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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
(2014-2015)**

(SIXTEENTH LOK SABHA)

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND
EMPOWERMENT**

**(DEPARTMENT OF EMPOWERMENT OF PERSONS
WITH DISABILITIES)**

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS
(2015-2016)**

TWELFTH REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

April, 2015/Vaisakha, 1937 (Saka)

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(2015-2016)

Presented to Lok Sabha on 28.04.2015

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 28.04.2015



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

April, 2015/Vaisakha, 1937 (Saka)

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**COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE
AND EMPOWERMENT (2014-2015)**

SHRI RAMESH BAIS - CHAIRMAN

**MEMBERS
LOK SABHA**

2. Shri Jasvantsinh Sumanbhai Bhabhor
3. Kunwar Bharatendra
4. Shri Dilip Singh Bhuria
5. Shri Santokh Singh Chaudhary
- #6. Shri Sher Singh Ghubaya
7. Shri Jhina Hikaka
8. Shri Prakash Babanna Hukkeri
9. Shri Bhagwant Khuba
10. Shri Sadashiv Lokhande
11. Smt. Maragatham K.
12. Shri Kariya Munda
13. Prof. A.S.R. Naik
14. Shri Asaduddin Owaisi
15. Sadhvi Savitri Bai Phule
16. Dr. Udit Raj
17. Smt. Satabdi Roy
18. Prof. Sadhu Singh
19. Smt. Neelam Sonkar
- #20. Smt. Mamta Thakur
- *21. Shri Tejpratap Singh Yadav

**MEMBERS
RAJYA SABHA**

22. Smt. Jharna Das Baidya
- **23. Dr. Tazeen Fatma
24. Shri Ahamed Hassan
25. Smt. Sarojini Hembram
26. Shri Prabhat Jha
27. Smt. Mohsina Kidwai
28. Shri Praveen Rashtrapal
29. Shri Nand Kumar Sai
30. Smt. Vijila Sathyananth
31. Smt. Wansuk Syiem

* Nominated w.e.f. 22.12.2014

** Nominated w.e.f. 29.1.2015

Nominated w.e.f. 25.3.2015

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

1. Shri Ashok Kumar Singh - Joint Secretary
2. Shri Ashok Sajwan - Director
3. Shri Kushal Sarkar - Additional Director
4. Smt. Neena Juneja - Under Secretary

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment (2014-15) having been authorized by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, do present this Twelfth Report on Demands for Grants for the year 2015-16 of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment).

2. The Committee considered the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment for the current year i.e. 2014-15 which was laid on the Table of the House on *i.e.*, 20.03.2015 in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. Thereafter, the Committee took evidence of the representatives of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment) on 30.03.2015. The Committee considered and adopted the Report at their sitting held on 24.4.2015.

3. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the officers of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities for placing before them the detailed written notes on the subject and furnishing the information the Committee desired and tendering evidence before the Committee in connection with the examination of the Demands for Grants.

4. For facility of reference and convenience, the observations and recommendations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report and have also been reproduced in a consolidated form in Appendix to the Report.

NEW DELHI;

24 April, 2015

4 Vaisakha, 1937 (Saka)

RAMESH BAIS
Chairman,
Standing Committee on
Social Justice and
Empowerment

DEPARTMENT OF DISABILITY AFFAIRS

INTRODUCTORY

1.1 The Department of Disability Affairs was created on 12th May, 2012 under Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment for greater focus on policy, programmes and implementation of Schemes for empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (PwD). Section 2(t) of The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, (also referred to as PwD Act, 1995) defines “Person with Disability” as a person suffering from not less than 40% of any disability as certified by a medical authority. The disability being (a) blindness (b) low vision (c) leprosy cured (d) hearing impairment (e) loco-motor disability (f) mental illness (g) mental retardation (h) autism (i) cerebral palsy or (j) a combination of any two or more of g), h) and i) (Section 2(i) of the PwD Act, 1995 read alongwith Section 2(j) of The National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999).

1.2 As per the census 2011, there are 2.68 crore Persons with Disabilities in India – about 1.18 crore are female and about 1.5 crore are male. Rehabilitation of PwD being largely a State subject, the following constitutional provisions apply to all persons including persons with disability:-

- (1) The Constitution of India guarantees equality, freedom, justice and dignity of all citizens, including PwDs.

- (2) Article 41: states that the State shall make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, and in other cases of undeserved want.
- (3) “Relief of the disabled and unemployable” also figures in 7th Schedule (“State List”), 11th Schedule (Panchyats), 12th Schedule (Municipalities)

The following Acts govern various aspects of disabilities:

- (4) Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) Act, 1992.
- (5) Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) (PWD) Act, 1995.
- (6) National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities (NT) Act, 1999.
- (7) Mental Health Act, 1987.

1.3 Some of the major activities of the Department of Disability Affairs are:-

1. To act as the nodal Department for matters pertaining to Disability and Persons with Disabilities:
2. Special Schemes aimed at rehabilitation and social, educational and economic empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, e.g. supply of aids and appliances, scholarships, residential schools, skill training, concessional loans and subsidy for self-employment etc.
3. Education and Training of Rehabilitation Professionals.

4. International Conventions and Agreements on matters, dealt with in the Department e.g. United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
5. Awareness generation, research, evaluation and training in regard to subjects allocated to the Department.
6. Charitable and Religious Endowments and promotion and development of Voluntary Efforts pertaining to subjects, allocated to the Department.
7. International Conventions and Agreements on matters dealt with in the Department. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
8. Awareness generation, research, evaluation and training in regard to subjects allocated to the Department.
9. Charitable and Religious Endowments, and promotion and development of Voluntary Effort pertaining to subjects allocated to the Department.

Following Acts/Legislations/Statutory Bodies/PSUs/Autonomous Bodies/National Institutes also come under the Department:

10. Acts/Legislations

- (i) The Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992 (34 of 1992);
- (ii) The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 (1 of 1996);
- (iii) The National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999 (44 of 1999).

11. Statutory Bodies

- (i) The Rehabilitation Council of India.
- (ii) The Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities.
- (iii) The National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities.

12. PSUs/Autonomous Bodies

- (i) The National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation - registered under Section 25 of the Companies Act, 1956
- (ii) Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation, Kanpur.

13. National Institutes

- (i) Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Institute for Physically Handicapped, New Delhi.
- (ii) National Institute for the Orthopaedically Handicapped, Kolkata.
- (iii) National Institute of Visually Handicapped, Dehradun.
- (iv) National Institute of Mentally Handicapped, Secundrabad.
- (v) Ali Yavar Jung National Institute for the Hearing Handicapped, Mumbai.
- (vi) Swami Vivekanand National Institute of Rehabilitation, Training and Research, Cuttack.
- (vii) National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities, Chennai.
- (viii) The Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre, New Delhi.

