

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
(2019-20)**

(SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA)

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

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS
(2019-20)**

FIRST REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

December, 2019/Agrahayana, 1941 (Saka)

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(2019-20)**

Presented to Lok Sabha on 12.12.2019

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 12.12.2019



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

December, 2018/Agrahayana, 1941 (Saka)

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**COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL
JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2019-20)**

SMT. RAMA DEVI - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Smt. Sangeeta Azad
3. Shri Durga Prasad Rao Balli
4. Shri Shafiqur Rahman Barq
5. Shri Bholanath 'B.P. Saroj'
6. Shri Chhatar Singh Darbar
7. Shri Y. Devendrappa
8. Smt. Maneka Sanjay Gandhi
9. Shri Hans Raj Hans
10. Shri Abdul Khaleque
11. Smt. Ranjeeta Koli
12. Smt. Geeta Kora
13. Shri Dhanush M. Kumar
14. Shri Vijay Kumar
15. Shri Akshaibar Lal
16. Dr. Lorho S. Pfoze
17. Shri V. Srinivas Prasad
- #18. Shri Prince Raj
19. Shri Arjun Singh
20. Smt. Supriya Sule
21. Smt. Rekha Arun Verma

Rajya Sabha

22. Smt. Jharna Das Baidya
23. Shri Abir Ranjan Biswas
24. Shri N.Chandrasegharan
25. Shri Biswajit Daimary
26. Shri Anil Desai
27. Smt. Sarojini Hembram
28. Shri P. L. Punia
29. Smt. Wansuk Syiem
30. Shri Ramkumar Verma
31. Vacant

Nominated to the Committee w.e.f. 09.12.2019.

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

1. Smt. Anita B. Panda - Joint Secretary
2. Dr. Vatsala P. Joshi - Director
3. Smt. Shilpa Kant - Committee Officer

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment (2019-20) having been authorized by the Committee do present on their behalf this First Report on 'Demands for Grants for the year 2019-20' pertaining to the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment).

2. The Committee considered the Demands for Grants (2018-19) of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment) which were laid on the Table of the House on 12th July, 2019. After obtaining the Budget Documents, Explanatory Notes, etc., the Committee took evidence of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment) on 5th November, 2019. The Committee considered and adopted the Report at the sitting held on 10th December, 2019.

3. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the Officers of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment) for tendering oral evidence and placing before them the detailed written notes and post evidence information as desired by the Committee in connection with the examination of the Demands for Grants (2019-20).

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

NEW DELHI;

10 December, 2019
19 Agrahayana, 1941 (Saka)

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

REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

1.1 The main objective of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment is to empower the socially, educationally and economically marginalized sections of the society including Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes, Senior Citizens, Victims of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, Transgender Persons, Beggars, Denotified and Nomadic Tribes (DNTs) and Economically Backward Classes (EBCs).

1.2 The Department through its programmes and Schemes strives to build an inclusive society wherein members of the target groups are provided adequate support for their growth and development.

1.3 The policies and programmes of the Department aim towards:

- (i) Educational and economic development along with the social empowerment of Scheduled Castes (SCs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Denotified and Nomadic Tribes (DNTs), Transgender Persons and Economically Backward Classes (EBCs);
- (ii) Support to Senior Citizens by way of their maintenance, welfare, security, health care, productive and independent living; and
- (iii) Prevention and treatment of Alcoholism and Substance (Drug) Abuse;

1.4 The target groups can be defined as follows:

- (i) **“Scheduled Castes”**- means such castes ,races or tribes or parts of or groups within such castes, races or tribes as are deemed under Article 341 to be scheduled castes for the purposes of this Constitution. [Clause (24) of Article 366]
- (ii) **“Backward Classes”**- socially and educationally backward classes means such backward classes as are so deemed under article 342A for the purpose of this Constitution.[Article 366 Clause 266, Constitution of India]

(iii) **“Senior Citizens”**- a citizen of India who has attained the age of 60 years or above. (Section 2, The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007)

(iv) **“Victim of Substance Abuse”** - a person who is addicted to / dependent on alcohol, narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances or any other addictive substances (other than tobacco), e.g. pharmaceutical drugs, etc., and generally includes the immediate family members also.

