

41

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
(2013-2014)**

(FIFTEENTH LOK SABHA)

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

Action taken by the Government on the observations/recommendations contained in the Thirty-sixth Report of the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2013-2014) of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment)

FORTY-FIRST REPORT



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

February, 2014/Magha, 1935 (Saka)

FORTY-FIRST REPORT

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

(2013-2014)

(FIFTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

(DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT)

Action taken by the Government on the observations/recommendations contained in the Thirty-sixth Report of the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2013-14) of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment)

Presented to Lok Sabha on 7.2.2014

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 7.2.2014



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

February, 2014/Magha, 1935(Saka)

CONTENTS

		PAGE
	COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE	4
	INTRODUCTION	6
CHAPTER -I	Report	7
CHAPTER- II	Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government.	18
CHAPTER- III	Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies of the Government.	30
CHAPTER -IV	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted.	31
CHAPTER- V	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government are interim in nature.	33
	Annexure	
Annexure	Minutes of the Fifth Sitting of the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment held on 17.12.2013	36
	APPENDIX	
	Analysis of the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Thirty-sixth Report of the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment.	38

**COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL
JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2013-2014)**

SHRI HEMANAND BISWAL - CHAIRMAN

**MEMBERS
LOK SABHA**

2. Shri M. Anandan
3. Smt. Susmita Bauri
4. Shri Devidhan Besra
5. Shri Tarachand Bhagora
6. Smt. Rama Devi
7. Shri Gorakh Prasad Jaiswal
8. Shri Mohan Jena
9. Shri Dinesh Kashyap
- *10. Shri Madhu Kora
11. Shri Kirodi Lal Meena
12. Kumari Meenakshi Natarajan
13. Smt. Mausam Noor
14. Shri Wakchaure Bhausahab R.
15. Smt. Sushila Saroj
16. Shri N. Dharam Singh
17. Shri Pradeep Kumar Singh
18. Dr. Naramalli Sivaprasad
19. Shri Lalit Mohan Suklabaidya
20. Shri Kabir Suman
21. Vacant

**MEMBERS
RAJYA SABHA**

- **22. Shri K.R. Arjunan
23. Smt. Jharna Das Baidya
24. Shri Avtar Singh Karimpuri
25. Shri Mangala Kisan
- #26. Dr. V. Maitreyan
27. Shri Ahmad Saeed Malihabadi
28. Prof. Mrinal Miri
29. Shri Sukhendu Sekhar Roy
30. Shri Mohammad Shafi
31. Shri Shivpratap Singh
32. Shri Shankarbhai N. Vegad

* Shri Madhu Kora nominated to the Committee w.e.f. 18.9.2013.

** Shri K.R. Arjunan nominated to the Committee w.e.f. 7.9.2013.

Dr. V. Maitreyan ceased to be a Member of Committee w.e.f. 7.9.2013.

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

1. Shri Devender Singh - Joint Secretary
2. Smt. Anita Jain - Director
3. Shri Kusal Sarkar - Additional Director
4. Smt. Neena Juneja - Under Secretary

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment having been authorized by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, do present this Forty-First Report on the action taken by the Government on the observations/recommendations contained in the Thirty-sixty Report of the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2013-14) of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment (Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment).

2. The Thirty-sixty Report was presented to Lok Sabha and laid in Rajya Sabha on 2nd May, 2013. The Department of Social Justice and Empowerment furnished their replies indicating action taken on the recommendations contained in that Report on 2nd August, 2013. The Report was considered and adopted by the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment at their sitting held on 17th December, 2013.

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

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

NEW DELHI:

17th December, 2013
26th Agrahayana, 1935 (Saka)

HEMANAND BISWAL

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

CHAPTER - I

REPORT

1.1 This Report of the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment deals with the action taken by the Government on the observations/recommendations contained in the Thirty-sixth Report of the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants, 2013-2014 relating to the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment (Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment).

1.2 The Thirty-sixth Report was presented to Lok Sabha and laid in Rajya Sabha on 2nd May, 2013. It contained 12 observations/recommendations. Replies of Government in respect of all the observations/recommendations have been examined and are categorised as under: -

- (i) Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government:
Paragraph Nos. 2.16, 2.17, 2.18, 2.31, 2.49, 2.51, 2.52 2.65 and 2.66.
(Total 9 - Chapter II)
- (ii) Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies of the Government:
- Nil -
- (iii) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted.
Paragraph Nos. 2.32.
(Total 1 - Chapter IV)
- (iv) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government are of interim in nature:
Paragraph Nos. 2.50 and 2.71.
(Total 2 - Chapter V)

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

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

A. Reduced Annual budgetary allocation for the Department

Recommendation (Sl. No.2, Para No. 2.17)

1.5 The Committee noted that the Department had sought an allocation of Rs. 18550 crore for the annual plan 2013-14, which was curtailed to one third i.e. Rs. 6065 crore by the Planning Commission. The Committee further noted that the 12th Plan allocation to the Department is only Rs. 29400 crore inspite of the fact the three working groups of the Planning Commission constituted for finalising the 12th Plan allocation of the Department had proposed an allocation of Rs. 4.26 lakh crore for the Plan period. The Committee expressed their unhappiness at the meagre allocation made to the Department for the 12th Plan as well as the allocation made in the budget 2013-14. The Committee desired that the Department should convey their concern to the Planning Commission, pursue vigorously with the Planning Commission for increase in allocation of funds in the 12th Plan so that in the existing schemes for the welfare of SCs and OBCs get successfully implemented and the Department is able to undertake new initiatives and expansion of some schemes like Pre-Matric scholarship for SC and OBC students for 6, 7 and 8 classes. The Committee felt that this would go a long way in achieving the goal of helping the target groups in getting access to education and financial independence.