REPORT

A. GENERAL PERFORMANCE OF THE DEPARTMENT

2.1 The BE for the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities for 2014-15 was at Rs. 565 crore (Plan), RE was Rs. 375 crore (Plan) while expenditure was Rs. 338.68 crore. An allocation of Rs. 565.4 crore (Plan) has been made for the Department for the year 2015-16. The following statement gives Plan allocation and expenditure for the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities during 2014-15 and BE 2015-16.

(Table No. 2.1)

	Programme/Schemes	Plan			Rs. In crores
		BE 2014-15	RE 2014-15	Actual Exp. ending 31.03.2015	BE 2015-16
1	Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporations	20.00	0.01	0.00	21.00
2	Assistance To Disabled Persons for purchase of Fitting Devises (ADIP)	110.00	100.00	101.28	125.50
3	Augment Corpus Fund Of National Trust	1.0	0.0	0.00	0.98
4	Awareness Generating And Publicity	3.0	2.0	0.71	5.00
5	Deen Dayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme	90.00	50.50	50.08	60.00
6	Employment For Physically Challenged	2.00	0.50	0.50	0.50
7	Establishment Of Institute Of Sign Language	4.00	0.01	0.00	4.00
8	Establishment of A College For Deaf In each 5 Regions in the Country	0.50	0.01	0.00	5.00
9	Establishment Of Centre For Disability Sports	1.00	0.01	0.00	0.50
10	Establishment OF Micro Enterprises Incubation Centres for Persons with Disabilities	1.00	0.01	0.00	0.00
11	Establishment Of National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation	1.00	0.01	0.00	0.99
12	Establishment Of National Missions State	1.00	0.01	0.00	0.01
13	Free Coaching For SWD	3.00	1.00	0.00	0.50
14	Grants to Associate For Rehabilitation under National Trust (ARUNIM)	2.00	0.01	0.00	0.01
15	Indian Spinal Injury Centre	2.00	2.00	1.80	2.00

16	Research On Disability Related Technology	1.00	0.01	0.00	0.50
17	Information And Mass Education Cell	20.00	10.00	8.10	10.00
18	In Service Training And Sensitization of State Govts, Local Bodies and other Service Providers	1.00	0.01	0.00	2.00
19	National Handicapped Finance & Development Corp.	37.00	37.00	36.58	35.00
20	National Institute For Disabled	105.00	87.00	78.97	105.25
21	National Overseas Scholarship for PwDs	3.0	1.00	0.00	0.50
22	National Program For Persons with Disabilities	5.00	0.02	0.00	5.00
23	Post-Matric Scholarship for Students with Disabilities	12.00	2.00	0.00	12.00
24	Pre Matric Scholarship For SWDs	12.00	1.00	0.00	12.00
25	Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for PwDs	17.0	10.0	7.46	8.00
26	Rehabilitation Council Of India	5.00	3.00	3.72	4.00
27	Scholarship For Top Class Education for PwDs	3.00	1.00	0.00	0.50
28	Schemes Arising Out Of The Implementation of the Persons with Disabilities Act 1995 (SIPDA)	80.00	61.41	43.09	135.00
29	Secretariat Social Services DD	5.00	3.45	2.53	4.00
30	Setting up of State Spinal Injury Centres	0.50	0.01	0.00	0.50
31	Support For Establishment/Modernization of Braille Presses	13.00	2.00	3.86	4.66
32	Establishment Of National/Centre of Universal Design & Barrier Free Environment	4.00	0.01	0.00	0.50
	Total	565	375	338.68	565.4

2.2 Under the Non-Plan head, the following table shows the expenditure under the head for 2013-14 and BE 2014-15:

(Table No. 2.2)

(Non Plan – Rs. In lakhs)

Sl.No.		BE 2014-15	RE 2014-15	Exp. upto 31.03.2015	BE 2015-16
	Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities				
1	Secretariat	1289.00	757.00	717.00	1162.00
2	National Institutes for Disabled Persons	5016.00	5451.50	5448.00	5512.00

3	Rehabilitation Council of India	175.00	165.00	165.00	190.00
4	Handling Clearance of Duty Free Consignments under Bilateral Agreements	69.50	1.00	0.00	10.00
5	Chief Commissioner for Physically Disabled	239.50	231.50	215.00	280.00
	Total	6789.00	6606.00	6546.00	7154.00

Main Reasons for Less-Utilization of Funds

The Department has furnished the following reasons for lesser utilization of funds :-

- a) Most of the new schemes have been launched at the fag end of 2014-15 and by the time these schemes were approved allocation to the Department was reduced at RE stage.
- b) Insufficient proposals received to utilize funding under SC/ST/NE Components.
- c) Inadequate/late/incomplete proposals from States/UTs despite constant follow-up; serious delay in responses and recommendations from States/UTs.
- d) Non-furnishing of Utilization Certificates of past releases by NGOs/State Governments.
- e) Severe and prolonged vacancies against sanctioned staff in the Department at Section Officer/PS and Assistant level, thereby seriously hampering the speed of work.

2.3 The Department has given the following table on the Schemes which were curtailed as per RE 2014-15 are as under:

(Table No. 2.3)

			(Rs in crores)
	Programme/Schemes	BE 2014-15	RE 2014-15
1	Deen Dayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS)	90.00	50.50
2	National Institutes for Disabled Persons	105.00	87.00
3	AIDS and Appliances for the Handicapped (ADIP)	110	100
4	Scheme arising out of the Implementation of Persons with Disabilities Act (SIPDA)	80.00	61.41

5	Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation (ALIMCO)	20.00	0.01
6	Rehabilitation Council of India	5.00	3.00
7	Establishment of Indian Sign Language Research & Training Centre (ISLRTC)	4.00	0.01
8	Establishment of National Centre of Universal Design and Barrier Free Environment	4.00	0.01
9	Employment for Physically Challenged	2.00	0.50
10	Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for PwDs	17.00	10.00
11	Post-Matric Scholarship for students with disabilities	12.00	2.00
12	Top Class Education for PwDs	3.00	1.00
13	National Overseas Scholarship for PwDs	3.00	1.00
14	Support for establishment/modernization/capacity augmentation of Braille Presses	13.00	2.00
15	Establishment of College for Deaf in each of the five zones of the country	0.50	0.01
16	Establishment of Centre for Disability Sports	1.00	0.01
17	Augment corpus fund of National Trust	1.0	00
18	Setting up of State Spinal Injury Centres	0.50	0.01
19	Establishment of National Mission, State Missions and District Coordinators	1.00	0.01
20	Establishment of National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation	1.00	0.01
21	Establishment of Micro Enterprise incubation Centres for persons with disabilities	1.00	0.01
22	Awareness generation and publicity	3.00	2.00
23	In-service training and sensitization of key functionaries	1.00	0.01
24	Grant to Association for Rehabilitation Under National Trust Initiative of Marketing (ARUNIM) for supporting its marketing activities	2.00	0.01
25	Research on disability related technology, products and issues	1.00	0.01
26	Pre-Matric Scholarships for SwDs	12.00	1.00
27	Free Coaching for Persons with Disabilities	3.00	1.00
28	National Programme for Persons with Disabilities	5.00	0.02

