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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
LABOUR, TEXTILES AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT
(2024-25)**

(EIGHTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF LABOUR & EMPLOYMENT

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS
(2024-25)**

FIRST REPORT



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

December, 2024/ Agrahayana, 1946 (Saka)

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MINISTRY OF LABOUR & EMPLOYMENT

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (2024-25)

Presented to Lok Sabha on 16.12.2024

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 16.12.2024



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

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December, 2024/ Agrahayana, 1946 (Saka)

CONTENTS

		<u>PAGE No.</u>
COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE		(iv)
INTRODUCTION		(v)
REPORT		
PART-I	NARRATIVES	1
I.	INTRODUCTORY	1
II.	FINANCIAL AND PHYSICAL PERFORMANCE	6
	(i) Proposals and Allocations for 2024-25	6
	(ii) Budgetary allocation and utilisation during 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24	8
III.	OVERALL ACHIEVEMENTS - PHYSICAL TARGETS	11
IV.	SCHEME-WISE ANALYSIS	19
	A. EMPLOYMENT GENERATION PROGRAMMES-TRANSFORMATION OF NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE	19
	(i) Aatmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY)	19
	(ii) National Career Services (NCS)	23
	(iii) National Career Services (NCS) Centres for Welfare of SC/ST job seekers (Coaching and guidance for SC, ST and Other Backward Classes)	29
	(iv) Employment Linked Incentive (ELI) Schemes	32
V.	SOCIAL SECURITY SCHEMES FOR WORKERS	38
	(i) Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan Dhan Yojna (PM-SYM)	38
	(ii) National Pension Scheme for Traders and Self Employed Persons	41
VI.	NATIONAL DATABASE OF UNORGANISED WORKERS (NDUW)	42
VII.	LABOUR WELFARE SCHEMES	48
VIII.	CENTRAL SECTOR SCHEME FOR REHABILITATION OF BONDED LABOURER, 2021	50
IX.	NATIONAL CHILD LABOUR PROJECT (NCLP)	55
X.	LABOUR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH	56
XI.	LABOUR BUREAU	59
XII.	EMPLOYEES' STATE INSURANCE CORPORATION (ESIC)	60
XIII.	EMPLOYEES' PROVIDENT FUND ORGANISATION (EPFO)	68
PART- II	OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS	76
APPENDICES		
*Appendix I- Minutes of the Second Sitting of the Committee held on 19 th November, 2024.		
*Appendix II- Minutes of the Sixth Sitting of the Committee held on 12 th December, 2024.		

*Not appended with this cyclostyled copy.

**COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR, TEXTILES AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT
(2024-25)**

Shri Basavaraj Bommai – Chairperson

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2	Shri Mani A.
3	Shri G. M. Harish Balayogi
4	Shri Aashtikar Patil Nagesh Bapurao
5	Shri Partha Bhowmick
6	Shri Yogender Chandolia
7	Shri Ram Prasad Chaudhary
8	Shri Chandra Prakash Choudhary
9	Shri G. Lakshminarayana
10	Shri Asit Kumar Mal
11	Shri Kali Charan Munda
12	Shri Rudra Narayan Pany
13	Shri Tanuj Punia
14	Shri Pradeep Purohit
15	Shri Mukesh Rajput
16	Shri Raja Ram Singh
17	Shri Adhikari Soumendu
18	Shri V. K. Sreekandan
19	Shri Manoj Tigga
20	Vacant
21	Vacant

RAJYA SABHA

22*	Smt. Jaya Amitabh Bachchan
23	Shri Naresh Bansal
24	Shri Govindbhai Laljibhai Dholakia
25	Shri Rajendra Gehlot
26	Dr. Syed Naseer Hussain
27	Shri Maharaja Sanajaoba Leishemba
28	Shri M. Shanmugam
29	Shri Shibu Soren
30	Vacant
31	Vacant

SECRETARIAT

1	Shri Jadumani Baisakh	-	Joint Secretary
2	Shri Sanjay Sethi	-	Director
3	Ms. Mili Dinesh	-	Deputy Secretary

* Nominated w.e.f. 01.10.2024 vice Shri Saket Gokhale

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Standing Committee on Labour, Textiles and Skill Development (2024-25) having been authorized by the Committee do present on their behalf this First Report on 'Demands for Grants (2024-25)' of the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

2. The Committee considered the Demands for Grants (2024-25) of the Ministry of Labour and Employment which were laid on the Table of the House on 5th August 2024. After obtaining the Budget Documents, Explanatory Notes, etc., the Committee took evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Employment on 19th November, 2024. The Committee considered and adopted the Report at their Sitting held on 12th December 2024.

3. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the officers of the Ministry of Labour and Employment for tendering oral evidence and placing before them the detailed written notes and post evidence information as desired by the Committee in connection with the examination of the Demands for Grants.

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

**New Delhi;
12 December, 2024
21 Agrahayana, 1946(Saka)**

**BASAVARAJ BOMMAI
CHAIRPERSON,
STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR,
TEXTILES AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT**

REPORT
PART-I

I. INTRODUCTORY

1. The Ministry of Labour & Employment, one of the oldest and important Ministries of the Government of India, is functioning to ensure improving life and dignity of labour force of the country by protecting and safeguarding the interest of workers, promotion of their welfare and providing social security to the labour force both in Organized and Unorganized Sector by enactment and implementation of various Labour Laws, which regulate the terms and conditions of service and employment of workers. The State Governments are also competent to enact legislation, as labour is a subject in the Concurrent List under the Constitution of India.

2. The Ministry of Labour and Employment has taken several initiatives, legislative as well as administrative, to provide decent working conditions and improved quality of life for workers, employment generation and simplification of Labour Laws for ease of doing business. The endeavour of the Ministry is to create a climate of trust that is essential for economic growth and development and for the dignity of the labour force of the country.

3. The Government has notified 4 Labour Codes, namely, the Code on Wages, 2019 on 8th August, 2019 and the Industrial Relations Code, 2020, the Code on Social Security, 2020 & the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 on 29th September, 2020. Codes are yet to be implemented.

4. Codification of the Labour Laws will, *inter alia*, reduce multiplicity of definitions & authorities, facilitate implementation & use of technology in enforcement of labour laws and bring transparency & accountability in enforcement which would promote setting up of more enterprises, thus catalysing the creation of employment opportunities in the country. Hence, it would promote setting up of industries by reducing rigidity of labour market and facilitate hassle-free compliance, paving the way for realizing the goal of Atmanirbhar Bharat. Simultaneously, it will harmonize needs of workers and industry and will prove an important milestone for welfare of the workers.

5. As a step towards implementation of the four Labour Codes, the Ministry has pre published the following draft Rules inviting comments of stakeholders (including general public) under the codes:

- the Code on Wages (Central) Rules, 2020;
- the Industrial Relation (Central) Rules, 2020;
- the Industrial Relations (Central) Recognition of Negotiating Union or Negotiating Council and Adjudication of Disputes of Trade Unions Rules, 2021;
- the Code on Social Security (Central) Rules, 2020;
- the Code on Social Security (Employee's Compensation) (Central) Rules, 2021;
- the Occupational Safety, Health & Working Conditions (Central) Rules, 2020; and
- draft Rules under section 16 (5) of the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020.

6. "Labour" is in the Concurrent List of the Constitution and under the Labour Codes, rules are required to be framed by the Central Government as well as by the State Governments. The Central Government and a number of States/UTs have pre-published rules under 4 Labour Codes.

7. The details of States/UTs which have pre-published draft Rules under the four Labour Codes are as follows:

Status of Rules by States/UTs under 4 labour Codes (As on 03.12.2024)

Name of Code	Name of States/UTs which have pre-published the draft rules	Name of States/UTs which have not pre-published the draft rules
The Code on Wages, 2019	Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra,	Meghalaya, Nagaland, West Bengal and Lakshadweep (4)

	Manipur, Mizoram, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, UTs of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Chandigarh, Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, NCT of Delhi and Puducherry (32)	
Industrial Relations Code, 2020	Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Mizoram, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, UTs of Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh and Puducherry (31)	Meghalaya, Nagaland, West Bengal, Lakshadweep and NCT of Delhi (5)
Code on Social Security, 2020	Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Mizoram, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Telangana, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, UTs of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Chandigarh, Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh and Puducherry(31)	Meghalaya, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Lakshadweep and NCT of Delhi (5)
Occupational Safety, Health & Working Conditions Code, 2020	Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu,	Meghalaya, West Bengal, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep and NCT of Delhi (5)

	Telangana, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, UTs of Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh and Puducherry(31)	
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8. In this context, the representative of the Ministry deposed as under:

“... I would just like to touch upon labour reforms. A lot of labour reforms have already been brought in under the existing Acts and we have been following up. We have had intensive regional consultations this year with the States, with the Union Territories and we are moving ahead with the framing of the rules under the labour codes. We have seen some gaps and deficiencies when the States have drafted the rules.”

9. In the context of labour codes, the representative of the Ministry supplemented as under:

“...on Labour Codes, we have good progress.....We have 32 States already onboarded. Similarly, industrial relations 30, 31 social security, occupational safety 31. Others are also onboarded. It is just for the rules, and we are hand-holding them.

About seven States and UTs, recently we have also had West Bengal agree that they will be putting the codes together. Tamil Nadu wanted a clarification and we have given. Delhi wanted a clarification and we have given and then there are the UTs we are hand-holding. There are some capacity issues in Meghalaya, Nagaland, Lakshadweep, Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

I believe within another couple of weeks, since we have done intensive work, regional meetings, hand-holding, State-by-State work, we will be ready with the draft rules of all the States and UTs as well.”

10. The work allocated to the Ministry is as under:

- Welfare of Industrial, commercial and agricultural conditions of labour.
- Provident funds, family pensions, gratuity, employers' liability and workmen's compensation; health insurance, and sickness including invalidity pensions, old age pensions.
- Improvement of working conditions in factories; canteens in industrial undertakings.
- Employment Exchanges.
- Trade Union, Industrial and labour disputes.
- Regulation of labour and safety in mines and oilfields.

- Central Government Industrial Tribunals/Labour Courts.
- Administration of laws relating to the working conditions and welfare of cinema workers and cinema theatre workers.
- Administration of laws connected with safety and welfare in mines other than coal mines; organizations of the Chief Inspector of Mines and Mica Mines Welfare.
- Administration of the Dock Workers (Safety, Health and Welfare) Scheme, 1961

11. The objectives of the Ministry are enhancing welfare and social security provisions for unorganised sector workers; providing social security to organised sector workers; eliminating child labour; promoting skill development; strengthening employment services; prevention and settlement of Industrial Disputes and strengthening Labour Laws enforcement machinery; and improving Safety conditions and ensuring safety of workers.

12. The Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE) presented their Detailed Demands for Grants for the Financial Year 2024-25 to the Parliament on **5th August, 2024** under Demand No: 64 detailing fund requirement under the following Major heads of Accounts:-

- (i) 2251 Secretariat Social Services
- (ii) 2225 Welfare of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and Minorities.
- (iii) 2230 Labour Employment & Skill Development
- (iv) 2552 North Eastern Areas
- (v) 3601 Grants-in-aid to State Governments
- (vi) 3602 Grants-in-aid to Union Territories Governments
- (vii) 4225 Capital Outlay on Welfare of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and Minorities.
- (viii) 4250 Capital Outlay on other Social Services

13. Total Allocation for the Ministry for the year 2024-25 is as under:-

Budgetary Allocations 2024-25

			(Rs. In Crore)
Sl.No	Revenue	Capital	Total
1	22481.88	49.59	22531.47

14. As may be seen from the above, Budgetary allocation under Revenue & Capital is Rs.22481.88 crore and Rs.49.59 crore, respectively. Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995, with a Budget allocation of Rs.10950.00 crore accounts for 48.71% of Revenue budget allocation. New Employment Generation Scheme, with a Budget allocation of Rs. 10000.00 crore accounts for 44.48% of Revenue budget allocation.

15. The Ministry have been allocated Rs. 22531.17 crore for the year 2024-25. Major Schemes run by the Ministry includes Aatmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY), National Career Services-(NCS) Centres for Welfare of SC/ST job seekers (Coaching and guidance for SC, ST and Other Backward Classes), New Employment Generation Scheme, Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan (PM-SYM), National Pension Scheme for Traders and Self-employed Persons, National Database of Unorganised Workers (NDUW), Social Security for Plantation Workers in Assam, Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour, National Child Labour Project (NCLP), Labour Education and Research, Employees Pension Scheme 1995, etc.

II FINANCIAL AND PHYSICAL PERFORMANCE

(i) Proposals and Allocations for 2024-25

16. As regards the details of the proposed amount scheme-wise and actual allocation as approved by the Ministry of Finance for the year, the Ministry submitted the following:-

Scheme-wise details of Budget Estimate Proposed & Received 2024-25			
(Rs. in Crore)			
Sl. No.	Schemes / Programmes	BE (2024-25) Proposed	BE (2024-25) Received
The Budget Allocations, net of recoveries, are given below:-			
A. CENTRE'S EXPENDITURE			
Establishment Expenditure of the Centre			
1	Secretariat Services	102.79	104.46
2	Labour Bureau	33.66	30.07

3	Other Items related Chief Labour Commissioner, Central Government Industrial Tribunal, Research and Information Technology	154.09	124.52
4	Directorate General of Factory Advice Services (DGFASLI)	47.76	39.34
5	Directorate General of Mines Safety (DGMS)	152.70	119.00
6	International Cooperation	33.64	43.14
7	Directorate General of Employment	95.22	76.86
8	DG Labour Welfare Scheme (Estb..)	169.95	156.36
Total-Establishment Expenditure of the Centre		789.81	693.75
B. Central Sector Schemes/Projects			
9	Labour and Employment Statistical System (LESS)	65.09	50.00
10	Labour Welfare Scheme	50.68	50.68
11	National Database for Unorganised Workers	176.84	176.84
12	Employees Pension Scheme, 1995	10960.00	10950.00
13	Social Security for Plantation Workers in Assam	66.20	66.20
14	Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-Dhan Yojana	205.00	177.24
15	National Pension Scheme for Traders and Self-Employed Persons erstwhile Pradhan Mantri Karam Yogi Maan-Dhan Yojana	0.01	0.01
16	Atmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana	150.00	150.00
17	Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourer	6.00	6.00
18	Coaching and Guidance for SC, ST and Other Backward Classes	31.00	20.60
19	National Career Services	58.00	58.00
20	New Employment Generation	...	10000.00
Total-Central Sector Schemes/Projects		11768.82	21705.57
C. Other Central Sector Expenditure			
Autonomous Bodies			
21	Dattopant Thengadi National Board	198.00	117.00

	for Workers Education and Development		
22	National Labour Institute	15.15	15.15
	Total-Autonomous Bodies	213.15	132.15
Total-Other Central Sector Expenditure		213.15	132.15
Grand Total(A+B+C)		12771.78	22531.47

(ii) Budgetary Allocation and Utilisation during 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24

17. The BE, RE and AE figures for the Ministry during the last three fiscal and BE for 2024-25 are as follows:

(Rs. In Crores)

Sl. No.	Year	BE	RE	AE	Shortfall/Excess Expenditure w.r.t. RE
1	2021-22	13306.50	14248.72	24036.34	9787.62(+)
2	2022-23	16893.68	16117.65	14800.61	1317.04(-)
3	2023-24	13221.73	12521.06	11539.62	981.44(-)
4	2024-25	22531.47	-	-	-

18. It was observed from the data furnished that, during the Fiscal 2023-24, the BE of Rs. 13221.73 Crore was revised downwards at RE stage to 12521.06 crore and despite the downward revision, there had been non-utilization of funds of Rs. 981.44 crore as on 31.03.2024. On being asked about the reasons attributed to this non-utilization of funds even after the downward revision at RE stage and the Schemes/Projects affected the most due to non-utilization of funds in 2023-24, the Ministry replied as under:-

“The Ministry utilized Rs. 11539.62 crore during the year 2023-24 which is 92.16 % of the RE-2023-24. The non-utilization of funds was reported mainly

under ABRY, PMSYM, NDUW and Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour, as these are demand driven schemes and the expenditure under these schemes are directly linked to the demand received. Further, surrender of Rs. 633 Cr became necessary at the fag end of the FY 2023-24 due to sudden revision of budget demand by EPFO with respect to the demand at RE stage under EPS' 95 on the basis of actual expenditure under EPS till Jan 2024. All out efforts were made to utilize the budget to the maximum extent. As the under-utilization was due to reduced requisition under demand driven schemes, no adverse effects were noted.”

19. In this context, the representative of the Ministry during the evidence deposed as under:

“About underutilisation of budget, yes, we will put forth the exact reasons, and it is a serious thing. We have done a lot of internal introspection on that as well. We are working with the other Ministries. We have put together a task force on employment, but we will strengthen it further.”

20. When pointed out that the taskforce should be a legalized authority where the Ministry of Labour & Employment should have a major say, the Secretary, MoLE supplemented as under:

“Sir, this is a valuable suggestion. We will discuss with our hon. Minister also and we will put together a concept note.”

21. On being specifically asked to specify the quantum of funds spent in each quarter during the financial year 2023-24 and the first two quarters of 2024-25 along with the reasons for the shortfall, if any, as per the Quarterly Expenditure Plan against the allocated budget as on 30.09.2024 along with the steps taken to utilize the remaining amount during the last two Quarters of the current fiscal, the Ministry stated as under:

“The quantum of funds spent in each quarter during the financial year 2023-24 is as follows:-

Quarter I	Quarter II	Quarter III	Quarter IV
Rs. 3,390.60 Cr	Rs. 2,498.06 Cr	Rs. 3,030.33 Cr	Rs. 2,620.63 Cr

The quantum of funds spent in two quarters during the current financial year 2024-25 is as follows:-

Quarter I	Quarter II
Rs. 2,947.16 Cr	Rs. 2,755.62 Cr

Reasons for the shortfall:- During the current FY 24-25, the major shortfall in expenditure is under ABRY, EPS'95, NDUW, and Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour. The ABRY scheme is closed with effect from 31.03.2022 and only payments to existing beneficiaries were being made. Funds of Rs 150 cr were provided in BE 2024-25 for spill over payments, if any, for beneficiaries registered in March 2022. However, no demand has been received so far and Budget requirement has been revised as NIL in RE for the FY 2024-25. As far as EPS'95 is concerned, GoI contributions are made on the basis of actual receipt of employer's contribution in immediately preceding five months whereas Budget Estimates are projected in September/October on the basis of previous years data and expected rate of growth in next FY. As per actual requirement upto August 2024, RE has been revised downwards in current FY. NDUW and Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour are demand driven schemes and the expenditure under these schemes are directly linked to the demand received.

Steps taken by the Ministry: - Bureau Heads have been advised to ensure proportionate expenditure during the year by fixing monthly and quarterly targets and also to review actual expenditure *vis-a-vis* targets. The pace of expenditure is also being reviewed on weekly basis by JS&FA and Secretary, MoLE.”

22. It was noted that the BE of Rs 13221.73 crore was reduced to Rs. 12521.06 crore at RE Stage and the actual utilization was Rs. 11539.62 crore resulting in surrender of Rs. 1682.11 crore. The reasons for saving inter-alia include non-filling up of vacant posts, non-completion of survey work, less demand from implementing agency(ies), non-receipt of utilization certificates, etc. When asked as to why the anticipated expenditure was not closely taken into account at the RE stage itself, whether C&AG have raised any objection to this surrender, the justification given and whether the same has been accepted by C&AG, the Ministry responded as under:

“The Ministry utilized Rs. 11539.62 crore during the year 2023-24 which is 92.16 % of the RE-2023-24. Out of Rs. 1682.11Cr, Rs. 633 Cr was surrendered due to sudden revision of demand by EPFO in the month of Feb 2024 on the basis of actual expenditure under the scheme till January 2024. This revision was not anticipated at RE stage when on the basis of the past year’s trends approx. Rs 633 cr was demanded additionally. Under NDUW, funds were surrendered due to non-receiving of proposals for payment of ex-gratia from States. Further, it was anticipated at RE stage that activities like filling up of vacant posts, receiving of proposals for payment of ex-gratia, completion of survey work etc will be completed during the FY 24-25 and expenditure will be booked, however due to various reasons, same could not materialize.....”

23. The Ministry further supplemented that the justifications for surrender of funds at RE stage during 2023-24 have been given while submitting annual accounts to C&AG. No further comments have been received from C&AG so far.

24. The Committee noted that re-appropriation of funds to the tune of Rs.127.34 crore from one head to another was made during 2023-24. The major heads enlisted are ABRY, LWS, NCS, PMSYM, DGMS and the reasons for savings *inter-alia* include less demand by implementing agency, fraud applications, delay in recruitment, etc. When asked to state whether provisions contained in GFRs for re-appropriation of funds were scrupulously followed and the measures envisaged for optimal utilization of funds in future, the Ministry replied as under:-

“Ministry is strictly following the provisions contained in GFRs for re-appropriation of funds. For optimal utilization of funds in future, instructions have been issued to the concerned administrative divisions of the Ministry of Labour & Employment to ensure responsible budgeting and full utilization of funds. They have also been advised to make provisions for only such schemes which are likely to get implemented in the ensuing year.”