Reply of the Government

1.6 The Department of Social Justice and Empowerment in this reply have stated:

“As per guidelines issued by the Planning Commission, the Department was required to formulate the Annual Plan proposal (2013-14) with the gross budgetary support equivalent to 5%, 10% and 15% of the BE 2012-13. The Department of SJ&E had submitted its actual requirements at Rs.18,550 crore for 2013-14. But Planning Commission allocated Rs. 6065.00crore only for the year 2013-14.The concern raised by the Committee has been communicated to the Planning Commission for taking action as recommended.

Regarding the scholarship schemes, this Ministry has been making efforts to increase the budgetary allocations for schemes of Pre-matric and Post-matric scholarship. The Ministry has been constantly pursuing its pending demand for allocation of more funds for the OBC sector with the Planning Commission. Minister (SJ&E) vide his letter dated 27.7.2012 addressed to Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, had requested to increase the budgetary allocation under Pre-matric and Post-matric scholarship schemes for OBC students. The Planning Commission was once again reminded by Secretary (SJ&E) vide letter dated 4.1.2013 to consider our request for enhanced allocations under scholarship schemes for OBCs and this was further highlighted during the discussions on Annual Plan-2013-14 of the Ministry with the Planning Commission.

As regards enhancement of allocation under pre matric scholarship scheme for SC students studying in classes IX and X to the students in classes VI to VIII, a proposal, has been sent to Deputy Chairman Planning Commission for according 'in principle' approval for extending the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Pre-Matric Scholarship for SC students studying in Classes VI to VIII. Planning Commission has also been requested to allocate an additional outlay of Rs. 2529 crores. The 'in principle' approval is still awaited. Hon'ble Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment has last reminded Dy. Chairman, Planning Commission on 15.07.2013”.

1.7 The Committee note that despite the Department (Social Justice and Empowerment) constantly pursuing with Planning Commission for increased budgetary allocation for 2013-14, for the schemes for the welfare of SCs and OBCs, the Planning Commission has been far from responsive to the issues of social empowerment. Further, even the 'in-principle' approval for extending Pre-matric scholarship to Scheduled Castes students studying in Class VI to VIII taken up with Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, at Minister's (Social Justice and Empowerment) level has not been received. While expressing their disappointment at the callous approach of the Government, the Committee desire the Department to bring their recommendation to the notice of Planning Commission and vigorously pursue for increased allocation for the Department.

B. Non-utilization of funds in the Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for SC students.

Recommendation (S. No.5, Para No. 2.32)

1.8 The Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for SC students is an important scheme for the educational empowerment of SC students by providing financial assistance to Scheduled Caste students for pursuing research studies leading to MPhil, PhD and equivalent research degree in universities, research institutions and scientific institutions. The Committee were dismayed to note that against an allocation of Rs. 125 crore, RE was reduced to Rs. 25.00 crore but the Actual expenditure was nil in 2012-13. The explanation of the Department to the Committee was that the funds could not be released in 2012-13 as University Grants Commission (UGC), which is the implementing agency, neither furnished the list of beneficiaries nor the utilization certificate for Rs. 150 crore of the previous years. Taking a serious note on the tardy implementation of the scheme, the Committee recommended that the Ministry strictly monitor the scheme in coordination with the Ministry of Human Resource Development and UGC so as to ensure that the universities award the required number of fellowships to deserving SC students and that there is 100% utilization of funds.

1.9 The Ministry in their Action Taken Reply have stated:

“Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship Scheme for SC students is implemented by the University Grants Commission. Funds could not be released during the year 2012-13 as UGC did not furnish the required UCs and Rs. 153.20 crores as unspent balance was available with them during 2012-13. The Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment has taken up the matter with the Minister of Human Resource Development to instruct the University Grants Commission (UGC) for immediate rendition of the balance UCs and to implement the Scheme effectively”.

1.10 The Committee had earlier expressed concern at the non-utilization of funds allocated under the scheme of Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for SC students during 2012-13 due to non-submission of required UCs of previous year by UGC and desired the Ministry to strictly monitor the scheme in co-ordination with Ministry of Human Resource Development. The Committee have now been informed that the Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment has taken up the matter with the Minister of Human Resource Development to instruct UGC for immediate rendition of the balance UC to implement the scheme effectively. The Committee would like the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment also to take up the matter with the individual universities where slots are being allotted under Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship Scheme and give a status report on the utilization of funds and UCs submitted, to the Committee at the earliest.