2.4 When the Secretary was asked about the cut at RE stage, he stated:

"Sir, I would like to come to the curtailments being done. The curtailments are applicable not only to our Department but the same have been made applicable to the entire social sector. You will find that these reductions have been made in all the social sector departments. It is a decision over which we do not have much control. We strongly put forth one point before the Ministry of Finance, but these are the decisions that are major decisions. We do put forth our point over such decisions, request the Ministry of Finance not to go for funds curtailments in our Department. But they have their own certain constraints. You will understand this. Keeping in view the financial position prevailing in the entire country, going thrust to a certain sector could naturally be possible only at the cost of the other. In this regard, we on our part, make strong efforts".

2.5 Regarding formation of an action plan to ensure that the funds are optimally utilized, the Secretary stated that:

"Presently, if further 200 crore rupees are provided to us, we may spend the amount on our schemes immediately. For this, we have our preparedness, but if Hon'ble Committee desire, an action plan over this would be made and placed before the Committee within a period of a month".

2.6 When enquired about the status of some new Schemes proposed in the budget, which could not take off, the Ministry stated as under:

"Following Schemes of the Department have not yet taken off and their status is tabulated below:

(Table No. 2.6)

Sl. No	Scheme	Status
1	Scholarships for Top Class Education for SWDs studying in premier higher educational institutions	The Schemes have been recommended by the Planning Commission with certain observations. The schemes have been modified accordingly and will be implemented from the year 2015-16.
2	Free Coaching for SwDs	Do
3	National Programme for Persons with disabilities	The Scheme is being re-formulated in accordance with the observations of the Planning Commission. However, the Scheme will be implemented from the year 2015-16.
4	Establishment of National Mission, State Missions and District Coordinators	Scheme is being formulated.
5	Establishment of National Institute of Mental Health	Land for the institute has been identified and is being allotted to Department. For DPR, CPWD, is being

	Rehabilitation	nominated to submit estimates.
6	Establishment of Micro Enterprise incubation Centers for Persons with Disabilities	Scheme is being formulated.
7	Grant to Association for Rehabilitation Under National Trust Initiative of Marketing (ARUNIM) for supporting its marketing activities	As ARUNIM has not been created with the approval of Cabinet, it is not entitled for grants-in-aid, so the Scheme may be dropped.
8	Augment Corpus Fund of National Trust	Proposal has been received from National Trust and SFC Note is being formulated.
9	National Programme for Persons with Disabilities)	An EFC Note was Circulated on 25.11.13. Comments from HRD, Planning Commission., DST, SJE received. As per the Planning Commission's observations, the Scheme needs to be redrawn/revise in consultation with other Ministries and is likely to be made operational in 2015-16.
10	Establishment of Indian Sign Language Research and Training (ISLRTC)	The proposal was discussed by the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) under the Chairmanship of Secretary (Expenditure) in its meeting held on July 18, 2014. Based on the EFC recommendations, draft CCEA Note containing the proposal was circulated to Department of Expenditure and PMO, for comments. Based on the comments received, it has been decided by the Ministry to integrate ISLRTC with the Regional Centre of AYJNIHH at New Delhi. Accordingly, AYJNIHH, Mumbai was asked to submit a suitable proposal to the Ministry. As the proposal received from AYJNIHH contains creation of posts, the file has been referred to Department of Expenditure. Department of Expenditure vide note dated 06.04.2015 has conveyed approval for 18 posts against the proposal of the Department for 31 posts. Further action in the matter is being taken accordingly. As the proposal was not finalized during 2014-15, the funds allocated could not be utilized. The budget allocation for ISLRTC during 12 th Five-year plan is Rs 20 crore.
11	Establishment of a National Centre of Universal Design and Barrier Free Environment	The proposal was discussed by the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) under the Chairmanship of Secretary (Expenditure) in its meeting held on July 18, 2014. Thereafter, draft CCEA Note for setting up NIIUD was sent to Department of Expenditure for obtaining the approval of Hon'ble Finance Minister on 24.09.2014. A copy was also forwarded to PMO. Based on the comments received from Department of Expenditure, draft CCEA Note was finalized and a copy each sent to PMO and Cabinet Secretariat on 29.01.2015. Based on the comments/observations of Cabinet Secretariat and PMO, draft Cabinet Note is under process.

12	Modernization of Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation (ALIMCO)	Total cost of the project is Rs.286.00 crore out of which Rs.200.00 crore is to be released by the Department and remaining Rs.86 to be met by ALIMCO out of their internal resources. Draft SFC Note along with Detailed Project Report has been circulated on 07.4.2015 to Niti Ayog, Department. of Expenditure and Department of Public Enterprises for comments.
13	Scholarships for Top Class Education for SWDs studying in premier higher educational institutions	The draft Scheme was referred to the Planning Commission, Integrated Finance Division and other Ministries/Departments concerned. In accordance with their observations the Scheme has been modified. Now it has been finalized for implementation from the year 2015-16. It will be operated online through the National Scholarship Portal being developed by DEITY.
14	Free Coaching for SwDs	The Scheme has been finalized taking into consideration the observations of IFD and is being put up for approval of the competent authority for launching of the Scheme in 2015-16.
15	Establishment of Centre for Disability Sports	A Scheme on establishment of a Centre for Disability Sports has been included in the 12 th Five Year Plan document, for which Rs. 20.00 crore has been earmarked for the plan period. The Department had invited Expression of Interest (Eoi) from consulting firms to provide consultancy services and prepare a site specific Detailed Project Report of Centres for Disability Sports at Mohali (Punjab), Vishakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh) and Ujjain (Madhya Pradesh). The Bids were invited on 15 th January, 2015 and as per schedule fixed, the proposals received as on last date and time have been opened on 04.03.2015. Seven firms had submitted their Bids and these are being examined
16	Setting up of State Spinal Injury Centres	The Scheme for setting up of State Spinal Injury Centres has been included in the 12 th Five Year Plan Document. The Scheme has been approved and will be implemented during 2015-16 based on the availability of funds.
17	Establishment of National Mission, State Missions and District Coordinators	Scheme is being formulated.