III. OVERALL ACHIEVEMENTS - PHYSICAL TARGETS

25. Scheme-wise physical targets and achievements along with reasons for shortfall in achievements of the targets during 2023-24 for the major schemes have been stated to be as under:-

(i) Aatmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY)

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme/Project/Programme	FINANCIAL	
		Targets	Achievement
1	Aatmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY)	2272.82 cr	1221.06 cr

Sl.No.	Activity	PHYSICAL		Reasons for variation of Achievement vis-à-vis targets
		Targets	Achievement	
1	Increase the employment generation in post Covid recovery phase and to incentivize creation of new employment along with social security benefits and restoration of loss of employment during COVID-19 pandemic.	71.80 Lakh (during the entire period of the scheme)	Total beneficiaries registered till 31.03.2024 is 75.78 lakh out of which, 60.49 lakh employees fulfilling eligibility criteria availed the benefit. During the F.Y 23-24 the number of beneficiaries benefited is 0.15 lakh.	-

(ii) National Career Services

SL.No.	Name of the Scheme/Project/Programme	FINANCIAL	
		Targets	Achievement
1	National Career Service	52.00 cr	46.90 cr

SL.No.	Activity	PHYSICAL		Reasons for variation of Achievement vis-à-vis targets
		Targets	Achievement	
1	To incentivize creation of jobs for employees	75 MCCs to be established 2 States have been interlinked with NCS portal	Achieved 9 States have been interlinked with NCS portal	

(iii) National Career Services (NCS) Centres for Welfare of SC/ST job seekers (Coaching and guidance for SC, ST and Other Backward Classes)

Sl.No.	Name of the Scheme/Project/Programme	FINANCIAL	
		Targets	Achievements
1	Coaching-cum-Guidance Centres for SC/ST	25.00 cr	23.88 cr

Sl.No.	Activity	PHYSICAL		Reasons for variation of Achievement vis-à-vis targets
		Targets	achievements	
1	Providing vocational guidance and career counselling services to educated SC/ST job-seekers	To provide vocational guidance, career counselling, typing and shorthand facilities to 2400 SC/ST job seekers and also prepare them for competitive examination/selection tests for Group 'C' posts	2160 SC/ST candidates have been imparted training under special coaching scheme.	
2	Computer Training to educated SC/ST job seekers	To provide Computer Training to 2925 educated SC/ST job seekers	Computer Training to 2925 educated SC/ST job seekers is being provided.	

(iv) Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan (PM-SYM) Yojana

Sl.No.	Name of the Scheme/Project/Programme	FINANCIAL	
		Targets	Achievement
1	Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan (PM-SYM) Yojana	350 cr	162.51 cr.

Sl.No.	Activity	PHYSICAL		Reasons for variation of Achievement vis-à-vis targets
		Targets	achievement	
1	Pension Scheme	NA as the scheme was approved for 2018-23. The scheme was extended without fixing any target	65,775	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Due to sudden outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, the lives of unorganized workers have been adversely affected.2. It is a contributory scheme, hence long-term financial commitment required by the beneficiaries.3. Awareness, persuasion and mobilization of beneficiaries are required through State Government or CSC Machinery.4. Unavailability of regular employment opportunities5. Lack of a Formal Employer-Employee Relationship6. Presence of other pension scheme covering unorganised workers from Central Government (Atal Pension Yojana, Old age pension for senior citizens under National social Assistance Program (NSAP). Most of the States have separate pension scheme for unorganised workers free of cost.

(v) National Pension Scheme for Traders, Shopkeepers and Self-Employed Persons

SL.No.	Name of the Scheme/Project/Programme	FINANCIAL	
		Targets	Achievement
1	National Pension Scheme for Traders, Shopkeepers and Self-Employed Persons	3.00 cr	0.0048 cr

SL.No.	Activity	PHYSICAL		Reasons for variation of Achievement vis-à-vis targets
		Targets	achievement	
1	Pension Scheme	To enroll 2.50cr. beneficiary.	1591	<p>1. Due to sudden outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, the lives of unorganized workers have been adversely affected.</p> <p>2. It is a contributory scheme, hence long-term financial commitment required by the beneficiaries.</p> <p>3. Awareness, persuasion and mobilization of beneficiaries are required through State Government or CSC Machinery.</p> <p>4. Unavailability of regular employment opportunities</p> <p>5. Lack of a Formal Employer-Employee Relationship</p> <p>6. Presence of other pension scheme covering unorganised workers from Central Government (Atal Pension Yojana, Old age pension for senior citizens under National social Assistance Program (NSAP). Most of the States have separate pension scheme for unorganised workers free of cost.</p>

(vi) National Database of Unorganised Workers (NDUW)

SL.No.	Name of the Scheme/Project/Programme	FINANCIAL	
		Targets	Achievement
1	National Database of Unorganised Workers	300.00 cr	28.96 cr

SL.No.	Activity	PHYSICAL		Reasons for variation of Achievement vis-à-vis targets
		Targets	achievement	
1	National Database of Unorganised Workers	To register 5 crore unorganised workers on e-Shram Portal	0.68 Cr	eShram received a significant response within the first year of its inception on 26.08.2021 and the number of unorganized workers registered on the portal exceeded the yearly target envisaged as per EFC note of NDUW. As on 10.11.2024, over 30.37 crore unorganized sector workers have registered on e-Shram Portal, on self-declaration basis.

(vii) Labour Welfare Scheme:

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme/Project/Programme	FINANCIAL	
		Targets	Achievements
1	Revised Integrated Housing Scheme (RIHS).	23.00 cr	41.45 cr
2	Health Scheme	12.00 cr	9.17 cr

3	Education	40.00 cr	30.68 cr
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Activity	PHYSICAL		Reasons for variation of Achievement vis-à-vis targets
	Target	Achievements	
Revised Integrated Housing Scheme	Only 2 nd /3 rd installments are being paid under this scheme. The scheme has now been converged with Pradhan Mantri Aawas Yojana.	8406 (2 nd and 3 rd installments)	--
Health Scheme	Health is a continuous activity hence it is not possible to fix a target in this category. Benefits under this scheme will be extended to all eligible workers and their dependents	18.02 lakh	Since it is demand driven scheme, no target can be fixed.
Education	1 lakh	96,051	Scholarships were given to eligible applicants.

(viii) Central Sector Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourer-2021

SL.No.	Name of the Scheme/Project/Programme	FINANCIAL	
		Targets	Achievements
1	Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour	10 cr	1.34 cr

Activity	PHYSICAL		Reasons for variation of Achievement vis-à-vis targets
	Target	Achievements	
Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour	No target can be fixed. As and when existence of bonded is detected, such persons are identified for rehabilitation	468 bonded labour has been released and rehabilitated	NA

(ix) National Child Labour Project (NCLP) scheme including Grant-in-Aid Scheme

Sl.No.	Name of the Scheme/Project/Programme	FINANCIAL	
		Targets	Achievements
1	National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme including Grant-in-Aid Scheme.	10 cr	0.68 cr

Sl.No.	Name of the Scheme/Project/Programme	PHYSICAL		Reasons for variation of Achievement vis-à-vis targets
		Targets	Achievements	
1	National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme including Grant-in-Aid Scheme.	No targets defined as the NCLP Scheme has been merged with SSA.	NA	NA

IV. SCHEME-WISE ANALYSIS

A. EMPLOYMENT GENERATION PROGRAMMES – TRANSFORMATION OF NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

(i) Aatmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY)

26. ABRY was announced as a part of Aatmanirbhar Bharat 3.0 package to boost the economy, increase the employment generation in post Covid recovery phase and to incentivize creation of new employment along with social security benefits and restoration of loss of employment during COVID-19 pandemic.

27. This scheme was implemented through the Employees Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) to reduce the financial burden of the employers of various sectors/industries and encourages them to hire more workers.

28. Under ABRY, the Government of India credited for a period of two years both the employees' share (12% of wages) and employers' share (12% of wages) of contribution payable or only the employees' share, depending on employment strength of the EPFO registered establishments. Under ABRY, benefits were provided to every establishment registered with EPFO and their new employees (earning wage less than Rs. 15,000/- per month) if the establishments took new employees on or after 1.10.2020 and upto 31st March, 2022 or those who lost jobs between 01.03.2020 to 30.09.2020.

29. The beneficiaries registered upto 31st March, 2022 continued to receive the benefits for 2 years from the date of registration under the scheme.

30. The salient features of the Scheme are as under:

- Government of India will pay both 12% employees' contribution and 12% employers' contribution i.e. 24% of wages towards EPF in respect of new employees in establishments employing upto 1000 employees for two years;
- Government of India will pay only employees' share of EPF contribution i.e. 12% of wages in respect of new employees in establishments employing more than 1000 employee for two years;
- An employee drawing monthly wage of less than Rs. 15000/- who was not working in any establishment registered with the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) before 1st October, 2020 and did not have a Universal Account Number or EPF Member account number prior to 1stOctober 2020 will be eligible for the benefit;

- Any EPF member possessing Universal Account Number (UAN) drawing monthly wage of less than Rs. 15000/- who made exit from employment during Covid pandemic from 01.03.2020 to 30.09.2020 and did not join employment in any EPF covered establishment up to 30.09.2020 will also be eligible to avail benefit.

31. The scheme was intended to enroll /benefit a total of 71.80 Lakhs members pan India. As on 31.03.2024 i.e closure of scheme, a total of 75.78 lakhs (105.5%) employees have registered under the ABRY scheme out of which 60.49 lakhs employees, fulfilling the eligibility criteria have availed the benefit under the scheme through 1.52 lakh establishments. The total expenditure incurred till 31.3.2024 was Rs. 10188.50 crore. On being asked the reasons attributed for not covering the remaining 11.31 lakh intended beneficiaries, the Ministry responded as under:

“The reasons for not covering the remaining 11.31 lakh intended beneficiaries is that ABRY was a demand driven scheme and the actual disbursement of benefits was contingent upon fulfilment of specific eligibility conditions (viz. (a) Establishments already registered before the commencement of this Scheme shall have to employ, over and above the reference base, minimum two new employees (if the reference base of employee is less than or equal to 50) and minimum five new employees (if the reference base of employees is more than 50).(b) For new establishments getting covered & registered under EPF & MP Act, 1952 from any date during validity period of this Scheme from 01.10.2020 to 30.06.2021, the reference base of employees shall be treated as Zero and benefits can be availed for all new eligible employees. (c) In case the employer does not maintain additional employees with reference-to-reference base in particular month, the benefit of employer’s share and/or employee share (as the case may be) will not be admissible for the month by the beneficiary establishments & employees. The frequent outbreak of COVID waves could have affected the establishments in meeting the required criteria on month-to-month basis, resulting in variation in demand/eligibility.”

32. The Committee desired to know the number of establishments and beneficiaries covered under the category (i) who lost jobs between 01.03.2020 to 30.09.2020 and (ii) new employees between 01.10.2020 to 31.03.2022, out of 60.49 lakh beneficiaries. In response, Ministry stated as under:

“The breakup of 60.49 lakhs unique beneficiaries in terms of those (i) who lost jobs between 01.03.2020 to 30.09.2020 i.e., Re- Joinees and (ii) new employees between 01.10.2020 to 31.03.2022 i.e. New Joinees is given below:

Number of unique Beneficiaries			
Establishments	New Joinees	Re-Joinees	Total
1.52 lakh	54,04,332	6,44,955	60,49,287

33. The Committee noted that the closing date of registration under the Scheme was 31.03.2022 and the beneficiaries registered upto 31.03.2022 were to receive benefits for two years from the date of registration i.e. upto 31.03.2024. When asked to state the purpose for which BE of Rs. 150 crore will be utilized during 2024-25, the Ministry stated as under:

“As per scheme guidelines where employers are permitted to file ECRs upto 60 days after the conclusion of the respective wage month and ECRs for a wage month are payable until the 15th of the subsequent month. Hence, ECRs for the wage month of March 2024 may be processed in April and May 2024. Based on this logic the BE of Rs. 150 crore was proposed initially.

However, the Budget requirement has been revised as NIL for the FY 2024-25 on re- interpretation of the provisions/directives established under the ABRY scheme. As per Para 3 of the guidelines, no benefits are payable beyond 31/03/2024 and therefore it mandates that remittance and ECR for all the wage months including the last beneficial wage month (i.e., FEB-2024) must be filed by 31/03/2024 to claim eligible entitlements, notwithstanding the provision 9(vi) of the scheme guidelines.”

34. When further asked to explain the circumstances that necessitated the reinterpretation of the provisions/directives established under the ABRY Scheme, which in turn led to revision of allocation for FY 2024- 25, the Ministry responded as under:

“The Budget Estimates for the F.Y. 2024-25 was estimated on the basis of the Para 9(vi) of the scheme guidelines which is re-iterated as “The ECR for any wage month for claiming the benefits under this Scheme has to be filed by eligible establishment not later than 60 days of the close of that wage month.”

2. Further, during the F.Y. 2024-25 when no demands were raised by EPFO, the guidelines were re-checked and it was found that there is a limitation in the scheme guidelines under the Para-3 of the revised guidelines i.e. “The Scheme stands commenced from 1st October 2020 and shall remain open for registration of eligible employers and new employees up to 30th June, 2021. The Central Government on 30.06.2021 approved for extension of last date of registration for eligible employers and new employees under the scheme from 30.06.2021 to 31.03.2022. The benefit shall be available for a period of twenty-

four months from date of registration of new employee, not later than 31/03/2024 in any case.”

3. Keeping in view that the Para 9(vi), which was restricted by the Para-3 of the guidelines, the funds under the scheme were revised at Revised Estimate stage revised as NIL.”

35. As regards financial progress in 2023-24, the Committee noted that BE of Rs. 2272.82 crores in 2023-24 was reduced at RE stage to Rs. 1350.00 crores and the actual expenditure further decreased to Rs. 1221.06 crores. When asked about the factors taken into consideration while proposing reduction of Rs. 922.82 crore at RE stage, the Ministry replied as under:

“The Revised Estimates for ABRY scheme in 2023-24 has been projected based on actual expenditure.

The registration window for establishments and new employees closed on 31.03.2022 as per provisions of the scheme. Only the employers & new employees who registered before this date and remained eligible as per scheme guidelines would be eligible for benefits.

Due to variation in the demand, a definite estimation of expenditure is difficult. However, on the basis of the actual trend in expenditure, Revised Estimates were reduced from the BE to ensure alignment with scheme guidelines and for the proper utilization of the fund.”

36. During the course of oral evidence, the representative of the Ministry submitted as under:-

“.....last year we had utilized Rs. 11,539 crore. We could not utilize the amount of Rs. 1,682 crore. This was basically due to the ABRY Scheme which got closed. The registration under ABRY Scheme closed in March of 2022 and thereafter the utilization of funds went down. We tried to use the money that ABRY was unable to use in other schemes. The number of contributions to the EPFO was rising in the last year when the BE was made. The BE is made in the months of September-October one year before. At that time, the EPFO rate of growth was showing us that they will be requiring a larger amount of money. We kept about Rs. 633 crore towards that but the rate of growth in EPFO was not up to the expectation. Therefore, in February we had to revise the figures. That was the major reason that this unutilized money is there. What we have done this year is that on a monthly basis we are checking the exact number of people who are contributing and what is our matching contribution for that. This year, we do not expect that this sort of a mismatch will happen.”

(ii) National Career Services

37. The Portal (NCSP) has been made functional w.e.f. 20.07.2015 at the URL (www.ncs.gov.in). The NCSP is supported by a dedicated helpline (multi-lingual) available from Tuesday to Sunday (8.00 AM to 8.00 PM) on 1800-425-1514 for assisting users. These services are available free of cost. The portal is accessible by all users including job seekers, employers, skill providers, placement organisations, career counselors, etc. The portal also facilitates organization of job fairs where both employers and jobseekers can interact.

38. The portal has been integrated with the following portals :

(i) eShram portal for consent-based registration of e-Shram registered unorganized workers and search for gainful career opportunities. So far, more than 48,01,909 e-Shram registrants have registered on NCS portal.

(ii) Udyam portal for consent-based registration of UDYAM registered MSME as an employer on the NCS Portal. These employers can post their vacancy requirements over NCS. So far 18,26,832 MSME employers have been registered on NCS portal.

(iii) Skill India Portal (SIP). As on 31st December 2023; 54,49,319 SIP candidates have now been registered on NCS Portal. Among these, more than 13.27 lakh candidates applied for at least one job, and more than 5.18 lakh candidates got shortlisted across various vacancies.

39. NCS has successfully integrated with DigiLocker. With this seamless integration, NCS users can now securely and effortlessly access and share their educational and employment documents stored in their DigiLocker accounts. This innovation not only simplifies the job application process but also enhances the credibility and authenticity of the documents submitted, fostering trust among employers and job seekers.

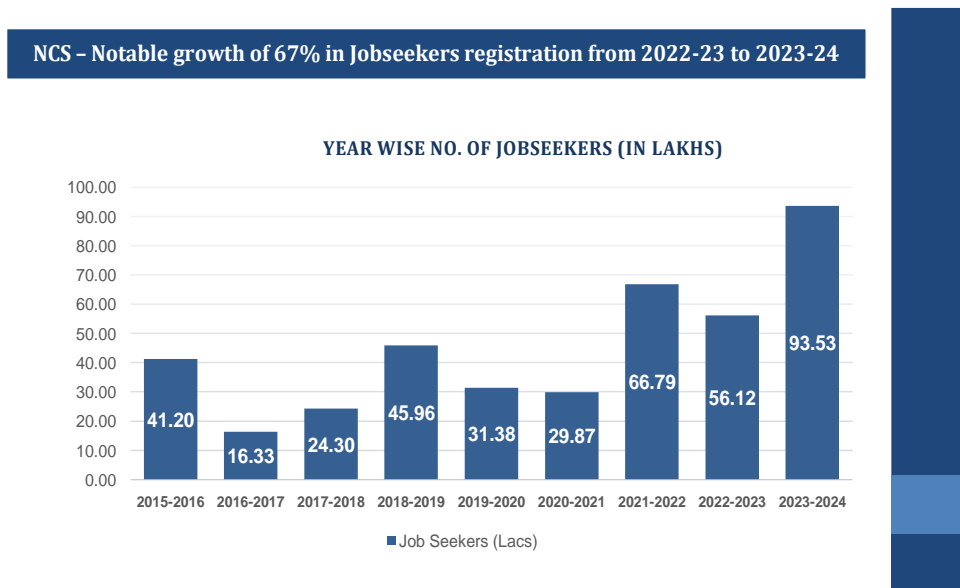
40. The government job module on NCS portal wherein DGE can post jobs on behalf of other government ministries/departments/PSU organizations. This module can be used for notification of permanent or contractual vacancies like Young Professionals, Consultants, etc. across different government departments or ministries.

41. The International Jobs module facilitates MEA-approved RAs to post international job opportunities on the NCS portal. It will facilitate the job seekers to search and apply for these international job opportunities via NCS portal. MEA-approved as registered over the NCS portal have posted around 12,000 vacancies.

42. NCS has launched employability assessment tools in December 2023. This is an AI proctored online free evaluation tool. It's a 100-minute exam that includes psychometric, communication skills, verbalability, logical reasoning, domain knowledge & computer skills. The key benefits are:

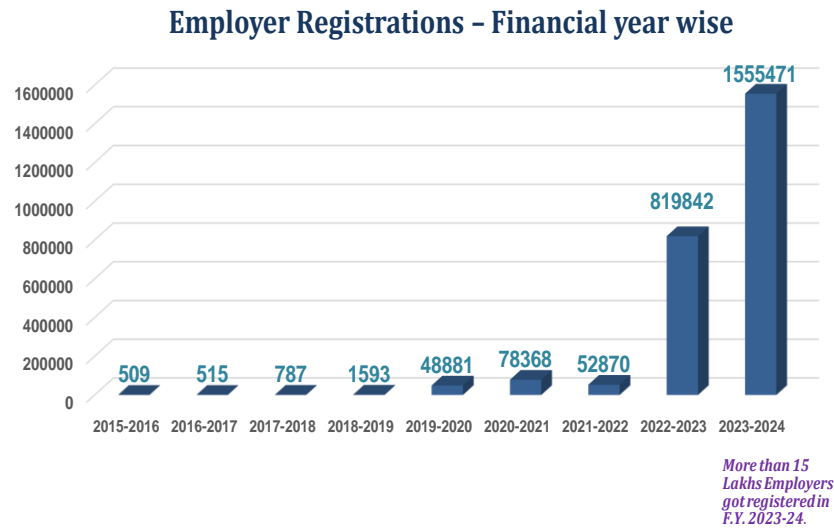
- (i) Job seekers get a view of their employability quotient.
- (ii) Get noticed by dream employers.
- (iii) Identify strengths and areas of improvements.
- (iv) Stand out in the crowd by posting your video resumes.
- (v) Accessible on app and web platforms.