C. Utilization of funds earmarked for the various Ministries under SCSP

Recommendation (Sl. No.8, Para No. 2.51)

1.11 The Committee noted that SCSP has been in force since 1979-80 with a view to ensuring proportionate flow of resources for the development of Scheduled Castes involving 62 Ministries. However in the year 2010, the number of Ministries, which were required to earmark funds in proportion to the Scheduled Caste population was curtailed from 62 to 25 following the recommendations of a task force constituted under Dr. Narendra Jadhav. 25 Central Ministries are now required to earmark funds in varying percentages of their plan outlay so that at least 16.2% of the total Gross Budgetary Support to Central Plan outlay gets earmarked under SCSP. However the Committee are shocked that, as per the data available, the proportion of funds earmarked under SCSP by the various Ministries stood at 9.32% in 2011-12, 9.49% in 2012-13 and 9.92% in 2013-14. The Committee also find that two main Ministries which are expected to play pivotal role in the development of Scheduled Castes i.e. Ministry of Rural Development and Ministry of Panchayati Raj have not been earmarking the stipulated funds under SCSP. The Ministry of Rural Development is allocating only 1/3 of the stipulated amount. While expressing strong disapproval, the Committee recommended that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment should play a proactive role not only in persuading the Central Ministries in allocating funds for SCSP as per stipulated norms but also help them in devising plans and projects for the upliftment of the target groups by strict monitoring and keep the Committee apprised.

1.12 The Ministry in their Action Taken Reply have stated:

“A Working Group was constituted by the Ministry to prepare draft Scheduled Castes Sub Plan Bill covering whole of India except J&K for providing legislative backing to earmark the Scheduled Castes population proportionate funds out of the Plan Outlay under SCSP. The Working Group has submitted draft SCSP Bill, 2013.

It has been proposed, *inter-alia*, to have an Administrative and Technical Support Unit in the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment for examining the SCSP proposals. The draft Bill has been discussed with the concerned Central Ministries/Departments and States/UTs. The proposed legislation will ensure stipulated amount being allocated to SCSP from the Plan Outlay of Central Ministries/Departments, as has been recommended by the Task Force which was set up under the chairmanship of Dr. Narendra Jadhav, Member, Planning Commission”.

“Minister (SJ&E) in a communication dated 18.03.2013 and again on 25.06.2013 addressed to Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission has expressed a view that this Ministry is prepared to assume the role of the Nodal Department as envisaged in the XII Plan and agrees to appraise and monitor the SCSP of all the participating Central Ministries/Departments as well as of the State Governments. The then Secretary (SJ&E) reiterated the same in the first meeting of IMC held in March, 2013”.

1.13 The Committee had expressed their unhappiness at the less earmarking of funds under SCSP by the various Ministries which stood at 9.32% in 2011-12, 9.49% in 2012-13 and 9.92% in 2013-14 against the stipulated 16.2% of the total expenditure. The Committee had desired that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment should play a proactive role not only in persuading the Central Ministries in allocating funds for SCSP as per the stipulated norms but help them in devising plans and projects for upliftment of the target groups. The Committee are happy that it has been proposed that an Administrative and Technical Support Unit in the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment for examining the SCSP proposals is being set up. Also a draft Bill is in the pipeline which would ensure stipulated amount being allocated to SCSP from the plan outlay of Central Ministries. The Committee desire that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment pursue the matter with the Planning Commission and take expeditious action in introducing the proposed legislation as also setting up the technical support unit for examining SCSP proposals.

D. More funds for education schemes of OBCs.

Recommendation (Sl. No.10, Para No. 2.65)

1.14 The Committee noted that the Backward Class division of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment runs the Post-Matric and Pre-Matric scholarship schemes as also scheme of Hostels for OBC boys and girls. The Committee find that only a small percentage of OBC students are getting access to the scholarships, and therefore the scope of the schemes need to be expanded to cover more children in accordance with the OBC population in the country. The Committee therefore recommended that more funds may be allocated under the education schemes for OBCs and the income ceiling revised so as to bring it at par with the ceilings for similar schemes for the SC students.

1.15 The Ministry in their Action Taken Reply have stated:

“As the requirement of funds of States/UTs every year has been substantially higher than the budgetary allocation, the matter was taken up by the Ministry in the past with Planning Commission for a higher allocation. During the last financial year i.e. 2012-13, against a demand of Rs. 466.00 Cr of the State Governments/UTs, the Budget Allocation was only Rs. 50.00 Cr for the scheme of Pre matric scholarship for OBCs. Due to persistent efforts of the Ministry, the allocation under the scheme has been enhanced to Rs.150.00 Cr in 2013-14. The scholarship rates and income ceiling under the scheme of Pre-Matric Scholarship could not be revised so far due to budgetary constraint. During the year, with the *in-principal* approval of the Planning Commission, a proposal for revision of Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme to enhance income ceiling and scholarship rates has already been initiated”.

“Under the scheme of Post Matric Scholarship for OBCs also, the requirement of funds projected by States/UTs every year has been substantially higher than the budgetary allocation. The matter was therefore taken up by the Ministry with the Planning Commission for a higher allocation. However, the allocation under the scheme was only Rs 625.00 cr. in 2012-13 against an estimated requirement of about Rs 2301.00 cr. Due to persistent efforts of this Ministry, the allocation under the scheme has been enhanced to Rs 900.00 Cr in 2013-14”.