2.7 Regarding a new Scheme for the PwDs, viz., the National Action Plan for Skill Development for Persons with Disabilities, the representatives stated as under :

"National action plan for skill development for persons of disabilities (PwDs) was launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister ten days ago. We desire to achieve the target of skill development of 25 lac PwDs by the year 2022. This year, we have fixed a target of skill development of one lac PwDs. For this purpose, we have signed an MoU with the Ministry of Skilling Entrepreneurship. It was launched on 21st March and the Hon'ble Minister for Skill Development has also promised to provide one hundred crore rupees for this purpose. Similarly, we are going to launch the Sugamya Bharat Campaign under which a campaign to make all public buildings PwD-friendly. This campaign is to be launched in the year 2015. In this, we shall also launch a portal by which people would be asked as to which are the buildings lacking these facilities. This portal is likely to be put in place by June, 2015."

2.8 The Committee note that an allocation of Rs. 564 crore (BE) was made to the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities for the year 2014-15, was revised at 375 crore and the amount actually expended was Rs. 338.68 crore, which comes to 60% of the BE. An enhanced allocation of Rs. 565.4 crore has been made for 2015-16. The reasons attributed for under utilization of funds are launching new schemes mostly at the fag end of 2014-15, receipt of insufficient proposals under SC/ST/NE components, incomplete and late proposals from States/UTs and non-furnishing of utilization certificates besides vacancies in the Department at the level of Section officers/PS and Assistant. The Committee find that the Department has no concrete action plan to ensure optimal utilization of allotted fund as the Secretary informed the Committee during evidence that "...an action plan over this would be made and placed before the Committee within a period of a month". The Committee are of the considered opinion that immediate steps should be taken to find a remedy to the aforesaid problems which are mainly perennial in nature and solely responsible for under utilization of funds by the Department. The Committee recommend that besides close and strict monitoring of the schemes, tie ups with State Channelizing Agencies for timely submission of complete proposals and furnishing of Utilization Certificates be made at frequent intervals including issuing do's and don'ts in the matter. The Committee desire that issue of staff shortage may be expeditiously taken up with DoPT.

2.9 The Committee note that many new schemes, such as, Establishment of Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC), National Centre of Universal Design and Barrier Free Environment, Establishment of Centre for

Disability Sports and Setting up of State Spinal Injury Centres are still in infancy stage. The Committee are not aware whether any steps have been taken by the Department to make these Schemes operational. The Committee urge upon the Department that bottlenecks in clearance and launching of these schemes be identified and action initiated. The Committee recommend that the Scheme for National Action Plan for skill development of PwDs may be made operational without any delay, as this Scheme will immensely help empowering the PwDs by making them self reliant.

B. DISABILITY SCHEMES IN THE NORTH EAST REGION

2.10 The North Eastern Region (NER) comprises eight States namely, Assam, Tripura, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Sikkim. As per guidelines issued by the Planning Commission, all Central Ministries/Departments are required to earmark at least 10% of their budgetary allocation for programme for the development of the North East Region and Sikkim. Under the schemes of the Department, 10% allocation is made for the States of the North Eastern Region.

BE, RE and Expenditure in respect of Scheme of NE Region and Sikkim during 2012-13 to 2014-15

(Table No. 2.10)

		BE, RE and Expenditure in NER during 2012-13 (As on 31.03.2013)			BE, RE and Expenditure in NER during 2013-14 (As on 31.03.2014)			BE, RE and Expenditure in NER during 2014-15 (As on 31.03.2015)		
		(Rs. in crore)			(Rs. in crore)			(Rs. in crore)		
	Bureau/Schemes	BE	RE	Exp.	BE	RE	Exp.	BE	RE	Exp.
1	National Institutes for Disabled Persons	7.00	6.42	2.71	8.00	10.00	3.40	12.00	8.70	4.82
2	Aids and Appliances for Handicapped	12.00	8.70	4.32	14.00	14.00	7.15	12.00	10.00	10.00
3	ALMICO	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4	National Handicapped Fin. & Dev. Corp.	3.00	0.00	0.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.70	3.70
5	Scheme for Implementation of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995	5.00	2.00	4.88	6.00	6.50	7.89	9.00	6.14	0.41
6	DDRS	17.00	9.00	3.45	18.00	9.50	5.20	10.00	5.05	4.23
7	Employment of Physically Challenged	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.20	0.05	0.05
8	PMS for Persons with Disability	3.00	0.00	0.00	3.00	0.00	0.00	1.30	0.20	0.00
9	RGNF for disabilities	1.00	0.00	0.00	2.00	2.00	0.66	1.70	1.00	0.26
10	Rehabilitation Council of India	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.30	0.00
11	Top Class Education for PwDs (New Scheme)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.30	0.10	0.00
12	Support for Establishment/Modernisation of Building of Braille Presses	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.30	0.20	0.00

13	National Overseas Scholarship for PwDs (New Scheme)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.30	0.10	0.00
14	Establishment of National Centre of Universal Design and barrier free(new Scheme)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.40	0.00	0.00
15	Free Coaching for PwD	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.30	0.10	0.00
16	Establishment of a college for Deaf in each of five regions	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
17	Establishment of Centre for Disability Sports	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00
18	Augment Corpus fund of National Trust	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00
19	Establishment of National mission/State Mission	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00
20	Establishment of National Institute of Mental Health	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00
21	Establishment of Micro Enterprises	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00
22	Awareness Generation	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.20	0.06
23	In Service Training and sensitization of State Governments	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00
24	National Trust Initiative of Marketing	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.20	0.00	0.00
25	Research on Disability	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00
26	Pre Matric Scholarship	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.30	0.10	0.00
27	National Programme for Persons With Disability	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00
	Grand Total	49.00	26.12	15.36	56.00	46.00	28.30	56.50	35.94	23.53

2.11 Giving details of these schemes, the Department have furnished the following details:

(Table No. 2.11)

ADIP Scheme

Rs. In lakhs				
S.No.	Year	Amount Allocated	Amount Released	No. of beneficiaries
1	2011-12	950	260.36	10181

2.	2012-13	950	432.32	17167
3.	2013-14	950	467.52	19150*
4.	2014-15	1200	977.55	Yet to be received

*(Information from Six implementing agencies is yet to be received and compiled)

SIPDA Scheme

(Table No. 2.11)

Rs. In lakhs				
S.No.	Year	Amount Allocated	Amount Released	No. of States benefitted
1	2011-12	500	30.00	02
2.	2012-13	500	488.48	04
3.	2013-14	600	763.68	08
4.	2014-15	900	41.37	04