(v) **“Economically weaker section”** shall be such as may be notified by the State from time to time on the basis of family income and other indicators of economic disadvantage .[Article 15(6) Constitution of India]. For this purpose, persons who are not covered under the existing scheme of reservations for the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and the Socially and Educationally Backward Classes and whose family has gross annual income below ₹ 8.00 lakh are to be identified as EWSs for the benefit of reservation. Family for this purpose will include the person who seeks benefit of reservation, his /her parents and siblings below the age of 18 years as also his/her spouse and children below the age of 18 years. The income shall include income from all sources i.e. salary, agriculture, business, profession etc. and it will be income for the financial year prior to the year of application. Also, persons whose family owns or possesses any one of the following assets shall be excluded from being identified as EWSs irrespective of the family income: (i) 5 acres of Agricultural land and above. (ii) Residential flat of 1000 sq ft and above. (iii) Residential plot of 100 sq yards and above in notified municipalities. (iv) Residential plot of 200 sq yards and above in areas other than the notified municipalities.

1.5 The population of the main target groups (mostly as per Census 2011) is given below:

- Scheduled Castes: 20.14 Crore (16.6 per cent)
- Other Backward Classes: Caste Census has not been done since 1931. The Mandal Commission had estimated OBC population at 52 per cent of the total population while NSSO (2009-10), 66th Round, had estimated it to be 41.7 per cent.
- Senior Citizens: 10.36 Crore (8.56 per cent).
- Victims of Substance Abuse: As per the National Survey on extent and pattern of Substance Abuse, approximately 6.50 Cr persons are victims of substance abuse.

CHAPTER II

BUDGETARY PROVISIONS AND UTILIZATION

2.1 The Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment) for the year 2019-20 are given under Demand No. 91. The detailed Demands for Grants of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment were laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 12.07.2019. The Department of Social Justice and Empowerment furnished the following statement showing the Budget Estimates, Revised Estimates and Actual Expenditure for the last three years under Plan and Non Plan Expenditure along with the Budget Estimates for 2019-20 under Schemes and Non-Schemes allocation:

Statement showing Plan and Non-Plan expenditure for the last three years and target for the current year:

(₹ in crore)				
Year	Budget Estimates(BE)	Revised Estimates(RE)	Actual Expenditure (AE)	Percentage of utilization of AE
2016-17	6565.95	6569.39	6516.23	99.19
2017-18	6908.00	6908.00	6754.49	97.77
2018-19	7750.00	9963.25	9964.25	100.01
Target 2019-20	8885.00	-	5169.03 (upto 31.10.2019)	58.17

2.2 The Department informed the Committee that they have formulated the Annual Plan proposal for the year 2019-20 as per the directions given by the Ministry of Finance, (Department of Expenditure). It was further informed that the Department had submitted its requirement of ₹ 14871.37 crore to the Ministry of Finance but received only ₹ 8885.00 crore for the year 2019-20 which had led to a squeeze in the proposed outlay of some Schemes.

2.3 When enquired about such Schemes, which were affected by the reduced allocation, it was submitted by the Department that the major gap in allocation demanded from Ministry of Finance and actually allocated funds in BE 2019-20 is in the following two Schemes:

- a. Post Matric Scholarship for SCs – The BE Demand was ₹ 7125.00 crore while ₹ 2926.82 crore have been allocated in the Scheme. Shortfall in allocation is ₹ 4198.18 crore.
- b. Post Matric Scholarship for OBCs – The BE Demand was ₹ 2500.00 crore while ₹ 1360.00 crore have been allocated in the Scheme. Shortfall in allocation is ₹ 1140.00 crore”.

2.4 When asked how the Department plans to manage in Schemes as well as non-Schemes with this reduced allocation of funds which is almost ₹ 1100 crore less in 2019-20 as compared to the last financial year, it was stated that “the Department received ₹ 7750.00 crore in BE 2018-19 and ₹ 8885.00 crore in BE 2019-20. The RE of 2018-19 was raised to provide funds only in one Scheme – Post Matric Scholarship for SCs (₹ 3000 crore) to meet the pending liabilities. Overall the BE for 2019-20 is higher than BE 2018-19 by 14.64 per cent”.