1.16 The Committee had desired the Ministry to take up with the Planning Commission for allocation of more funds for the education schemes for OBCs and revision of income ceilings to bring at par with the ceiling for SC students. The Ministry have informed that with the “in-principle” approval of the Planning Commission for Pre-matric scholarship scheme for OBCs, a proposal to enhance income ceiling and scholarship rates has been initiated. The Committee desire the Ministry to vigorously pursue with Planning Commission to expedite the approval so that new income ceiling of scholarship rate could be brought in effect during the current financial year. The Committee also desire that the matter regarding release of more funds for the OBC sector in the next financial year 2013-14 should be pursued well in advance with the Planning Commission.

CHAPTER – II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Sl. No.1, Para No. 2.16)

2.1 The Committee are constrained to note the underutilization of funds in Plan allocations of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment for the year 2012-13. Against a budgetary allocation of Rs. 5415 crore for the Department, the revised estimates were reduced to Rs. 4750.76 crore and the actual expenditure was Rs. 4657.36 crore. As informed by the Department, the cut was due to new expenditure norms whereby the Department must spend 67% of the allocation under each scheme by December. The Secretary submitted before the Committee that the major default was in the schemes pertaining to the NGO sector, and the delay being caused by the fact that the recommendations about grants to NGOs came to the Department from the State Governments usually in December – January and processing of the proposals took place thereafter. Taking cognizance of the revised expenditure norms and in order to ensure that there is no reduction in allocation at RE stage in any scheme, the Committee recommend that the Department impress upon the State Governments to send forward the proposals of NGOs, well in advance i.e. in the first quarter of the year itself so that they could be processed and funds sanctioned before the third quarter of the year to avoid reduction in allocation. The Committee also desire that the Ministry bring these new expenditure norms to the notice of the States and persuade them to send their proposals early in the first quarter of the financial year.

Reply of the Government

2.2 In so far as the Scheme of Grant-in Aid to Voluntary Organizations working for SCs is concerned, during the current financial year, the States have been requested to submit complete proposals in one lot to the Ministry latest by 31.7.13, through a letter dated 24.5.2013 addressed to the concerned Secretaries to the State Governments. Proposals are awaited from all the States except Assam. The proposals from the Assam Government have been received on 31.7.13. The states are being reminded to send the complete proposals immediately.

Similarly, for the Scheme of Assistance to Voluntary Organization working for welfare of OBCs, this Ministry vide letter dated 20.5.2013 has requested all State Governments to submit the proposals of the NGOs by 30th August, 2013 so that the funds could be released on time. A reminder is being issued.

As regards Integrated Programme of Older persons also, the recommendations of the Standing Committee regarding early submission of the proposals of NGOs by the State Governments and UT administrations have been brought to their notice vide letter dated 31.7.2013 and proposals have been sought by 30.8.2013. Similarly, under the scheme of Assistance for Prevention of Alcoholism and Substance (Drugs) Abuse, in the year 2013-14 the proposals have been invited from the NGOs by 10.8.2013 vide letter dated 11.7.2013.

During the Regional Conferences held in May-June, 2013, the State Governments were also requested to expedite the proposals of NGOs in respect of all the schemes.

(Department of Social Justice and Empowerment O.M. No. 1-35/2013-Plan Division Dated 2nd August, 2013).

Recommendation (Sl. No. 2, Para No. 2.17)

2.3 The Committee note that the Department had sought an allocation of Rs. 18550 crore for the annual plan 2013-14, which was curtailed to one third i.e. Rs. 6065 crore by the Planning Commission. The Committee further note that the 12th Plan allocation to the Department is only Rs. 29400 crore inspite of the fact the three working groups of the Planning Commission constituted for finalising the 12th Plan allocation of the Department had proposed an allocation of Rs. 4.26 lakh crore for the Plan period. The Committee express their unhappiness at the meagre allocation made to the Department for the 12th Plan as well as the allocation made in the budget 2013-14. The Committee desire that the Department should convey their concern to the Planning Commission, pursue vigorously with the Planning Commission for increase in allocation of funds in the 12th Plan so that in the existing schemes for the welfare of SCs and OBCs get successfully implemented and the Department is able to undertake new initiatives and expansion of some schemes like Pre-Matric scholarship for SC and OBC students for 6, 7 and 8 classes. This would go a long way in achieving the goal of helping the target groups in getting access to education and financial independence.

Reply of the Government

2.4 As per guidelines issued by the Planning Commission, the Department was required to formulate the Annual Plan proposal (2013-14) with the gross budgetary support equivalent to 5%, 10% and 15% of the BE 2012-13. The Department of SJ&E had submitted its actual requirements at Rs.18,550 crore for 2013-14. But Planning Commission allocated Rs. 6065.00crore only for the year 2013-14.The concern raised by the Committee has been communicated to the Planning Commissionfor taking action as recommended.