43. The Ministry furnished the following details with regard to the number of jobseekers since 2015-16:-



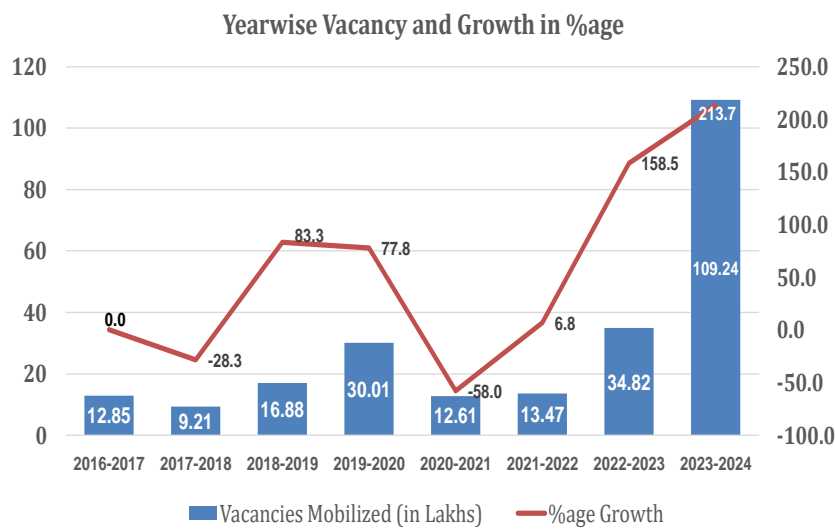
44. The details of employers registered since 2015-16 are as under:

NCS – Employer registration at NCS surged by 90% from 2022-23 to 2023-24



45. The details of year-wise vacancies since 2016-17 are as under:

NCS – Rise of 213% in Vacancies mobilized in 2023-24 when compared to 2022-23



46. The details of fund allocation and utilization in National Career Services during 2021-22 to 2023-24 and BE for 2024-25 are as follows:

(Rs. in Crores)

Sl. No.	Year	BE	RE	AE	Shortfall/Excess Expenditure
1	2021-22	57.00	32.00	24.31	7.69(-)
2	2022-23	52.00	42.00	43.99	1.99(+)
3	2023-24	52.00	52.00	46.90	5.10(-)
4	2024-25	58.00	-	-	-

47. The Committee noted that the target for 2024-25 is (i) to setup two career lounges in Model Career Centres with Industry partnership, (ii) to issue uniform guidelines for employment portals of the States, and (iii) to migrate NCS portal from DC&DR to Azure public cloud. When asked to give the details of the physical and financial progress upto 30.09.2024 and the shortfall, if any, as per quarterly expenditure plan of 2024-25 as well as the measures proposed to maximize utilization of Rs. 58 crore as earmarked for 2024-25 during the remaining two quarters, the Ministry submitted as under:

- (i) “Two career lounges in Model Career Centres are envisaged to be setup by March, 2025.
- (ii) The study for employment portals of states is going on. Employment portals of 4 states have been studied. As soon as the study of employment portals of states is completed, the uniform guidelines will be issued.
- (iii) The onboarding of the Managed Service Provider (MSP) for NCS 2.0 is nearing finalization, and once the contract is awarded, the Minimum Viable Product (MVP) is expected to be ready by April 2025. Hence, the migration activities will commence thereafter.

48. It is expected that the whole Rs 58.00 crore would be used for payment of committed liabilities of Consultancy agency, System Integrator, Social Media agency etc during the FY 2024-25. The expenditure as on 30.09.2024 is detailed below:

FY 2024-25	BE	RE	Expenditure
	58.00	58.00	17.90

Physical Progress since inception upto 30.09.2024	
Jobseeker Registered	4,73,23,318
Vacancy Mobilized	3,32,14,515
Employer Registered	34,12,876”

49. When specifically asked about the timeline fixed for completion of study of employment portals of the remaining states, the Ministry submitted that the same is likely to be completed till May, 2025.

50. The Ministry were asked to provide the placement figures with respect to regular/ad- hoc/part time/contract employments since 2015, year-wise and the number of job seekers re-registered after completing the term of their employment on ad-hoc/part- time/contract basis. The details given by the Ministry is enumerated below:

“Notifying final hiring figures is not a mandatory requirement on NCS Portal. However, the number of provisionally selected candidates is given below:

Year	Provisionally selected with respect to regular/ad-hoc/part time/contract employments through portal and Job fair
2015-2016	4
2016-2017	1,04,719
2017-2018	4,42,750
2018-2019	4,52,952
2019-2020	6,52,639
2020-2021	12,70,613
2021-2022	7,70,917
2022-2023	58,78,166
2023-2024	91,90,528
2024-2025	24,87,254
Grand Total	2,12,50,542

It is not mandatory for the jobseekers to update the employment details at the time of registration or updation of their profile/bio-data. However, any Jobseeker whether employed or un-employed can register on NCS portal for employment/better opportunities.”

51. The Committee were apprised that 27 States have been integrated for information exchange with NCS Portal. When asked about the remaining 9 States/UTs and the time by when these are likely to be inter-linked with the NCS portal, the Ministry furnished the following details:

“As on 23.10.2024, 30 States/UTs have been integrated for information exchange with NCS Portal and integration with rest of the States/UTs (Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Sikkim, Nagaland and Ladakh) is under process.”

52. It was noted that the Scheme has been approved for continuation during 15th Finance Commission Cycle, i.e., 2021-26. When queried as to whether any mid-term review/third party evaluation of the Scheme has been conducted so as to assess deficiencies and possible improvements in the Scheme, the Ministry responded that the hiring of agency for third party evaluation of various schemes including NCS scheme is under process.

53. The Ministry subsequently clarified that the process of hiring of agency for third party evaluation on the NCS scheme is almost at final stage and may be completed by December, 2024.

54. During evidence, it was pointed out that while the information regarding number of jobseekers, employers registered, number of vacancies, number of job fairs organized is available on the portal, the data regarding the number of persons who actually got employment is not available.

55. In response, the representative of the Ministry deposed as under:

“Sir, the NCS portal is bridging the gap between employers and the job seekers. At the moment, it is not mandated to get feedback, but we are putting in place an AI system whereby we will get feedback.”

56. The representative of the Ministry further supplemented as under:

“Presently, we are depending on the PLFS survey for getting information on the people who get jobs, education-wise, age-wise, in rural areas, in urban areas,

and so on and we also get feedback from RBI on 27 sectors, how the employment, the jobs are getting created, and we also get very good feedback from EPFO on the new subscribers who are joining the EPFO.

So, as I said, almost 6.9 crore/7 crore have joined in the last seven years in the formal market. So, this is the kind of data which we are getting. On NCS, there is no mandate, but we will work on it.”

(iii) National Career Services (NCS) Centres for Welfare of SC/ST job seekers (Coaching and guidance for SC, ST and Other Backward Classes)

57. The details of fund allocation during 2021-22 to 2023-24 and BE for 2024-25 are as under:-

(Rs. in Crores)					
S. No.	Year	BE	RE	AE	Shortfall/Excess Expenditure
1	2021-22	19.90	17.90	14.50	3.40(-)
2	2022-23	23.00	23.00	22.06	0.94(-)
3	2023-24	25.00	25.00	23.89(upto 31.03.2024)	1.11(-)
4	2024-25	20.60	-	-	-

58. BE for the year 2024-25 has been reduced from Rs. 25 crore in 2023-24 to Rs. 20.60 crore. In this regard, on being asked to state the reasons for such reduction and to what extent the decrease in BE 2024-25 is likely to affect the implementation of the Scheme considering the fact that the number of candidates proposed to be covered during 2024-25, viz., 5085 candidates (2160+2925) is the same as covered during 2023-24, the Ministry stated as under:

“The total outlay of the Scheme as per SFC Note is Rs. 99.90 Crore for 15th Finance Commission cycle (five years period i.e., 2021-22 to 2025-26), out of which an expenditure of Rs. 60.94 Crore have been incurred till 2023-24. As

per SFC, total proposed outlay for 2024-25 was Rs. 20.60 Crore and hence same was allocated in the year 2024-25. Keeping in view the trend of expenditure during the past year, decrease in BE 2024-25 is unlikely to affect the implementation of the Scheme.”

59. It was observed that during 2023-24, the target was to provide vocational guidance, career counseling, etc to 2400 SC/ST job seekers, however, 2160 persons were covered. When asked about the reasons for not covering the remaining 240 candidates, the Ministry responded as under:

“During 2023-24, total 5085 candidates have been trained out of which (2160 candidates) were registered in Special Coaching Scheme and (2925 candidates) were registered in Computer Training. In addition to this, 2,50,002 candidates have been provided vocational guidance and career counselling during the year 2023-24.”

60. When asked to provide state-wise details of candidates placed/employed after successful completion of training during the last three years, the Ministry furnished the following data:

“...The State/UT-wise list of candidates successfully trained and placed is given below:

S.No.	NCSC-SC/STs	NO. OF CANDIDATES PROVIDED TRAINING	NO. OF CANDIDATES GIVEN OFFER OF APPOINTMENT*
		2021-2024**	
1	Aizawl	405	2
2	Bengaluru	710	383
3	Bhubaneswar	720	676
4	Chennai	645	2,761
5	Delhi	555	510
6	Guwahati	695	57
7	Hisar	710	1,446
8	Hyderabad	595	803
9	Imphal	240	491

10	Jabalpur	720	1,036
11	Jaipur	505	369
12	Jalandhar	430	636
13	Jammu	530	151
14	Jowai	284	164
15	Kanpur	1,340	1,495
16	Kohima	305	84
17	Kolkata	610	214
18	Una	580	57
19	Nagpur	555	411
20	Naharlagun	405	84
21	Puducherry	355	1,437
22	Ranchi	635	341
23	Surat	1,015	1,665
24	Trivandrum	615	526
25	Vishakhapatnam	205	194
Total		14,364	15,993

*This figure includes No. of Candidates given offer of appointment after training and through job fair.

**During 2021-22, the courses could not run as coaching/computer training institutes were closed due to pandemic.

61. On being asked to provide State/UT-wise details of the number of National Career Service Centres for SCs/STs functioning in the Country and whether there is any proposal to expand the number of such centres, the Ministry replied as under:

“Currently, there is one Centre at each of 25 States viz. Aizawl, Bengaluru, Bhubaneshwar, Chennai, Delhi, Kolkata, Guwahati, Hisar, Hyderabad, Imphal, Jaipur, Jammu, Jabalpur, Jalandhar, Jowai, Kanpur, Kohima, Nagpur, Naharlagun (Arunachal Pradesh), Puducherry, Ranchi, Surat, Thiruvananthapuram, Una & Vishakhapatnam which are opened by Central Government and the State Governments/UTs are at liberty to open similar Centres in the States/UTs from their own resources depending on their requirement. At present there is no such proposal to expand.”

(iv) Employment Linked Incentive (ELI) Schemes

62. The detailed background note on the ELI Scheme, as furnished by the Ministry of Labour & Employment is as under:

“The Union Budget for the fiscal year 2024-25 has announced the Employment Linked Incentive Scheme (ELI), a landmark initiative designed to increase formalisation of workforce, stimulate job creation and enhance employability. The scheme, focuses on recognition of first-time employees and support to employees and employers. The incentives under the scheme will be provided based on the enrolment of employees in the EPFO. This scheme is a part of the “Prime Minister’s Package for Employment and Skilling” with a total outlay of Rs 1,07,000/- crores and consists of three Parts with registration period of two years.

Part A of the Scheme incentivises first time eligible employees earning wages not exceeding ₹1 lakh per month based on their enrolment with EPFO. It will provide one month’s wage upto ₹ 15,000 in three instalments to such employees. Such employee must undergo compulsory online Financial Literacy course before claiming the second instalment. The Part A of the scheme has a total financial outlay of Rs. 22,333 crore and is expected to benefit 2.03 crore First Timers.

Part B of the Scheme will incentivise additional employment in the manufacturing sector, linked to the employment of in-sourced first-time employees earning wage not exceeding of ₹ 1 lakh per month. An incentive will be provided both to the employee and the employer with respect to their EPFO contribution in the first 4 years of employment. However, the incentives will be calculated on a maximum EPF wage of Rs 25000 per month. All employers engaged in manufacturing sector and creating additional employment over and above the threshold limits, will be eligible. The Part B of the Scheme has a total financial outlay of Rs. 48,326 crore scheme and is expected to benefit about 27 lakh First Timers in the manufacturing sector.

Part C of the Scheme will incentivise employers across all sectors who create additional employment over and above the prescribed threshold and sustain the higher level. The government will reimburse to employers up to ₹ 3,000 per month for 2 years towards their EPFO contribution for each additional employee. In case, the employer creates additional employment above 1000, such employer will be eligible for benefits on the same scale as provided in Part

B, for the 3rd and 4th year as well. The Part C of the scheme is expected to incentivize additional employment of 1.09 crore.”

63. The Ministry also furnished the following details:

All additional employment within a salary of Rs. 1 lakh per month will be counted.

- Expected launch date from 1st Aug, 2024
- 02 years Enrolment Period (Aug 2024-July 2026)
- Funding Requirement Period

PART A: FY 2024-25 to 2027-28

PART B: FY 2024-25 to FY 2030-31

PART C: FY 2024-25 to 2030-31

Total Estimated Outlay of Rs. 1, 07,000 crores

PART A:Rs. 22,333crores

PART B: Rs. 48,326 crores

PART C: Rs. 36,040 crores

ADMIN CHARGES: Rs. 268 crores

64. When asked whether the ELI Schemes been launched, the Ministry stated as under:

“The ELI Scheme has not been launched yet. The process of obtaining approval of Union Cabinet is on.”

65. On being asked to furnish the details of financial outlay of Rs.10,000 crore for the three components of the ELI Scheme during the current Financial Year and the planned distribution of Rs.1,07,000 crore over a period till 2030-31, the Ministry responded as under:

(Rs in Crore)

Budget Estimates					
	Part A	Part B	Part C	Administrative Charge	Total
2024-25	3576.30	1534.63	1651.495	90	6852.43

2025-26	10,019.33	8927.79	9607.64	90	28644.76
2026-27	7607.05	14972.84	15100.72	40	37720.60
2027-28	1130.28	12621.35	8196.72	20	21968.35
2028-29		7459.89	1251.74	10	8721.62
2029-30		2601.82	215.42	10	2827.24
2030-31		208.15	15.84	8	231.99
ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGES (0.25% of total outlay of the Scheme)				268	
TOTAL	22,333	48,326	36040		1,06,967
The total expenditure will be restricted to				1,07,000	

Note: Financial targets will be restricted to the total budgetary outlays.

66. When pointed out that the estimated financial outlay for the year 2024-25 viz. Rs. 6852.43 crore for the three ELI Schemes does not match with the BE of Rs.10,000 crore, the Ministry responded as under:

“In the Budget Speech for the Financial Year 2024-25, ELI Scheme was announced and in the Detailed Demand for Grants, provisions of Rs 10000 crore was made by Ministry of Finance. However, considering the limited time available during the current financial year and considering the eligibility condition and sustainability of additional employment targeted, the estimated expenditure during the current Financial Year is expected to be lower vis a vis the Budgetary Estimates of Rs 10000 crore. However, it is expected that the expenditure under the Scheme will increase in the next Financial Year.”

67. On being asked to state the current status of introduction of these three Schemes, *inter-alia* indicating Scheme-wise financial and physical targets for 2024-25 and achievements, if any, during the first two quarters viz., upto 30.09.2024 as well as preparedness of EPFO to implement these Schemes, the following information was given by the Ministry:

(a) The scheme was announced in the budget speech in July, 2024. A draft EFC note was circulated on 16th August, 2024 to all concerned Ministries/Department for seeking comments thereon. Thereafter, on receipt of Comments, a final EFC Note was submitted to Deptt. of Expenditure on 19.09.2024 for convening a meeting of EFC for appraisal of the EFC Memo.

The EFC recommended the proposed scheme (ELI) as a Central Sector Scheme with an outlay of Rs 1,07,000/- crore for the period 2024-25 to 2030-31 subject to certain conditions.

After addressing all conditions stipulated by the EFC on EFC Memo, a Draft Cabinet Note has been prepared and the same is under submission for approval of the competent authority for further submission to DOE/Cabinet Secretariat.

(b) The Scheme is proposed to be launched w.e.f. 01.08.2024 after seeking necessary approvals from Ministry of Finance/Cabinet Secretariat. At present, no expenditure has been incurred towards release of incentive/subsidy to the beneficiary under the provisions of ELI Scheme.

(c) Physical and Financial Targets of the Scheme are as under:

Year-Wise Targets of Output/Outcomes of ELI Scheme

Components	Part	Year 2024-25 (Projections)		Year 2025-26 (Projections)		Year 2026-27 (Projections)		Year 2027-28 (Projections)		Year 2028-29 (Projections)		Year 2029-30 (Projections)		Year 2030-31 (Projections)	
		Physical	Financial	Physical	Financial	Physical	Financial	Physical	Financial	Physical	Financial	Physical	Financial	Physical	Financial
Incentive paid by the GOI towards EPF contribution/Salary through EPFO as per proposal	A	56,00,952	3,576.30	1,01,62,852	10019.33	45,38,879	7607.05	0	1130.28	0	-	0	-	0	
	B	7,34,785	1534.63	13,52,702	8,927.79	5,94,681	14,972.84	0	12,621.35	0	7,459.89	0	2,601.82	0	208.15
	C	30,19,184	1651.50	54,78,268	9,607.64	24,46,675	15,100.72	0	8196.72	0	1251.73	0	215.42	0	15.84

Note:- Financial targets have been restricted to the budgetary outlays.

Beneficiaries			
	Part A	Part B	Part C
2024-25	56,00,952	7,34,785	30,19,184
2025-26	1,01,62,852	13,52,702	54,78,268
2026-27	45,38,879	5,94,681	24,46,675
Total Beneficiaries	2,03,02,684	26,82,169	1,09,44,128

(d) EPFO's preparedness for implementation of the Scheme:

EPFO in consultation with this Ministry has taken various initiatives for launch/implementation of the Scheme. Following are the details of major steps taken:

(i) Setting up of PMU: A Programme Management Unit, consisting Consultants, Professionals, Officials of EPFO, Statisticians, etc have been set up to manage and monitor the activities related to the Scheme.

(ii) Media Plan: An exhaustive media plan for vast publicity of the Scheme with the employees/employers, general public, corporates, industries through its regional offices have been prepared by EPFO.

(iii) IT Plan and Infrastructure: EPFO is preparing a dedicated IT infrastructure in consultation with MEITY for implementation of the Scheme. The IT Plan includes preparation of software system/apps for smooth operation of applicants registration, disbursement of incentive/subsidy details, particulars of each employee/employers availing benefits from the scheme etc. The Scheme will be operated using latest technology software and devices.

(iv) Grievance redressal Mechanism: EPFO is also setting up a dedicated grievance redressal cell to address all the grievances/complaints of the beneficiaries with strength of expert/professionals.

68. The representatives of Ministry during evidence deposited as under:

“... I would like to touch the Employment-Linked Incentive Schemes that you mentioned. This is a historic initiative of the Government of India. This was announced in the Budget 2024-25 with a historic outlay of Rs.1.07 lakh crore with an objective of employment generation, promoting employability and formalization as well of the labourer because the ELI benefit will flow only when the employees and the employers are part of the EPFO. the Employees' Provident Fund Organization, which will lead to formalization of the labour market as well.

There are three parts of the ELI scheme. part A is for the first-timers. It will benefit more than 2.1 crore new employees. Part B is for about 30 lakh employees, and this is restricted to the manufacturing sector. Part C is for employers to take benefit. These are hiring and wage incentives under the scheme. Part C will benefit about 50 lakh jobs for the first-timers and re-joiners.

Sir, as a preparation for the ELI, we have had regional consultation meetings. We have had stakeholder meetings. We have had a series of these meetings with the Ministries. We have done more than 14 consultations with the stakeholders plus six regional consultations, plus we have consulted 22 Ministries. We have put together the draft for the scheme, which will be coming up before the Cabinet. Then, we are also preparing for the launch of the scheme. We expect this to happen including the launch of the scheme in the next two months.”

69. Subsequently, the representative of the Ministry during oral evidence on 19.11.2024 also informed as under:

“...The EFC meeting has happened. The Cabinet Note has been submitted. We are expecting to start shortly. The total budgetary allocation for this scheme in the next 6 ½ years will be Rs. 1,07,000crore. This year, Rs. 10,000 crore has been given and we expect to spend above Rs. 6,000 crore of money.”

70. The representative further supplemented as under:

“This year because of this new ELI Scheme we have been given a BE of Rs. 10,000 crore. We have a limited amount of time this year. Therefore, in RE we have requested for a cut on that amount and it will be about Rs. 6,799 crore.

ELI Scheme has three components – first timers, job creation in manufacturing sector, and support to employers. These schemes are awaiting the Cabinet approval and we hope to start expenditure under this scheme by the next month.”

V. SOCIAL SECURITY SCHEMES FOR WORKERS

(i) Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan Dhan Yojna (PM-SYM)

71. PM-SYM was launched in February, 2019. This is a voluntary and co-contributory pension scheme for providing monthly minimum assured pension of Rs. 3000/- after attaining the age of 60 years to the workers of unorganised sector. The workers in the age group of 18-40 years whose monthly income is Rs. 15000/- or less and not a member of EPFO/ESIC/NPS (Govt. funded) can join the scheme. Under the scheme, 50% monthly contribution is payable by the beneficiary and equal matching contribution is paid by the Central Government. Enrolment to the Scheme is done through the Common Service Centres, with its network of about 4.00 lakh Centres across the country. The Life Insurance Corporation of India is the fund Manager to this Scheme. In addition eligible persons can also self-enroll through visiting the portal www.maandhan.in. 49.98 lakh beneficiaries have been enrolled under this scheme as on 31.03.2024 against the target of 10 crore beneficiaries during 2018-23. The Scheme was extended without fixing any target.