2.12 The State-wise details of the allocation of funds made for the North East States under DDRS and details of admissible funds released and the number of beneficiaries for the last three years is tabulated below :-

(Table No. 2.12)

S.No	State	Notional Allocation lakh (Rs. in)			Admissible amount Released (Rs. in lakh)			Number of Beneficiaries		
		2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
1	Arunachal Pradesh	70	70	50	0	20.06	0	0	1926	0
2	Assam	990	990	300	119.75	162.31	156.81	1452	1908	3289
3	Manipur	300	300	500	128.5	324.8	225.11	2416	4751	4111
4	Meghalaya	110	110	100	79.86	15.45	36.61	1009	243	710
5	Mizoram	40	40	200	5.89	2.03	23.93	35	40	562
6	Nagaland	40	40		0	0	0	0	0	0
7	Sikkim	40	40		0	0	0	0	0	0
8	Tripura	110	110		12.58	25.14	8.44	147	188	89
Total		1700	1700	1150	346.58	549.79	450.9	5059	9056	8761

2.13 On the issue of the slow pace of DDRS Scheme, the Department clarified as under::

- (i) This Department has developed centralized on-line application software with the assistance of National Informatics Centre (NIC) on the website of the Ministry www.ngograntsje.gov.in. All the applications by NGOs seeking Grant-in-aid under DDRS are being invited through on-line process in the website of the Ministry from the year 2014-15.
- (ii) As regards proposals being forwarded by SCA. The following observations have been made by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities :-
 - (a) While forwarding the proposal(s) by the State Govts./UTs, most often they do not forward their proposals along with their recommendations alongwith the requisite mandatory documents required to process the proposal(s).
 - (b) State Govt./UTs Govt. Also do not forward adequate number of proposals in time.
 - (c) The proposals forwarded by the State Governments/UTs are having deficiencies, such as some columns of the Inspection Report are left blank in the Inspection Report (s).
 - (d) All the mandatory documents etc. are not forwarded by the Organizations to the State Govts. Resulting which the proposals could not be processed in time.
 - (e) Integrated Finance Division (IFD) of the Department also raises several observations for which correspondences are required to be made with the State Governments/UTs and also with the Organization(s) for getting the document(s)/clarification(s) as per the observation(s) of the IFD.
 - (f) In order to avoid unnecessarily delay on the part of the State Govts./UTs and the Organisation(s) advisories have been issued from time to time to forward proposals complete in all respect expeditiously along with the recommendations both on-line and in material form/hard copy.

2.14 The Committee note that expenditure of funds for the schemes in the North East region of the country has been low since 2012-13. Against an allocation of Rs. 49.00 crore, expenditure in 2012-13 was Rs. 15.36 core, BE in 2013-14 was Rs. 56 crore and expenditure Rs. 28.30 crore while BE in 2014-15 was Rs. 56.50 crore and expenditure only Rs. 23.53 crore. The Committee, are not happy with the efforts of the Department in expenditure on various Schemes in the NE region. The Committee are of the firm view schemes in the NE region need to be popularized more so in remote areas so that poor people can avail benefit of these schemes. The Committee are equally unhappy in finding that no money was spent on awareness generation in 2012-13 and 2013-14 and only Rs. 0.06 crore could be spent in the year 2014-15. The Committee desire that a specific plan of action needs to be in place to generate awareness for these Scheme by involving the print and electronic media adequately for the purpose. The Committee also desire the Department to send a team of officials to few selected villages of the NE region States to bring awareness about the benefits of the schemes to the people of the region.

2.15 The Committee note that implementation of some of the schemes has been affected badly as the State Channelizing Agencies had submitted incomplete proposals with many deficiencies in spite of the fact that necessary advisories were issued by the Department. As these advisories are not yielding any tangible results, the Committee recommend that the use of latest technologies like video conferencing etc. to sort out all the problems with State

Channelizing Agencies and NGOs so that proposals could be processed speedily and funds released in time.

C. EDUCATION SCHEMES FOR PwDs

2.16 The Pre-matric and Post-matric Scholarship Schemes, as informed by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities were to be operationalized that during 2014-15, the BE for the schemes of Pre-matric scholarship and Post-matric scholarship was Rs.12.00 crore each. The RE for the schemes was Rs.1.00 crore and Rs.2.00 crore respectively. However, no expenditure could be incurred under the schemes during the year.

2.17 The schemes of Pre-matric and Post-matric Scholarship Schemes for students with disabilities had been finalized in October, 2014. As per the provisions of the Scheme, the Scheme was to be operated on-line through a web-portal. Initially, the NIC unit of Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment was requested to develop the on-line web-portal for implementing the Scheme. Before any considerable progress could be made by NIC, there was an instruction from the PMO to develop a common portal for all the scholarship schemes being implemented by various Departments of the Govt. of India. PMO directed Deptt. of Electronics & Information Technology (DEITY) to develop a National Scholarship Portal. However, the said portal could not become functional during the year 2014-15.

2.18 The Department further informed that in the absence of the scholarship portal, a decision was taken to implement the Scheme through the State Governments as a special dispensation for the year 2014-15 only. Every State/UT was provided notional allocation of number of scholarships and was advised to make selection of candidates and to intimate this Deptt. for release of funds to the State Govt. However, demands for funds from the State Governments were not received during the year, except from Uttar

Pradesh, which raised the demand but funds could not be released as the State did not furnish the requisite information like details of bank accounts of eligible applicants. The details are being collected from the State.

However, the funds in respect of the year 2014-15 will be released in 2015-16 to the State Governments who have implemented the Scheme in accordance with the instructions of this Department.

2.19 Regarding the difficulties faced and the progress of the Scheme, the representative of the Ministry stated:

"We will have double the benefit this year. Our applications for the present financial year are already pending with the State Governments which we are likely to receive in April. We are going to finish about Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 crores for that. Simultaneously, the portal for this year is ready. It will be much faster than the whole of the year. By December, we will be able to finish the online portal for this year also."

2.20 The Committee note that Pre-matric and Post-matric scholarship schemes for empowerment of persons with disabilities could not take off in the year 2014-15 as the web portal for launch of these Schemes could not be developed. Further, the PMO desired that there should be a common web portal for all scholarship schemes i.e. National Scholarship Portal, which too could not become operational so far. As reported by the Department, a decision was, thereafter taken to implement the Schemes through the State Governments as a special dispensation for the year 2014-15. However, the States could not furnish the requisite information including Bank account details of eligible applications with the result funds could not be released. The Committee have been informed that the entire amount now would be beneficially utilized in the next financial year as applications for the present financial year are already pending with the State Governments. The Committee desire that formation and launch of National Scholarship Portal be expedited so that PwDs could get the benefits of these schemes in 2015-16 besides exhorting the State Governments to furnish all the desired information of eligible candidates in time.