2.5 When the Department was asked about the reasons for a huge difference between BE of ₹ 7750.00 crore and RE of ₹ 9963.25 crore granted to the Department in 2018-19, it was submitted that “in 2018-19, this difference between BE of ₹ 7750.00 crore and RE of ₹ 9963.25 crore was due to increase of RE of Scheme of Post Matric Scholarship for SCs by ₹ 3000.00 crore to meet the pending liabilities. It is pertinent to mention that after RE of Scheme of Post Matric Scholarship for SCs was increased by ₹ 3000.00 crore, only ₹ 2213.25 crore was provided as Cash Supplementary by Ministry of Finance. Remaining funds to the extent of ₹ 786.75 crore were to be re-appropriated/met from cut in RE in other Schemes of the Department”.

2.6 When the Department was asked about the present status of arrears under the Scheme of Post Matric Scholarship for SCs, it was replied by the Department that “during the year 2018-19, Central Assistance of ₹ 5928.15 crore was released covering entire arrears upto 2017-18 of all the States/UTs except Punjab. Funds could not be released to Punjab as the State is in the process of conducting an audit of the scheme for the implementation during the 12th Plan period. Further release of funds will be considered after the receipt of details of audit and final proposal for release of funds from State Government”. When the Department was asked whether all the arrears under this Scheme are cleared till date, it was submitted by the Department that during the year 2019-20, out of the Budget Estimate of ₹ 2926.82 crore, Central Assistance of ₹1731.30 crore has been released so far towards Central Assistance for 2018-19 and 2019-20 (anticipated) to the States who had submitted complete proposals along with due Utilization Certificates etc. The due Central Assistance will be released to remaining States/UTs subject to submission of final proposals and utilization certificate.

2.7 In this connection, the Secretary of the Department deposed before the Committee during the evidence that “we have requested the Government of India to support us for the ‘Scheme of Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for SCs and Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme’ that is why we have demanded extra Budget of ₹ 4-5 thousand crore”.

2.8 The Department furnished the following statement of number of beneficiaries, State-wise, from 2016-17 to 2018-19 under this scheme.

State-wise beneficiaries under the Scheme of Post Matric Scholarship for SC students in the last three years (2016-17 to 2018-19)

S.No.	States/UTs	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
1	Andhra Pradesh	685102	658534	660193
2	Assam	38366	23874	7606
3	Bihar	0	89213	96189
4	Chandigarh	3000	2203	NA
5	Chhattisgarh	90871	95565	NA
6	Daman & Diu	170	0	NA
7	Delhi	0	20100	14057
8	Goa	108	280	NA
9	Gujarat	166582	131169	NA
10	Haryana	94377	123062	NA
11	Himachal Pradesh	55213	33057	NA
12	Jammu & Kashmir	4094	11040	7159
13	Jharkhand	0	20177	22629
14	Karnataka	297478	322606	302286
15	Kerala	131314	132286	NA
16	Madhya Pradesh	323642	361268	NA
17	Maharashtra	404656	540993	NA
18	Manipur	7310	6566	5516
19	Odisha	106668	202125	202917
20	Puducherry	0	6241	NA
21	Punjab	309468	274730	NA
22	Rajasthan	310639	191184	339157
23	Sikkim	328	361	387
24	Tamil Nadu	796206	761114	NA
25	Telangana	278363	212706	272169
26	Tripura	14943	14652	16982
27	Uttar Pradesh	1095469	1238139	1274740
28	Uttarakhand	39864	69504	NA
29	West Bengal	607744	382795	450004
	TOTAL	5861975	5925544	3366583

NA- The actual details of beneficiaries for 2018-19 and anticipated for 2019-20 are still awaited from these States. However the beneficiaries for 2018-19 and 2019-20 are estimated to 62 lakh and 64 lakh respectively.

2.9 When it was enquired from the Department that when there were arrears pending under the Scheme of Post Matric Scheme of Scholarship to SCs what were the reasons of under utilisation of funds in 2018-19, the Department replied that “the allocation of ₹ 3000 crore at BE stage and additional ₹ 3000 crore at RE stage was made for clearing the arrears of the States for the 12th Plan Period. As per the guidelines 2 per cent of this ₹ 6000 crore need to be earmarked for North Eastern States. However, since there were no pending arrears of North Eastern States towards 12th Plan Period and therefore due to additional allocation of budget towards NE Head there was slight under utilization. However it is submitted that unutilized funds under NE head of this scheme were re-appropriated to NE head of other schemes where demand was higher compared to their allocation”.

