. They recommend that the Department should adhere to the deadlines instead of extending those and vigorously pursue with the line Ministries/States/UTs to finish the work by target dates. The Committee also recommend invoking of penal provisions, in case timelines are not met, as a last resort, in the interest of Divyangjan.

Reply of the Government

On the issues highlighted in the observation at Para 4.23 above the response of the Department is as follows:

1. Status of Implementation of Built Environment and ICT Ecosystem Targets of AIC: Under the Accessible India Campaign for the Target 1.1, so far, access audits have

been conducted for 1662 State Government buildings, of which funds amounting to Rs. 496.69 crores have been released for initiating retrofitting work in 1183 buildings. So far, 16 States/UTs (Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Chandigarh, Delhi, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal) have reported completion of work in 510 buildings. As per information available on the MIS Portal of AIC, further work is in progress in 282 buildings reported by 9 States/UTs (Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh). Under the ICT Ecosystem target, 603 State Government websites have been made accessible and 459 have been made live.

2. Follow-Up and Monitoring the progress by State/UT Governments: In regard to the matter of repeated extension of timelines and setting up targets by States/UTs for completion of work within the extended date of June, 2022, the matter is being regularly followed up with all States/UTs through video conferences and letters. During the VCs held on 8th and 9th June 2021 and on 14th and 16th September 2021 each State/UT was asked to submit the timelines for the completion of work under the AIC and a google sheet was also circulated to capture real-time data. Response were received from 22 States/UTs, details of which have been provided in Annexure A. The work of retrofitment was affected as the construction industry witnessed a slowdown due to the pandemic. Letters on regular basis are sent to State/UT Governments latest having been sent 31.05.2021 and 22.09.2021. Separately follow-up is also being conducted through telephonic and virtual discussions from time to time to State/UT Governments including Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Punjab and Tripura to expedite the matter and facilitate the troubleshooting of any implementation related issues being faced by them. Consequently, responses have been received from Arunachal Pradesh where cost estimates for all buildings have been received for processing and release of funds; Jammu & Kashmir where 7 buildings have been reported to have been made accessible, Punjab where 3 buildings have been made accessible along with retrofitment being carried out in 17 other premises and Tripura where work is in progress in 7 buildings along with a report that all buildings would be completed within due timelines.

3. Follow-up with Central Ministries/Departments: Regular follow-ups are also done with Central Ministries/Departments to facilitate and expedite the completion of targets under Accessible India Campaign as well as the work of formulation of accessibility standards/guidelines. Video conferences and sensitization workshops were held with 20 Ministries/Departments which were on-boarded for the formulation of accessibility standards/guidelines, including line Ministries/Departments such as Railways, Civil Aviation, etc. on 23.03.2021, 24.03.2021, 11.06.2021, 29.09.2021 and 29.10.2021, wherein discussions were held regarding the status of work progress in regard to the targets of AIC. For enhancing the understanding of web-accessibility among the officials

of Central Ministries/Departments, the Department also conducted sensitization workshops on Website Accessibility for all Central Ministries/Departments on 14.07.2021, 22.07.2021 and 29.10.2021.

4. Accessibility in the Transportation Sector: So far, under the transportation sector of AIC, all 709 A1, A & B category railway stations have been provided with seven Short Term Facilities. Ministry of Railways has also prepared the guidelines for accessibility and completed CCPD Consultation. The final version of the guidelines, incorporating the suggestions made by CCPD, is due for submission to this Department for Notification under the RPwD Rules 2017. Further, Ministry of Railways *vide* O.M dated 09.09.2021 informed that for 'Model Accessible Railway Station', New Delhi, Chennai and Kanpur Railway Stations have been identified to be developed as Showcase Stations having all possible accessible features (list attached at Annexure C) for PwDs. All the enumerated facilities except sign language have been provided at New Delhi railway station. Similarly, all the enumerated facilities except Braille Signage Board have been provided at Kanpur railway station. At Chennai station all the facilities have been provided except Divyang friendly few signages which will be recouped soon.

Ministry of Civil Aviation has also reported that 35 International Airports and 55 Domestic Airports have been provided with features of accessibility and Ambulifts are available at 12 airports. The Department, to showcase the efforts being made to make air travel accessible for all, has also developed the 2nd Volume of ACCESS- The Photo

Digest on Airports which would be launched shortly. This handbook serves as a guide for professionals, wherein the requirements of accessibility in the aviation sector is explained simplistically through graphical representation and photographs of good practices observed in 50 airports from across the country. Similarly, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways is looking into the target of providing accessibility in public transport carriers and have reported that, 44,153 (30.01%) buses have been made partially accessible and 8,443 (5.73%) made fully accessible.

The Department has been consistently conveying to these line Ministries for the formulation of holistic accessibility standards/guidelines which would cater to end to end accessibility of sector specific infrastructure and services. The timeline for the notification of the standards/guidelines has been set as 31st December 2021, following which as per Section 46 of the Rights for Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 a timeframe of 2 years shall be provided for making all services which includes Railways, Civil Aviation and Road Transport accessible, *i.e.* by December 2023. At present, both Ministry of Civil Aviation and Road Transport & Highways have had consultations of their draft guidelines with the Office of Chief Commissioner of Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) as required under Section 40 of the RPwD Act 2016, before finalizing the drafts.

Ministry of Railways has also formulated the guidelines and completed CCPD consultation.

5. Monitoring adherence to timelines and invoking penal provisions: In view of the expanse of the coverage of the task at hand, the Central Advisory Board, the highest decision-making body in the disability sector had extended the timelines for completing all target of AIC as June 2022. This would also be in-line with the provisions of the RPwD Act, 2016. For services, the timeline for the Notification of the Rules, 2017 has been set for December 2021. The Department has taken a policy decision to set the sunset date for the Campaign as 31st March 2024, beyond which the Campaign will be merged with the Barrier Free Component of SIPDA Scheme. To achieve this vision, States/UTs have been informed that no proposal for the release of 1st instalment of funds would be considered beyond 31st December 2021, such that an appropriate period of 6 months is available for the completion of work by June 2022. Timeline of 31st December 2021 has been set for the Ministries/Departments working in the services sector to notify the sector specific standards/guidelines under the RPwD Rules 2017. Furthermore, it is submitted that under Sections 89-95 of the RPwD Act 2016, penal provisions have been provided for any contravention of the Act or Rule. All stakeholders have been reminded of these provisions through letters, sensitization workshops and video conferences. As an additional step and as per the directions of Hon'ble Prime Minister, the Department also launched the Sugamya Bharat App in March 2021 so that complaints regarding inaccessibility of public centric buildings and services can be crowdsourced and forwarded to the organizations responsible for necessary corrective action. In case of non-responsiveness by organization/department in-charge in resolving the issues raised on the App, the Office of the Chief Commissioner of Persons with Disabilities and State Commissioner of Persons with Disabilities can also take up suo- moto action.

[Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities O.M dated 10.11.2021)]

Recommendation (Para No.4.26)

In pursuance of the recommendation of National Institute of Labour Economics Research and Development, which undertook third party audit of AIC, the Department of Higher Education has been directed to develop educational modules for inclusion of universal accessibility related studies in the curriculum for Civil Engineering and

Architecture. The Committee also find that all States/UTs have been directed to carry out activities similar to the one organized by students of Architecture of Chandigarh College of Architecture for community engagement in the field of accessibility and to organize training of concerned officers conducted by CPWD on accessibility. The Committee, while appreciating these initiatives taken by the Department, would like to be informed about the latest status of work done on the directions given to the Department of Higher Education and also to States/UTs. The Committee would also like the Department to vigorously pursue with all the stakeholders for the implementation to avoid any delay.

Reply of the Government

Coordination with Department of Higher Education: The Department has been coordinating with DoHE on a regular basis, requesting them to expedite the matter pertaining to the provision of accessibility features in Higher Educational Institutes, inclusion of Accessibility in the curriculum for Civil Engineering and Architecture courses and formulation of accessibility standards/guidelines for the higher education sector. Several letters have been sent to the Ministry in this regard with the latest being sent on 1st October 2021 at the level of the Secretary. In regard to the formulation of standards/guidelines for the higher education sector, UGC has been tasked with compiling a holistic document, inclusive of guidelines for the accessibility of physical environment as well as associated services and the pedagogical requirements. The draft guideline has been prepared and is under public consultation. Consultation with the Office of Chief Commissioner of Persons with Disabilities is anticipated to be completed by November 2021. The Ministry has also been informed of the Sugamya Bharat App, launched on 2nd March 2021 through which, PwD will be able to raise complaints pertaining to inaccessibility of infrastructure and services which would demand prompt resolution from the Government's end.

2. Status of work done by the Department of Higher Education: DoHE apprised DEPwD vide e-mail dated 16.09.2022, of the inputs received from AICTE vide letter No. AICTE/P&AP/Misc/2021/916 dated 3.9.2021(attached) on the observation/recommendation and action taken is as follows:-

a. Inclusion of Accessibility in Higher Education

1. AICTE constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Prof. M. Balakrishnan, former Deputy Director, IIT-Delhi for suggesting initiatives for enabling differently abled students by providing accessibility to learning and other infrastructure facilities in

institutions and equal opportunities of empowering them for taking better education through various other measures.