Regarding the scholarship schemes, this Ministry has been making efforts to increase the budgetary allocations for schemes of Pre-matric and Post-matric scholarship. The Ministry has been constantly pursuing its pending demand for allocation of more funds for the OBC sector with the Planning Commission. Minister (SJ&E) vide his letter dated 27.7.2012 addressed to Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, had requested to increase the budgetary allocation under Pre-matric and Post-matric scholarship schemes for OBC students. The Planning Commission was once again reminded by Secretary (SJ&E) vide letter dated 4.1.2013 to consider our request for enhanced allocations under scholarship schemes for OBCs and this was further highlighted during the discussions on Annual Plan-2013-14 of the Ministry with the Planning Commission.

As regards enhancement of allocation under pre matric scholarship scheme for SC students studying in classes IX and X to the students in classes VI to VIII, a proposal, has been sent to Deputy Chairman Planning Commission for according 'in principle' approval for extending the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Pre-Matric Scholarship for SC students studying in Classes VI to VIII. Planning Commission has also been requested to allocate an additional outlay of Rs. 2529 crores. The 'in principle' approval is still awaited. Hon'ble Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment has last reminded Dy. Chairman, Planning Commission on 15.07.2013.

(Department of Social Justice and Empowerment O.M. No. 1-35/2013-Plan Division Dated 2nd August, 2013).

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Para 1.7 of Chapter – I of the Report)

Recommendation (Sl. No. 3, Para No. 2.18)

2.5 The Committee also feel that the synchronisation of the Central and State Governments schemes and pooling of resources for Social Sector Projects would improve the utilization of funds with better outputs. The Committee accordingly recommend that the matter should be taken up with the Planning Commission in this regard.

Reply of the Government

2.6 The recommendation of the Committee has been forwarded to the Planning Commission for taking suitable action on all the concerns raised by the Committee.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 4, Para No. 2.31)

2.7 The Committee note that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment has the responsibility of empowering the Scheduled Castes through its various schemes most important of them being the Post-Matric and Pre-Matric scholarship schemes. Allaying the worry of the Committee, the representatives of the Department testified that the State Governments / UTs Administrations 'have been advised to ensure that cash payment of scholarships is avoided and scholarships is paid through post offices/Bank accounts'. The representative further submitted that Government have decided to introduce a system of Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) to the individual beneficiaries under the scholarship schemes in their Aadhaar enabled Bank Accounts. The availability of digitized list of beneficiaries seeded with Aadhaar number would be a pre-requisite for release of funds. Having noted the fact that the scholarships reach the beneficiaries at the fag end of the year due to the cumbersome procedures, the Committee hope that the new system would help the SC students in getting the scholarship money early at the start of the academic session. The Committee however caution that digitized lists along with Aadhaar number of all beneficiaries of the scheme would need to be submitted by the State Governments in

a time bound manner for the success of the new system of Direct Benefit Transfer and the Department would have to monitor the same scrupulously.

Reply of the Government

2.8 Department of Social Justice & Empowerment, in the regional meetings held with the Principal Secretaries/Secretaries of the Department of Social Welfare/SC Welfare/BC Welfare of the States/UTs held in May-June 2013, has discussed the modalities for implementing the Direct Benefits Transfer. A timetable to follow the modalities would be prepared for the States/UTs in consultation with them.

(Department of Social Justice and Empowerment O.M. No. 1-35/2013-Plan Division Dated 2nd August, 2013).

Recommendation (Sl. No. 6, Para No. 2.49)

2.9 The Committee note that the Central Scheme of Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub-Plan was introduced in 1980, with the main objective to give a thrust to family oriented schemes for economic development of the Scheduled Castes below the poverty line. The Committee are however dismayed to note that the allocation of Rs. 1200 crore for the scheme in BE 2012-13 was reduced to 1050 core and the release of funds was only Rs. 872 crore due to States not meeting the stipulated conditions in submission of UCs, audited figure of expenditure, etc. The Committee express their disapproval of the lackadaisical approach of States in submission of documents resulting in less release of crucial funds meant for historically disadvantaged sections of society. The Committee recommend that the Department should take up the matter with the defaulting State Governments at higher level and impress upon them to timely submit the documents so that the entire amount allocated under the scheme gets utilized for approved purposes.

Reply of the Government

2.10 Regular reminders have been issued at the levels of Joint Secretary to all the States who are availing assistance under the Scheme and especially with the States like Bihar, Goa, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Manipur, Punjab, Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh, Chandigarh, Delhi and Pudducherry who have availed either no or partial Central Assistance during 2012-13. The matter was also taken up by the Secretary (Social Justice & Empowerment) with the Chief Secretaries of six major States viz. Bihar, Jharkhand, Haryana, Odisha, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh covered under the Scheme.

The matter of not furnishing the stipulated documents in time was also discussed in the Annual Regional Review Meetings with the Social Welfare Secretaries of State Governments/UT Administrations held in May-June 2013 in New Delhi.