72. The BE, RE and AE figures for PMSYM during 2021-22 to 2023-24 and BE for 2024-25 are as under:

(Rs. in Crores)

S. No.	Year	BE	RE	AE	Shortfall/Excess Expenditure w.r.t. RE
1	2021-22	400	350	324.23	25.77(-)
2	2022-23	350	350	269.91	80.09(-)
3	2023-24	350	205.21	162.51	42.70(-)
4	2024-25	177.24	-	-	-

73. During the fiscal year 2023-24, Rs 350 crore was allocated at BE stage which was reduced to Rs. 205.21 crore at RE stage. However, actual expenditure as on 31.03.2024 was Rs 162.51 crore only. The reasons for not achieving the target or shortfall of expenditure for the previous three fiscals as stated by the Ministry are as under:-

- (i) Due to sudden outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, the lives of unorganized workers have been adversely affected.
- (ii) It is a contributory scheme, hence long-term financial commitment required by the beneficiaries.
- (iii) Awareness, persuasion and mobilization of beneficiaries are required through State Government or CSC Machinery.
- (iv) Unavailability of regular employment opportunities.
- (v) Lack of Formal Employer-Employee Relationship.
- (vi) Presence of other pension scheme covering unorganised workers from Central Government [Atal Pension Yojana, Old age pension for senior citizens under National Social Assistance Program (NSAP)]. Most of the States have separate pension scheme for unorganized workers free of cost.

74. About the remedial measures taken to ensure that the above-mentioned impediments do not further hamper the objectives of the Yojana, the following information was submitted by the Ministry:

“The Ministry has taken various steps to increase the enrolment under PM-SYM:

- i. Meeting with officers of States/ UTs at Secretary level.
- ii. Meetings with Common Services Centres (CSC) Heads were held to promote the enrolment drive for PM-SYM scheme

- iii. Launch of social media campaign in January, 2024 through Radio Jingle and Video spot for creating awareness and promotion of the scheme throughout India.
- iv. Extension of revival of dormant accounts from 1 Year to 3 Year. The dormant accounts revived in 2023-24 are 1,889 and in 2024-25 are 1,151.
- v. Meeting with Department of Financial Services (DFS), Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) and National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP) to increase the outreach of pension scheme.
- vi. Regular meetings with Welfare Commissioners, Directorate General Labour Welfare (DGLW) and States to sensitize them regarding the scheme.”

75. It was noticed that the enrolment during 2023-24 was only 65775 beneficiaries. When asked whether the Ministry will be able to achieve the target of enrolment of one lakh beneficiaries during 2024-25 and what progress has been made in terms of financial and physical achievements upto 30.09.2024 as per Quarterly Expenditure Plan of current fiscal, the Ministry responded as under:

“The scheme is demand-driven. The enrolment during 2023-24 was 65,775 beneficiaries. PM-SYM scheme performance has improved in the FY 2024-25, registration during 2024-25 is 60,240 till 17.10.2024. Expenditure during the first two quarter of 2024-25 is around Rs. 94 crores against quarterly expenditure plan of Rs. 88.62 crore.....”

76. The Committee noted that the Third-party evaluation of PM-SYM scheme was done by Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA). 6 States namely Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh were selected from different zones on the basis of below-mentioned criteria:

- a. cover at least one CSC located at sub-district level,
- b. cover at least one CSC operating at the Panchayat level
- c. cover at least one CSC operating at the Panchayat level
- d. cover at least one CSC each operating in the Rural and Urban setting
- e. Background of the Village Level Entrepreneur (VLE) operating the CSC

The IIPA came out with report in March 2023. The Major recommendations of the IIPA Study are mentioned below:

- a. Entry age to be relooked to 18 to 50 years
- b. Merger of the two PM-SYM and PM-LVM pension schemes of the Ministry of Labour and Employment with the similar flagship old age pension schemes like Atal Pension Yojana (APY)

- c. Fresh registration under PM-SYM and PM-LVM schemes should be discontinued and subscribers enrolled earlier may be allowed to shift to APY.
- d. Constitution of the district-level implementation committee and setting targets to achieve higher rate of enrolment of Unorganised worker subscribers under the scheme.
- e. PM-SYM beneficiaries to provide the benefit of PM-SBY and PM-JJBY.
- f. Micro-credit provisions for the Unorganised worker subscribers should be included in the PM-SYM and PM-LVM scheme guidelines.
- g. The services provided to Unorganised worker subscribers under various social security schemes like PM-SYM, PM-LVM, PM-KMY pension scheme and state-specific schemes like BOCW should be provided through the E-shram portal only.
- h. Training and capacity-building programmes should be organized for the village-level entrepreneurs running common service centres for effective implementation of the scheme.

77. It was noticed that the recommendations of the third party evaluation conducted by Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) were reviewed by a Committee constituted by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, which had not agreed to some of the recommendations of IIPA and proposed detailed evaluation of the Scheme before taking the proposal to Cabinet. When asked about the present status and by when the Scheme is expected to get clearance, the Ministry stated as under:

“The committee constituted by the Ministry recommended, inter-alia, re-designing of PMSYM Scheme instead of merger with Atal Pension Yojana. In this regard, steps have been taken e.g. engaging agency for actuarial valuation of the scheme. Meanwhile, Ministry has requested D/o Expenditure, M/o Finance to further extend the scheme for one more year i.e. 2025-26 while the details of a revised scheme is worked out.”

78. The Ministry further clarified that Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance has agreed for extension for another year i.e. 2025-26 pending revision of scheme by early next FY.

(ii) National Pension Scheme for Traders and Self-Employed Persons :

79. NPS Traders has been launched on 12.09.2019. It is a voluntary and co-contributory pension scheme. The traders in the age group of 18-40 years with an annual turn over, not exceeding Rs. 1.5 crore and are not member of EPFO/ESIC/NPS (govt funded)/PM-SYM or an income tax payer, can join the scheme. Under the scheme, the subscribers, after attaining the age of 60 years, are eligible for a monthly minimum assured pension of Rs. 3,000/-. Enrolment

to the scheme is done through the Common Service Centres, with its network of about 4.0 lakh Centres across the country. The Life Insurance Corporation of India is the fund Manager to this Scheme. In addition eligible persons can also self-enroll through visiting the portal www.maandhan.in. Under the scheme, 50% monthly contribution is payable by the beneficiary and equal matching contribution is paid by the Central Government. 53,948 beneficiaries have been enrolled under this scheme as on 31.03.2024 against the target of 7.5 crore beneficiaries.

80. It was observed that during 2023-24, only 1591 beneficiaries could be enrolled resulting in total enrolment of only 53948 persons from September, 2019 to 31st March, 2024 against the overall enrolment target of 7.5 crore beneficiaries. While no target has been fixed for 2024-25, the financial allocation during 2024-25 is Rs. 10 lakh. When asked about the measures initiated by the Ministry in coordination with State Governments to propagate the benefits of the scheme so as to effectively mobilize the targeted groups and extend the benefits of the scheme to small shop keepers/traders, the Ministry stated as under:

Ministry has taken following measures: -

i. States to mobilize the workers of e-Shram beneficiaries under Pension schemes

ii. Formation of State-Level Monitoring Committee (SLMC) and District Level Implementation Committee (DLIC) to mobilize the workers of e-Shram beneficiaries under Pension schemes.

iii. Each Common Services Centre (CSCs)/ Village Level Entrepreneur (VLEs) need to be tasked to register at least 1-2 workers per center under the PM-SYM & NPS Traders scheme.

iv. Discussion on redesigning of pension scheme to make it more attractive for unorganised workers is under process.

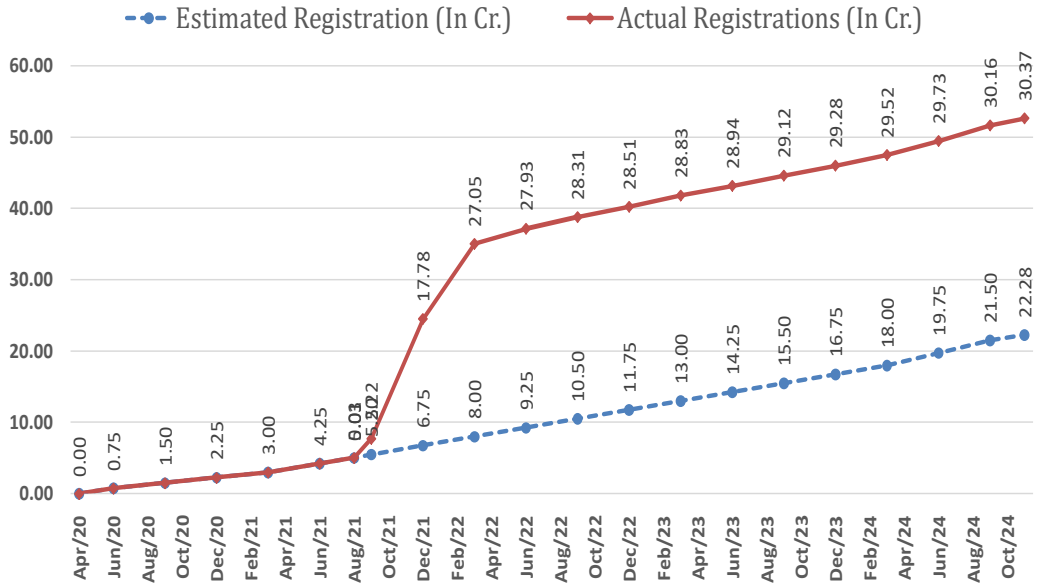
VI. NATIONAL DATABASE OF UNORGANISED WORKERS (NDUW)

81. The highlights of the e-Shram Portal National Database Of Unorganised Workers (NDUW) since its launch on 26.8.2021 are as under:-

e-Shram Portal (National Database of Unorganised Workers (NDUW))

- Ministry of Labour & Employment launched eShram portal for creation of National Database of Unorganised Workers, seeded with Aadhaar.
- eShram portal was launched on **26th August 2021** by Hon'ble Union Minister (L&E), subsequently eShram: One-Stop-Solution was launched on 21st October 2024.
- The portal has been made available to the States/ UTs for registration of unorganised workers including construction workers, migrant workers, domestic workers, agricultural workers, street vendors and similar other sub – groups of unorganised workers.
- Portal captures details of workers under 400+ occupations.
- **4 lakh+ Common Services Centre (CSC)** and State Seva Kendras (SSKs) centres assisting Unorganised Workers for enrolling on eShram.
- As on 10th November 2024 over **30.37 crore** unorganised workers registered on eShram

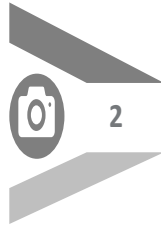
e-Shram Registration Estimated vs Actual



Data Sharing with States/ UTs



**Data Sharing
Guidelines**



**Sharing data with
States/ UTs**



**Targeted delivery of
schemes**



**Increased
coverage**

eShram data sharing is operational through two modes

Through API

Through Data Sharing Portal (DSP)

✓ All 36 States/ UTs onboarded for Data Sharing

eShram portal as a “One-Stop-Solution” for Unorganised Workers

- eShram “One-Stop-Solution”, which was budget announcement for 2024-25, has been launched by Hon’ble Union Minister of Labour and Employment on **21st October 2024**.
- **Data of Twelve (12)** Central Schemes have been mapped on eshram to facilitate unorganised workers to register and avail the benefit of schemes based on their eligibility – **Single window approach**

All Schemes at one place for unorganised workers in a phased manner

Key objectives:

- To find out left-out unorganised workers- targeted delivery of schemes
- To verify eShram registrants and support in registration
- Awareness creation
- Intimation to workers on attaining eligibility under schemes
- “Ask only once” approach
- Employment & Skilling services

Pan India portability of schemes



82. In this context, the representative of the Ministry during oral evidence deposed as under:

“..... When it comes to the employment aspect, we have a portal which is called e-Shram and I hope many of our hon. esteemed Members would be familiar with that. It was launched in August 2021, and in a matter of about three years, the e-Shram portal has registered over 30 crore labour from the unorganized sector. They cover a vast spectrum of activities. These labourers, the unorganized workers, include the migrant workers, the building construction workers, the workers in the MSME, in agriculture, in farm sector, and various other sectors.

Sir, as we have over 30 crore unorganized labour on e-Shram portal, we are developing the portal as a One-Stop Solution for access to social security schemes for these unorganized workers. In this context, in the 100 days this year, we have on-boarded about 12 social security welfare schemes of various Ministries pertaining to rural employment, pertaining to street vendors, microcredit, various other schemes of financial services related to insurance, pension, the Atmanirbhar Bharat, health schemes and so on. The idea of onboarding various welfare schemes of different Ministries is to provide our unorganized labour a single window to access benefits from these schemes, to apply for them in a single window through a common application form.

Sir, this is the saturation aspect as well where e-Shram is actually helping the various Ministries saturate their schemes. Since every beneficiary has a Unique Identity Number, it is helping us trace and track the access to each of these schemes for each individual.....”

83. The Committee noted that SOP/Guidelines to share e-Shram data with Central Ministries/Departments have been finalized and circulated. These guidelines will enable Central Ministries to extend the benefit of social security schemes meant for unorganized workers to eligible beneficiaries. Asked to state the response/suggestions, if any, received from the Ministries/Departments along with the follow up action taken by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, the Ministry furnished the following information

“No response / suggestion has been received regarding the issued guidelines on data sharing through eShram portal with Central Government Ministries.”

84. The guidelines inter alia provide that the Ministry of Labour and Employment shall not be liable for any incorrectness of e-Shram data or resultant losses to the concerned Central Government Ministry upon use of e-Shram data without prior verification because the e-Shram data is based on self declaration by the registrant. Provision also exist with regard to data security, protection and privacy guidelines for the Central Government Ministries.

85. As regards financial progress during 2023-24, the BE of Rs. 300 crore was reduced to Rs. 102.96 crore at RE stage and the actual expenditure was Rs. 28.96 crore only (9.6% of BE and 28.13% of RE respectively) leaving an unspent balance of Rs. 74 crore.

VII. LABOUR WELFARE SCHEMES

86. Labour Welfare Scheme has 3(three) components viz. Revised Integrated Housing Scheme, Health Scheme and Education Scheme. The beneficiaries of the scheme are Beedi/Cine/Non Coal Mines workers.

87. **Health Care Scheme:** Health care facility is extended to Beedi/Cine/Non-Coal Mines workers with a network of 279 Dispensaries and 10 Hospitals. For diseases like cancer, heart ailments and kidney transplants, there are facilities for reimbursement to the beneficiaries. In the F.Y. 2023-24, 1802000 beedi/cine/non-coal mines workers and their dependents benefited with an expenditure of Rs 9.7 Crore. The financial assistance ranging from Rs. 30000 to Rs. 7,50,000 is also provided for treatment of 09 diseases like Cancer, Tuberculosis, Heart Diseases, Kidney Transplantation, Hernia, Appendectomy, Ulcer, Gynaecological diseases and Prostrate diseases in the Government recognized Hospitals.

88. On a specific question as to when the rates were fixed for each category and whether there is any proposal to increase the financial assistance as well as to cover more diseases, the Ministry furnished the following details :

Name of Disease	Details of reimbursement	Present rate/ Ceiling Effective date
Cancer	Reimbursement of expenditure up to Rs. 7,50,000/- on treatment, medicines and diet charges incurred by workers, or their dependents.	06.04.2022
Tuberculosis	Reservation of beds in T.B. Hospitals and domiciliary treatment for workers. Subsistence allowance of Rs. 750/- to Rs. 1000/- p.m is granted as per the advice of the treating physician.	20.08.2002
Heart Diseases	Reimbursement of expenditure up to Rs. 1,30,000/- to workers.	20.08.2002
Kidney Transplantation	Reimbursement of expenditure up to Rs. 2,00,000/- to workers.	20.08.2002
Hernia, Appendectomy, Ulcer, Gynaecological diseases and Prostrate diseases	Reimbursement of expenditure up to Rs. 30,000/- to workers and their dependents.	13.12.2003

Further, it is informed that at present there is no proposal under consideration of Government to increase the financial assistance or to cover more diseases.

89. The Ministry subsequently submitted that no demands for revision of medical re-imburement for the other major diseases have been received.

VIII. CENTRAL SECTOR SCHEME FOR REHABILITATION OF BONDED LABOURER-2021

90. The gist of the Central Sector Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourer, 2021 is as under:

Central Sector Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour-2021

- ❖ The Ministry of Labour and Employment is implementing a Central Sector scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourer, 2021 for identification and release of bonded labourers.
- ❖ This scheme is demand driven in nature where funds are provided to the States/UTs on receipt of financial demand from them.
- ❖ The BE for current financial year is **6.00** crore. As on 19.11.2024, only Rs. 33.61 lakhs has been spent under the said scheme.
- ❖ The Budget details and bonded labour freed/rescued/rehabilitated during the last three years i.e FY 2021-22 to FY 23-24 are as follows:

Sl. No.	Year	Budget Estimates (Rs. in Cr)	Revised Estimates (Rs. in Cr)	Exp (Rs. in Cr)	No. of bonded labourer rehabilitated
1.	2021-22	10.00	10.00	3.69	1676
2.	2022-23	10.00	10.00	5.15	673
3.	2023-24	10.00	6.98	1.34	468

- **Total rescued since 1978:** 2,96,795
- **Total funds disbursed since 1978:** Rs. 10,558.30 lakhs

91. The Committee noted that for the fiscal 2023-24, the BE for the Scheme was Rs. 10 crore which was reduced to Rs. 6.98 crore at RE Stage. Out of which, as on 31.03.2024, an abysmal amount of Rs. 1.34 crore only had been utilized leaving an unspent amount of Rs.8.66 crore due to non-receipt of documents and utilization certificates. On being asked the measures taken/proposed to ensure timely receipt of utilization certificates, the Ministry submitted as under:

“The Ministry of Labour and Employment is implementing a Central Sector scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourer, 2021 for identification and release of bonded labourers. This scheme is demand driven in nature where funds are provided to the States/UTs on receipt of financial demand from them. Under the scheme, the entire expenditure is borne by the Central Government and State/UT Governments are not required to pay any matching contribution. As incidences of bonded labour can occur/reoccur at any point in time, it may not be possible to anticipate substantively the target of fund needs in advance. Ministry of Labour and Employment has requested states to submit

the reimbursement related cases timely. Recently also, requests were made through letters as well as virtual meetings to all the states/ union territories to avoid late submission of their reimbursement proposals and submitting them immediately after rescue of the concerned bonded labourers so as to ensure an optimal utilization of funds.”

92. The Ministry further supplemented that given the recent trend observed in expenditure incurred under the scheme in the last 3 years, after an objective assessment, BE 2024-25 has been reduced by 4 crores w.r.t BE of the year 2023-24.

93. The Committee observed that the number of bonded labour freed/rescued/rehabilitated during the last three years is 1676, 673 & 468 indicating the prevalence of socio-economic evil of bonded labour. When asked to furnish the State/UT-wise details during these three years, indicating the number of minors rescued in each year, details of cases pending for final verdict during the last two years and the effective steps being taken by the Ministry to speed up the trials, the following details were furnished by the Ministry:

“The State/UT-wise details, as available, about the number of bonded labour freed/rescued/rehabilitated during the last three years i.e FY 21-22 to FY 23-24 were the following:

Sl. No.	Year	Name of State/UT	No. of bonded labourer rehabilitated
1.	2021-22	Chhattisgarh	250
		Tamil Nadu	1,016
		Bihar	360
		Rajasthan	50
2.	2022-23	Rajasthan	70
		Uttar Pradesh	287
		Tamil Nadu	297
		Bihar	19
3.	2023-24	Rajasthan	56
		Tamil Nadu	176
		Chhattisgarh	76
		Pondicherry	5
		Odisha	155

The details of minors rescued during 2022-23 and 2023-24 are the following:

Sl.No.	Year	No. of minors rescued
1.	2022-23	91
2.	2023-24	123

Under the Scheme, rehabilitation assistance to the tune of Rs. 1.00 lakh, Rs. 2.00 lakh and Rs. 3.00 lakh are provided to each rescued bonded labourers based on their category and level of exploitation. Besides, there is a provision to provide immediate financial assistance upto Rs. 30,000/- to each rescued bonded labour. The details of the number of bonded labourers, during the last two years, to whom immediate cash assistance were provided but are yet to be paid final rehabilitation assistance are the following:

Sl.No.	Year	Name of State/UT	No. of bonded labourers
1.	2022-23	Rajasthan	70
		Tamil Nadu	297
2.	2023-24	Rajasthan	56
		Tamil Nadu	174
		Chhattisgarh	76

As an effective step to speed up the trials, Ministry of Labour and Employment recently held a meeting with various State/UT governments requesting them to speed up the trials in respect of bonded labourers to whom immediate financial assistance had already been provided.”

94. When asked about the number of cases pending in judiciary processes awaiting conviction and the effective steps taken to speed up the procedure, the Ministry furnished the following information:

“Under the scheme there is a provision to provide immediate financial assistance uptoRs. 30,000/- to each rescued bonded labour. This amount is adjusted at the time of the receipt of the final rehabilitation proposal. The details of the number of bonded labourers, during the last two years, to whom immediate cash assistance of Rs.30,000 were provided are given below:

Sl. No.	Year	Name of State/UT	No. of bonded labourers
1.	2022-23	Rajasthan	70
		Tamil Nadu	297
2.	2023-24	Rajasthan	56
		Tamil Nadu	174
		Chhattisgarh	76

The details regarding convictions are being collected from the respective states. In this regard, a VC meeting also held with the states on 10.09.2024, where states were requested to provide the status of convictions in respect of bonded labourers to whom immediate financial assistance have been provided by this Ministry.”

95. The Committee noted that the third party evaluation of Central Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour was conducted through Institute for Human Development (IHD) in 2021. IHD have, inter alia, observed that the Scheme should continue till the bonded labour system is completely eradicated. On being asked about the collaborative efforts made by the Ministry with various States/UTs in this direction and the extent of success achieved in this regard, the Ministry submitted as follows:

“The bonded labour system stands abolished throughout the country with effect from 25.10.1975 with the enactment of Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976. It freed unilaterally all the bonded labourers from bondage with simultaneous liquidation of their debts. It made the practice of bondage a cognizable offence punishable by law. The provisions of the Act are implemented by the State/UT Governments.