2. The committee submitted its report in April 2021 and it covers the following points:

- a) Accessibility Standards for Students with Disabilities Studying in Technical Institutions;
- b) Framing Syllabus on Disability, Accessibility and Universal Design;
- c) Introduction of a New Elective Course on Design of Assistive Technologies (for other than Civil Engg. and Architecture Students)
- d) Suggested online SWAYAM course(s) and the list of faculty members who will be able to offer these courses;
- e) Suggested conducting one Seminar for NGOs and Department of Rehabilitation which are already working in this area for sensitizing people and create awareness on this issue;
- f) Suggested designing a short term certificate diploma course of one-year duration for teachers; and
- g) Suggested that AICTE take an initiative for the promotion of proactive engagement of college community (Students and Staff) with NGOs working for the people with disability in the neighborhood.

3. The recommendations of the committee was considered by AICTE Executive committee in its 143rd meeting held on June 10, 2021 and the Executive Committee appreciated the suggestions of the Committee as it will enable students to provide accessibility not only to infrastructural resources, but also to other educational facilities for differently abled friendly educational resources and approved the same.

4. DoHE further, conveyed that architecture curriculum was still awaited from School of Planning & Architecture (SPA). The same, as and when received, would be forwarded to the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities.

b. Model Accessible College: The Executive Committee also accorded approval to develop one model college in some selected states, which will be having all provisions as mentioned in the recommendations of the committee and approved the tentative proposed budget of Rs. 75.00 crore (Rupees Seventy-Five Crore only) for 15 states @ Rs. 5.00 crore per institute. A detailed proposal for making the institute divyang-friendly with learning assistive devices would be chalked out and implemented accordingly.

3. Status regarding verification audits through Student's Engagement Programmes and conducting training of concerned officials through CPWD's Training Institute: All States/UTs, were requested vide letter dated 13.08.2020 to carry out verification audits of their facilities through Student's Engagement Programmes and were also requested vide letter dated 23.10.2020 to organize training of their officers through CPWD's Training Institute in Ghaziabad. Only the State of Meghalaya during VCs held in December, 2020 and January 2021 informed that the State Government was considering conducting training of officials through CPWD so that the verification audits of the State Government buildings could be facilitated.

4. Other initiatives pertaining to education sector taken by the Department: The Department is also coordinating with the Department of School Education (DoSEL) and Literacy. It has been reported that 8,33,703 government and government aided schools, out of 11,68,292 (71%) have been made barrier free with the provision of ramps, handrails and accessible toilets, content on accessibility has been integrated by NCERT in Classes 1 to 12 and B.Ed syllabi and by State Boards as well as under the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, provision has been made for in-service training of teachers, and for training of special educators. DoSEL has also prepared the draft accessibility standards/guidelines for their sector, in consultation with the Office of CCPD which are under finalization before being shared with the Department for Notification. Furthermore, the Department, on 24.08.2021, jointly with Ministry of Education launched 'Priya-The Accessibility Warrior', an E-Comic cum Activity Book on Accessibility for raising awareness and sensitivity among school going children and stakeholders of the education sector.

[Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities O.M dated 10.11.2021)]

Recommendation (Para No.5.8)

Regular receipt of UCs from State/UTs is very significant in the timely release of funds under the two sub-Schemes i.e. Creation of Barrier Free Environment and Accessible India Campaign, as further installments are not released and future projects not considered by the Department in the absence of Utilization Certificates from the States/UTs and Implementing Agencies. The Committee are very concerned about the delay in submission of Utilisation Certificates by several States and UTs. In case of Barrier Free Environment, Utilization Certificates to the tune of ₹ 1259.92 lakh are statedly pending from many States for several years. Similarly, in case of Accessible India Campaign, Utilization Certificates are pending against several States since 2010-

2011. While COVID pandemic has impacted construction activities since 2020, it is surprising that lack of knowledge about various standards and similar reasons have largely contributed in delay in submission of UCs. The Committee feel disappointed that the available mechanism in this regard has not been able to address the persisting problem of submission of Utilization Certificates by the States/UTs despite the Department making efforts like, sending letters to State Governments, holding VCs for getting the pending certificates from States/Implementing agencies, creation of MIS Portal as well as monitoring by Secretaries, Ministers and even PMO. The Committee feel that withholding of 2nd installment in the absence of pending UCs, which is mandatory, obviously makes an adverse impact on the creation of barrier free environment for PwDs. Hence, there is a need to study the issue in depth and work out a new methodology including hand holding with the stakeholders and sensitization of all the Implementing Agencies about the rights of disabled persons as well as assistance of established Central agencies like NBCC, so that in submission of Utilization Certificates could be expedited and the work on Barrier Free Environment is not disrupted in the interest of the disabled persons. The Committee would like to be apprised of the efforts of the Department to resolve the issue of Utilization Certificates at the earliest.

Reply of the Government

As has been rightly noted by the Parliamentary Standing Committee because of the pending UCs, further releases are withheld which adversely and persistently affects the Schemes. As mentioned in reply to 3.13 earlier, as a result of the continuous efforts made by the Department, the pendency of UCs of Institutions/Autonomous organizations has been brought down from Rs.32.52 crore to Rs.10 crore and from States/UTs from Rs.305.78 crore to 254.44 crore in the period March, 2021 to September 2021. Further, Department writes to States/UTs to furnish utilization certificate and sends repeated reminders. DO letters were written on 23.02.2021, 30.06.2021 and 05.08.2021 to States/UTs. Further, the issue is also raised in meetings held by Hon'ble Minister, Hon'ble Ministers of State, Secretary and Joint Secretary and the status is taken and State/ UTs are requested to furnish the pending UCs. No new sanctions are given unless a substantial portion of the pending UCs is submitted and sincere efforts are made to reduce their pendency. However, because of COVID 19 pandemic that has affected construction activities, the States/UTs are slow in furnishing the UCs. However, efforts are going on to make the States/UTs sensitized for clearing the pendency of UCs, therefore the Department recently has written DO letters to the

State Governments of Puducherry, Assam, Uttarakhand, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh on 27.08.2021 and 29.10.2021 followed up with phone calls and reminder letters on 27.08.2021. A review meeting by VC was also taken by Secretary, DEPwD with these states on 08.11.2021.

[Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities O.M dated 10.11.2021)]

Recommendation (Para No.6.17)

The Committee find that the under National Action Plan for Skill Development since its inception in 2016-17, Department has released ₹126.00 Crore and could train 1.27 Lakh PwDs. The Committee are concerned to know that the National Action Plan for Skill Development, which came into existence in 2016-17, had to undergo vigorous overhaul within a span of two years due to operational issues such as lack of guidelines, non-commencement of training or substantial delay in commencement and completion of training, lack of infrastructural facilities/manpower, etc. The Committee strongly feel that number of beneficiaries would have been more had the Department prudently drawn up proper guidelines for the Scheme at the beginning itself. Thereafter COVID-19 pandemic derailed all skill training efforts. Now, since the Department has reportedly taken several initiatives such as switching from 'project' mode to 'batch mode', introduction of Biometric attendance, inspection of centres, condition of three years of experience for ETPs in skill training, etc. to address the operational issues, the Committee expect that the quality of skill training and the number of beneficiaries would improve and the disabled persons would also be saved from incompetent ETPs. The Committee also hope that the Department would be able to achieve the target of 85000 beneficiaries fixed for 2021-22 and would similarly fix such targets for future so that good number of PwDs could be trained and made self reliant as early as possible. The Committee feel that to further boost the skill training, the process of development of Management Information System needs to be expedited to enable the organizations to submit the proposals for empanelment and training in online mode. The Committee, therefore, recommend that a mechanism may be suitably devised and the initiatives taken to overcome the flaws are strictly implemented.

Reply of the Government

Management Information System is now fully functional which enables organizations to submit application for empanelment and Project Specific Proposals online. Regarding target for 2021-22, it is stated that situation like COVID pandemic has affected training activities as though training activities were allowed by the eligible Empanelled Training Partners, it was allowed in non-containment zone and that too with 50% or less capacity. Further, as per decision of EFC in its meeting held on 11.08.2021, budget for Scheme of Implementation of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (SIPDA) has reduced which has resulted in reduced budgetary provisions for National Action Plan for Skill Training of PwDs for next five years including 2021-22. Accordingly, targets under National Action Plan for Skill Training of PwDs have now been revised. As per the new targets, During 2021-22, 10,000 PwDs will be provided skill training under Short Term Training (STT) programme and 12,000 PwDs under Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in total financial outlay of Rs. 36 Crore.

[Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities O.M dated 10.11.2021)]

Recommendation (Para No.6.18)

The Committee are surprised to note that several States have neither received any funds nor there are any beneficiaries since inception of NAP. On being enquired, the Committee was aghast to know during the course of evidence of representatives of the Department that such situation prevails in many States as either there are no ETPs or ETPs registered in one State are running the Skill Centres in another State. The Department had assured the Committee to address these issues very shortly. The Committee are of the opinion that such system deprives new organizations to become part of the Scheme. The Committee, therefore, recommend that a mechanism may be devised to promote organizations in all the States where ETPs are not existing and discourage ETPs from operating Centres in States other than where they are registered.