2.10 There were few Schemes of the Department in which there was less utilization of funds in 2018-19 such as Pre-Matric Scholarships for the children of those engaged in unclean occupation and Scheme for Education and Economical Development of De-notified and Nomadic Tribes etc. It is stated by the Department that the reason for less utilization in these Scheme was non-receipt of complete proposals from the States/UTs.

2.11 The Department furnished the following statement showing BE, RE and AE incurred on all the Schemes under the three Divisions from the year 2016-17 to 2018-19 along with target for the year 2019-20:

Annexure-I											
Statement showing B.E, R.E, Expenditure from 2016-17 to 2018-19 and B.E 2019-20.											
(₹ in crore)											
S. No.	Programme/Schemes	2016-17			2017-18			2018-19			Target 2019-20
		BE 2016-17	RE 2016-17	Exp. 2016-17	BE 2017-18	RE 2017-18	Exp. 2017-18	BE 2018-19	RE 2018-19	Exp. 2018-19	
	SCD Division										
1	Post Matric Scholarship for SCs	2791.00	2820.70	2798.77	3347.99	3347.99	3414.18	3000.00	6000.00	5928.16	2926.82
2	Free Coaching for SCs and OBCs	25.00	2.00	1.50	25.00	25.00	19.84	30.00	15.00	14.88	30.00
3	Pradhan Mantri Adharsh Gram Yojana	90.00	50.00	62.68	40.00	40.00	39.00	70.00	140.00	167.88	390.00
4	Strengthening of machinery for Enforcement of Protection of Civil Right Act 1955 and Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989	150.00	228.49	222.56	300.00	305.17	355.86	403.72	403.72	405.72	530.00
5	Babu Jagiivan Ram Chhatravas Yojnaa for Sc Boys and Girls.	45.00	35.00	35.00	155.00	155.00	74.91	160.45	32.00	36.56	107.76
7	Assistance to Vol. Orgns. for SCs	50.00	70.00	70.00	70.00	70.00	70.00	50.00	30.00	36.08	70.00
8	Pre-matric Scholarships for the children of those engaged in unclean occupation	2.00	1.00	1.88	2.70	2.70	0.35	5.00	4.00	3.12	5.00
9	State Sch. Castes Development Corporations	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	30.00
10	Up gradation of Merit of SC Students	3.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	1.22	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01
11	National SC Finance and Dev Corporation	139.00	138.00	138.00	128.21	128.21	128.21	137.39	137.39	137.39	180.00
12	Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan	800.00	800.00	797.92	800.00	800.00	731.38	1000.00	900.00	897.25	1100.00
13	Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Foundation	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00

14	National Safai Karamcharis Finance & Development Corporation	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	44.83	5.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	35.00
15	National Fellowship for SCs	200.00	200.00	196.00	230.00	230.00	225.40	300.00	240.00	240.00	360.00
16	Self Employment Scheme of Liberation & Rehabilitation of Scavengers	10.00	1.00	0.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	20.00	70.00	85.76	110.00
17	National Overseas Scholarship for SCs	15.00	15.00	14.59	15.00	15.00	4.59	15.00	15.00	5.97	20.00
18	Top Class Education for SCs	21.00	31.00	28.83	35.00	35.00	33.96	35.00	25.00	25.48	40.50
19	Dr. B.R. Ambedkar National Memorial	16.99	16.99	16.99	62.00	62.00	62.00	5.00	5.00	9.37	5.00
20	Pre Matric Scholarship for SCs	550.00	510.00	507.47	50.00	50.00	62.99	125.00	109.45	115.64	355.00
21	Dr. B.R. Ambedkar International Centre	100.00	100.00	100.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	15.00	10.00	5.63	15.00
22	Venture Capital Funds for SCs	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	50.00	140.00	10.00	10.00	60.00
23	Credit Guarantee fund for SCs	10.00	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
	Total SCD Division	5128.99	5131.19	5104.20	5418.91	5418.91	5344.90	5562.58	8197.58	8175.90	6371.10
	Social Defence										
1	National Institute of Social Defence	24.93	23.93	23.68	22.24	22.50	22.66	15.15	25.15	27.37	25.00
2	Scheme for prevention of Alcoholism and Substance (Drugs) Abuse	35.00	46.00	47.00	46.00	46.00	48.97	50.00	80.00	80.00	130.00
5	Assistance to VO's. for Providing Social Defence Services	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
6	Assistance to Voluntary Organisations under the Scheme of Integrated Programmes for Older Persons	37.00	37.00	36.99	46.00	46.00	44.47	60.00	60.00	65.08	90.10