D. NATIONAL OVERSEAS SCHOLARSHIP FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND TOP CLASS EDUCATION FOR PWDS

2.21 The National Overseas Scholarship for Students with Disabilities was approved in the year 2014 and made effective from 1st April, 2014. Applications were invited by issuing advertisements through various newspapers and the web-site of the Department. Only two applications were received and none of the applicants were found eligible for sanction of the scholarship due to which the funds allocated for the Scheme had to be surrendered.

2.22 The Department informed that advertisements have again been issued through newspapers in all States/UTs and web-sites of this Ministry to invite applications for the Scheme of National Overseas Scholarship for Students with Disabilities. The Chief Secretaries of all the States/UTs have been requested through D.O. letters to advise all the educational institutions to popularize the Scheme and bring it into the notice of all students. Ministry of External Affairs too have been requested to bring it to the notice of all the Embassies/High Commissions.

2.23 As regards the Scheme of Scholarship for Top Class Education for Students with Disabilities –the process of obtaining approval could not be completed and the portal for the same was not available. The Scheme has now been finalized and it will be made effective from the year 2015-16.

2.24 The Committee note that a Scheme for Scholarship for Top Class Education for Students with Disabilities was to be launched in the year 2014-15 but the process of obtaining approval could not be completed and the portal for the same too was not available due to which it could not be launched. The Committee recommend that since Scheme for Scholarship for Top Class Education for Students with Disabilities is an important Scheme for the empowerment of PwDs, it should be given adequate publicity by all possible and available media, so that awareness is there about the scholarship among the candidates which would result in receipt of maximum number of applications and benefit to maximum PwDs.

2.25 The Committee were informed that only two applications were received, that too, were found unsuitable under the National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for Students with Disabilities. The Committee could not fathom the reasons for receipt of only two applications under such an important scheme in a country where PwDs are in considerable number. The Department also did not try to gauge the grounds for receiving only these two applications. In Committee's view either the students with disabilities are not at all aware of the Scheme due to insufficient publicity or eligibility criteria for the students is complicated. The Committee also feel that the Department should have reached out of the candidates, sort out the shortcomings in their applications, relax the norms to the extent possible and help them to avail the Scholarship. The Committee desire that criteria/norms of this Scheme may not only be revisited, if need be, simplified, keeping in view to give maximum benefit to PwDs. The Committee would like to be apprised of the steps taken by the Department in this regard.

E. DEENDAYAL DISABLED REHABILITATION SCHEME (DDRS)

2.26 The Scheme aims to create an enabling environment to ensure equal opportunities, equity, social justice and empowerment of persons with disabilities, by encouraging voluntary action. NGOs are given assistance under the Scheme for providing a wide range of services to persons with disabilities, such as:

- (i) Programme for pre-school and early intervention
- (ii) Special education
- (iii) Vocational training and placement
- (iv) Community based rehabilitation
- (v) Manpower development
- (vi) Psycho-social rehabilitation of persons with mental illness
- (vii) Rehabilitation of leprosy-cured persons, etc.

2.27 The Department furnished the following statement showing the Budget Estimate, Revised Estimate and Actual Expenditure for the previous years along with the Budget Estimate for the current year showing separately under the above mentioned Scheme:

(Table No. 2.27)

(Rs. in crore)

Year	Budget Estimates	Revised Estimates	Actual Expenditure
2012-13	120.00	75.00	46.99
2013-14	124.85	90.00	63.64
2014-15	90.00	50.50	50.08
2015-16	60.00		

2.28 As regards, reasons for low expenditure under the Scheme, the Department stated as under:

"The RE allocation was Rs. 50.50 crores out of which Rs. 49.83 crores was released during the year 2014-15. The funds under General Head was limited even though sanctions & bills were ready. Review of the Scheme is under consideration.

2.29 The Department stated in response to a written reply that they have devised following mechanism for monitoring of the Scheme:

- (i) Fresh/subsequent release of grants to implementing agencies during a year is made only on receipt of Utilization Certificates in respect of previous grants(s) which have become due.
- (ii) The Schemes implemented through NGOs are also expected to be monitored by the respective State Government/UTs Administrations.
- (iii) In the event of proven misappropriation of funds by an NGO, the Department initiate action to blacklist the NGOs. The performance of the NGOs is reviewed from time to time through inspections by the State Governments concerned, National Institutes and officers of the Ministry.
- (iv) The Audited Annual Accounts are being mandatorily examined for all NGOs before recommending any further/subsequent release of funds.
- (v) This Department has developed centralized on-line application software with the assistance of National Informatics Centre (NIC) on the website of the Ministry www.ngograntsje.gov.in. All the applications by NGOs seeking Grant-in-aid under DDRS are being invited through on-line process in the website of the Ministry to monitor the applications from the year 2014-15."

2.30 The Committee note that the expenditure of funds in the Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS) has been quite low from the year 2012-13 onwards, less than 50% of the BE. The Department has now reduced the BE of the Scheme in the year 2015-16 to Rs. 60 crore i.e. almost 50% of the previous year allocation. The Committee desire the Department to introspect and look into the reasons as to why the Scheme could not achieve its physical and financial targets. The Committee have been informed that the Scheme is also to be revised. The Committee would like to be apprised of the revised Scheme. As the Scheme is NGO centric, the Committee desire that specific and close monitoring be done to prevent any misuse of funds by the NGOs.

F. SCHEME FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 1995 (SIPDA)

2.31 The implementation of the provisions of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 is being undertaken with a multi-sectoral collaborative approach and with related Ministries/ Departments of the Central Government, the State Government and other appropriate authorities to take steps towards effective implementation of various provisions of the Act.

2.32 The Department furnished the following statement showing the BE, RE and Actual Expenditure on the Scheme:

(Table No. 2.32)

(Rs. in crore)

Year	Budget Estimates	Revised Estimates	Actual Expenditure
2012-13	100.00	20.00	20.3
2013-14	105.00	65.00	47.94
2014-15	80.00	61.41	43.4
2015-16	135.00		

2.33 The Department, in a written reply, has given the following reasons for under utilization of funds:

"The reasons furnished for non-utilization, the proposal received from a number of States could not be considered for want of Utilization Certificates in respect of previous grant-in-aid released to them till the years 2013-14. All the concerned State/ UTs have been requested/reminded for sending the Utilization Certificate/progress reports in respect of the grants received by them. Hon'ble Minister (SJ&E) also advised all the Chief Ministers of States to send proposals under the SIPDA Scheme while apprising them about the pending Utilization Certificates in respect of earlier grants, vide his letter dated 06.08.2014".