Reply of the Government

It is a fact that there are some states where there are no Empanelled Training Partners (ETPs). However, it is also a fact that many existing ETPs have centres in almost all States thereby providing skill training to PwDs of almost all the States. The Organizations empanelled with the Department as ETPs conduct training projects of

other Departments/Ministries of central and state governments also and, therefore, it is not in the hands of this Department to restrict any ETP to open Centres in States where they are registered. Such restriction may not be appropriate as it does not help the Department in expanding its reach and coverage across the country which is the objective of the National Action Plan for Skill Training of PwDs. With respect to the mechanism to promote organizations in all states, now that MIS has been made functional and it may help the organizations in submitting their proposals for empanelment online and the Department may be able to address this issue. State Skill Development Missions (SSDM) have also been requested to submit proposals and two states have also been assigned targets so far.

[Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities O.M dated 10.11.2021)]

Recommendation (Para No.6.20)

The prevailing COVID situation has adversely affected the overall education scenario and forced all entities to switch over to the online education system. The Committee find that the Department has allowed training in blended mode, however, it has not gained much popularity since training modules of most of the trades include practical components. Also ETPs are not forthcoming as they are required to ensure the employability of trainees. The Committee were informed that the training is presently being allowed specifically in trades in which practical components is also possible online. The Skill Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPwD) has also developed online content for training. The Committee desire that the content developed by SCPwD should be included in the training modules by all the ETPs. The Committee also desire that in order to make training worthy during such circumstances, the Department may conduct a study to address problems faced by ETPs so that the purpose of training is achieved. The Committee would also like the Department to explore ways and means adopted by advanced countries for their PwDs during the COVID-19 pandemic and adopt them in collaboration with line Ministries/Departments so that the training of PwDs does not suffer. The Committee also recommend that the Department should pursue for the early transfer of Vocational Rehabilitation Centres, as decided by Skill India mission in June, 2018 to the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities as it has been inordinately delayed.

Reply of the Government

Department allows and encourages conduct of online training to ETPs including content for training developed by SCPwD in their training modules. To ensure that training activities are not affected due to situations arisen in view of COVID-19 pandemic, Department decided to conduct Webinar from time to time to resolve issues, if any, faced by ETPs in providing quality skill training to PwDs. Recently, a National Webinar with ETPs has been conducted.

As regards transfer of National Career Service Centers for Differently Abled (NCSC for DA) erstwhile Vocational Rehabilitation Centers (VRCs) from M/o Labour and Employment to Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), it is stated that Department is pursuing the matter for early transfer.

[Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities O.M dated 10.11.2021)]

Recommendation (Para No.7.8)

The Committee are surprised to note that the Awareness Generation and Publicity Scheme launched in 2014-15 has not taken off despite its revision in 2015-16 as only 160 events have taken place since its inception. In 2018-19, 2019- 20 and 2020-21, only 15, 17 and 15 events were held respectively and several States in the country have not organized even a single event till date. The Committee were informed during the evidence that the various proposals from NGOs were sent back as those did not have the recommendation of State Governments as mandated under the guidelines. The Committee are not convinced with this submission as there are several other Government Institutions/ Organizations which can organize such events, apart from NGOs but perhaps this sub-scheme does not have provisions on the same. The Committee feel that it is required to identify and iron out any flaws and bring out innovative features so that these events are organized by the institutions/Organizations, either Government or non-Government, as envisaged under the Rules. The Committee also suggest that social media platforms and Indian micro-blogging sites like KOO app can be explored to allow them to create awareness about rights of the PwDs, as these are easily accessible through mobile phones. The Committee are also concerned about

the funds allocation because more events can only be organized if funds are enhanced. The Committee, therefore, feel that the funds allocation for the sub-scheme may be reviewed as wider dissemination of information to create awareness is necessary for the success of SIPDA and the welfare of PwDs.

Reply of the Government

1. Under the AGP Scheme, each & every proposal received from the Government./Non-Government. Organisations are placed before the Screening Committee after scrutiny of the proposal. Under the Scheme, funds are released on pan-India basis not state wise.

2. As regards the Committee's observations regarding non organization of a single event by some of the States, it is pointed out that from the year 2018-19 to 2020- 21, no proposals have been received from States like Andhra Pradesh, Kerala Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal etc. It is also a fact that during the beginning of the Financial Year, letters are sent to Chief Secretaries of all the States/UTs, and Vice Chancellor (UGC). In the year 2020, to give wider publicity to the Scheme, an advertisement regarding the Scheme was published in leading newspapers including regional languages ones (135 Newspapers),

3. The Committee also observed that the programmes can be held through other Government Institutions /organizations apart from NGOs and that this scheme does not have any provision on the same. In this regard, it is pointed out that under the Scheme, there is enough provision of conducting the programme through Government Institutes. During the year 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21, 10, 05, and 07 number of programmes respectively were conducted by Government organizations including Institutes under the administrative control of DEPwD. Even though letters are sent to Govt. Organizations in the beginning of the years, Govt. Organizations including institutes under the administrative control of DEPwD may again be requested for holding the programmes.

4. As regards the suggestion of the committee for the use of social media platform to create awareness about the rights of the PwDs, the same will be considered once the scheme is finalized.

5. Regarding paucity of funds under the Scheme, it is stated that the AGP Scheme is a sub-scheme of umbrella scheme SIPDA and there is flexibility of funds.

[Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities O.M dated 10.11.2021)]

Recommendation (Para No.8.11)

The Scheme was launched with an objective to promote research in prevention and prevalence of disability and the application of science and technology for the development of indigenous aids and appliances for PwDs. The Committee are perturbed to note that the fund allocation under the scheme is too meagre. Only ₹ 3.30 crore were allocated for research on disability related technology, products and issues and ₹ 1.49 crore could only be spent since 2016-17. To develop indigenous aids and appliances for PwDs, the Committee desire that the Department should make sincere efforts to enhance its allocation so as to encourage ALIMCO, DRDO, National Institutes and other Organisations for research on disability related technology products. The Committee are convinced that the limited availability of funds is hampering the research and as a result the Department has not been able to develop even small products such as retrofit kits and batteries for motorized Tricycles necessitating those to be imported. Nonetheless, the Committee are happy to note that 'Sugamya' Cane for visually impaired persons has been developed by ALIMCO and that the Cochlear implant, being developed by DRDO, is at trial stage. The Committee desire to know about the mass production status after the launch of 'Sugamya' Cane. They expect that with the success of clinical trials, the Cochlear implant would be developed soon and made available to the persons with hearing impairment and would also like to see that the project to develop a Mobile App for persons with disability is completed in a time bound manner. They would like to stress upon the fact that there is a need to enhance allocation to promote research to develop technology indigenously and minimize dependence on import. The Committee also recommend that the Department should keep abreast of the development of technologies, Apps etc. by various talented private entrepreneurs in the country too and involve them, wherever needed.

Reply of the Government

Proposed allocation for the Research & Development scheme over next five years period has been substantially increased in comparison to the expenditure incurred during the last five years. Rs. 10.00 crore is being provided under this scheme for the next five years period. 'Sugamya Cane', manufactured in-house by ALIMCO is proposed to be launched during the exhibition of aids and assistive devices to be held in Parliament House Annexe during the Winter Session 2021-22. Mass production of 1000

canes per month is expected to commence from January, 2022. The Defence Research Development Organization (DRDO) is in the process of developing the indigenized Cochlear Implant 'Shravan'. The trial of the Cochlear Implant developed by DRDO was delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic and now is in process and the outcome of cochlear implantation will be known after 6-8 months of audio-verbal therapy and complete follow up is estimated to take 18 months as per the protocol. Commercial production would be commenced only after the successful trials of the implant. 'ALIMCO Mitra' mobile app for Android phones was launched on 31.10.2021 by the Hon'ble Minister (SJ&E).

[Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities O.M dated 10.11.2021)]

Recommendation (Para No.9.4)

The Committee note that the Scheme launched in 2008-09 to provide incentives to private employers to provide jobs to PwDs, despite its noble objectives, was, perhaps not found to be attractive and hence could not take off. It was subsequently revised in 2016 incorporating several measures to make it more attractive to employers in private sector so that employment opportunities are created by them for persons with disabilities and that they become self reliant. The Committee are disheartened to note that even after that, not a single penny has been released on this Scheme since 2016-17. The Committee were informed by the Department during the evidence that they propose to modify this Scheme so that the disabled get employment in private sector. The Committee recommend that Department in their process of review, should exhaustively examine the reasons due to which Scheme has failed and also examine the role of Entrepreneurs/Employers in offering employment to disabled in advanced countries. They may need to be informed about the kind of jobs that can be handled by PwDs efficiently. The Committee also recommend that providing direct incentives to private employers may work instead of opting to share EPF contributions. They further feel that suggestions can also be obtained from the Entrepreneurs/Employers and other stakeholders before the Scheme is revised.