7	National Survey to Assess the extent, pattern and trends on Drug Abuse and Substance Abuse	3.00	6.00	6.00	15.24	22.22	22.22	7.00	11.00	8.91	0.99
8	National Policy on Prevention on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	155.50	113.50	112.34	135.00
9	Integrated Programme for Rehabilitation of Beggars	10.00	1.00	0.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	0.50	0.50	0.50	5.00
10	Scheme for Transgender Persons	15.00	0.01	0.00	4.00	0.02	0.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	5.00
11.	Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana			0.00	0.00	0.00	1.50	0.01	0.01	106.51	0.01
12.	National Action Plan for Sr. Citizens	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	40.00
	Total Social Defence	127.94	116.95	116.67	140.49	140.75	143.82	292.16	294.16	404.71	434.10
	Backward Classes Division										
1	National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	90.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	130.00
2	Pre-Matric Scholarship to OBCs	142.00	142.00	129.14	142.00	142.00	128.23	232.00	132.00	121.84	220.00
3	Asstt. To Vol. Organizations for OBCs	4.00	9.00	8.99	10.00	10.00	15.00	30.00	30.00	40.00	30.00
4	Boys & Girls Hostels for OBCs	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	42.50	50.00	30.00	36.05	30.00
5	Post-Matric Scholarship for OBCs	885.00	885.00	875.81	885.00	885.00	829.61	1100.00	983.25	1000.45	1360.00
6	Scheme for Educational and Economical Development of De-notified and Nomadic Tribes	5.00	4.50	4.50	6.00	6.00	5.40	10.00	10.00	9.00	10.00
7	Post Matric Scholarship for Economically Backward Classes	10.00	15.12	15.12	10.00	10.00	11.00	103.00	23.00	23.00	23.00

8	National Overseas Scholarship for OBCs	2.00	3.00	2.90	4.30	4.30	19.87	10.00	10.00	10.00	15.00
9	National Fellowship for OBCs and EBCs	27.00	27.00	27.00	40.00	40.00	20.00	110.00	30.00	30.00	70.00
10.	Venture Capital Funds for OBCs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
	Total Backward Classes Division	1215.00	1225.62	1203.46	1237.30	1237.30	1161.61	1745.00	1348.25	1370.34	1938.00
	Miscellaneous										
1.	Research and Training	1.00	0.50	0.46	6.50	2.50	1.10	5.00	3.00	0.57	5.00
2.	Information and Mass Education Cell.	30.00	30.00	29.78	33.00	37.00	36.48	65.00	40.00	41.03	45.00
	Total Miscellaneous	31.00	30.50	30.24	39.50	39.50	37.58	70.00	43.00	41.6	50.00
	Total Schemes	6502.95	6504.26	6454.57	6836.20	6836.46	6687.91	7669.74	9882.99	9992.55	8793.20
	Secretariat	35.79	39.31	38.18	41.10	41.10	41.46	46.54	46.54	47.92	51.93
1.	National Commission for Scheduled Castes	16.58	15.88	15.06	18.20	18.20	15.69	22.00	22.00	19.08	24.11
2.	National Commission for Safai Karamcharis	4.09	2.75	2.20	4.50	4.50	4.55	5.92	5.92	6.70	9.46
3.	National Commission for Backward Classes	4.80	4.90	4.13	5.50	5.24	3.00	5.80	5.80	4.50	6.30
4.	National Commission for Denotified and Nomadic Tribes	1.76	2.29	2.09	2.50	2.50	1.92	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Total Non Schemes	63.02	65.13	61.66	71.80	71.54	66.62	80.26	80.26	78.20	91.80
	Grand Total Schemes and Non Schemes	6565.95	6569.39	6516.23	6908.00	6908.00	6754.53	7750.00	9963.25	10070.75	8885.00

Note:-The expenditure of ₹ 10070.75 crore of the Department for the year 2018-19 includes the expenditure of ₹ 106.50 crore incurred under the scheme of Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY) which is met from the Sr. Citizens Welfare Fund. Hence, the expenditure of the Department for the 2018-19 is ₹ 9964.25 crore.