(Department of Social Justice and Empowerment O.M. No. 1-35/2013-Plan Division Dated 2nd August, 2013)

Recommendation (Sl. No. 8, Para No. 2.51)

2.11 The Committee note that SCSP has been in force since 1979-80 with a view to ensuring proportionate flow of resources for the development of Scheduled Castes involving 62 Ministries. However in the year 2010, the number of Ministries, which were required to earmark funds in proportion to the Scheduled Caste population was curtailed from 62 to 25 following the recommendations of a task force constituted under Dr. Narendra Jadhav. 25 Central Ministries are now required to earmark funds in varying percentages of their plan outlay so that at least 16.2% of the total Gross Budgetary Support to Central Plan outlay gets earmarked under SCSP. However the Committee are shocked that, as per the data available, the proportion of funds earmarked under SCSP by the various Ministries stands at 9.32% in 2011-12, 9.49% in 2012-13 and 9.92% in 2013-14. The Committee also find that two main Ministries which are expected to play pivotal role in the development of Scheduled Castes i.e. Ministry of Rural Development and

Ministry of Panchayati Raj have not been earmarking the stipulated funds under SCSP. The Ministry of Rural Development is allocating only 1/3 of the stipulated amount. While expressing strong disapproval, the Committee recommend that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment should play a proactive role not only in persuading the Central Ministries in allocating funds for SCSP as per stipulated norms but also help them in devising plans and projects for the upliftment of the target groups by strict monitoring and keep the Committee apprised.

Reply of the Government

2.12 A Working Group was constituted by the Ministry to prepare draft Scheduled Castes Sub Plan Bill covering whole of India except J&K for providing legislative backing to earmark the Scheduled Castes population proportionate funds out of the Plan Outlay under SCSP. The Working Group has submitted draft SCSP Bill, 2013. It has been proposed, *inter-alia*, to have an Administrative and Technical Support Unit in the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment for examining the SCSP proposals. The draft Bill has been discussed with the concerned Central Ministries/Departments and States/UTs. The proposed legislation will ensure stipulated amount being allocated to SCSP from the Plan Outlay of Central Ministries/Departments, as has been recommended by the Task Force which was set up under the chairmanship of Dr. Narendra Jadhav, Member, Planning Commission.

Minister (SJ&E) in a communication dated 18.03.2013 and again on 25.06.2013 addressed to Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission has expressed a view that this Ministry is prepared to assume the role of the Nodal Department as envisaged in the XII Plan and agrees to appraise and monitor the SCSP of all the participating Central Ministries/Departments as well as of the State Governments. The then Secretary (SJ&E) reiterated the same in the first meeting of IMC held in March, 2013.

(Department of Social Justice and Empowerment O.M. No. 1-35/2013-Plan Division Dated 2nd August, 2013).

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Para 1.13 of Chapter – I of the Report)

Recommendation (Sl. No. 9, Para No. 2.52)

2.13 The Committee further note that the average budgetary allocation actually earmarked by the 25 Ministries is 14.30% which is about 2% less than the stipulated 16.2%. The Committee note that the Planning Commission has set up an inter-Ministerial Committee to look into the matter. The Committee desire that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment take up the matter with the Planning Commission so that the IMC examine the issue in right earnest and give its recommendations to Planning Commission in a time bound manner.

Reply of the Government

2.14 The IMC with Secretary (SJ&E) as one of the members has so far held three meetings. It is expected that the Committee will soon finalize its report and submit it to the Planning Commission. Minister (SJ&E) vide her DO letters dated 18.03.2013 and 25.06.2013 has requested the Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission for appropriate revision of SCSP guidelines.

(Department of Social Justice and Empowerment O.M. No. 1-35/2013-Plan Division Dated 2nd August, 2013).

Recommendation (Sl. No.10, Para No. 2.65)

2.15 The Committee note that the Backward Class division of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment runs the Post-Matric and Pre-Matric scholarship schemes as also scheme of Hostels for OBC boys and girls. The Committee find that only a small

percentage of OBC students are getting access to the scholarships, and therefore the scope of the schemes need to be expanded to cover more children in accordance with the OBC population in the country. The Committee therefore recommend that more funds may be allocated under the education schemes for OBCs and the income ceiling revised so as to bring it at par with the ceilings for similar schemes for the SC students.

Reply of the Government

2.16 As the requirement of funds of States/UTs every year has been substantially higher than the budgetary allocation, the matter was taken up by the Ministry in the past with Planning Commission for a higher allocation. During the last financial year i.e. 2012-13, against a demand of Rs. 466.00 Cr of the State Governments/UTs, the Budget Allocation was only Rs. 50.00 Cr for the scheme of Pre matric scholarship for OBCs. Due to persistent efforts of the Ministry, the allocation under the scheme has been enhanced to Rs.150.00 Cr in 2013-14. The scholarship rates and income ceiling under the scheme of Pre-Matric Scholarship could not be revised so far due to budgetary constraint. During the year, with the *in-principal* approval of the Planning Commission, a proposal for revision of Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme to enhance income ceiling and scholarship rates has already been initiated.

the scheme of Post Matric Scholarship for OBCs also, the requirement of funds projected by States/UTs every year has been substantially higher than the budgetary allocation. The matter was therefore taken up by the Ministry with the Planning Commission for a higher allocation. However, the allocation under the scheme was only Rs 625.00 cr. in 2012-13 against an estimated requirement of about Rs 2301.00 cr. Due to persistent efforts of this Ministry, the allocation under the scheme has been enhanced to Rs 900.00 Cr in 2013-14.