Reply of the Government

In view of the fact that the Incentive to Private Employers Scheme did not take off despite its review in 2016-17, as informed to the Committee, this sub-scheme

component of the Umbrella SIPDA Scheme has been decided to be merged with the sub-scheme of National Action Plan (NAP) for Skill Development of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) under SIPDA. It is expected that on merger of the scheme with Skill Training under NAP, there shall be a demand of fund/proposals under this scheme since instead of being a standalone scheme, it shall function synergistically in providing gainful employment to PwDs, whilst assisting skilled PwDs under NAP. On the lines of the recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee about providing direct incentives to private employers instead of opting to share EPF Contributions, the EFC (Expenditure Finance Committee) has also suggested that the Department should delink the issue of component of contribution towards EPF, ESIC, Gratuity etc. which have a continuing liability created and consider incentivizing private employers through say, a one-time grant. With the merger of the said schemes, further modalities of implementation of the same shall be carried out under NAP after due consideration of the recommendations of the Parliamentary Standing Committee.

The Department proposed to merge the sub-scheme of "Incentive to Private Employers" with "National Action Plan for Skill Development of PwDs". However, the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) observed that the objective of the National Action Plan for Skill Development is to impart skill training to promote employment of persons with disabilities both in public and private sector. Linking with a component of contribution towards EPF, ESIC gratuity or any such component where there is a continuing liability created with NAP may raise implementation and legal issues. It may be appropriate to delink this issue and consider incentivizing private employees through say, a one-time grant, if the Department may want to consider any such proposal. In pursuance of the recommendations of EFC necessary action is being taken by the Department accordingly.

[Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities O.M dated 10.11.2021)]

Recommendation (Para No.11.3)

The Committee appreciate that 'Sugamya Bharat' App has been launched on 02 March, 2021 with an objective to crowd source the complaints being faced by PwDs in regard to inaccessibility of public infrastructure services. Out of total 518 complaints received, 158 could only be closed and 360 were forwarded to the concerned authorities. As per the information provided by the Department, only 26 complaints have been resolved till date. The Committee are of the view that the number of complaints in the initial months of the launch of App, particularly during the pandemic when lockdown was imposed in various parts of the country and people were mostly indoors, reflects poorly

on the status of Barrier Free Environment in the country. The Committee strongly believe that the number of complaints would multiply once the App gains popularity amongst the public. Keeping the volume of complaints into consideration and the time consumed in addressing the complaints, as only 26 complaints have been resolved out of 518 received, the Committee feel that strong mechanism needs to be developed to follow up and resolve the complaints in minimum time possible. The Committee desire that the nature of the complaints may also be studied to understand the problems faced by PwDsin a particular area so that they can be addressed suitably in the upcoming projects. The Committee also desire that wide publicity should be given to Sugamya Bharat APP so that more PwDsuse it and all the stakeholders, who are responsible for providing accessibility related facilities and services to PwDs, get the feedback from the beneficiaries.

Reply of the Government

The Committee has recommended that a strong mechanism needs to be developed in order to follow up and resolve the complaints in minimum possible time.

A. The following steps have been taken by the Ministry to expedite the resolution of the complaints:

1. As soon as a Complaint is received, it is acknowledged with minimum delay.

Apart from this, the Complaint is followed up through emails and telephonic reminders. In the event that the Complaint is not acknowledged, the Complaint is escalated to the next higher Authority. Letters are sent out to DMs/DCs with copies to Principal Secretary and Chief Secretary at the State level. Similar action is taken with respect to complaints at Central level. Accordingly, such letters were addressed on 9thApril, 2021, 5th May 2021, 10thJune 2021, 12thJuly 2021 and 12th August 2021, requesting the concerned authorities to acknowledge the pending Complaints.

2. In view of the fact that the country was in the grip of a pandemic and in order to make forward movement possible on the pending complaints, it was decided to take up COVID related issues directly with the concerned authorities. Accordingly, letters forwarding COVID related complaints were addressed at the level of Joint Secretary to the concerned Principal Secretaries (9thJune, 2021) and from Secretary DEPwD to Chief Secretaries of all States/UTs. (14thJune, 2021).A demi-official reminder from Joint Secretary to Principal Secretaries on COVID related complaints was also sent out on 16thAugust 2021 and 06thOctober 2021.

3. It was also decided to take up those categories in which a large number of complaints were registered in other verticals and which could be addressed easily by the concerned authorities despite the pandemic. An analysis of the complaints in Built Environment Vertical showed that maximum complaints received from across the country related to inaccessibility in Banks. Accordingly, a demi-official letter from Secretary DEPwD addressed to Secretary Banking was sent on 8th July, 2021.

4. Similarly, letters dated 20th July 2021 were addressed by Joint Secretary to Nodal Officers in the Ministries of Civil Aviation and Railways as also to Principal Secretaries Transport in the States highlighting Transport related complaints pending for action.

5. All these efforts seem to have worked as all concerned authorities are getting in touch and necessary information is being shared with the respective offices, apart from guiding them on the operation of the Dashboard.

B. The Committee's desire for the nature of complaints to be studied to understand the problems faced by PwDs in a particular area so that they can be addressed suitably in the upcoming projects has been noted for future compliance.

(Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities) O.M. dated 2021)

Recommendation (Para No.13.5)

The Committee are happy to find that the reservation for persons with disabilities has been enhanced from 3% to 4% in Government Sector and 3% to 5% in higher educational sector. Appreciably, the Department has also notified 3566 posts in Group A, B, C & D for disabled persons on 4 January, 2021. The Committee are also aware of the fact that Hon'ble Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment has taken up the matter for implementation of the provisions of reservation with the Chief Ministers of the States. Also, Central Advisory Board has advised States/UTs to develop online mechanism for compilation of data on appointment of persons with disabilities. The Committee, in view of the decisions taken with respect to the implementation of reservation provision by Central/State/UT Governments, urge upon the Department to follow up the implementation in this regard and suitably pursue with the State Government/UT Administration for ensuring reservations for disabled persons as well as development of online mechanism for compilation of data on appointment of

persons with disabilities. The Committee would like to be informed of the progress made in this regard.

Reply of the Government

As stated earlier, DoPT is the nodal Central Department on matters regarding recruitment of personnel. They have an online system for compilation of information relating to recruitment of personnel including persons with disabilities recruited as per the reservation policy of the Government in terms of RPwD Act, 2016. DoPT also monitors the position and the Department obtains consolidated information from DoPT as and when required.

As advised by the Committee, the Department requested States/UTs vide letter no. 02-01/2021-DD-III dated 06/09/21 to implement reservation for PwDs in their establishments and develop an online mechanism for the compilation of data on the appointment of persons with disabilities in terms of the provisions of RPwD Act, 2016.

[Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities O.M dated 10.11.2021)]

CHAPTER- III

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

Recommendation (Para No.2.8)

The Committee find that the Department of Empowerment of Pwds, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, has been releasing funds since 1999 under an Umbrella Scheme for the implementation of the provisions of the erstwhile Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, called 'SIPDA', in various fields like access to education and vocational training, employment, public transport, built-up environment and information and communication systems so as to uphold the independence and dignity of Pwds. Various sub-schemes or components under SIPDA have been added/removed in 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22 after the enactment of the Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016. In 2018-19, the Scheme had six components and now in 2021-22, it has 13 components. The Committee are surprised to note that the Scheme, when it had six components in 2016-17, had budgetary allocation of ₹ 193 crore and in 2021-22, when its components have more than doubled, the budgetary allocation is ₹ 209.77 Crore, a mere ₹ 16.77 crore more. The Committee lament the fact that the Budget for SIPDA, which should have been at least doubled in a span of 5 years in order to achieve the objectives envisaged under the added subschemes/components, has remained almost stagnant. Furthermore, the expenditure status of the Scheme is alarming to the Committee as they find that the pace of expenditure during the year 2016- 17 onwards has not increased despite expansion in the scope of the Schemes during the period, rather the expenditure has nose-dived in 2019-20 to 2020-21, which, as per the Department, has happened mainly due to COVID-19 pandemic. The Committee feel that holding COVID-19 responsible for it is not justified as the Department has themselves also stated reasons like pendency of UCs, lack of proposals under NAP for skill development as well as Braille Press sub-scheme, etc. for reduction in actual expenditure. The Department should have analysed the reasons for insufficient number of proposals under these sub-schemes and promoted the same in the interest of

persons with disabilities. The Committee also feel that adding & removing sub-schemes in an umbrella scheme has its pitfalls. If the Department had exhaustively examined the scope of SIPDA at the time of revision of the Scheme in 2016-2017, there perhaps would not have been any need to add or remove the Schemes in subsequent years. The Committee, further, are of the view that the need for poorly performing components like Braille press, Research on disability Technology etc. should have been pre-examined and decisions taken accordingly, particularly for research which is generally undertaken by outside institutions like DRDO. They are of the opinion that SIPDA has been amended every now and then which has affected not only beneficiaries but also made it difficult for Implementing agencies and other stakeholders to understand the new processes, guidelines and provisions of this frequently reworked Scheme for proper implementation.