2. In order to assist the state governments in their efforts of rehabilitation of released bonded labourers, the Ministry of Labour and Employment launched a centrally sponsored scheme for rehabilitation of bonded labourers in May, 1978. Subsequently the scheme was modified from time to time. The scheme was last modified in January 2022 and henceforth it is known as "Central Sector Scheme' for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourer – 2021".

3. Under the Scheme, rehabilitation assistance to the tune of Rs. 1.00 lakh, Rs. 2.00 lakh and Rs. 3.00 lakh are provided to each rescued bonded labourers based on their category and level of exploitation. Besides, there is a provision to provide immediate financial assistance upto Rs. 30,000/- to each rescued bonded labour.

4. Regular meetings are being conducted with the representatives of States/UT governments. In the last meeting held on 10.09.24 in this regard, State/UT governments were requested to:

- Speed up trials awaiting final verdicts and to apprise the Ministry of the status of convictions in respect of bonded labourers to whom immediate financial assistance had already been provided.
- Take necessary action for conducting survey, evaluatory studies & awareness generation to eradicate the menace of bonded labour.

5. Simultaneously, the development of a national portal on bonded labour is in progress, which has the objective of facilitating in bringing uniformity in capturing data across different States/UTs to help towards eradication the menace of bonded labour more efficiently.”

96. The Committee noted that based on the recommendations of the IHD, the immediate assistance has been increased from Rs. 20000/- to Rs. 30000/-. When asked about the status of other recommendations made by IHD, the Ministry submitted as follows:

“Institute of Human Development (IHD) had conducted evaluation of the aforesaid central sector scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourer-2016 for

continuation of scheme beyond 31.03.2021. The major recommendations of IHD were as follows:

- i. The scheme should be continued and scaled up. The scheme should continue till the bonded labour system is completely eradicated.
- ii. Changes in design of the scheme recommended. Payment of rehabilitation amount should be delinked from conviction.
- iii. Working out modalities and SOPs for interstate migrants who are released from destination states and rehabilitated in their native states.
- iv. Awareness building of functionaries at the district level and below in low performing states.
- v. Uniformity in capturing data in different states.

The recommendations were examined in the Ministry and following recommendations were accepted:

- i. The scheme should be continued and scaled up. The scheme should continue till the bonded labour system is completely eradicated: Based on the suggestions and inputs received from various stakeholders and other social partners, the scheme has been continued up to the financial year 2025-26.
- ii. Awareness Building of functionaries at the district level and below in low performing states: Timely meetings are held with all State/UT governments wherein necessary efforts are regularly made to build awareness of functionaries at the district level & below in low performing states
- iii. Uniformity in capturing data in different states: The work related to development of the national portal on Bonded Labour is in progress which would facilitate uniformity in capturing data in different states.”

97. The Scheme provides for creation of a Bonded Labour Rehabilitation Fund at the district level by each State with a permanent corpus of at least Rs. 10 lakhs at the disposal of the District Magistrate which would be renewable for extending immediate help to the released bonded labourers. On being asked about the States which have already created such a fund, the reasons for delay, if any, in creation of this fund by the remaining States and the corrective action taken by the Ministry in this regard, the Ministry stated as under:

“The Ministry has requested all States / UTs to confirm the constitution of Bonded Labour Rehabilitation Fund in the respective State / UTs. So far, nine states, namely the states of Assam, Kerala, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Delhi, Haryana, Gujarat & Tamil Nadu have confirmed the constitution of district corpus funds in each district. The aforesaid national portal on Bonded Labour, being developed currently, is also planned to capture data regarding the status of creation of corpus funds in the remaining States/UTs.”

98. On being queried as to whether the National Portal on Bonded Labour has started real time updation of information on rehabilitation and rescue figures so as to map the progress of the Scheme, the Ministry replied thus:

“The work related to development of the National Portal on Bonded Labour is in progress.”

99. When specifically asked to indicate the timeframe by which the National Portal on Bonded Labour is likely to be made functional, the Ministry responded as under:

“Ministry of Labour and Employment is in the process of revamping the existing Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour (PENCL) Portal into a comprehensive unified portal for Child Labour, Bonded Labour and Women Labour. The agency for revamping the Portal has been shortlisted and the work is under progress. It is expected that the revamped portal will be functional within a year.”

IX. NATIONAL CHILD LABOUR PROJECT (NCLP)

100. National Child Labour Project (NCLP) scheme was implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Employment with the objective to eliminate the child labour and mainstream them to formal education by providing bridge education. The scheme was under implementation upto 31.03.2021. Thereafter, it was merged with the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) Scheme of Ministry of Education, in order to ensure optimum utilization of available resources and avoid duplication at any stage. Under SSA scheme, operational through the Ministry of Education, the children are provided better opportunity, as the scheme SSA also has hostel facility to the children as well as the formal and secondary education

101. The Committee noted that during 2023-24, no target was fixed under the scheme as it has been merged with Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) of Ministry of Education. It was also noted that during 2023-2024, BE of Rs. 10 crore was reduced to RE of Rs. 6 crore and the actual expenditure was Rs. 0.68 crore. Thus, while financial allocations were made, physical target was not fixed. During 2024-2025, no financial allocations have been made and no target has been fixed on the ground that the Scheme has been closed. When asked to clarify whether all committed liabilities have been, the Ministry stated as under:

“.....2. The integration of the NCLP with the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan has led to significant changes in financial allocations. The budgetary outlay (BE) of the NCLP scheme was kept at Rs. 20 crore in 2021-22, Rs. 20 crore in 2022-23 and Rs. 10 crore in 2023-24, in order to meet the committed liabilities. Accordingly, this Ministry made a request on 14.03.2022 to all the District Project Societies to submit, by 31.03.2022, their liability claims (if any) as per prescribed format. Subsequent request was again made on 21.10.2022 for submission of claims with the required documents within the deadline of 30.11.2022. Consequently, some claims were received and processed by the Ministry within the framework of the scheme guidelines. Based on the

processing of received claims, some liability claims have become due, for which this Ministry has also requested for budgetary allocation in RE under the NCLP scheme as there has not been any budgetary allocation in BE 2024-25 under the scheme.

3. Despite the merging of the NCLP scheme with SSA, the Ministry retains a crucial role in the joint effort of the Central government and State governments to eliminate child labour. Towards this effort, the Ministry continues to make policy/ programme/ interventions including the monitoring of the programme associated activities carried out by various stakeholder agencies to combat child labour.”

X. LABOUR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

102. The Dattopant Thengadi National Board for Workers Education and Development (erstwhile Central Board for Workers Education)(DTNBWED) is a tripartite registered society established in 1958. Through its National network of 50 Regional Directorates and an apex training institute, Indian Institute of Workers Education at Mumbai organizes various educational, training and awareness programmes for workers of organized and unorganized Sector on the topic of behavioural domains, industrial democracy and development, labour laws, quality of life as well as government schemes for social security and skill development. The Board’s thrust is on educating the 92% workforce of the country of unorganized and rural sectors, for creating awareness about government flagship schemes of Social Security, livelihood and Skill development activities.

103. The Committee noted that BE and RE for 2023-24 in respect of DTNBWED was Rs. 113.10 crore whereas the actual expenditure was Rs. 105.12 crore, leaving an unspent balance of Rs. 7.98 crore. The justification given by the Ministry for underutilization is delay in completion of work by Central Public Works Department (CPWD). On being asked as to the timeline prescribed for completion of work, efforts made by the Ministry to ensure that the CPWD meets the timeline and whether any periodic reviews were undertaken, the Ministry replied as under:

“The BE and RE for 2023-2024 in respect of DTNBWED was Rs. 113.10 crore whereas the actual expenditure was Rs. 105.12 crore, leaving an unspent amount balance of Rs. 7.98 crore, comprising 6.975 crore under Salary Head and 1 Crore under Capital Head.

DTNBWED had planned to recruit the Education Officers and Staff during the 2023-2024 under Mission Mode. The Recruitment process of filling up the vacant post of Education Officers (22 Post), Stenographers Gr. II (13 post), Lower Division Clerk (44 Post) and Multi-Tasking Staff (11 Post) were planned.

The RE was based taking into consideration that the Board will be filling up the vacancies. However only the post of Stenographer Gr. II and Lower Division Clerk were partially filled; and later many of the newly recruited officials left the Organisation. Due to this the expenditure was not as per the expectation. Regarding the amount that was sought for constructing and restructuring the IWE (Indian Institute of Workers Education), Mumbai, the proposal was sent to CPWD for construction of temporary structure. The Board had been following up the proposal for civil and electrical estimate from the CPWD which has been received on 04.10.2024.”

104. When asked to provide the State/UT-wise details of the number of awareness programmes organised during the last two years, indicating separately the number of organized and unorganized sector workers who participated/were benefitted from such programmes, the Ministry furnished the following State and Union Territory wise details of the number of awareness programmes organized during the year 2022-23 and 2023-24:

2022 - 2023							
Sr.No.	State Name	Organized Sector		Unorganized Sector		Total	
		No. of Programmes	No. of Participants	No. of Programmes	No. of Participants	No. of Programmes	No. of Participants
1	Andhra Pradesh	75	1,565	179	12,451	254	14,016
2	Arunachal Pradesh	-	-	1	80	1	80
3	Assam	13	279	103	6,302	116	6,581
4	Bihar	13	261	105	7,252	118	7,513
5	Chandigarh	2	40	1	30	3	70
6	Chhattisgarh	67	1,518	126	8,073	193	9,591
7	Delhi	113	2,288	150	8,529	263	10,817
8	Goa	58	1,450	158	10,891	216	12,341
9	Gujarat	252	6,160	309	18,941	561	25,101
10	Haryana	65	1,481	83	6,530	148	8,011
11	Himachal Pradesh	40	1,246	57	3,222	97	4,468
12	Jammu And Kashmir	8	157	45	3,458	53	3,615
13	Jharkhand	181	3,980	239	17,870	420	21,850
14	Karnataka	130	2,923	354	25,948	484	28,871
15	Kerala	108	2,715	175	11,634	283	14,349

16	Madhya Pradesh	298	6,450	429	32,761	727	39,211
17	Maharashtra	194	4,691	357	22,151	551	26,842
18	Manipur	20	613	126	8,891	146	9,504
19	Odisha	276	5,891	576	39,401	852	45,292
20	Punjab	33	708	53	4,064	86	4,772
21	Rajasthan	82	1,993	206	14,390	288	16,383
22	Tamil Nadu	375	9,214	466	31,370	841	40,584
23	Telangana	78	1,698	93	6,447	171	8,145
24	Uttar Pradesh	300	6,123	663	45,689	963	51,812
25	Uttarakhand	1	20	3	198	4	218
26	West Bengal	90	1,732	379	26,739	469	28,471
	Total	2,872	65,196	5,436	3,73,312	8,308	4,38,508

2023 - 2024

S.N.	State Name	Organized Sector		Unorganized Sector		Total	
		No. of Programmes	No. of Participants	No. of Programmes	No. of Participants	No. of Programmes	No. of Participants
1	Andhra Pradesh	99	2,241	438	27,104	537	29,345
2	Arunachal Pradesh			5	296	5	296
3	Assam	10	244	295	24,630	305	24,874
4	Bihar	32	1,108	233	15,411	265	16,519
5	Chandigarh	1	35	9	653	10	688
6	Chhattisgarh	17	340	129	10,000	146	10,340
7	Delhi	35	727	214	15,959	249	16,686
8	Goa	53	1,205	208	11,374	261	12,579
9	Gujarat	146	3,399	628	49,507	774	52,906
10	Haryana	19	428	192	16,260	211	16,688
11	Himachal Pradesh	22	655	107	7,790	129	8,445
12	Jammu And Kashmir	18	399	107	9,097	125	9,496
13	Jharkhand	129	2,884	608	44,883	737	47,767
14	Karnataka	83	1,854	726	57,641	809	59,495
15	Kerala	61	1,538	223	19,054	284	20,592

16	Ladakh			9	778	9	778
17	Madhya Pradesh	112	2,355	760	66,617	872	68,972
18	Maharashtra	192	4,474	670	52,021	862	56,495
19	Manipur	11	340	90	7,575	101	7,915
20	Odisha	152	3,386	617	44,800	769	48,186
21	Puducherry	2	40	2	203	4	243
22	Punjab	12	256	105	8,759	117	9,015
23	Rajasthan	40	933	418	33,692	458	34,625
24	Sikkim			4	286	4	286
25	Tamil Nadu	199	4,893	625	45,554	824	50,447
26	Telangana	24	528	198	14,188	222	14,716
27	Tripura			10	616	10	616
28	Uttar Pradesh	154	3,243	1,204	94,849	1,358	98,092
29	Uttarakhand	3	52	11	989	14	1,041
30	West Bengal	44	991	746	59,109	790	60,100
	Total	1,670	38,548	9,591	7,39,695	11,261	7,78,243

105. With regard to the measures taken by the Ministry to facilitate the employment of workers in various firms, the Ministry submitted as under:

“DTNBWED conducts awareness generation programmes for the workers of Organized and Unorganized sectors. Subjects such as various Welfare Schemes of the Government of India, women empowerment, health and hygiene, importance of education etc. are covered in unorganized sector programmes. For Organized sector, subjects like Safety at workplace, Work Ethics, Motivation and Morale, Leadership Skills and other behavioural topics as demanded by the industries are covered. In addition to these, topics on skill development/enhancement are also covered. These facilitate for the employment of workers in various firms.”

XI. LABOUR BUREAU

106. The status of surveys conducted/index released by Labour Bureau is as under:

Labour Bureau

➤ All India Survey on Migrant workers (MWS)	Field work of the survey has been completed.
➤ All India Survey on Domestic workers (DWS)	Field work of the survey has been completed.
➤ Quarterly Employment Survey (QES)	The 5th and 6th quarterly reports have been released
➤ Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers (CPI-IW)	Index released each month periodically
➤ Consumer Price Index for Rural and Agricultural Labourers (CPI-AL/RL)	Index released each month periodically
➤ Revision of base year of CPI-IW (2016=100) and CPI-AL/RL (1986-87=100)	Initiated

107. In this context, the representatives of the Ministry during evidence deposed as under:

“The Labour Bureau is our organisation that conducts labour related statistical surveys. Two major all India surveys have been conducted in the recent past on migrant workers and domestic workers. The field work has been completed. The data is now being peer reviewed and we soon expect to come out with the figures.

.....Revision of base year for CPI, IW and ALRL is currently on and we expect to finish it by next year.”

108. The representatives of the Ministry during evidence further supplemented as under:

“We are working on a Labour Welfare Employment Index with the States, and the hon. Prime Minister had also told in one of the meetings that from the States, we must capture that data. We are working on that. Very soon, we hope, within this financial year, we will have that Index in place.”

XII. EMPLOYEES STATE INSURANCE CORPORATION (ESIC)

A. Extending Scope of Provisions Under the Act:

109. The Employees’ State Insurance Act, 1948 applies to all non-seasonal factories employing 10 or more persons. The provisions of the Act are being brought into force in district area-wise in stages. On being asked about the present status of operation of the provisions of the Act in various States and

the efforts made by the Ministry to expedite the implementation of the Act in all the States, the reply given by the Ministry is as under:

“At present, the ESI scheme has been notified in 674 districts out of 778 districts of the country, which includes 571 fully notified districts under ESI coverage and 103 partially notified districts under ESI coverage. There are remaining 104 districts where the ESI scheme is yet to be notified.

For implementation of ESI scheme in non-notified areas/districts of the country, instructions have been issued by the ESIC to all its field offices and respective State governments (vide recent DO letter dated 05.07.2024) to make necessary medical arrangements through dispensaries, empanellment of modified Insurance Medical Practitioner (m-IMP)/ modified Employer Utilization Dispensary (mEUD) for providing primary care medical services to insured persons and their families.

In this regard, necessary collaboration with the regional offices and medical institutions are being made to expedite infrastructure creation to ensure completion of medical arrangements in the pending districts as early as possible. Consistent efforts are being made to expedite implementation of scheme in the remaining districts so that pan-India implementation is done at the earliest.”

110. Under the Act, the employees are required to pay contribution at the rate of 3.25 percent of wages of the covered employees. The rate of contribution for the employees is 0.75 percent of their wages. Now, wage workers drawing wages upto Rs.176 per day are exempted from paying their share of contribution. The Committee desired to know whether with the increase in wages, such low paid workers still exist in the country, the number of such workers, State-wise, when the amount of Rs. 176 per day was fixed and whether there is any proposal to increase the threshold limit in view of the increase in wages. In response, the Ministry furnished the following details:

“The average daily wages during a wage period for exemption from payment of employee’s contribution was raised to Rs.176 w.e.f. 06 September 2019.

Minimum Wages for exemption of an employee from payment of employees contribution under Section 42 of ESI Act, 1948 read with Rule 52 of ESI (Central) Rule 1950, is decided on the basis of National Floor Level Minimum Wages decided under Minimum Wages Act, 1948. ESIC will implement the National Floor Level Minimum Wage (limit for expenditure from payment of contribution) as decided by the Ministry from time to time. The state wise details of number of exempted employees is given below:

State wise details of number of exempted employees

Sl. No.	State/UT Name	Exempted Employees
1	Andhra Pradesh	18,624
2	Arunachal Pradesh	1
3	Assam	7,488
4	Meghalaya	338
5	Bihar	2,320
6	Chandigarh	510
7	Andaman and Nicobar UT	1
8	Chhattisgarh	4,899
9	Delhi	8,454
10	Goa	211
11	Gujarat	1,734
12	Haryana	4,379
13	Himachal Pradesh	721
14	Jammu & Kashmir	1,534
15	Jharkhand	1,079
16	Karnataka	10,982
17	Kerala	9,802
18	Madhya Pradesh	11,206
19	Maharashtra	13,316
20	Manipur	89
21	Mizoram	53
22	Nagaland	530
23	Odisha	4,587
24	Puducherry	1,364
25	Punjab	9,526
26	Rajasthan	7,968
27	Sikkim	131
28	Tamilnadu	44,545
29	Telangana	13,871
30	Tripura	1,089
31	Uttar Pradesh	12,777
32	Uttarakhand	1,796
33	West Bengal	44,021

	TOTAL	2,39,946
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B. ESIS/ESIC Hospitals

111. On being asked whether the ESI Corporation has any proposal to set up new Hospitals in various States/UTs and the present status of these projects, State/UT-wise, the Ministry stated that ESIC has accorded “in principle” approval for setting up of 105 new hospitals in various States/UTs as per details given below:

Status of newly approved hospitals

Sl. No.	State	District	Location	No. of beds	Target Date of Completion	Physical Progress
On-going projects						
Andhra Pradesh						
1	Andhra Pradesh	Vizianagaram	Vizianagaram	100	30.01.2025	47%
2	Andhra Pradesh	Vishakapatnam	Vishakhapatnam (ESIC)	400	06.10.2025	17%
3	Gujarat	Ahmedabad	Sanand	350	28.02.2026	5%
Haryana						
4	Haryana	Jhajjar	Bahadurgarh	100	30.12.2024	86%
5	Haryana	Rewari	Bawal	100	30.11.2024	80%
Himachal Pradesh						
6	Himachal Pradesh	Sirmaur	Kala Amb	30	31.10.2024	95%
Jammu & Kashmir (UT)						
7	Jammu & Kashmir (UT)	Badgam	Ompura, Srinagar	100	28.02.2025	82%
Karnataka						
8	Karnataka	Bangalore Rural	Doddabalapur	100	completed	100%
9	Karnataka	Shimoga	Shivamoga	100	01.03.2025	52%
Maharashtra						
10	Maharashtra	Nagpur	Butibori, Nagpur	200	31.03.2025	30%
Tamil Nadu						
11	Tamil Nadu	Kanchipuram	Sriperumbudur	100	12.06.2025	50%
12	Tamil Nadu	Thothukudi	Tuticorin	100	06.01.2025	50%
Uttar Pradesh						
13	Uttar Pradesh	Shahjahanpur	Shahjahanpur (ESIC)	30	15.03.2027	0%
Uttarakhand						
14	Uttarakhand	Haridwar	Sidkul area Haridwar	300	30.01.2025	68%
West Bengal						
15	West Bengal	Darjeeling	Siliguri	100	31.12.2024	97%
16	West Bengal	Purba Medinapore	Haldia	100	31.12.2024	97%