(Department of Social Justice and Empowerment O.M. No. 1-35/2013-Plan Division Dated 2nd August, 2013).

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Para 1.16 of Chapter – I of the Report)

Recommendation (Sl. No. 11, Para No. 2.66)

2.17 The Committee are deeply concerned that the BE for OBC boys and girls hostel scheme has remained static at Rs. 45 crore from 2010-11 to 2013-14, but the RE has shown downward trend ranging progressively from Rs. 33 crore to Rs. 15 crore. What disturbs the Committee most is that the expenditure continued to decline in these years from Rs. 25.59 crore to Rs. 14.76 crore. The Committee were apprised that the scheme is under revision and there is a proposal to build integrated hostels and revise the period of construction and cost of construction to bring it at par with the similar scheme for the SC students. Obviously, this would involve considerable increase in allocation for the scheme. The Committee recommend early revision of the scheme so that availability of hostel facilities helps in the educational development of OBCs. Further, the anxiety and deep concern of the Committee may be brought to the notice of all concerned so that adequate funds are sanctioned for the successful implementation of the scheme.

Reply of the Government

2.18 The Scheme is presently under revision on the pattern of the Scheme of Construction of Hostels for Scheduled Castes students. It is proposed to revise the financial norms and the period of construction. Further, while sanctioning hostels, preference will be given to integrated hostels (which are part of established educational institutions) over stand-alone hostels. Accordingly, hostels are also proposed to be sanctioned to universities/ educational institutions as extension to the existing hostels with

the aim of having integrated hostels as far as possible. During the Regional Conferences in May-June, 2013 with State Secretaries, all States/UTs have been requested to send the proposals for construction of Hostels for OBC Boys and Girls.

(Department of Social Justice and Empowerment O.M. No. 1-35/2013-Plan Division Dated 2nd August, 2013).

CHAPTER – III

**OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE
TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT**

- NIL -

CHAPTER – IV

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED AND HAVE BEEN COMMENTED UPON BY THE COMMITTEE IN CHAPTER – I

Recommendation (Sl. No. 5, Para No. 2.32)

4.1 The Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for SC students is an important scheme for the educational empowerment of SC students by providing financial assistance to Scheduled Caste students for pursuing research studies leading to MPhil, PhD and equivalent research degree in universities, research institutions and scientific institutions. The Committee however are dismayed to note that against an allocation of Rs. 125 crore, RE was reduced to Rs. 25.00 crore but the Actual expenditure was nil in 2012-13. The explanation of the Department to the Committee was that the funds could not be released in 2012-13 as University Grants Commission (UGC), which is the implementing agency, neither furnished the list of beneficiaries nor the utilization certificate for Rs. 150 crore of the previous years. Taking a serious note on the tardy implementation of the scheme, the Committee recommend that the Ministry strictly monitor the scheme in coordination with the Ministry of Human Resource Development and UGC so as to ensure that the universities award the required number of fellowships to deserving SC students and that there is 100% utilization of funds.

Reply of the Government

4.2 Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship Scheme for SC students is implemented by the University Grants Commission. Funds could not be released during the year 2012-13 as UGC did not furnish the required UCs and Rs. 153.20 crores as unspent balance was available with them during 2012-13. The Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment has taken up the matter with the Minister of Human Resource Development to instruct the

University Grants Commission (UGC) for immediate rendition of the balance UCs and to implement the Scheme effectively.

(Department of Social Justice and Empowerment O.M. No. 1-35/2013-Plan Division Dated 2nd August, 2013).

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Para 1.10 of Chapter – I of the Report)

CHAPTER – V

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

Recommendation (S.No.7, Para No. 2.50)

5.1 As per the data available to the Committee as many as 13 States fell short of earmarking funds in proportion to SC population during 2010-11 and 16 States during 2011-12. The Committee are dismayed that even after so many years of implementation of the scheme, the number of defaulting States is very high and despite the fact that the development of these disadvantaged groups remains the focal point of the developmental strategy. As approval of the State Plans is done by the Planning Commission, the Committee desire that the Planning Commission devise some mechanism of penal action and accountability against the erring States so that they strictly enforce the guidelines in allocating funds in proportion to their SC population. The Committee further recommend that the Department should take expeditious action to revamp the scheme in the light of the recommendations made by the National Institute of Rural Development, Hyderabad who have recently carried out a study in this regard and the keep the Committee apprised.

Reply of the Government

5.2 The recommendation of the Committee has been forwarded to the Planning Commission. To effectively implement the Scheduled Caste Sub Plan/Tribal Sub-Plan, the essential instrument for accomplishing inclusive growth, a Secretary level Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) had been constituted by the Planning Commission vide Order dated 17.01.2013 , whose Terms of Reference are:-

- (i) To suggest new and innovative schemes, which have potential to bridge the gaps in development between SCs/STs and others and;
- (ii) To prepare guidelines for effective implementation of SCSP during 12th Plan.