Reply of the Government

A) The BE, RE and fund release in respect of SIPDA for the years 2016-17 to 2017-18 are shown Table 1 and those of FY 2018-19 onwards in Table 2:

Table 1: Pertaining to Financial years 2016-17 and 2017-18

Sl. No.	Components /Sub-Schemes	Year	BE	RE	Fund release
1.	Creation of barrier free environment	2016-17	193.00	193.00	186.83
2.	Accessible India Campaign (AIC)				
3.	National Action Plan for Skill Development for PwDs				
4.	Composite Regional Centres (CRCs)				
		2017-18	207.00	257.00	272.23

5.	District Disability Rehabilitation Centre (DDRCs)				
6.	Unique Disability Identification				

Table- 2: Pertaining to Financial Years 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22

		Sub scheme wise notional allocation of BE, RE and Fund release (Rs. in Crore)										
Sl. No.	Components/Sub-Schemes	2018-19			2019-20			2020-21			2021-22	
		BE	RE	Fund released	BE	RE	Fund released	BE	RE	Fund released	BE	Fund released (as on 30.09.2021)
1.	Creation of barrier free environment	6.00	10.00	15.55	13.00	19.60	15.55	18.00	16.00	25.22	9.32	3.75
2.	Accessible India Campaign*	93.00	100.00	112.40	105.00	112.00	134.19	105.00	56.37	54.03	80.00	13.00
3.	National Action Plan for Skill Development for PwDs	121.00	70.00	43.75	100.00	40.00	4.33	77.00	30.00	4.50	80.85	1.19
4.	Composite Regional Centres (CRCs)	43.00	60.00	76.85	70.00	70.00	50.10	Both Components discontinued				
5.	District Disability Rehabilitation Centre (DDRCs)	6.00	10.00	5.26	7.50	4.00	3.18					
6.	Unique Disability Identification (UDID)	31.00	8.30	7.01	13.00	10.00	7.87	13.00	6.00	5.10	9.00	1.66

7.	Awareness Generation and Publicity (AGP)					3.00	2.00	2.12	2.50	1.00	1.17	2.50	0.0
8.	Research on Disability Related Technology, Products and Issues	Merged under SIPDA w.e.f. FY 2019-20				1.00	0.40	0.0	1.00	0.50	0.45	1.00	0.13
9.	In-service Training					2.00	2.00	0.0	2.00	0.50	0.0	2.00	0.0
10.	Incentive to					0.50	0.0	0.0	1.00	0.0	0.0	0.10	0.0
11.	Deaf College					Merged under SIPDA w.e.f. FY 2020-21						3.00	0.0
12.	Media							18.00	6.00	6.08	7.00	0.0	
13.	State Spinal Injury Centre							5.00	2.52	1.73	5.00	0.0	
14.	Braille Press							6.00	4.00	5.15	6.00	0.80	
15.	Indian Spinal Injury Centre	Merged under SIPDA w.e.f. FY 2021-22									4.00	0.0	
	Total	300.00	258.30	260.82	315.00	260.00	217.34	251.50	122.89	103.43	209.77	20.53	

Note:

- (i) Component/ Sub-Scheme-wise notional allocation of BE & RE has been effective since 2018-19.
- (ii) The RE of overall SIPDA for FY 2021-22 is yet to be finalized.

Table- 3: Status at a glance for BE, RE and AE from 2016-17 onwards

(Rs. in crore)			
Fin. Year	BE (in ₹)	RE (in ₹)	Actual Expenditure (in ₹)
2016-17	193.00	193.00	186.83
2017-18	207.00	257.00	272.23
2018-19	300.00	258.00	260.82
2019-20	315.00	260.00	217.34
2020-21	251.50	122.89	103.43
2021-22	209.77	-	20.53*

* Expenditure of 2021-22 upto 30.09.2021

From the above tables it is evident that during F.Y. 2016-17, there were six components and the BE was Rs.193.00 crore. During 2016-17, there was no notional allocation among the sub-schemes and the same was introduced from F.Y. 2018-19. The minor schemes such as Awareness Generation and Publicity (AGP), Research on Disability Related Technology, Product and Issues, In-Service Training, Incentive to Private Employers, Media, Deaf Colleges, Braille Press, SSIC and ISIC have been added in SIPDA and two components i.e. Composite Regional Centers (CRC) and District Disability Rehabilitation Centre (DDRCs) were removed. Although the eight components were added under SIPDA, these were minor sub-schemes having a total BE allocation of Rs.30.60 crore only during F.Y. 2021-22 out of the total BE allocation of Rs.209.77 crore. Further, two components, namely, CRC and DDRC were removed from SIPDA and clubbed with different components i.e. CRC with National Institutes and DDRCs with DDRCs scheme. CRC and DDRCs had major allocation i.e. Rs.77.50 crore (during FY 2019-20 i.e. last year, the allocation was made under SIPDA but from F.Y. 2020-21 these were removed from SIPDA).

As a result, there is a decrease of Rs.46.90 crore due to adding/removing of sub-schemes. Hence, for drawing a parallel and if budgetary allocation has to be compared on equal basis, then Rs.46.90 crore is to be added in the budgetary allocation of Rs.209.77 crore which would reflect an increased budget allocation of around Rs.63.67 crores over the period from 2016-17 to 2021-22, that is around 33% increase over the span of last 5 years. Further, due to the effect of Covid-19, the RE allocation of FY 2020-21 was reduced under SIPDA from Rs.251.50 crore to 122.89 crore. The reduced RE of FY 2020-21 and various Covid-19 related factors have impacted the BE allocation of FY 2021-22 also. Hence, if a true comparison needs to be done with F.Y. 2016-17, then the normal year of F.Y. 2019-20 should be considered. During F.Y. 2019-20, four new components namely AGP, Research on Disability related technology product, In-Service Training and Incentive to Employees have been added which had a budgetary allocation of Rs.6.50 crore only. Reducing Rs.6.50 crore from BE allocation of FY 2019-20 of Rs.315.00 crore is Rs.308.50 crore. Hence, if comparison of allocation between FY 2016-17 and FY 2019-20 is done, then there is increased in Budget allocation from Rs.193.00 crore to 308.50 crore i.e. around 60% in span of 3 years.

(B) The reasons for the reduced expenditure in NAP Skill Training, Research and Development and Braille Press schemes are as follows:

For Skill training under NAP, the reasons of low expenditure is as under:

(i) As per the existing guidelines/norms, the payment of final installment is linked to placement and it is released to ETPs on the basis of their performance on placement

criteria only. As per the extant criteria, the 3rd installment is not released to ETPs with placement below 40% whereas it is released on pro-rata basis to ETPs with placement between 40 to 70% and the full amount of the 3rd installment is released only to such ETPs as have achieved a target of 70% placement.

(ii) 3rd installment has not been released to any ETP for want of authentic data and documents. In order to determine the actual number of placed/employed persons with disabilities against trained PwDs under "National Action Plan for Skill Development of PwDs" as of date, the Department is in the process of collecting data from all the ETPs provided fund for skill training to PwDs since 2016-17.

(iii) With a view to encouraging the ETPs for placement, there is provision of incentive in Common Norms for ETPs also which is Rs.3000/- per candidate for placement above 70% and Rs.5000/- per candidate for placement above 85%. As per Common Norms, ETPs are also provided fund for organizing job outreach activities. It was due to various initiatives taken towards streamlining in 2019-20 and the pandemic situation which have affected skilling activities severely from Feb/March, 2020 onwards.

Reason for low expenditure under Braille Press: From 2014-15 to 2020-21, 12 new Braille Presses have been set up across the country, 12 existing Braille Presses modernized and the capacity of 03 existing Braille Presses augmented, thus largely meeting the targets set forth under the Scheme. In 2019-20, the actual expenditure was less mainly due to the non receipt of adequate and complete proposals from the implementing agencies, particularly in respect of recurring grants in aid which is provided under the scheme @ Rs. 2/- per page for printing Braille text books and course material for supplying free of cost to the school going visually impaired children. In the year 2020-21, the performance of the scheme was improved and the actual expenditure (Rs. 5.15 crore) was higher than the initial notional allocation (Rs. 4.00 crore).

Measures undertaken under Research and Development scheme

To give a boost to the research being funded under the Research & Development scheme being implemented by the Department, the following measures are being taken while continuing the scheme over the next five year period:

- i. Objectives of the scheme have been broadened in line with the provisions under the Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016.
- ii. Every year the Steering Committee will identify the priority areas/themes for inviting proposals in identified areas / themes during a particular year.
- iii. To facilitate smooth and early consideration and decision on the proposals received, frequent meeting of Steering Committee will be held under this scheme.