2.34 When the Committee desired to know what steps were being taken to make all buildings barrier-free for PwDs, the Department stated as under :

"Ministry of HRD (Department of Higher Education) was also requested to advise UGC, Central Universities and other autonomous bodies and Institutions for sending proposals for making buildings barrier free for PwDs and for making accessible websites for PwDs vide letter dated 23.06.2014. Department of Sports was also requested to issue suitable instructions to the concerned authorities for making the sports stadiums disabled friendly and for sending requisite proposals by this sports Authority of India, other autonomous body and institutions under the Department for the same purpose, vide letter dated 23.06.2014."

2.35 During evidence, the Committee desired to know whether there was any proposal to interact or coordinate with Archeological Survey of India for making heritage sites accessible, the representative of the Ministry stated:

"We would give any Department technical know-how on how to make these sites accessible. We are preparing accessibility reports".

2.36 The Committee note that funds under the 'Scheme for Implementation of Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 (SIPDA)' have been inadequately utilized during the last three years *i.e.*, from the year 2012-13 onwards. The main reasons attributed by the Department are, non-furnishing of Utilization Certificates and Progress Reports by the States. The Committee have been further informed that the Ministry of HRD and Sports Authority of India have been asked to make all educational institutions and sports stadia barrier free and accessible to PwDs. The Committee desire that the Department scrupulously monitor the expenditure under the Scheme and also the progress on making all buildings barrier-free. The Committee further desire that the Department should also closely work with the Archeological Survey of India to make all heritage sites accessible to PwDs.

NEW DELHI;

24 April, 2015

4 Vaisakha, 1937 (Saka)

RAMESH BAIS
Chairman,
Standing Committee on
Social Justice and
Empowerment

**MINUTES OF THE SEVENTEENTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT HELD ON MONDAY, 30th MARCH, 2015**

The Committee met from 1445 hrs. to 1735 hrs. in Committee Room 'C', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SHRI RAMESH BAIS - CHAIRMAN

**MEMBERS
LOK SABHA**

2. Shri Jasvantsinh Sumanbhai Bhabhor
3. Kunwar Bharatendra
4. Shri Dilip Singh Bhuria
5. Shri Santokh Singh Chaudhary
6. Shri Sher Singh Ghubaya
7. Shri Sadashiv Lokhande
8. Prof. A.S.R. Naik
9. Shri Asaduddin Owaisi
10. Sadhvi Savitri Bai Phule
11. Smt. Neelam Sonkar

RAJYA SABHA

12. Shri Ahamed Hassan
13. Smt. Mohsina Kidwai
14. Shri Nand Kumar Sai
15. Smt. Vijila Sathyananth

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri A.K. Singh - Joint Secretary
2. Shri Ashok Sajwan - Director
2. Shri Kushal Sarkar - Additional Director

**REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
(DEPARTMENT OF EMPOWERMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES)**

Sl. No.	Name	Designation and Organization
1.	Shri Lov Verma	Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities
2.	Shri Awanish K. Awasthi	Joint Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities
3.	Shri Mukesh Jain	Joint Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities
4.	Smt. Kiran Puri	Joint Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities
5.	Prof. Sudesh Mukhopadhyay	Chairman, RCI
6.	Shri Prem Chander Das	CMD, NHFDC
7.	Shri D.R. Sarin	CMD, ALIMCO

2. At the outset, the Chairman welcomed the Secretary and other accompanying officials of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities and invited their attention to the provisions contained in Direction 55(1) of the Directions by the Speaker, Lok Sabha.

3. The Chairman, thereafter, asked the Secretary to brief the Committee on Demands for Grants (2015-16) pertaining to his Department.

4. The Secretary then briefed the Committee about the performance of the Department, detailing the budgetary allocations, actual expenditure incurred/physical targets achieved under various schemes/programmes with the help of a power point presentation. The broad issues discussed at the meeting relating to Demands for Grants (2015-16) of the Department are as follows :-

- (i) Under utilization of funds allocated in Annual Plan 2014-15.

- (ii) Inability of the Ministry to use allocation in important education schemes for the PwDs *i.e.*, Post-Matric and Pre-Matric Scholarship Schemes.
- (iii) Difficulties faced in the launching of new schemes, Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre, establishment of Centre for Disability Sports, establishment of National Institute/Centre of Universal Design, establishment of colleges for deaf in five regions of the country.
- (iv) Under-utilization of funds in Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme and revision of the scheme.
- (v) Reservation for PwDs in jobs and educational institutes.
- (vi) Distribution of aids and appliances and kits for the use of disabled persons through organization of camps in remote areas.

5. The representatives of the Department also responded to the queries by the Members to the extent possible. The Chairman asked the Secretary to furnish written replies to the unanswered queries raised by Members to the Secretariat latest by 8th April, 2015 for early finalization of Report on Demands for Grants (2015-16) of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities.

6. The Chairman then thanked the Secretary and other officials of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities) for giving valuable information to the Committee on the subject and expressing their views in a free and frank manner on various issues raised by the Members.

A copy of the verbatim proceedings of the sitting was kept for record.

[The representatives of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities) then withdrew]

(The Committee then adjourned)

MINUTES OF THE TWENTY FIRST SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT HELD ON FRIDAY, 24TH APRIL, 2015

The Committee sat from 1500 hrs. to 1515 hrs. in Committee Room 'B', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SHRI RAMESH BAIS - CHAIRMAN

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Kunwar Bharatendra
3. Shri Santokh Singh Chaudhary
4. Smt. Maragatham K.
5. Shri Kariya Munda
6. Prof. Sadhu Singh

RAJYA SABHA

7. Smt. Jharna Das Baidya
8. Shri Ahamed Hassan
9. Shri Nand Kumar Sai
10. Smt. Vijila Sathyananth

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

1. Shri Ashok Kumar Singh - Joint Secretary
2. Shri Ashok Sajwan - Director
3. Shri Kushal Sarkar - Additional Director

2. At the outset, Hon'ble Chairperson welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee and apprised them that the sitting has been convened to consider and adopt the following draft Reports:

- (i) xxxx xxxx xxxx
- (ii) Twelfth Report on Demands for Grants (2015-16) of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities).
- (iii) xxxx xxxx xxxx
- (iv) xxxx xxxx xxxx

3. The Chairperson then requested the Members to give their suggestions on the draft Reports. The Reports were adopted by the Committee without any change. The Committee then authorized the Chairperson to finalize the Reports in the light of consequential changes that might arise out of factual verification of the draft Reports and to present the same to both the Houses.

The Committee then adjourned.