Work assigned to agency(Tendering stage at the level of CPWD)					
Andhra Pradesh					
17	Andhra Pradesh	Vishakapatnam	Atchyutapuram	30	Awaited from Agency
Delhi					
18	Delhi	North Delhi	Narela (ESIC)	80	Awaited from Agency
Karnataka					
19	Karnataka	Bangalore Rural	Bommsandra	200	-do-
20	Karnataka	Kolar	Narsapura	100	-do-
21	Karnataka	Ramanagar	Haroholli	100	-do-
Odisha					
22	Odisha	Jajpur	Duburi	100	-do-
Madhya Pradesh					
23	Madhya Pradesh	Dhar	Pithampur	100	-do-
Uttar Pradesh					
24	Uttar Pradesh	Meerut	Meerut (ESIC)	100	-do-
Work assigned to agency(Estimation stage/Concept Plan stage)					
Odisha					
25	Odisha	Khurdha	ESIC SS hospital, Jagannath Prasad, Bhubaneswar (ESIC)	150	-do-
Rajasthan					
26	Rajasthan	Chittorgarh	Chittorgarh	30	-do-
West Bengal					
27	West Bengal	North 24 Pargana	Garshyamnagar	100	-do-
Karnataka					
28	Karnataka	Bellary	Bellary	100	-do-
Construction Work is being assigned to agency(PSU)					
Goa					
29	Goa	North Goa	Mulgaon Goa	150	-do-
Haryana					
30	Haryana	Gurgaon	Manesar (ESIC)	500	-do-
31	Haryana	Rohtak	Rohtak	100	-do-
Karnataka					
32	Karnataka	Udupi	Udupi	100	-do-
Kerala					
33	Kerala	Idukki	Idukki	100	-do-
Leh (UT)					
34	Leh (UT)	Leh	Leh (ESIC)	30	-do-
Odisha					
35	Odisha	Jharsuguda	Jharsuguda	100	-do-
Punjab					
36	Punjab	Malerkotla	Malerkotla	150	-do-
37	Punjab	Patiala	Rajpura	30	-do-
Sikkim					
38	Sikkim	East Sikkim	Rangpo (ESIC)	100	-do-
Telangana					
39	Telangana	Peddapalli	Ramagundam	100	-do-
Tripura					
40	Tripura	West Tripura	Shyamlibazaar, Agartala	100	-do-

Assessment of suitability of land with State Govt. is under consideration.					
Andhra Pradesh					
41	Andhra Pradesh	Guntur	Guntur (ESIC)	100	-do-
42	Andhra Pradesh	Sri Potti Sriramulu (Nellore)	Sri City, Nellore	100	-do-
Bihar					
43	Bihar	Begusarai	Begusarai	30	-do-
44	Bihar	Muzaffarpur	Muzzafarpur (ESIC)	100	-do-
Gujarat					
45	Gujarat	Panchmahal	Halol	100	-do-
46	Gujarat	Vadodara	Savli	100	-do-
Haryana					
47	Haryana	Hissar	Hissar	100	-do-
48	Haryana	Ambala	Ambala	100	-do-
49	Haryana	Karnal	Karnal	30	-do-
Karnataka					
50	Karnataka	Tumkur	Tumkur	100	-do-
Madhya Pradesh					
51	Madhya Pradesh	Jabalpur	Jabalpur	100	-do-
Maharashtra					
52	Maharashtra	Palghar	Palghar	150	-do-
53	Maharashtra	Raigad	Pen	200	-do-
54	Maharashtra	Jalgaon	Jalgaon	100	-do-
55	Maharashtra	Pune	Chakan	350	-do-
56	Maharashtra	Aurangabad	Shendra	30	-do-
57	Maharashtra	Aurangabad	Waluj	200	-do-
58	Maharashtra	Wardha	Wardha	30	-do-
Odisha					
59	Odisha	Jagatsinghpur	Paradeep	100	-do-
60	Odisha	Ganjam	Berhampur	100	-do-
Rajasthan					
61	Rajasthan	Kotputli-Behror/Rath	Neemrana	150	-do-
62	Rajasthan	Ajmer	Kishangarh-Ajmer (ESIC)	100	-do-
Tamil Nadu					

63	Tamil Nadu	Dindigul	Dindigul	100	-do-
64	Tamil Nadu	Kanyakumari	Kanyakumari	100	-do-
65	Tamil Nadu	Erode	Erode	100	-do-
Telangana					
66	Telangana	Ranga Reddy	Shamshabad	100	-do-
Uttar Pradesh					
67	Uttar Pradesh	Amroha	Gajraula (ESIC)	30	-do-
68	Uttar Pradesh	Gautambudhna gar	Greater Noida	350	-do-
Land not offered by State Govt.					
Andhra Pradesh					
69	Andhra Pradesh	Ananthpur	Penukonda	100	-do-
70	Andhra Pradesh	Sri PottiSriramulu (Nellore)	Nellore (ESIC)	100	-do-
71	Andhra Pradesh	Kurnool	Kurnool	30	-do-
72	Andhra Pradesh	Srikakulam	Srikakulam(ESIC)	30	-do-
Bihar					
73	Bihar	Bhagalpur	Bhagalpur	30	-do-
Chhattisgarh					
74	Chhattisgarh	Bilaspur	Bilaspur	100	-do-
Gujarat					
75	Gujarat	Bhavnagar	Alang	50	-do-
Haryana					
76	Haryana	Sonipat	Sonepat	150	-do-
Himachal Pradesh					
77	Himachal Pradesh	Una	Una	30	-do-
Jharkhand					
78	Jharkhand	Deoghar	Deoghar	100	-do-
79	Jharkhand	Bokaro	Bokaro (ESIC)	100	-do-
Kerala					
80	Kerala	Ernakulam	Perambavoor	100	-do-
Madhya Pradesh					
81	Madhya Pradesh	Satna	Satna	30	-do-
Maharashtra					
82	Maharashtra	Satara	Satara	100	-do-
83	Maharashtra	Raigad	Panvel	100	-do-

84	Maharashtra	Pune	Baramati	100	-do-
85	Maharashtra	Nashik	Sinnar	100	-do-
86	Maharashtra	Chandrapur	Ballarpur	30	-do-
87	Maharashtra	Amravati	Amrawati	100	-do-
88	Maharashtra	Sangli	Sangli	100	-do-
89	Maharashtra	Ahmednagar	Ahmednagar	100	-do-
90	Maharashtra	Ratnagiri	Ratnagiri	30	-do-
91	Maharashtra	Raigad	Karjat	30	-do-
92	Maharashtra	Raigad	Khopoli	30	-do-
Odisha					
93	Odisha	Balasore	Balasore	100	-do-
Punjab					
94	Punjab	SAS Nagar (Mohali)	SAS Nagar, Lallu	100	-do-
Tamil Nadu					
95	Tamil Nadu	Tirupattur	Vaniyamvadi	100	-do-
96	Tamil Nadu	Chengalpattu	Chengalpattu	100	-do-
Telangana					
97	Telangana	Mehabubnagar	Mehabubnagar	30	-do-
Uttar Pradesh					
98	Uttar Pradesh	Firozabad	Firozabad	30	-do-
99	Uttar Pradesh	Moradabad	Moradabad	100	-do-
100	Uttar Pradesh	Gorakhpur	Gorakhpur	100	-do-
101	Uttar Pradesh	Bulandshahar	Bulandshahar	30	-do-
102	Uttar Pradesh	Ayodhya	Janpad	30	-do-
Uttarakhand					
103	Uttarakhand	Dehradun	Dehradun	100	-do-
104	Uttarakhand	Udham Singh Nagar	Kashipur	30	-do-
West Bengal					
105	West Bengal	Paschim Midnapore	Kharagpur	100	-do-

XIII. EMPLOYEES PROVIDENT FUND ORGANISATION (EPFO)

The Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995 (EPS, 1995):

112. This Scheme is framed under EPF & MP Act, 1952 and came into effect from 16th November, 1995. This scheme has two components:

(a) The Central Government contributes @ 1.16% of wages with wage ceiling of Rs 15000/- per month as Govt's Share of pension contribution under Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995.

(b) A Grant-in-Aid is provided by the Central Government under Minimum Pension Scheme towards re-imbursalment of difference of amount between minimum pension of Rs. 1000/- (announced by the Govt. of India) and actual member pension under EPS-1995(if it is less than Rs. 1000/-) w.e.f. 01.09.2014.

113. The gist of the Act and Schemes administered by EPFO, its net payroll growth, pension under EPS, 1995 and number of pensioners under it is as under:

Employees' Provident Fund Organization

EPFO administers Employees Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provision Act, 1952 along with Following schemes-

- Employees' Provident Funds Scheme-1952
- Employees' Deposit-Linked Insurance Scheme-1976
- Employees' Pension Scheme-1995

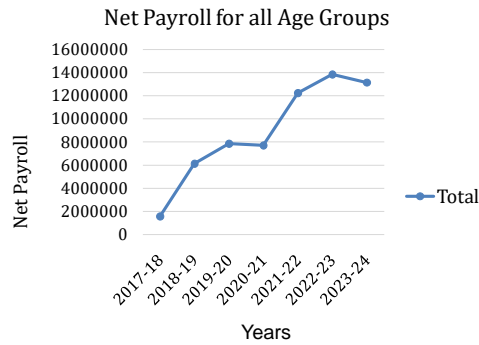


Employee's Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) Net Payroll Growth

Enrolment number in EPFO - consistently increasing trend over the year

In last 6 and half year alone, more than **6.2 crore member** joined the EPFO fold, indicating **Formalization of the job market**.

Net Payroll Growth: is the number of new member added to the organisation in a given period compared to the previous corresponding period.



Pension under EPS, 1995

Total Number of pensioners under EPS 1995 as on 31.03.2024	78,49,338
Pension amount disbursed (from 01.04.2023 to 31.03.2024)	15,130.68 cr.
Minimum pension of Rs. 1000 p.m.	
Total number of pensioners getting minimum pension of Rs. 1000/- p.m.	20,64,806 (FY 23-24)
Total Grant-in-aid for providing minimum pension of Rs. 1000/- p.m. (from 01.04.2023 to 31.03.2024)	957.55 cr.

No. of Pensioners under Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995

Item	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
No. of EPS members obtaining contribution @ 1.16% under EPS-1995 by Govt (as per DBT report)	6,20,66,913	6,73,09,949	6,95,58,206
Beneficiaries getting minimum Pension of Rs. 1000/- p.m. under EPS-1995	20,44,150	20,55,885	20,64,806

114. It was noted that the Government for the first time, provided a minimum pension of Rs. 1000 per month to the pensioners under EPS, 1995 from 01.09.2014 by providing additional budgetary support. When asked to provide State/UT-wise data regarding the number of beneficiaries and the expenditure incurred during the last five years viz. during 2019-20 to 2023-24, the Ministry submitted the following data:

Annexure

SR	STATE NAME	2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
		PENSIONERS	TOTAL AMOUNT	PENSIONERS	TOTAL AMOUNT	PENSIONERS	TOTAL AMOUNT
1	ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS	936	1,07,58,288	783	97,13,561	754	87,90,397
2	ANDHRA PRADESH	85,920	92,86,27,436	84,434	93,75,23,651	84,126	93,84,50,055
3	ASSAM INCLUDING ARUNACHAL PRADESH, MANIPUR, NAGALAND	10,871	12,45,56,247	10,355	12,24,58,773	10,445	12,45,04,144
4	BIHAR	67,985	85,40,82,902	66,277	80,99,59,681	66,512	79,78,11,748
5	CHANDIGARH	9,152	10,33,21,615	8,968	10,41,98,735	9,020	10,36,62,690
6	CHHATTISGARH	21,386	24,87,44,182	21,159	24,81,42,449	21,273	24,26,74,940
7	DELHI	28,559	32,80,16,085	27,365	32,14,50,818	27,304	31,50,94,505
8	GOA	5,590	6,17,66,431	5,440	6,27,93,715	5,469	6,20,94,658
9	GUJARAT INCLUDING THE DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI AND DAMAN AND DIU	1,11,627	1,22,33,66,938	1,09,297	1,21,54,80,344	1,10,697	1,23,02,52,957
10	HARYANA	30,302	33,62,05,505	29,757	34,08,37,182	29,942	33,65,70,610
11	HIMACHAL PRADESH	8,420	9,91,80,868	8,495	10,46,36,447	8,772	10,52,51,647

12	JAMMU AND KASHMIR INCLUDING LADAKH	-	-	-	-	2	16,709
13	JHARKHAND	38,348	45,29,01,528	37,580	46,11,96,086	38,477	46,56,19,987
14	KARNATAKA	1,75,322	1,89,78,41,200	1,74,343	1,95,35,48,087	1,76,561	1,98,62,90,626
15	KERALA INCLUDING LAKSHDEEP	1,80,658	1,92,63,90,424	1,78,423	2,01,65,54,390	1,78,791	2,03,69,14,649
16	MADHYA PRADESH	77,958	87,38,68,070	76,380	86,74,24,261	77,017	86,41,95,703
17	MAHARASHTRA	3,07,438	3,43,60,25,047	3,02,976	3,41,91,21,630	3,06,026	3,47,30,82,201
18	MEGHALAYA INCLUDING MIZORAM	627	69,54,946	588	70,60,307	606	70,72,817
19	ODISHA	47,481	61,27,79,707	45,758	54,36,33,429	46,479	56,80,06,921
20	PUDUCHERRY	5,234	5,63,85,096	5,165	5,77,88,703	5,161	5,70,71,170
21	PUNJAB	27,843	31,76,14,067	27,035	31,65,82,665	27,041	31,51,88,021
22	RAJASTHAN	43,791	50,47,52,107	43,016	49,83,32,117	43,452	49,35,59,216
23	TAMIL NADU	2,74,055	2,95,19,77,830	2,71,856	3,02,27,09,359	2,74,607	3,06,74,95,131
24	TELANGANA	1,14,323	1,22,14,46,301	1,14,161	1,28,96,18,356	1,17,530	1,30,96,27,679
25	TRIPURA	1,878	2,55,41,024	1,904	2,59,03,353	1,980	2,79,50,902
26	UTTAR PRADESH	1,37,463	1,58,34,20,688	1,33,017	1,55,47,06,936	1,33,116	1,51,80,17,591
27	UTTARAKHAND	13,015	15,32,25,679	12,655	15,12,99,351	12,960	15,00,01,213
28	WEST BENGAL INCLUDING SIKKIM	2,25,045	2,77,90,65,423	2,21,100	2,69,47,03,728	2,30,030	2,88,05,94,048

		20,51,227	23,11,88,15,634	20,18,287	23,15,73,78,114	20,44,150	23,48,58,62,935
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SR	STATE NAME	2022-23		2023-24	
		PENSIONERS	TOTAL AMOUNT	PENSIONERS	TOTAL AMOUNT
1	ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS	756	98,69,951	754	96,53,919
2	ANDHRA PRADESH	82,659	93,94,94,744	81,612	93,70,13,380
3	ASSAM INCLUDING ARUNACHAL PRADESH, MANIPUR, NAGALAND	10,666	12,44,78,682	10,281	12,80,65,304
4	BIHAR	66,052	81,44,65,592	65,237	80,27,70,907
5	CHANDIGARH	9,012	10,56,60,133	8,945	10,53,81,559
6	CHHATTISGARH	21,327	25,19,19,776	21,261	25,18,95,707
7	DELHI	26,906	32,36,44,626	26,632	31,68,93,332
8	GOA	5,453	6,38,65,745	5,475	6,67,57,175
9	GUJARAT INCLUDING THE DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI AND DAMAN AND DIU	1,09,499	1,27,48,85,815	1,09,177	1,27,56,60,341
10	HARYANA	29,530	33,96,31,709	28,762	33,27,23,040
11	HIMACHAL PRADESH	8,794	10,89,71,109	8,986	11,04,55,933
12	JAMMU AND KASHMIR INCLUDING LADAKH	15	3,17,968	16	2,60,515
13	JHARKHAND	38,348	48,06,27,947	38,012	46,96,71,122
14	KARNATAKA	1,80,020	2,10,12,31,638	1,83,303	2,14,82,41,364
15	KERALA INCLUDING LAKSHDEEP	1,80,307	2,09,99,43,353	1,79,432	2,07,90,68,459
16	MADHYA PRADESH				

		76,107	87,50,98,424	75,608	87,53,08,444
17	MAHARASHTRA	3,05,415	3,48,94,16,362	3,03,324	3,45,58,49,407
18	MEGHALAYA INCLUDING MIZORAM	583	76,02,189	590	70,60,548
19	ODISHA	47,353	58,97,65,653	47,586	58,26,71,925
20	PUDUCHERRY	5,130	5,45,38,992	5,178	6,54,65,804
21	PUNJAB	26,744	31,99,89,788	26,259	31,37,93,535
22	RAJASTHAN	42,929	50,55,91,399	42,762	50,48,20,802
23	TAMIL NADU	2,75,107	3,14,79,14,120	2,75,459	3,17,11,55,609
24	TELANGANA	1,20,965	1,39,15,48,403	1,25,990	1,46,38,98,280
25	TRIPURA	2,075	3,01,65,754	2,196	3,08,84,578
26	UTTAR PRADESH	1,29,492	1,52,62,52,932	1,27,381	1,51,13,95,579
27	UTTARAKHAND	13,020	15,85,59,397	12,933	15,53,20,336
28	WEST BENGAL INCLUDING SIKKIM	2,41,621	3,19,23,78,842	2,51,655	3,33,50,29,218
		20,55,885	24,32,78,31,043	20,64,806	24,50,71,66,122

115. With regard to the initiatives taken by EPFO, the representatives of the Ministry during the oral evidence deposed as under:

“EPFO has launched a centralized pension payment system. Currently, pilot is going on. From 1st of January, this will be rolled out across the country and this will enable 80 lakh pensioners to withdraw their pension from any bank rather than being restricted to a few banks.”

PART-II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

I. FINANCIAL AND PHYSICAL PERFORMANCE

The Committee note that a total amount of Rs. 13221.73 crore was allocated as BE 2023-24, which was decreased to Rs.12521.06 crore at RE stage whereas the actual expenditure incurred as on 31.03.2024 was Rs.11539.62 crore, which amounts to 87.27% of BE and 92.16% of RE, with Rs. 981.44 crore of unutilised funds. The non-utilization of funds has been observed mainly under ABRY, PMSYM, NDUW and Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour. According to the Ministry, the expenditure under these schemes is directly linked to the demand received. The Committee have made their Observations/Recommendations under each Scheme. On the under-utilization aspect, the representative of the Ministry during evidence also admitted that it was a serious thing.

2. The Committee further note that during 2023-24, the Ministry had surrendered funds amounting to Rs. 1682.11 crore on certain grounds, which *inter-alia* include non-filling up of vacant posts, non-completion of survey work, less demand from implementing agency(ies), non-receipt of utilization certificates, etc. According to the Ministry, out of Rs. 1682.11 crore, Rs. 633 crore was surrendered due to sudden revision of demand by EPFO in the month of February 2024 on the basis of actual expenditure under the scheme till January 2024. This revision was not anticipated at RE stage when on the basis of the past year's trends, approx. Rs. 633 crore was demanded additionally. The Committee are surprised to note that the additional amount received at RE stage was ultimately surrendered. The Committee do not find this type of budget provisioning appropriate and desire that recurrence of such instances be avoided in future.

3. The Ministry have also stated that justifications for surrender of funds at RE stage have been given while submitting annual accounts to C&AG and no further comments have been received. The Committee

would like to be apprised of the comments, if any, as and when received from C&AG. The Committee note that re-appropriation of funds to the tune of Rs.127.34 crore from one head to another was made during 2023-24. The major heads enlisted are ABRY, LWS, NCS, PMSYM, DGMS and the reasons for savings *inter-alia* include less demand by implementing agency, fraud applications, delay in recruitment, etc. The Ministry have informed that they are strictly following the provisions contained in GFRs for re-appropriation of funds and for optimal utilization of funds in future, instructions have been issued to the concerned administrative divisions of the Ministry to ensure responsible budgeting and full utilization of funds. The Ministry have also mentioned that they have also been advised to make provisions for only such schemes which are likely to get implemented in the ensuing year. The Committee are satisfied to note that appropriate instructions in the matter have been issued and trust that the same would be strictly adhered to.

4. The Committee appreciate that the quantum of funds spent during the first two quarters of 2024-25 is even and hope that the funds earmarked for various Schemes will be utilized during the remaining part of the current financial year. The Committee also take cognizance of the submission of the Ministry that Bureau Heads have been advised to ensure proportionate expenditure during the year by fixing monthly and quarterly targets and also to review actual expenditure *vis-a-vis* targets. The Committee hope that the Ministry's endeavours bear fruit and they fare better in terms of the utilisation of funds during 2024-25 unlike the previous year.

5. As far as physical targets and achievements are concerned, the Committee are concerned to note that in many Schemes they have not been able to achieve the physical targets during 2023-24. In this context, the Committee have made their Observations/Recommendations under each Scheme.

II. AATMANIRBHAR BHARAT ROJGAR YOJANA (ABRY)

6. The Committee note that Aatmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY) Scheme was implemented through the Employees Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) to reduce the financial burden of the employers of various sectors/industries and to encourage them to hire more workers. Under ABRY, the Government of India credited for a period of two years both the employees' share (12% of wages) and employers' share (12% of wages) of contribution payable or only the employees' share, depending on employment strength of the EPFO registered establishments. Under ABRY, benefits were provided to every establishment registered with EPFO and their new employees (earning wage less than Rs. 15,000/- per month) if the establishments took new employees on or after 01.10.2020 and upto 31st March, 2022 or those who lost jobs between 01.03.2020 to 30.09.2020. The beneficiaries registered upto 31st March, 2022 continued to receive the benefits for 2 years from the date of registration under the Scheme *viz.* upto 31.03.2024. The Scheme was intended to enroll /benefit a total of 71.80 lakh members pan-India. As on 31.03.2024 *i.e.* closure of the Scheme, a total of 75.78 lakh (105.5%) employees have registered under the Scheme, out of which 60.49 lakhs employees, fulfilling the eligibility criteria have availed the benefit through 1.52 lakh establishments. The reasons for not covering the remaining beneficiaries, as stated by the Ministry, is that the ABRY was a demand driven Scheme and the actual disbursement of benefits was contingent upon fulfilment of specific eligibility conditions. Out of the total number of 60,49,287 beneficiaries, the number of beneficiaries who lost jobs between 01.03.2020 to 30.09.2020 *i.e.* Re-joiners is 6,44,955 and the new employees, who joined between 01.10.2020 to 31.03.2022 is 54,04,332. The Committee, while appreciating that the physical target, as far as enrolment/registration is concerned, was over achieved, a large number of enrolled/registered beneficiaries could not get the benefits due to non-fulfilment of eligibility conditions. The Committee desire that in future,

while introducing any New Scheme/revising or re-designing the existing Scheme, steps be taken to ensure that, as far as possible, the intended beneficiaries fulfill the eligibility criteria at the time of registration/enrolment itself.