The minor sub-schemes have been added under the umbrella schemes of SIPDA because their budgetary allocation was very less i.e. less than Rs.10 crores. If there were separate sub-schemes then any fund not utilized would have lapsed. However, if it is underutilized in the umbrella scheme SIPDA, the same can be utilized in other sub-schemes of SIPDA. As could be seen from the above table although there were RE allocation under the sub-schemes AGP, R&D and In Service Training during FY 2019-20, the expenditure was less than the RE allocation. The same were utilized under Accessible India Campaign (AIC) where the RE allocation was only rupees 110 crore but the actual expenditure was Rs.134.19 crore, hence it could be seen that due to minor sub-schemes put under SIPDA scheme, there is optimal utilization of funds. Further, the scheme is under review of EFC again in 2021-22 as per the direction of the Department of Expenditure (DoE) vide OM dated 08.12.2020. As per para 2(vii) "With regards to Umbrella Central Sector Scheme, it may be ensured that the financial outlay of each scheme under the umbrella is not less than Rs.25 crore for five years and financial outlay of any standalone Central Sector Scheme should not be less Rs.50 crore for five years." Keeping the above guidelines in view, the following 10 sub- schemes are proposed to be kept under SIPDA for the plan period 2021-22 to 2025-26:

S.no.	Sub-Scheme
1	Creation of Barrier Free Environment
2	Accessible India Campaign (AIC)
3	NAP-Skill Training Program with Incentive to PrivateEmployer
4	UDID
5	Awareness Generation Publicity (AGP)& In ServiceTraining
6	Research & Disability
7	Assistance to Spinal Injury Centres
8	Cross Disability Early Intervention Centre
9	Projects under SIPDA
	Deaf College
	Braille Press
10	CPMU cum Data Strategy Unit

It is further pointed out that although the sub-schemes of the SIPDA have been added/removed frequently, yet the sub-schemes guidelines and implementing agencies

remain same and is reviewed only during the EFC/SFC review and not while addition/removal from SIPDA. Because of addition/removal only the Budgeting head gets changed and the rest of the procedure followed remains same. The stakeholders are adequately sensitized about such changes through letters, VCs, etc.

[Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities O.M dated 10.11.2021)]

Recommendation (Para No.2.9)

With regard to the mechanism for allocating funds under SIPDA, the Committee are informed by the Department that the Scheme get a single allocation and notional allocation is made for each of the sub-schemes each year so that there is optimum utilization of funds. It has further been informed that if there is shortfall of proposals on one component of the Scheme then the same can be covered by other components, where there are adequate proposals. From this, it appears that in case if any of the sub-scheme is lagging behind, then no extra effort would, perhaps, be made to promote that particular sub-scheme and the funds will be diverted to another more popular sub-Scheme under SIPDA. Hence, the main thrust of the Department seems to be on spending the full allocation, even if it is at the expense of a less popular sub-scheme. The Committee feel that this trend would dilute the objectives of the Scheme, as all the sub-Schemes, once included, will have different roles to play for the empowerment of PwDs and the optimum benefits of SIPDA would be achieved, if all the sub-schemes successfully perform together. Moreover all the sub components have their own program Divisions and guidelines. Hence, the Committee recommend the Department to re-examine the decision of having a single allocation vis-a-vis separate allocation under each sub-Scheme, in consultation with stakeholders so that objectives of SIPDA are better achieved with better fiscal management and monitoring.

Reply of the Government

The objective of clubbing the smaller sub-schemes into single umbrella schemes of SIPDA is to have optimal utilization of funds so that the shortfall on one sub-scheme can be covered by other sub-schemes and to have fewer budget lines for small small schemes. It has been pointed out correctly that each sub-scheme has its own set of objectives and guidelines which are different from other sub-scheme and is being implemented by different Program Divisions. The monitoring of each sub scheme is being done separately by each Program Division and they are responsible for the performance of their sub-schemes. During the EFC review, NITI AAYOG has also given a separate set of Output/Outcome Monitoring Framework (OOMF) target for each sub-scheme separately.

In spite of all the efforts made by the Program Division there may be instances beyond the control of Program Division wherein a particular sub-scheme may not be able to receive sufficient proposals, complete in all respects, from implementing agencies which may result in the non release of notionally allocated funds under the sub-scheme. In such circumstances, if the fund gets lapsed in one sub-scheme, the same can be utilized under another sub-scheme.

[Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities O.M dated 10.11.2021)]

Recommendation (Para No.2.10)

The Committee are surprised to note that the Central Advisory Board (CAB), an apex policy recommending body in disability matters was not taken into confidence before the merger/de-merger of sub-schemes under SIPDA as it has been informed to them by the Department that the Expenditure Finance Committee is competent to sanction the changes in Schemes. Notwithstanding the expertise and mandate of the Expenditure Finance Committee, the Committee opine that the role of Central Advisory Board should not have been overlooked, particularly when the members of the CAB are experts in the field of disability and rehabilitation, directly interacting with the stakeholders and are responsible for the performance of the Scheme. The Committee, therefore, feel that the Central Advisory Board should be involved to play a proactive role in major policy decisions on SIPDA and the Department should seek their advice on the various aspects of Scheme on the basis of functional experience gained by them.

Reply of the Government

The merger/de-merger of the SIPDA Sub-Schemes was considered on the basis of the guidelines of Revision of the Scheme as circulated by DoE/Ministry of Finance vide OM dated 08.12.2020. As per para 2(vii) "With regards to Umbrella Central Sector Scheme, it may be ensured that the financial outlay of each scheme under the umbrella is not less than Rs.25 crore for five years and financial outlay of any standalone Central sector scheme should not be less Rs.50 crore for five year". The recommendations of the Parliamentary Standing Committee are being brought to the attention of the Central Advisory Board in its upcoming meeting.

[Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities O.M dated 10.11.2021)]

CHAPTER-IV

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

Recommendation (Para No.3.13)

The Committee note that grant is provided to the Departments of the State Governments/Union Territories, Autonomous Bodies/Statutory Bodies/ Public Sector Undertakings set up by the Central/State Governments/ UT Administrations including Central and State Universities, to create Barrier Free Environment for the persons with disabilities, which includes making Government websites at the Central/State and District levels accessible to PwDs. The Department could, however, release only ₹ 44.30 crore during 2018-19 to 2020-21. Further, only 11 States/UTs could be benefitted under this component since 2017-18 and Grants-in-aid could be released to the Universities/Colleges/ Institutions etc. in 9 States only. Considering the number of States/UTs where no proposals have been undertaken so far, the Committee doubt as to when the entire Country would be covered. As there appears to be a lack of enthusiasm amongst State Governments/UT administrations on this sub-scheme,the Committee feel that the Department needs to make extra efforts than merely sending routine letters to raise awareness, sensitize and remind States/UTs every year for sending viable proposals, if they intend to make this sub-Scheme successful. This could also include offering expert advice on preparation of viable proposals, preparing ready Reckoners and setting of annual targets as being done under Accessible India Campaign (AIC) etc. particularly since the Scheme is proposed to continue till 2024-25,after merger of AIC. The Committee also note that the work of making websites accessible for the disabled is languishing as no funds have been released in this regard during the last three years. Further, the progress in making the private websites accessible is moving at a snail pace as the guidelines are yet to be framed. With on-line work becoming a norm in recent times, the Committee are of the strong opinion that the methodology adopted for fund allocation/release may be

reworked to speed up these objectives. The Committee also recommend that the proposals received from States currently pending with the Department should be expeditiously processed and if handholding is required on some aspects, support must be forthcoming from them so that the proposals could be approved and implemented in coordination with respective State/UT. The Committee would like to be apprised of the action taken in this regard.

Reply of the Government

While efforts are made to seek proposals from States/UTs, Implementing Agencies (IAs), SIPDA is a Central Sector Scheme hence it depends on States/UTs also to send proposals with complete documentation as prescribed under the scheme. They are requested to also clear the pending Utilization Certificates (UCs) of the previous releases before any further releases can be made. The Department takes serious efforts to sensitize the States/UTs to send the proposals under Barrier Free component. In the beginning of every financial year, the Department invariably writes to all States/UTs to send the proposals under Creation of Barrier Free Environment for persons with disabilities under SIPDA scheme. In 2020-21, the letter was issued to States/UTs only on 16.09.2021 due to the proceedings of EFC for the appraisal of the continuation of SIPDA scheme being underway earlier. States/UT Governments are advised to send the proposals (in original) in correct format along with the documents referred to in the checklist as per applicable guidelines prescribed in SIPDA scheme. Further, the Department regularly writes to States/UTs and takes up the issue at every level including during visits at the level of Hon'ble Minister, Hon'ble Ministers of States, Secretary, Joint Secretary and other officials. Video Conferencing sessions with States/UTs invariably feature this issue to clear their pendency of Utilization Certificates so that any new proposal would not be on hold for want of the submission of utilization certificates. Demi-official letters are regularly written to States/UTs for example 23.02.2021, 30.06.2021, 05.08.2021 and 27.08.2021 for clearing the pending UCs. These efforts have helped to bring down the pendency of UCs of Institutions/Autonomous organizations from Rs.32.52 crore to Rs.10 crore and of States/UTs from Rs.305.78 crore to 254.44 crore in the period March, 2021 to September 2021. The accessibility of websites in Barrier Free Environment depends upon proposals received. However, the Barrier Free sub scheme has a set of eligibility criteria and the guidelines, following which the proposals need to be sent for grants. These are conveyed to States/UTs who are required to follow the procedures while submitting proposals. If any State/UT sends the proposal in the correct format as per requirements laid down, then it helps in processing it expeditiously. However, all Page 14 of 58 proposals of the States/UTs go through technical scrutiny and if some documents/information is required, then the same is asked for and thereafter the

proposal is placed before the Screening Committee of the Department for recommendation.

[Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities O.M dated 10.11.2021)]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Para No.7 of Chapter-I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No.6.19)

The National Action Plan for Skill Development for PwDs was launched to enable persons with disabilities to become self reliant, productive and contributing members of the Society. However, it has been found that only 41931 PwDs have been employed so far out of 1.27 lakh trained. The Committee are unable to understand the reasons for such a low level of employment despite several measures taken by the Department such as instruction to ETPs to ensure employment after training, NHFDC extending loans to PwDs, establishment of NSK's in various States, etc. Moreover, the Department also has the sub-scheme of providing incentives to private employers for providing jobs to PwDs, under SIPDA, which should be used for trained PwDs. The Committee would also emphasize that if training is imparted in a trade that already exists in that area and the loan procedures are simplified, the Scheme would attract more persons for the training which will make them self reliant. The Committee, therefore, recommend that a comprehensive study may be conducted to identify the reasons for such a low employability despite several initiatives of the Department and suggest suitable remedy.

Reply of the Government

Regarding placement of PwDs trained under NAP, it is stated that the scheme is implemented as per Common Norms issued by M/o Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE). As per the existing guidelines/norms, the payment of final installment is linked to placement and it is released to ETPs on the basis of their performance on placement criteria only. As per extant criteria, 3rd instalment is not released to ETPs with placement below 40% whereas it is released on Pro-rata basis to ETPs with placement between 40 to 70% and full amount of 3rd instalment is released only to such ETPs achieved a target of 70% placement. 3rd instalment has not been released to any ETP for want of authentic data and documents. In order to determine the actual number of placed/employed persons with disabilities against trained PwDs

under "National Action Plan for Skill Development of PwDs" as of date, the Department is in the process of collecting data from all the ETPs provided fund for skill training to PwDs since 2016-17.

With a view to encouraging ETPs for placement, there is also a provision of incentive in Common Norms for ETPs which is Rs.3000/- per candidate for placement above 70% and Rs.5000/- per candidate for placement above 85%. As per Common Norms, ETPs are also provided fund for organizing job outreach activities. Association of Sector Skill Councils as Project Implementing Agencies will also help in enhancement of employment opportunities as these organizations have good industry connect in their sectors. The Department has also been taking initiatives in this regard. NHFDC keeps organizing job fairs on regular basis. In order to explore and enhance employment opportunities for PwDs, the Department is exploring the possibilities to associate e-commerce companies such as Flipkart and Amazon. The Department also envisages to holding National level Webinars with speakers from ETPs and big companies to explore placement opportunities in private/public sectors and understand the issues involved in placement of persons with disabilities in such companies and resolve them.

[Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities O.M dated 10.11.2021)]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Para No.10 of Chapter-I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No.10.4)

As stipulated in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, all the State Governments are required to appoint a State Commissioner for persons with disabilities. Also, the State Governments, with the concurrence of the Chief Justice of the High Court, by notification, are required to specify for each district, a Court of Session to be a Special Court to try the offences under this Act for the purpose of providing speedy justice to PwDs. The Committee are surprised to note that only 18 States/UTs have appointed independent Commissioners/officers holding additional charge till date and 23 States/UTs have designated special Courts in terms of the Act, in the last 5 years. The Committee are of the view that in the absence of full time State Commissioners and designated special Courts, the Scheme is bound to suffer as both the Institutions

have important role to play as envisaged in the Act. The Committee also observe that since the State Commissioner is supposed to have special knowledge or practical experience in respect of matters relating to rehabilitation, hence appointment of officers with additional charge violates the provisions of the Act and defeats the intended purpose of this office. The Committee would therefore like the Department to pursue with the States for the appointment of State Commissioners and designation of Special Courts without further delay.

Reply of the Government

Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) has been continuously emphasizing the need of full time State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities for dealing with matters concerned with persons with disabilities in all review meetings with States/UTs on earlier occasions. It is also one of the recommendations of the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities on order to monitor the status of implementations of provisions of the Act. This was also communicated in writing to the Chief Secretaries of States/UTs vide D.O. letters dated 16.05.2018 and 03.09.2020. The inputs on the observation/recommendation are as under:

Special Courts for PwDs in the States/UTs Twenty-nine States/UTs have reported availability of Special Courts for PwDs to try the offences under RPwD Act, 2016 for the purpose of providing speedy justice to persons with Disabilities. The list is as under:

Status of Availability of Special Court for PwDs in the Status/ UTs

S.No.	Names of the State / UTs	Status of ConstitutionSpecial Court Yes / No
1.	Andaman & Nikobar	Yes
2.	Andhra Pradesh	Yes
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	No
4.	Assam	Yes
5.	Bihar	Yes
6.	Chandigarh (UTs)	Yes
7.	Chhatisgarh	Yes
8.	Dadar & Nagar Haveli (UTs) & Daman & Diu	No
9.	Delhi (UTs)	Yes
10.	Goa	Yes
11.	Gujarat	Yes
12.	Haryana	No

13.	Himachal Pradesh	Yes
14.	Jammu & Kashmir	No
15.	Jharkhand	Yes
16.	Karnataka	Yes
17.	Kerala	Yes
18.	Ladshadweep (UTs)	Yes
19.	Madhya Pradesh	Yes
20.	Maharashtra	Yes
21.	Manipur	No
22.	Meghalaya	Yes
23.	Mizoram	Yes
24.	Nagaland	Yes
25.	Odisha	Yes
26.	Puducherry (UTs)	Yes
27.	Punjab	Yes
28.	Rajasthan	Yes
29.	Sikkim	Yes
30.	Tamilnadu	Yes
31.	Telangana	Yes
32.	Tripura	Yes
33.	Uttar Pradesh	Yes
34.	Uttrakhand	Yes
35.	West Bengal	No

Appointment of independent Commissioner in States/UTs Sixteen States/UTs have reported the availability of Full Time State/UT Commissioners whereas in the 20 States/UTs the Commissioners have an Additional Charge. Hence, all States have in place a Commissioner. It is also pertinent to mention here that in the erstwhile Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 under Section 58 (a), "Coordinate the work of Commissioners" is one of the Prime functions of the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD)" whereas under RPwD Act, 2016 the same has not been mentioned under Section 75. Hence as directed by the Committee, the Department will also pursue with the States/UTs on this matter.

[Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities O.M dated 10.11.2021)]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Para No.13 of Chapter-I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No.12.3)

The Central Advisory Board on disability, in November, 2020, had inter-alia urged the States/UTs to set up helpline numbers for the disabled persons. The Committee are surprised to note that only 10 States have established helpline till date which does not include Delhi, and desire that the matter should be vigorously pursued with all the remaining States/UTs to ensure that helpline is established in all the States/UTs within three months. The Committee would like to be apprised of the status at the Action Taken stage.

Reply of the Government

The Department issued Comprehensive Disability Inclusive Guidelines for Protection and Safety of Persons with Disabilities on 26.03.2020 which, inter-alia, mandates the States/UTs to setup helpline for them. The matter was also discussed in the meeting of Central Advisory Board on Disability held in November, 2020. The Board urged the States/UTs to take measures for the implementation of these guidelines and submit a detailed consolidated report. As per information available from various States/UTs, following 11 States/UTs have so far established helpline for persons with disabilities:-

Sl. No.	State/UT	Status
1.	Bihar	Helpline number set up for Divyangjan- 8448385590, 0612-2215041
2.	Chandigarh	Helpline Number -181 set up for Women, Children, Senior Citizens and PwDs kept active during COVID 19.
3.	Haryana	Helpline number set up for Divyangjan: 9888176357 (For Sign Language), 9876377800, 9888888363
4.	Jharkhand	Helpline number set up for Divyangjan: 0651-2401825
5.	Karnataka	Toll Free counseling Helpline number for Mental Health: 18001212830
6.	Nagaland	Helpline set up for Divyangjan except Hearing Impaired - 8258953837, For Hearing Impaired 9862300893

7.	Odisha	Helpline set up for Divyangjan – 0674-2392803
8.	Rajasthan	Helpline number set up for Divyangjan - 18001806127
9.	Tamil Nadu	Helpline number set up for Divyangjan - 18004250111
10.	Telengana	Toll free helpline for PwDs - 18005728980
11.	Uttar Pradesh	Helpline number set up for Divyangjan - 18001801995

The Department requested other States/UTs which have, so far, not set up helpline for PwDs vide letter no. 02-01/2021-DD-III dated 06/09/2021 to expedite setting up of helpline for PwDs.

[Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities O.M dated 10.11.2021)]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Para No.16 of Chapter-I of the Report)

CHAPTER-V

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

Recommendation (Para No.4.24)

The Committee feel that Railways is one of the major partners in the Accessible India Campaign as it has widest presence across the nation and rail transport is the maximum used service by Divyangjan. However, while the Committee would like to believe that the Department are sincerely trying to pursue matters, the accessibility guidelines are yet to be notified as those are awaited from the Ministry of Railways. The Ministry of Railways was not able to provide update on the Model Accessible Railway Stations as it was directed in the AIC Review Meeting held on 19 December, 2019 to complete New Delhi Railway Station under Model Accessible Railway Stations by 30 January, 2020. First of all, the Committee desire to know current position on this aspect. Further, the Committee have also been informed that the update on accessibility guidelines, Model accessible Railways Stations, Action Taken Report on the findings of verification audit of selected Railway Stations are also awaited from them, which is quite disappointing and unworthy of a seasoned and gigantic Ministry like the Railways. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Department should seek reasons for non-compliance by the Ministry of Railways and take up the matter at Ministerial level so that the work on accessibility guidelines, Model accessible Railways Stations and Action Taken Report on the findings of verification audit of selected Railway Stations is completed at least now. The Ministry of Railways may also be made aware of the penal provisions of the Act in case there is further delay by them in completing their targets.