APPENDIX

STATEMENT OF OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Sl. No.	Para No.	Observations/Recommendations
(1)	(2)	(3)
1.	2.8	<p>The Committee note that an allocation of Rs. 564 crore (BE) was made to the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities for the year 2014-15, was revised at 375 crore and the amount actually expended was Rs. 338.68 crore, which comes to 60% of the BE. An enhanced allocation of Rs. 565.4 crore has been made for 2015-16. The reasons attributed for under utilization of funds are launching new schemes mostly at the fag end of 2014-15, receipt of insufficient proposals under SC/ST/NE components, incomplete and late proposals from States/UTs and non-furnishing of utilization certificates besides vacancies in the Department at the level of Section officers/PS and Assistant. The Committee find that the Department has no concrete action plan to ensure optimal utilization of allotted fund as the Secretary informed the Committee during evidence that "...an action plan over this would be made and placed before the Committee within a period of a month". The Committee are of the considered opinion that immediate steps should be taken to find a remedy to the aforesaid problems which are mainly perennial in nature and solely responsible for under utilization of funds by the Department. The Committee recommend that besides close and strict monitoring of the schemes, tie ups with State Channelizing Agencies for timely submission of complete proposals and furnishing of Utilization Certificates be made at frequent intervals including issuing do's and don'ts in the matter. The Committee desire that issue of staff shortage may be expeditiously taken up with DoPT.</p>
2.	2.9	<p>The Committee note that many new schemes, such as, Establishment of Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC), National Centre of Universal Design and Barrier Free Environment, Establishment of Centre for Disability Sports and Setting up of State Spinal Injury Centres are still in infancy stage. The Committee are not aware whether any steps have been taken by the Department to make these Schemes operational. The Committee urge upon the Department that bottlenecks in clearance and launching of these schemes be identified and action initiated. The Committee recommend that the Scheme for National Action Plan for skill development of PwDs may be made operational without any delay, as this Scheme will immensely help empowering the PwDs by making them self reliant.</p>

3. 2.14 The Committee note that expenditure of funds for the schemes in the North East region of the country has been low since 2012-13. Against an allocation of Rs. 49.00 crore, expenditure in 2012-13 was Rs. 15.36 core, BE in 2013-14 was Rs. 56 crore and expenditure Rs. 28.30 crore while BE in 2014-15 was Rs. 56.50 crore and expenditure only Rs. 23.53 crore. The Committee, are not happy with the efforts of the Department in expenditure on various Schemes in the NE region. The Committee are of the firm view schemes in the NE region need to be popularized more so in remote areas so that poor people can avail benefit of these schemes. The Committee are equally unhappy in finding that no money was spent on awareness generation in 2012-13 and 2013-14 and only Rs. 0.06 crore could be spent in the year 2014-15. The Committee desire that a specific plan of action needs to be in place to generate awareness for these Scheme by involving the print and electronic media adequately for the purpose. The Committee also desire the Department to send a team of officials to few selected villages of the NE region States to bring awareness about the benefits of the schemes to the people of the region.
4. 2.15 The Committee note that implementation of some of the schemes has been affected badly as the State Channelizing Agencies had submitted incomplete proposals with many deficiencies in spite of the fact that necessary advisories were issued by the Department. As these advisories are not yielding any tangible results, the Committee recommend that the use of latest technologies like video conferencing etc. to sort out all the problems with State Channelizing Agencies and NGOs so that proposals could be processed speedily and funds released in time.
5. 2.20 The Committee note that Pre-matric and Post-matric scholarship schemes for empowerment of persons with disabilities could not take off in the year 2014-15 as the web portal for launch of these Schemes could not be developed. Further, the PMO desired that there should be a common web portal for all scholarship schemes i.e. National Scholarship Portal, which too could not become operational so far. As reported by the Department, a decision was, thereafter taken to implement the Schemes through the State Governments as a special dispensation for the year 2014-15. However, the States could not furnish the requisite information including Bank account details of eligible applications with the result funds could not be released. The Committee have been informed that the entire amount now would be beneficially utilized in the next financial year as applications for the present financial year are already pending with the State Governments. The Committee desire that formation and launch of National Scholarship Portal be expedited so that PwDs could get the

benefits of these schemes in 2015-16 besides exhorting the State Governments to furnish all the desired information of eligible candidates in time.

6. 2.24 The Committee note that a Scheme for Scholarship for Top Class Education for Students with Disabilities was to be launched in the year 2014-15 but the process of obtaining approval could not be completed and the portal for the same too was not available due to which it could not be launched. The Committee recommend that since Scheme for Scholarship for Top Class Education for Students with Disabilities is an important Scheme for the empowerment of PwDs, it should be given adequate publicity by all possible and available media, so that awareness is there about the scholarship among the candidates which would result in receipt of maximum number of applications and benefit to maximum PwDs.
7. 2.25 The Committee were informed that only two applications were received, that too, were found unsuitable under the National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for Students with Disabilities. The Committee could not fathom the reasons for receipt of only two applications under such an important scheme in a country where PwDs are in considerable number. The Department also did not try to gauge the grounds for receiving only these two applications. In Committee's view either the students with disabilities are not at all aware of the Scheme due to insufficient publicity or eligibility criteria for the students is complicated. The Committee also feel that the Department should have reached out of the candidates, sort out the shortcomings in their applications, relax the norms to the extent possible and help them to avail the Scholarship. The Committee desire that criteria/norms of this Scheme may not only be revisited, if need be, simplified, keeping in view to give maximum benefit to PwDs. The Committee would like to be apprised of the steps taken by the Department in this regard.
8. 2.30 The Committee note that the expenditure of funds in the Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS) has been quite low from the year 2012-13 onwards, less than 50% of the BE. The Department has now reduced the BE of the Scheme in the year 2015-16 to Rs. 60 crore i.e. almost 50% of the previous year allocation. The Committee desire the Department to introspect and look into the reasons as to why the Scheme could not achieve its physical and financial targets. The Committee have been informed that the Scheme is also to be revised. The Committee would like to be apprised of the revised Scheme. As the Scheme is NGO centric, the Committee desire that specific and close monitoring be done to prevent any misuse of funds by the NGOs.
9. 2.36 The Committee note that funds under the 'Scheme for Implementation of Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 (SIPDA)' have been inadequately utilized during the last three years *i.e.*, from the year 2012-13 onwards. The main reasons attributed by the

Department are, non-furnishing of Utilization Certificates and Progress Reports by the States. The Committee have been further informed that the Ministry of HRD and Sports Authority of India have been asked to make all educational institutions and sports stadia barrier free and accessible to PwDs. The Committee desire that the Department scrupulously monitor the expenditure under the Scheme and also the progress on making all buildings barrier-free. The Committee further desire that the Department should also closely work with the Archeological Survey of India to make all heritage sites accessible to PwDs.