2.12 The Committee note that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment have been utilizing almost all funds allocated to them every year from 2016-17 till 2018-19. The Committee are happy that the Department is committed to reducing the pendency of arrears in Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for SCs. The Committee have been informed that in the current fiscal, they have utilized 58.17 per cent till 31st October, 2019 i.e. ₹ 5169.03 crore out of the total fund allocation of ₹ 8885 crore. It is evident that the requirements of this Department are much more to provide Scholarships, than allocation actually provided to them, particularly since they have failed to receive their projected demand. The Committee find that the Department submitted its requirement of ₹ 14871.37 crore to the Ministry of Finance but received only ₹ 8885.00 crore for the year 2019-20 which adversely affected the Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for SCs and Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for OBCs. The shortfall were reportedly ₹ 4198.18 crore and ₹ 1140.00 crore respectively in both Schemes, which the Committee finds quite disappointing. The Committee learn that the Department have put forth extra demand of ₹ 4-5 thousand crore to the Ministry of Finance to fill this gap which was statedly not accepted till the Committee examined the subject. Hence they would like to know the status now. As there were reportedly huge arrears pending under the Scheme of Post Matric Scholarship for SCs and even though the Department had released ₹ 5928.15 crore upto 2017-18 to all the States/UTs, the arrears have not been completely cleared, therefore, the Committee expect that the Department must have vigorously pursued Ministry of Finance to grant the extra funds demanded by them to clear the arrears and to ensure smooth functioning of

all the Schemes/programmes of the Department at the supplementary Demands for Grants stage. The Committee would like to be apprised of the additional funds allocated, if any, and the position of arrears at the action taken stage.

2.13 The Committee note that during the year 2017-18 and 2018-19 actual expenditure under some of the Schemes of the Department *viz.* Pre Matric Scholarship for OBC students (ii) Assistance for Skill Development of OBCs/DNTs/EBCs (NGO Scheme) was very low vis-à-vis its budgetary allocation and the allocated budgetary amount could not be utilized fully by the Department. The Committee find that the Department has been repeatedly citing reasons such as non-receipt of complete and adequate proposals from the States/UTs, non-receipt of proposals and UCs in time. The Committee note from the proceedings of the Coordination meetings of the Department that problems range from lack of computerization to inadequate coordination mechanism to low recovery from beneficiaries etc. Also Apart from State Channelizing Agencies, there are several agencies/bodies involved in Schemes and thus an effective coordination is a must. With a large number of dependable information tools/technology available at hand, the Committee are sanguine that many challenges can be tackled so as to attain fiscal prudence. The Committee desire the Department to work hard in handling all challenges and supporting State agencies as their mandate is unique and much valuable for the Society.

2.14 The Committee observe that the details of beneficiaries under the Scheme Post Matric Scholarship for SCs (PMS-SC) are still awaited from many States for the year 2018-19. The Committee are dismayed to note that though more than half

of the financial year i.e. 2019-20 has passed, yet the Department still have no details of the beneficiaries of previous year. The Committee wonder that under these circumstances how the Department would manage to assess the pendency of the arrears under this Scheme and on what basis would it manage to take measures to clear the pending arrears. The Committee, therefore, urge upon the Department to take up this issue with the concerned States/UTs on urgent basis so that the details of the beneficiaries are provided without delay to the Department and the Department could decide the future plan of action for clearing the pendency in arrears and also provide assistance to the fresh eligible candidates under this Scheme.

2.15 The Committee note that there are few Schemes under which the Department has not been able to utilize full amount of allocated funds such as Pre-Matric Scholarships for the children of those engaged in unclean occupations and Scheme for Education and Economical Development of De-notified and Nomadic Tribes etc. The Committee are dissatisfied to note that non-receipt of proposals in time by the Department under these Schemes is the major reason behind less utilization of funds which is an oft-repeated stance taken by them. It is high time that the Department takes concrete steps towards solving this issue of non-sending of adequate and complete proposals by the States/UTs in time. The Committee suggest that the Department could depute capable staff who can provide either necessary on-line expertise to the State Departments or counseling *via* video conferencing regarding sending of appropriate proposals well in time to them which would result in full and proper utilization of funds to benefit larger number from the target groups.