Reply of the Government

On the issues raised and recommendations made by Standing Parliamentary Committee, the comments of Ministry of Railways have been sought vide letter dated 26.08.2021. Accordingly, the response has been given below:

1. Accessibility Standards: The Department conducts regular Monthly review meetings with concerned Ministries to understand the progress of the work on the formulation of accessibility standards. During a review meeting held on 14.06.2021,

Railways informed that the suggestions/comments given by the O/o Chief Commissioner of Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) in January 2021 have been incorporated and the final set of standards are due for Railway Board's approval. Thereafter, as informed by Ministry of Railways letter dated 09.09.2021, 'Indian Railways is making every effort possible to make railway services fully accessible in compliance with RPwD Act, 2016. Accordingly, the Harmonized Guidelines and Standards of Accessibility & Provisioning of Facilities for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) in Indian Railways were issued to zonal railways in February 2020. However, there were some observations of the office of Chief Commissioner of Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) on the above Harmonized Guidelines. These observations are being addressed by the Ministry of Railways on priority and the same will be sent to the office of CCPD at the earliest.' The Department also wrote to Railways vide letters dated 12.03.2021, 01.07.2021 and 05.08.2021 to submit the finalized standards to this Department for notification under the RPwD Rules, 2017. Taking further follow up, a letter dated 02.09.2021 at the level of Hon'ble Minister has also been issued to Hon'ble Minister of Railways to direct concerned officials to act in this regard on immediate basis.

2. Model Accessible Railway Stations: Ministry of Railways vide O.M dated 09.09.2021 has informed that as a 'Model Accessible Railway Station', New Delhi, Chennai and Kanpur Railway Stations have been identified to be developed as Showcase Stations having all possible accessible features (list attached at Annexure C) for PwDs. All the enumerated facilities except sign language have been provided at New Delhi railway station. Similarly, all the enumerated facilities except Braille Signage Board have been provided at Kanpur railway station. At Chennai station all the facilities have been provided except Divyang friendly few signages. These will be recouped soon'. The Department has also highlighted this issue in a letter dated 02.09.2021 issued at the level of Hon'ble Minister.

3. Verification Audit: In addition to previous several communications sent to the Ministry of Railways, the Department once again highlighted this issue in a letter dated 02.09.2021 issued at the level of Hon'ble Minister for submitting the report at the earliest. The Ministry of Railways vide letter dated 09.09.2021 informed that 'the verification audit of selected 70 Railway stations was done by School of Planning and Architecture, Delhi (SPA, Delhi). The shortcomings as brought out in the SPA audit report have almost been attended and the amenities have been provided. However, it may be noted that maintenance/upgradation of existing facilities at stations is an ongoing and continuous process.'

4. Penal Provisions of RPwD Act, 2016: The recommendation of the committee with regards to informing penal provision of the RPwD Act, 2016 to Ministry of Railways was conveyed to Railways in a letter dated 26.10.2021.

[Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities O.M dated 10.11.2021)]

Recommendation (Para No.4.25)

The Committee find that several Ministries are yet to start work on accessibility guidelines/standards which they were supposed to firm up in consultation with Chief Commissioner for persons with Disabilities and submit to DEPwD by June, 2021. The Committee are surprised from further revelation that all the Ministries/Departments of Government of India have failed to accomplish the task by the target date of June, 2021 as they still are at various stages of finalization. The Committee are unable to understand the reasons for the tardy response from the Ministries/Departments of the Government of India in finalizing the accessibility standards by the stipulated date as this would mean that the Department would not be able to achieve the targets of Accessible India Campaign in the absence of sector-wise accessibility standards and a collective sense of responsibility from all Ministries/Departments. The Committee would, therefore, like to recommend that their sentiments are conveyed to them and suitable steps taken for early finalization of accessibility standards by various Ministries/Departments for being notified urgently.

Reply of the Government

1. The matter of slow progress in respect of the formulation of accessibility Standards/Guidelines are regularly discussed with the 20 concerned Central Ministries/Departments and necessary handholding support is extended by the Department to facilitate the process. Vide letter dated 23.09.2021 (Annexure D), all Central Ministries/Departments were conveyed the sentiments of the Standing Committee on their tardy response in finalization and notification of the accessibility standards.
2. The latest status on the Central Ministries/Departments on the formulation of accessibility standards is annexed at Annexure E which reflects that 07 Ministries/Departments have completed the consultation with CCPD and are currently at advanced stage of finalization of the guidelines and 10 Ministries are at present at the stage of drafting of the guidelines.
3. Further, for monitoring the progress in AIC the following measures are being undertaken by the Department –
 - i. Letters-DEPwD has regularly written letters and requested all Ministries/Departments (e.g. on, 21.12.2020, 19.05.2021, 07.06.2021,

01.07.2021 and 23.09.2021) to take measures to ensure accessibility in their sector as well as expedite the task of formulation of holistic accessibility standards/guidelines. Letters were written to Ministry of Railways (02.09.2021) and Ministry of Shipping (27.09.2021) at the level of Hon'ble Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment, also to further lay emphasis on the criticality of the matter. Correspondence with Ministries of Housing & Urban Affairs, Department of Financial Services, Education, Health & Family Welfare and Jal Shakti has been made, addressing sector specific issues being faced by the Ministries in regard to the formulation of accessibility standards/guidelines.

ii. Regular Video Conferences - For expediting and facilitating the task of formulation of the guidelines, regular Video Conferences are organized with Central Ministries/Departments, which were held in March, July, September and October, 2021. Recently, the Department conducted a VC on 29.10.2021, where the progress made by all Ministries/Departments was again reviewed. These Ministries/Departments have yet again been requested to formulate timelines to achieve the set targets and recommendations of the penal position & the recommendation of the Parliamentary Standing Committee.

iii. Meetings- To provide hand holding support to facilitate the work of formulation of guidelines,DEPwD also attended one to one meetings on the issue with Ministry ofSports on 01.04.2021, Ministry of Culture on 01.04.2021 and 19.08.2021, Ministry of Education on 13.04.2021, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) and CPWD on 20.05.2021, Ministry of Home Affairs on 29.06.2021, Ministry of Jal Shakti on 05.07.2021, Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation on 12.08.2021, Ministry of Higher Education on 17.08.2021 and with Ministry of Justice on 18.08.2021. Individual letters detailing specific issues were also sent to the Ministries/Departments, such as Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on 12.01.2021, Central Zoo Authority and Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change on 14.02.2021, Ministry of Civil Aviation on 11.03.2021, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting on 04.03.2021, Ministry of Railways on 12.02.2021 and 05.08.2021, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways on 09.04.2021 and Ministry ofJal Shakti on 07.07.2021 and 17.07.2021.

[Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities O.M dated 10.11.2021)]

NEW DELHI;

02 August, 2022

11 Sravana, 1944 (Saka)

RAMA DEVI

**Chairperson,
Standing Committee on
Social Justice and
Empowerment**

MINUTES OF THE FOURTEENTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2021-22) HELD ON TUESDAY, 2nd AUGUST, 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. Smt. Pramila Bisoyi
5. Shri Thomas Chazhikadan
6. Shri Y. Devendrappa
7. Smt. Ranjeeta Koli
8. Smt. Geeta Kora
9. Shri Vijay Kumar
10. Shri Akshaibar Lal
11. Smt. Supriya Sule

RAJYA SABHA

12. Smt. Ramilaben Becharbhai Bara
13. Shri Abir Ranjan Biswas
14. Smt. Geeta *alias* Chandraprabha
15. Shri N.Chandrasegharan
16. Shri Narayan Koragappa

SECRETARIAT

1. Smt. Anita B. Panda - Additional Secretary
2. Shri T.S. Rangarajan - Joint Secretary
3. Smt. Mamta Kemwal - Director
4. 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) XX XX XX XX XX

- (ii) 36th Report on the Action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Twenty-Third Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on 'Assessment of Scheme for Implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (SIPDA)' relating to the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities).

- (iii) XX XX XX XX XX

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.

4. The Committee then authorized the Chairperson to finalize the draft Report in the light of consequential changes that might arise out of factual verification of the draft Report and to present the same to both the Houses.

The Committee then adjourned.

XX Does not pertain to this Report

APPENDIX

ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE TWENTY-THIRD REPORT (SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA) OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT ON 'ASSESSMENT OF SCHEME FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 2016 (SIPDA)

	Total	Percentage
I. Total number of Recommendations	20	
II. Observations/ Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government- Rec. Para No. 4.23, 4.26, 5.8, 6.17, 6.18, 6.20, 7.8, 8.11, 9.4, 11.3 & 13.5.	11	55%
III. Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's reply- Rec. Para No.2.8, 2.9, 2.10	03	15%
IV. Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration- Rec. Para No. 3.13, 6.19,10.4 & 12.3.	04	20%
V. Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government are interim in nature- Rec. Para No.4.24 & 4.25	02	10%
		100%