7. As regards financial progress in 2023-24, the Committee note that BE of Rs. 2272.82 crore in 2023-24 was reduced at RE stage to Rs. 1350.00 crore (Rs. 922.82 crore reduction) and the actual expenditure further decreased to Rs. 1221.06 crore at RE stage leaving an unspent balance of Rs. 128.94 crore. The Ministry have justified reduction of Rs. 922.82 crore at RE stage stating that due to variation in the demand, a definite estimation of expenditure is difficult and on the basis of the actual trend in expenditure, Revised Estimates were reduced from the BE to ensure alignment with scheme guidelines and for the proper utilization of the fund. The Committee are not convinced with the justification given by the Ministry as the beneficiaries registered upto 31st March, 2022 only were to receive the benefits upto 31.03.2024. This aspect appears to have been overlooked by the Ministry while proposing BE of Rs. 2272.82 crore during 2023-24 resulting in avoidable reduction of Rs. 922.82 crore at RE stage and non-utilization of Rs. 128.94 crore till 31.03.2024. As a matter of fact, the Ministry were not able to gauge the trend in demand, irrespective of the variables, to arrive at a more definite estimate of expenditure involved.

The Committee further note that the total expenditure incurred till 31.03.2024 was Rs. 10,188.50 crore and the BE for 2024-25 is Rs. 150 crore. When the Committee desired to know the purpose for which this amount will be utilized in the current financial year, the Ministry have responded that the Budget requirement has been revised as NIL for the FY 2024-25 on re-interpretation of the provisions/directives established under the ABRY scheme.

The Committee firmly believe that the reduction at RE stage, under-utilization during 2023-24 and provisioning of Rs. 150 crore at BE stage

during 2024-25 could have been avoided had the Scheme guidelines been objectively analyzed/interpreted. The Committee, therefore, call upon the Ministry to ensure that in future, in respect of various Schemes implemented by the Ministry, the respective Scheme Guidelines be properly analyzed/gone through/interpreted while proposing Budget Estimates to the Ministry of Finance so as to have accurate projections of estimates so that the reduction at RE stage is avoided to the extent possible. The Committee further recommend that all the impediments hampering the hassle free execution of various Schemes be looked into during the preparation of the estimates itself to obviate the non/under-utilisation of funds.

III. NATIONAL CAREER SERVICES

8. The Committee note that the Ministry are implementing the National Career Services (NCS) project for transformation of the National Employment Service to provide a variety of employment related services like job search & matching, career counselling, vocational guidance, information on skill development courses, internships etc. through a digital platform.

The Committee further note that the target for 2024-25 is (i) to set up two career lounges in Model Career Centres with Industry partnership; (ii) to issue uniform guidelines for employment portals of the States; and (iii) to migrate NCS portal from DC&DR to Azure public cloud. The Committee have been apprised that (i) two career lounges in Model Career Centres are envisaged to be set up by March, 2025; (ii) the Employment portals of 4 States have been studied, the study of the Employment portals of the remaining States is likely to be completed till May, 2025 and as soon as the study of employment portals of States is completed, the uniform guidelines will be issued; (iii) the onboarding of the Managed Service Provider (MSP) for NCS 2.0 is nearing finalization, and once the contract is awarded, the Minimum Viable Product (MVP) is expected to be ready by April 2025 and, thereafter, the migration activities will

commence. The Committee trust that the Ministry will meet the deadlines in respect of setting up of career lounges in Model Career Centres by March, 2025, completion of study of Employment Portals of all States by May, 2025, and readiness of Minimum Viable Product (MVP) by April, 2025. The Committee further desire that after these deadlines are met, efforts be made to ensure that the work relating to issue of uniform guidelines for employment portals of the States and migration of NCS portal from DC&DR to Azure public cloud be completed in a time bound manner preferably in the year 2025 itself.

9. The Committee have been apprised that as on 23.10.2024, 30 States/UTs have been integrated for information exchange with NCS Portal and integration with rest of the States/UT viz. Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Sikkim, Nagaland and Ladakh is under process. The Committee appreciate the efforts being made by the Ministry and desire that the process of integration of the remaining 06 States/Union Territory be completed on priority so that the information for the use of intended beneficiaries across the country is timely available on NCS portal.

10. The Committee also note that while the information regarding number of jobseekers, employers registered, number of vacancies, number of job fairs organized is available on the portal, the data regarding the number of persons who actually got employment is not available. The Committee were apprised that the NCS is aimed to bridge the gap between employers and the job seekers and at present, it is not mandated to get feedback, however, the Ministry are putting in place an AI system whereby feedback will be obtained. The Committee desire that an effective feedback mechanism be put in place at the earliest so that the potential job seekers are able to acquire suitable placements as per their matching skill. This would in turn be a win-win situation for both the employers and employees.

11. The Committee were also apprised that, at present, the Ministry depend on the PLFS survey for getting information in respect of persons who get jobs, education-wise, age-wise, in rural areas, in urban areas, etc. The Ministry also get feedback on employment and job creation from RBI on 27 sectors. In addition, feedback from EPFO on the new subscribers who are joining the EPFO provides information on job creation. The Committee note that notifying final hiring figures is not a mandatory requirement on NCS Portal. During evidence, the Committee were assured that though NCS does not have mandate for providing placement details, the Ministry will work on it. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend the Ministry to devise a suitable mechanism to ensure that NCS portal reflects the actual number of placements achieved through its usage so that the data regarding employment generation is readily available.

12. The Committee find that the Scheme has been approved for continuation during 15th Finance Commission Cycle, i.e., 2021-26, however, mid-term review/third party evaluation of the Scheme has not yet been conducted to look into/assess deficiencies and possible improvements in the Scheme. The Committee were, however, apprised that the process of hiring of agency for third party evaluation of the NCS Scheme is almost at final stage and may be completed by December, 2024. The Committee impress upon the Ministry to hire the agency at the earliest and ensure that the third party evaluation of the Scheme is completed preferably during the current financial year so as to assess deficiencies and possible improvements in the Scheme.

13. The Committee note that since inception of the Scheme and upto 30.09.2024, 34.12 lakh employers and approximately 4.73 crore job seekers were registered, 3.32 crore vacancies mobilized, whereas only 2.12 crore candidates were provisionally selected implying that only 50% of the registered candidates got selected. The Committee would like to have an assessment from the Ministry with regard to the possible reasons

for such less number of selection and the steps to be taken to overcome the shortcomings in the larger interest of both the employers and the job seekers.

IV. NATIONAL CAREER SERVICES (NCS) CENTRES FOR WELFARE OF SC/ST JOB SEEKERS (COACHING AND GUIDANCE FOR SC, ST AND OTHER BACKWARD CLASSES)

14. The Committee note that during 2023-24, total 5085 candidates were trained out of which 2160 candidates were registered in Special Coaching Scheme and 2925 candidates were registered in Computer Training. The Committee also note that during 2024-25, the physical target is the same. However, the BE for the year 2024-25 has been reduced from Rs. 25 crore in 2023-24 to Rs. 20.60 crore. According to the Ministry, the total outlay of the Scheme as per SFC Note is Rs. 99.90 Crore for 15th Finance Commission Cycle (five years period i.e., 2021-22 to 2025-26), out of which an expenditure of Rs. 60.94 crore has been incurred till 2023-24. The Ministry have also mentioned that as per SFC, total proposed outlay for 2024-25 was Rs. 20.60 crore and hence same was allocated in the year 2024-25. Therefore, keeping in view the trend of expenditure during the past year, decrease in BE 2024-25 is unlikely to affect the implementation of the Scheme. The Committee, however, note that during 2022-23 and 2023-24 the actual expenditure was Rs. 22.06 crore and 23.89 crore respectively, which is more than the RE for 2024-25, which is Rs. 20.60 crore. Thus, the contention of the Ministry that the trend of expenditure during the past years was taken into consideration while proposing BE of 2024-25 does not hold water. Considering the fact that the number of candidates proposed to be covered during 2024-25, viz., 5085 candidates (2160+2925) is the same as covered during 2023-24, the Committee feel that BE for 2024-25, which is less than the actual expenditure during 2023-24, are inadequate and need to be revised upwards. The Committee desire the Ministry to look into

this aspect so that the implementation of the Scheme during the remaining part of the 2024-25 is not adversely affected.

15. The Committee note that during 2021-24, the number of candidates provided training was 14,364, whereas the number of candidates given offer of appointment was 15,993, which includes the candidates given offer of appointment through job fair also. The Ministry have specifically mentioned that during 2021-22, the courses could not run as coaching/computer training institutes were closed due to pandemic. The Committee note that out of 25 States/UTs, in 16 States/UTs, the number of candidates given offer of appointment was less than the number of candidates provided training despite the fact that the figure includes those candidates who were given offer of appointment through job fair also, thereby indicating that less number of candidates got placed than those who were trained. The Committee exhort the Ministry to look into the reasons for shortfall in selection vis-à-vis training and wherever felt necessary, take appropriate measures to ensure that maximum number of trained candidates get placement.

16. The Committee further note that out of 36 States/UTs, the training to SC/ST candidates was provided in 25 States/UTs only and the candidates in the remaining 11 States/UTs viz. Bihar, Chhatisgarh, Goa, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Ladakh and Lakshadweep were left out. The Ministry have also categorically stated that there is one Centre at each of 25 States/UTs and, at present, there is no proposal to expand the training Centres in the remaining 11 States/UTs. The Committee feel that SC/ST candidates in these 11 States/UTs are being deprived of their legitimate right to get training under the Scheme. The Committee, therefore, impress upon the Ministry to expand the number of training centres in such a way that each State/UT has at least one Training Centre so that the SC/ST candidates across the country get the training benefits under the Scheme.

V. EMPLOYMENT LINKED INCENTIVE (ELI) SCHEMES

17. The Committee note that the Union Budget for the fiscal year 2024-25 has announced the Employment Linked Incentive Scheme (ELI) to increase formalisation of workforce, stimulate job creation and enhance employability. The Scheme, focuses on recognition of first-time employees and support to employees and employers. The incentives under the Scheme will be provided based on the enrolment of employees in the EPFO. The total estimated outlay for the Scheme, proposed to be implemented during 2024-25 to 2030-31, is Rs.1,07,000/- crores and it consists of three Parts with registration period of two years.

Part A of the Scheme incentivises first time eligible employees earning wages not exceeding Rs.1 lakh per month based on their enrolment with EPFO. It will provide one month's wage upto Rs.15,000 in three instalments to such employees. Such employee must undergo compulsory online Financial Literacy course before claiming the second instalment. The Part A of the Scheme, proposed to be implemented during 2024-25 to 2027-28, has a total financial outlay of Rs.22,333 crore and is expected to benefit 2.03 crore First Timers.

Part B of the Scheme will incentivise additional employment in the manufacturing sector, linked to the employment of in-sourced first-time employees earning wage not exceeding of Rs.1 lakh per month. An incentive will be provided both to the employee and the employer with respect to their EPFO contribution in the first 4 years of employment. However, the incentives will be calculated on a maximum EPF wage of Rs.25000 per month. All employers engaged in manufacturing sector and creating additional employment over and above the threshold limits, will be eligible. The Part B of the Scheme, proposed to be implemented during 2024-25 to 2030-31, has a total financial outlay of Rs.48,326 crore scheme and is expected to benefit about 27 lakh First Timers in the manufacturing sector. Part C of the Scheme will incentivise employers

across all sectors who create additional employment over and above the prescribed threshold and sustain the higher level. The government will reimburse to employers up to Rs.3,000 per month for 2 years towards their EPFO contribution for each additional employee. In case, the employer creates additional employment above 1000, such employer will be eligible for benefits on the same scale as provided in Part B, for the 3rd and 4th year as well. The Part C of the scheme, proposed to be implemented during 2024-25 to 2030-31, has a total financial outlay of Rs. 36,040 crore and is expected to incentivize additional employment of 1.09 crore.

The Committee note that the ELI Scheme has not been launched yet. The Committee have, however, been apprised that the Cabinet Note has been submitted and the Scheme is expected to be launched shortly. The Committee have also been apprised that during 2024-25, the BE is Rs. 10,000 crore, however, considering the time available during the remaining part of the current fiscal, the BE are proposed to be reduced to Rs. 6,799 crore at RE stage. The Committee appreciate the efforts being made by the Ministry to increase formalisation of workforce, stimulate job creation and enhance employability. The Committee call upon the Ministry to give further fillip to their efforts so that the objectives of the Scheme are truly achieved. The Committee also desire that efforts be made to fully utilize the RE during the remaining part of the current fiscal.

18. The Committee further note that the EPFO is preparing a dedicated IT infrastructure in consultation with MEITY for implementation of the Scheme. The IT Plan includes preparation of software system/apps for smooth operation of applicants registration, disbursement of incentive/subsidy details, particulars of each employee/employers availing benefits from the scheme etc. As the Scheme will be operated

using latest technology software and devices, the Committee desire that the process involved be completed at the earliest in a time bound manner.

VI. PRADHAN MANTRI SHRAM YOGI MAAN DHAN YOJNA (PM-SYM)

19. The Committee note that no target was set during 2023-24 as the PM-SYM Scheme was approved for the period 2018-23. The Scheme was extended beyond 2022-2023 without fixing any target. However, 65,775 beneficiaries were enrolled during 2023-24. Thus, 50.58 lakh beneficiaries have been enrolled under the Scheme as on 17.10.2024 against the target of 10 crore beneficiaries set during 2018-23 resulting in approximately 5% physical achievement of the initial target set. The financial progress during the fiscal year 2023-24 was also not upto the mark as the allocation of Rs 350 crore at BE stage was reduced to Rs. 205.21 crore at RE stage and the actual expenditure as on 31.03.2024 was Rs 162.51 crore only resulting in underutilization of funds to the tune of Rs. 42.70 crore. However, the performance upto the second quarter of 2024-25 has remarkably improved, as 60,240 beneficiaries have been registered upto 17.10.2024 and the expenditure on the said date was Rs. 94 crore against the quarterly expenditure plan of Rs. 88.62 crore and BE of Rs. 177.24 crore resulting in more than 50% utilization till 17.10.2024. The Committee desire that the remaining balance of Rs. 83.24 crore be utilized in the remaining part of 2024-25.

20. The Committee further note that the third-party evaluation of the Scheme was undertaken by Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), which presented its report in March 2023. The major recommendations of the IIPA Study *inter alia* included (i) merger of the two PM-SYM and PM-LVM pension schemes with the similar flagship old age pension schemes like Atal Pension Yojana (APY) and (ii) fresh registration under PM-SYM and PM-LVM schemes should be discontinued

and subscribers enrolled earlier may be allowed to shift to APY. The recommendations of the third party evaluation conducted by Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) were, however, reviewed by a Committee constituted by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, which had not agreed to some of the recommendations of IIPA and *inter alia* recommended re-designing of PMSYM Scheme *instead of* merger with Atal Pension Yojana. As stated by the Ministry, they have taken steps to engage agency for actuarial valuation of the Scheme. The Committee have also been apprised that the, Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance has agreed to the proposal of the Ministry for extension of Scheme for another year i.e. 2025-26 pending revision of scheme by early next Financial Year.

The Committee, therefore, impress upon the Ministry to work out the revised Scheme on priority and in a time bound manner *inter alia* keeping in view the shortcomings noticed earlier, reservations/deficiencies, if any, pointed out by the States/UTs during meetings held by the Ministry from time to time and the recommendations of the Committee constituted by the Ministry to review the recommendations of IIPA so that the workers of the unorganized sector are truly benefitted with the revised Scheme. The Committee would like to be apprised of the progress in this regard.

VII. NATIONAL PENSION SCHEME FOR TRADERS AND SELF-EMPLOYED PERSONS

21. The Committee note that during 2023-24, only 1591 beneficiaries could be enrolled under the NPS Traders Scheme resulting in total enrolment of only 53948 persons from February, 2019 to 31st March, 2024 against the overall enrolment target of 2.5 crore beneficiaries. The BE for 2023-24 was Rs. 3 crore, whereas the actual expenditure was Rs. 48000 only, which is 0.16% of BE. The Committee further note that while no physical target has been fixed for 2024-25, the financial allocation during 2024-25 is Rs. 10 lakh. The Committee are deeply concerned to

note the dismal performance of the Scheme both in financial and physical targets. The reasons for poor performance of the Scheme *inter-alia* include unavailability of regular employment opportunities, lack of a formal Employer-Employee Relationship and presence of other pension scheme covering unorganised workers from Central Government [Atal Pension Yojana, Old age pension for senior citizens under National social Assistance Program (NSAP)]. In addition, most of the States have separate pension scheme for unorganised workers free of cost. The Committee also find that measures taken by the Ministry in consultation with the States to effectively mobilize the targeted groups have not yielded the desired results resulting in abysmal performance of the Scheme. The Ministry have informed that the discussions on redesigning of the scheme to make it more attractive for unorganised workers are under process. The Committee strongly feel that the Scheme needs to be re-designed and the efforts being made in this regard need to be put to the logical end so as to make the Scheme more attractive and thereby cover more intended beneficiaries.

VIII. NATIONAL DATABASE OF UNORGANISED WORKERS (NDUW)

22. The Committee note that the Ministry have finalised and circulated the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)/Guidelines to share e-Shram data with Central Ministries/Departments. These Guidelines will enable Central Ministries to extend the benefit of social security schemes meant for unorganized workers to eligible beneficiaries. The Ministry have stated that no response/suggestion has been received from the Ministries/Departments with regard to the aforesaid guidelines on data sharing through e-Shram portal with Central Government Ministries. The Committee feel that the initiative taken by the Ministry for sharing e-Shram data with Central Ministries/Departments is a thoughtful step which can be a quantum leap towards achieving the higher objective of extending the benefits of social security schemes to the beneficiaries. As informed by the Ministry, the idea of onboarding various welfare schemes

of different Ministries is to provide unorganized labour a single window to access benefits from these schemes, to apply for them in a single window through a common application form. The Committee, therefore, impress upon the Ministry to urge the various Central Ministries/Departments to come out with their propositions and opinions on the Guidelines and also take follow up action to address/resolve the issues, if any of the Ministry concerned.

23. The Committee further note that the guidelines *inter alia* provide that the Ministry of Labour and Employment shall not be liable for any incorrectness of e-Shram data or resultant losses to the concerned Central Government Ministry upon use of e-Shram data without prior verification because the e-Shram data is based on self declaration by the registrant. The Committee firmly believe that this aspect needs to be re-looked and either the Ministry of Labour and Employment or the Ministry concerned or a body comprising representatives of various Ministries be held responsible for correctness of the data uploaded on the e-Shram Portal.

24. Further, considering the fact that provision also exist with regard to data security, protection and privacy guidelines for the Central Government Ministries, the Committee strongly recommend that all possible measures be taken to ensure the security and confidentiality of the data.

25. The Committee find that no authentic data of unorganized workers was available till the portal was launched on 26.08.2021, however, the database of over 30.37 crore unorganized workers, as on 10.11.2024, is now available. The Committee appreciate the initiative taken by the Ministry and desire that the Ministry should take one step forward and evolve some more innovative measures through intensive and methodical approach on the lines similar to the door to door survey being conducted while undertaking Census so as to cover each and every unorganized labourer in a time bound manner.

26. As regards financial progress, the Committee note that during 2023-24, the BE of Rs. 300 crore was reduced to Rs. 102.96 crore at RE stage and the actual expenditure was Rs. 28.96 crore only (9.6% of BE and 28.13% of RE respectively) leaving an unspent balance of Rs. 74 crore. The Committee express serious concern on gross under utilization of funds under the Scheme and call upon the Ministry to fully utilize the funds to the tune of Rs. 176.84 crore allocated during 2024-25.

IX. LABOUR WELFARE SCHEMES

27. The Committee note that health care facility is extended to Beedi/Cine/Non-Coal Mines workers with a network of 279 Dispensaries and 10 Hospitals. In the F.Y. 2023-24, 18,02,000 beedi/cine/non-coal mines workers and their dependents were benefited with an expenditure of Rs 9.7 Crore. The financial assistance ranging from Rs. 30,000 to Rs. 7,50,000 is provided for treatment of 09 diseases viz. Cancer, Tuberculosis, Heart Diseases, Kidney Transplantation, Hernia, Appendectomy, Ulcer, Gynaecological diseases and Prostrate diseases in the Government recognized Hospitals. The Committee note that while the rates for reimbursement in respect of cancer were revised in 2022, there has not been any increase in the rates for reimbursement for the remaining 08 diseases since 2002/2003 viz. during the last 22/21 years. The Committee have been informed that at present there is no proposal under consideration of the Government to increase the financial assistance or to cover more diseases. The Committee are of the considered view that owing to the surge in medical expenses over the years, it has become imperative, if not mandatory, to augment the amount of reimbursement for the treatment of various diseases. The Committee firmly believe that a powerful health care system is one of the prerequisites for building a robust economy and towards achieving this end, the good health of the movers and shakers of the economy who form the base of the pyramid, i.e., the work force is of paramount significance. The Committee, therefore, desire the Ministry to undertake an objective

assessment of the current rates prescribed and expediently undertake an exercise to revise the existing ceiling so that expenses incurred on health care facilities become affordable to the beneficiaries as well as their dependents. The Committee also recommend to simultaneously explore the desirability of identifying other diseases prevalent in Beedi/Cine/Non-Coal Mines workers adversely affecting their liver, eyes, skin, ears, mental and behavioral disorders or such occupational diseases as identified by ILO.