The IMC has so far held three meetings to firm up the revision of Guidelines for effective implementation on SCSP during 12th Five Year Plan and circulated a preliminary Draft Report of the Committee in the third meeting of the IMC held on 17.6.2013.

The Ministry has undertaken an exercise for revision of the extant guidelines of the Scheme of SCA to SCSP in pursuance of the Evaluation Study report of NIRD, Hyderabad. A draft Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) Memo on proposed revisions has been circulated vide OM dated 25-06-2013 to concerned Ministries/Departments for inter-ministerial consultations.

(Department of Social Justice and Empowerment O.M. No. 1-35/2013-Plan Division Dated 2nd August, 2013).

Recommendation (Sl. No.12, Para No. 2.71)

5.3 The Committee note that in pursuance of their earlier recommendation in the 28th Report (14th Lok Sabha) on the “Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Bill, 2007” and the recommendation of the working group on 11th Plan for formulation of Centrally Sponsored Scheme for construction of old age homes, an outlay of Rs. 80 crore was earmarked in the BE of 2012-13 and the Department had approached the Planning Commission for ‘in principle’ approval of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme. Surprisingly, in a recent development, the Planning Commission taking a different position on the issue have come to the view that running old age homes is largely a non-recurring expenditure and it would therefore be more appropriate for the State Governments to run the old age homes. Although the Committee acknowledge that the onus for running the old age homes should be on the State Governments, yet they feel that liberal Central Assistance should be provided for construction of old age homes in each district so that the scheme takes off and constraint of funds does not become a hindrance in execution of the scheme by the States. The Committee are happy to note that certain new schemes are proposed to be

launched for the senior citizens during 12th Plan. Considering the growing ageing population and the changing socio-economic milieu and the impact of globalized world on our cultural mores, the Committee consider it imperative that the schemes contemplated are implemented expeditiously. The Committee also desire that immediate steps such as setting up help-lines for senior citizens should be taken.

Reply of the Government

5.4 The Working Group on Social Welfare constituted by the Planning Commission for formulation of the 12th Five Year Plan (2012-17) had recommended a number of new Schemes for the welfare of Senior Citizens including formulation of a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for establishment of old age homes in each district. The Planning Commission has included formulation and implementation of the following new Schemes during 12th Five Year Plan:

- (i) Awareness generation for the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007;
- (ii) Setting up Helplines for Senior Citizens at the National and District Levels;
- (iii) Setting up a National Commission for Senior Citizens;
- (iv) Creation of a National Trust for the Aged; and
- (v) Scheme for Implementation of various provisions of the New National Policy on Senior Citizens;

The Ministry has constituted an Expert Committee to formulate the above mentioned Schemes. The Expert Committee has been asked to complete its task expeditiously.

(Department of Social Justice and Empowerment O.M. No. 1-35/2013-Plan Division Dated 2nd August, 2013)

NEW DELHI:

17th December, 2013
26th Agrahayana , 1935 (Saka)

HEMANAND BISWAL

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

MINUTES OF THE FIFTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT HELD ON TUESDAY, 17th DECEMBER, 2013

The Committee met from 1500 hrs. to 1515 hrs. in Main Committee Room, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SHRI HEMANAND BISWAL - CHAIRMAN

**MEMBERS
LOK SABHA**

2. Shri M. Anandan
3. Shri Tarachand Bhagora
4. Smt. Rama Devi
5. Shri Mohan Jena
6. Shri Lalit Mohan Suklabaidya

**MEMBERS
RAJYA SABHA**

7. Smt. Jharna Das Baidya
8. Shri Avtar Singh Karimpuri
9. Prof. Mrinal Miri
10. Shri Sukhendu Sekhar Roy
11. Shri Mohammad Shafi
12. Shri Shankarbhai N. Vegad

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

1. Shri Devender Singh - Joint Secretary
2. Smt. Anita Jain - Director
3. Shri Kushal Sarkar - Additional Director

2. At the outset, the Chairman welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee and apprised them that the sitting has been convened for consideration and adoption of the draft Thirty-ninth Report on the subject "Implementation of schemes for welfare of Senior Citizens", Fortieth Action Taken Report on Demands for Grants, 2013-14 of the Department of Disability Affairs (Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment), Forty-first Action Taken Report on Demands for Grants, 2013-14 of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment (Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment) and Forty-second Action Taken Report on Demands for Grants, 2013-14 of the Ministry of Minority Affairs.

3. Thereafter, the Committee considered and adopted the Thirty-ninth, Fortieth, Forty-first and Forty-second Report of the Committee without any amendment.

4. The Committee authorized the Chairman to finalize the draft Reports and present the same to Parliament.

The Committee then adjourned.

APPENDIX

ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE THIRTY-SIXTH REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (FIFTEENTH LOK SABHA)

	Total	Percentage
I. Total number of Recommendations	12	
II. Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government (Paragraph Nos. 2.16, 2.17, 2.18, 2.31, 2.49, 2.51, 2.52, 2.65 and 2.66.	9	75.00
III. Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies - Nil	0	0
IV. Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted.	1	8.33
V. Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government are interim in nature (Paragraph Nos. 2.50 and 2.71).	2	16.67