28. The Committee are deeply concerned to note the plight of the mine workers, who have been rendered jobless due to the closure of mines in the Ballari district of Karnataka since 2011. The Committee reckon that the operations in these mines have since resumed, however, the workers have not been re-instated. The Committee, therefore, call upon the Ministry to take urgent pro-active steps to ensure livelihood of these jobless mine workers and consider making use of some portion of the environment cess being collected by the State Government of Karnataka for development of mining areas, as per the directions of Hon'ble Supreme Court.

X. CENTRAL SECTOR SCHEME FOR REHABILITATION OF BONDED LABOURER-2021

29. The Committee note that the Central Sector Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourer-2021 has been revamped and implemented w.e.f. 27.01.2022. The Committee have been apprised that 2,96,795 persons have been rescued and Rs.10,558.30 lakhs has been disbursed since 1978.

The Committee further note that for the fiscal 2023-24, the BE for the Scheme was Rs. 10 crore which was reduced to Rs. 6.98 crore at RE Stage and out of which, as on 31.03.2024, only a meagre amount of Rs.1.34 crore (23.76 %) has been utilized leaving an unspent amount of Rs.5.64 crore due to non-receipt of documents and utilization

certificates. The BE for current financial year is 6.00 crore and as on 19.11.2024, only Rs.33.61 lakhs has been spent. The Committee reckons that the Ministry are implementing the Scheme for identification and release of bonded labourers and it is demand driven in nature where funds are provided to the States/UTs on receipt of financial demand from them. The Committee note that the Ministry has requested States to submit the reimbursement related cases timely and that requests were also made through letters as well as virtual meetings to all the States/Union Territories to avoid late submission of their reimbursement proposals and to submit the claims immediately after rescue of the concerned bonded labourers so as to ensure optimal utilization of funds. The Committee, while appreciating the efforts made by the Ministry to get timely reimbursement proposals from the States/UTs, desire that heightened measures be undertaken in this direction. The Committee also desire that the process of submitting reimbursement proposals by the States/UTs be carried out online. The Committee impress upon the Ministry to strengthen their monitoring and coordination mechanism for optimal utilisation of funds and reduce surrender of allocated funds to the minimum extent possible.

30. The Committee further note that during the year 2023-24, 468 bonded labourers were freed/rescued/rehabilitated from five States *viz.*, Rajasthan (56), Tamil Nadu (176), Chhattisgarh (76), Pondicherry (5) and Odisha (155). The Committee further note that in 2023-24, 123 minors were also rescued which is a clear indication of the wide spread presence of the evil of bonded labour in the country. The Committee note that the Ministry is holding meetings with various State/UT Governments and requesting them to speed up the trials in respect of bonded labourers to whom immediate financial assistance had already been provided. The Committee feel that unless the convictions come through, it may be extremely difficult to establish the crime of Bonded Labour and provide full benefits under the Scheme. The Committee are, therefore, of the considered view that there is an urgent need on the part of the Ministry

to shore up the efforts so as to eradicate the scourge of bonded labour and implement the Scheme in a more effective way. The Committee desire the Ministry to explore the possibility of setting up fast track courts by taking up the matter with the Ministry of Law & Justice and the States/UTs, where the cases of bonded labourers are predominant. In addition, the States/UTs may also be encouraged to set up squads of law enforcement agencies to act against perpetrators of bonded labour. The Committee strongly recommend that effective measures be initiated to stamp out Bonded Labour from the country regardless of the procedural and legal recourse being adopted.

31. The Committee are surprised to note that the Ministry had initially stated that the work related to development of the National Portal on Bonded Labour is in progress. The portal has the objective of facilitating in bringing uniformity in capturing data, which would facilitate uniformity in capturing data in different States/UTs to help towards eradication of the menace of bonded labour more efficiently. However, subsequently, the Ministry have informed that they are in the process of revamping the existing Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour (PENCiL) Portal into a comprehensive unified portal for Child Labour, Bonded Labour and Women Labour and for the purpose, the agency for revamping the Portal has been shortlisted and the work is also under progress. The Ministry have further stated that it is expected that the revamped portal will be functional within a year. The Committee hope that the Ministry of Women and Child Development, being the nodal Ministry responsible for overall development of women and children in the country, has been consulted in this regard. The Committee call upon the Ministry to intensify their efforts and trust that the Ministry would fulfill their commitment for development of a Unified Portal within a year.

32. The Committee note that the Institute of Human Development (IHD) had conducted evaluation of the Scheme and based on the recommendations of the IHD, the immediate assistance has been

increased from Rs. 20,000/- to Rs. 30,000/-. The Committee have been apprised that based on the suggestions and inputs received from various stakeholders and other social partners, the Scheme has been continued up to the financial year 2025-26. The Committee would like to know the status of implementation of the recommendation of IHD regarding changes in design of the Scheme and also that the payment of rehabilitation amount be delinked from conviction.

33. The Committee further note that the Scheme provides for creation of a Bonded Labour Rehabilitation Fund at the district level by each State with a permanent corpus of at least Rs. 10 lakhs at the disposal of the District Magistrate which would be renewable for extending immediate help to the released bonded labourers. As informed by the Ministry, so far, only 09 States viz. Assam, Kerala, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Delhi, Haryana, Gujarat & Tamil Nadu have confirmed the constitution of district corpus funds in each district. The Committee would like to be apprised of the status of creation of corpus funds by the remaining 27 States/UTs and the efforts made by the Ministry in this direction.

XI. NATIONAL CHILD LABOUR PROJECT (NCLP)

34. The Committee note that National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme was implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Employment with the objective to eliminate the child labour and mainstream them to formal education by providing bridge education. The Scheme was under implementation upto 31.03.2021. Thereafter, it was merged with the Samagara Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) Scheme of Ministry of Education in order to ensure optimum utilization of available resources and avoid duplication at any stage. There is no denying the fact that despite merger of the NCLP Scheme with SSA, the Ministry of Labour and Employment continues to be the nodal Ministry responsible for elimination of child labour as the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act 1986 and Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Rules, 1988 are administered by the Ministry. Needless to mention that it is

incumbent upon the Ministry to follow a mission mode approach in tackling the bane of Child Labour.

35. The Committee would like to remind the Ministry that in their 52nd Report on 'National Policy on Child Labour – An Assessment', they have comprehensively dealt with the issue and recommended concrete measures to be taken by the Ministry of Labour and Employment independently as well as in consultation and coordination with the other Ministries.

Taking into account the gravity of the issue and also considering the fact that with the ratification of ILO Conventions No. 138 of 01.06.1973 concerning minimum age for employment and No. 182 of 01.06.1999 concerning prohibition and elimination of worst forms of child labour in June, 2013, **the Committee again impress upon the Ministry to tirelessly work towards meeting its international commitment towards elimination of child labour as well as achieving the target stipulated in Sustainable Development Goal 8.7 to end all forms of child labour by the year 2025.**

36. The Committee note that during 2023-24, no target was fixed under the NCLP Scheme on the ground that it has been merged with Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) of Ministry of Education. The Committee also note that during 2023-24, BE of Rs. 10 crore was reduced to RE of Rs.6 crore and the actual expenditure was Rs.0.68 crore. Thus, while financial allocations were made, physical target was not fixed. In fact, during 2024-25, no financial allocations have been made and no target has been fixed on the ground that the Scheme has been closed. When asked to clarify whether all committed liabilities have been met, the Ministry have now informed that the budgetary allocation in RE under the NCLP scheme has now been requested for as no budgetary allocation in BE 2024-25 were made. **The Committee do not find it a prudent measure and impress upon the Ministry to foresee the financial requirements and commitments**

while proposing the budgetary allocations. The Committee, therefore, urge the Ministry to exercise due diligence in this regard in future

XII. LABOUR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

37. The Committee note that the Dattopant Thengadi National Board for Workers Education and Development (DTNBWED) (erstwhile Central Board for Workers Education) is a tripartite registered society established in 1958. Through its National network of 50 Regional Directorates and an apex training institute, Indian Institute of Workers Education at Mumbai, organizes various educational, training and awareness programmes for workers of organized and unorganized Sector *inter-alia* including awareness about government flagship schemes of Social Security, livelihood and Skill development activities. The Board's thrust is on educating the 92% workforce of the country of unorganized and rural sectors, for creating awareness about government flagship schemes of Social Security, livelihood and Skill development activities.

The Committee have been apprised that DTNBWED had planned to recruit 90 posts *viz.* 22 Education Officers, 13 Stenographers Grade-II, 44 Lower Division Clerks and 11 Multi Tasking Staff during the year 2023-24 under Mission Mode but only the post of Stenographer Gr. II and Lower Division Clerk were partially filled and later many of the newly recruited officials left the Organisation. The Committee find that non-filling up of all posts as planned resulted in under utilization of Rs. 6.975 crore under Salary Head out of the total unspent amount balance of Rs. 7.98 crore.

The Committee are concerned to note that an Institute established to organize a slew of educational, training and awareness programmes for workers of organized and unorganized sector stands under-staffed which will jeopardize the very objective which it represents. The Committee, therefore, urge the Ministry to fill up the vacancies in DTNBWED expeditiously and, simultaneously, undertake urgent corrective measures

to retain employees for smooth and effective functioning of the organization.

38. The Committee further note that during 2022-23, the Board had organized 8308 awareness programmes covering 4,38,508 participants in both Organised and Unorganised Sectors. Out of 8308 programmes, 2872 programmes were organized for 65,196 participants in Organised Sector and 5436 programmes were organized for 3,73,312 participants in the Unorganised Sector. Similarly, during 2023-24, the Board had organized 11,261 awareness programmes covering 7,78,243 participants in Organised and Unorganised Sectors. Out of 11,261 programmes, 1670 programmes were organized for 38,548 participants in Organised Sector and 9,591 programmes were organized for 7,39,695 participants in the Unorganised Sector. The Committee find that while over 30.37 crore unorganized workers have been registered on e-Shram Portal during 2022-23 and 2023-24, the training programmes were organized for only 11.12 lakh workers [3.73 lakh in 2022-23 and 7.39 lakh in 2023-24].

The Committee, therefore, desire that based on the data available on e-Shram Portal, more training programmes be organized in those States/UTs where concentration of unorganized workers is on the higher side and this can be achieved only if the Board has adequate manpower. The Committee desire that the process of conducting work study be initiated so as to assess suitable manpower requirement in the Board.

39. The Committee appreciate the efforts being made by DTNBWED in generating awareness amongst unorganized workers about various Welfare Schemes of the Government, women empowerment, health and hygiene, importance of education etc. as well as organizing programmes like Safety at workplace, Work Ethics, Motivation and Morale, Leadership Skills and other behavioural topics for workers in organized sector, as per industry requirement thereby facilitating employment generation in various firms. The Committee desire the Board to continue momentum in organizing

various programmes in 2024-25 and, thereafter, also for education, training and awareness of workers in both the Sectors.

XIII. LABOUR BUREAU

40. The Committee were apprised that the field work on two major surveys *viz.* All India Survey on Migrant Workers and All India Survey on Domestic Workers has been completed. The Committee desire that the peer review of the data be accorded top priority and the exercise completed in a time bound manner so as to have database of both Migrant and Domestic Workers, which will help them to get benefits of various Social Security Schemes.

41. The Committee have also been apprised that work relating to revision of base year for Consumer Price Index for Industrial Worker (CPI-IW) (2016=100) and All-India Consumer Price Index Number for Agricultural Labourers and Rural Labourers (CPI-AL/RL) (Base: 1986-87=100) has been initiated and the same is expected to be completed by next year. The Committee expect the Ministry to fulfil their commitment and complete the exercise by the next year, which will benefit a cross section of workers in industrial sectors, agricultural and rural labourers and others.

42. The Committee appreciate that the Ministry is in the process of introducing a 'Labour Welfare and Employment Index' (LWEI) to rank all States and Union Territories (UTs) and, as assured by the representative during the oral evidence, the proposed Index will be in place by the end of the current financial year. The Committee feel that the initiative will improve labour standards, foster healthy competition among the States and help them to improve their performance in employment generation, labour requirements besides promoting uniformity in the implementation of Labour Codes thereby improving welfare of the labour as well as productivity. The Committee desire that the exercise to introduce 'Labour Welfare and Employment Index' (LWEI) to rank all States and

Union Territories (UTs) be completed in a time bound manner so as to meet the intended objectives.

XIV. EMPLOYEES STATE INSURANCE CORPORATION (ESIC)

43. The Committee note that under the Code on Social Security, 2020, the Central Government may frame scheme for unorganised workers, gig workers and platform workers and the members of their families for providing benefits under ESIC. Further, the ESIC coverage will be extended pan-India as against notified districts/areas at present. In addition, ESIC benefits will be extended to establishments with less than 10 employees on voluntary basis and on mandatory basis for establishment, employing even single employee involving hazardous process. Thus, in order to implement all the new provisions under the Code, the ESIC need to expand the coverage across the country before the Code comes into force. The Committee are, however, concerned to note that at present, out of 778 districts of the country, the ESI Scheme has been notified in 674 districts which includes 571 fully notified districts and 103 partially notified districts. As a matter of fact, the ESI scheme is yet to be notified in the 104 districts. Thus, 207 districts (103 partially notified and 104 non-notified districts) are awaiting full coverage under ESI Scheme. The Committee urge the Ministry/ESIC to gear up and have a serious view to expand the coverage of ESIC to all partially notified and non-notified districts so that there is no vacuum/inconvenience to the beneficiaries once the labour codes are implemented.

44. The Committee note that under the Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948 the employees are required to pay contribution at the rate of 3.25 percent of wages of the covered employees and the rate of contribution for the employees is 0.75 percent of their wages. Further, at present, wage workers drawing wages upto Rs.176 per day are exempted from paying their share of contribution. The Committee have been apprised that the average daily wages during a wage period for exemption from payment of employee's contribution was raised to Rs.176 w.e.f. 06

September 2019. The Committee have also been apprised that the Minimum Wages for exemption of an employee from payment of employees contribution under Section 42 of ESI Act, 1948 read with Rule 52 of ESI (Central) Rule 1950, is decided on the basis of National Floor Level Minimum Wages decided under Minimum Wages Act, 1948.

The Committee note that there are 2,39,946 exempted employees in 33 States/UTs with top five States being Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Maharashtra having 44,545, 44,021, 18,624, 13,871 and 13,316 low paid employees respectively. The Committee feel that the amount of Rs.176 per day is way too low to sustain a family in the present time.

Considering the fact that more than five years have passed since the increase was effected on the last occasion as well as rise in cost of living, the Committee, feel that there is an urgent need to revise National Floor Level Minimum Wages under Minimum Wages Act, 1948 so as to have corresponding revision in exemption of an employee from payment of employees contribution under ESI Act and the Rules made thereunder. The Committee, therefore call upon the Ministry to revisit the threshold limit and arrive at a reasonable amount in the larger interest of welfare of the low paid workers and their family members.

45. The Committee note that ESIC has accorded “in principle” approval for setting up of 105 new hospitals in various States/UTs. The Committee further note that out of 105 new hospitals proposed to be set up, only 01 hospital at Bangalore Rural has been completed, in respect of 15 hospitals the work is in progress and is scheduled to be completed in 2024/2025/2026/2027, in respect of 89 hospitals, the work has been assigned to the Agency by CPWD and the target date of completion is awaited. The Committee are deeply concerned to note the extremely slow progress of setting up on new hospitals and impress upon the Ministry/ESIC to vigorously pursue the matter with CPWD, chalk out a comprehensive plan/schedule indicating the various stages involved in

the construction of hospitals and ensure that the hospitals are set up on priority and in a time bound manner.

46. The Committee are also of the considered view that in order to offer quality medical care facilities to beneficiaries to the maximum extent possible, in addition to creation of physical infrastructure, it is equally important to offer state of the art facilities and professional medical care in a standardised fashion in ESIC hospitals in every corner of the country. The Committee, therefore, call upon the Ministry to equip all the ESIC hospitals with expert medical practitioners, excellent allied medical care staff, state-of-the-art medical equipments and acquire necessary accreditations, which can be achieved by the collective and collaborative efforts of both the Ministry as well as ESIC.

XV. EMPLOYEES PROVIDENT FUND ORGANISATION (EPFO)

47. The Committee note that the Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995 (EPS, 1995) has been framed under the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 (EPF & MP Act, 1952) and came into effect from 16th November, 1995. Under the Scheme, the Central Government contributes @ 1.16% of wages with wage ceiling of Rs. 15000/- per month as Govt's Share of pension contribution under Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995. In addition, a Grant-in-Aid is provided by the Central Government under Minimum Pension Scheme towards reimbursement of difference of amount between minimum pension of Rs. 1000/- (announced by the Govt. of India) and actual member pension under EPS-1995 (if it is less than Rs. 1000/-) w.e.f. 01.09.2014. During 2023-24, the total number of pensioners getting minimum pension of Rs. 1000 per month was 20,64,805 and the total grant-in-aid for providing minimum pension of Rs. 1000 per month from 01.04.2023 to 31.03.2024 was Rs. 957.55 crore.

The Committee note that over a decade has passed since the minimum pension of Rs.1000 per month is being provided to the

pensioners. Considering the manifold increase in the cost of living in 2024 vis-à-vis 2014 and other relevant factors, as put before the Committee by various Stakeholders during their oral evidences held in the year 2023, the Committee feel that there is a need to seriously look into the aspect of considering an upward revision of this amount. Notwithstanding the financial implications involved, the Committee desire the Ministry/EPFO to take up this significant task sympathetically with a sense of urgency in the larger interest of the effected pensioners and their family members so as to arrive at an amicable solution.

48. The Committee have been apprised that EPFO has launched a Centralized Pension Payment System, which is proposed to be rolled out across the country from 01.01.2025. The Committee note that this initiative will enable 80 lakh pensioners to withdraw their pension from any bank rather than being restricted to a few banks. While appreciating the initiative taken by the EPFO/Ministry for the benefit of pensioners, the Committee desire that sincere efforts be made for speedy disposal of claims through a transparent mechanism as well as for redressing the grievances of pensioners in a time bound manner.

XVI. IMPLEMENTATION OF LABOUR CODES

49. The Committee note that the Government have notified four Labour Codes, namely, the Code on Wages, 2019 on 8th August, 2019 and the Industrial Relations Code, 2020, the Code on Social Security, 2020 & the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 on 29th September, 2020. These Codes are yet to be implemented.

As a step towards implementation of the four Labour Codes, the Ministry have pre-published seven draft Rules during the period 07.07.2020 to 03.06.2021 whereby comments of all stakeholders including general public have been invited.

Labour is in the Concurrent List of the Constitution and under the Labour Codes, rules are required to be framed by the Central Government

as well as by the State Governments. The Central Government and a number of States/UTs have pre-published rules under four Labour Codes. As on 03.12.2024, 03 States viz Meghalaya, Nagaland and West Bengal and 01 UT viz. Lakshadweep have not yet pre-published the Rules on the Code on Wages, 2019. 02 States viz. Meghalaya and West Bengal and 02 UTs viz. Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep and NCT of Delhi have not pre-published the Rules on the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020. 03 States viz. Meghalaya, Nagaland, West Bengal and 01 UT viz. Lakshadweep and NCT of Delhi have not pre-published the Rules on the Industrial Relations Code, 2020. 03 States viz. Meghalaya, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal and 01 UT viz. Lakshadweep and NCT of Delhi have not pre-published the Rules on the Code on Social Security, 2020.

The Committee have been apprised that the Ministry had held intensive regional consultations with the States/UTs and found some gaps and deficiencies in the rules drafted by some of the States for which necessary clarifications have been provided by the Ministry.

The Committee are concerned to note that the four Labour Codes, which were notified in 2019/2020 are yet to be implemented. While most of the States/UTs have pre-published draft Rules under these Codes, only a few States/UTs have not pre-published the draft Rules. The Committee have been apprised that the draft Rules of all the States and UTs will be ready soon as the Ministry have done intensive work, regional meetings, hand-holding and State-by-State work.

Considering the fact that for carrying out the provisions of the Codes, it is a statutory obligation on the States/UTs to prepare the Rules, the Committee impress upon the Ministry to further intensify their efforts and vigorously pursue the matter with all States/UTs and ensure that the follow up action viz. vetting of the draft by the Ministry of Law/ State Law Departments as required, etc. is also completed in a time bound manner so as to ensure that the four Labour Codes are implemented at

the earliest. The Committee would like to be apprised of the progress made in this regard.

XVII. FILLING UP OF VACANCIES IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT, ESIC, ESIC/ESIS HOSPITALS AND DISPENSARIES AND EPFO AND CONDUCT OF WORK STUDY TO ASSESS MANPOWER REQUIREMENT.

50. The Committee expect that after implementation of Labour Codes, there will be substantial increase in the work load of the Ministry of Labour and Employment, ESIC, ESIC/ESIS hospitals and dispensaries and EPFO and other Offices under the Ministry. The Committee, therefore, desire that sincere efforts be made to fill up the existing vacancies in these organisations in a time bound manner and, if the situation demands, the process of conducting work study of these organizations be initiated so as to assess suitable manpower requirement and preparedness of these organisations in anticipation of the implementation of the Labour Codes.

New Delhi;
12 December, 2024
21 Agrahayana, 1946(Saka)

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