CHAPTER III

SCHEDULED CASTES DIVISION

I. NATIONAL OVERSEAS SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME FOR SC STUDENTS FOR HIGHER STUDIES ABROAD

3.1 The National Overseas Scholarship is meant to provide assistance to selected Scheduled Caste, De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes, landless agricultural labourers and traditional artisans' students for pursuing higher studies of Master level courses and Ph. D programmes abroad in the fields of Engineering and Management, Pure and Applied Science, Agricultural Science and Medicine, International Commerce, Accounting and Finance and Humanities and Social Science. The Scheme is to facilitate the low income students belonging to the target population to obtain higher education viz., Master degree or Ph. D by studying abroad thereby improving their economic and social status. Bachelor level courses in any discipline are not covered under the Scheme.

3.2 The scholarship provides actual tuition fees charged by the foreign university, fixed maintenance allowance of Great Britain Pound (GBP) 9900 in United Kingdom and US Dollar 15,400 in United States of America (USA) and other countries per annum, Contingency Allowance of GBP 1100 in UK and US Dollar 1500 in USA and other countries per annum along with to and fro airfare through Air India.

3.3 National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for Scheduled Caste students has 100 slots in each year and 30 per cent of the awards have been earmarked for women candidates. Financial assistance under the Scheme is provided for a maximum period of 4 years for Ph. D. and 3 years for Masters degree.

3.4 As regards eligibility conditions, only one child of the same parents/guardians is eligible to get benefit under the Scheme. The prospective awardee should not be more than 35 years of age. The total family income of the awardee from all the sources should not exceed ₹ 6.00 Lakh per year. The applicant should have secured minimum 55 per cent marks in the Bachelors degree in order to be eligible for scholarship for Masters degree. For Ph. D. the applicant should have secured minimum 55 per cent marks in the Masters degree. The Scheme has been revised with effect from 20.07.2016 to relax the condition of 5 years mandatory stay in India after completion of course in any of the three conditions viz. if the candidate is able to obtain employment abroad, or joins any other course or is married to a person settled abroad. It has also been decided to carry forward the unfilled slots of previous years from 2014-15 onwards. From 2019-20, an online portal “nosmsje.gov.in” has been made operational for calling of online applications.

3.5 When the Department was enquired about diluting the condition of 5 years mandatory stay in India after completion of the course after the revision of this Scheme by the Department it was submitted that “National Overseas Scholarship scheme for SC etc. has not been revised and as per the scheme guidelines all candidates after having availed of the award under the Scheme are required to return to India. The awardees after having returned to India is also required to immediately intimate to this Ministry in writing about having returned to India. However, as per the provisions of the Scheme permission for staying abroad after completion of the course without any financial support is considered by the Hon’ble Minister(Social Justice and Empowerment) in exceptional cases if a candidate is able to obtain employment abroad, or joins any other course or is married to a person settled abroad. For this purpose the awardees are required to apply to the Ministry seeking permission for extension of stay immediately after completion of

course and furnish reasons for doing so". This Ministry is striving to keep addresses/contact details of the candidates who have successfully completed their course abroad and have returned to India. However, Employment records of the candidates are not maintained in the Ministry. Data of candidates who have gone abroad for studies and returned, from 2015-2019 is given below:-

Sl. No	Selection Year	Candidates gone abroad for studies	Candidates returned back to India, so far	Remarks
1.	2015-16	19	04	Masters/Ph.D courses last for approx 3-4 years. Therefore, courses of many selected candidates from the year 2016-17 onward are yet to get over.
2.	2016-17	46	7	
3.	2017-18	58	4	
4.	2018-19	20	-	
5.	2019-20	-	-	

3.6 The Department furnished the following information regarding BE, RE and AE of last 3 years and target for the year 2019-20 for the above mentioned Scheme:

(₹ in crore)			
Year	BE	RE	AE
2016-17	15.00	15.00	14.59
2017-18	15.00	15.00	4.59
2018-19	15.00	15.00	5.97
Target 2019-20	20.00	-	3.27

3.7 When the Department was asked about the low budgetary allocation under this Scheme amounting to only ₹ 15 crore, the Department justified their demand vis-a-vis the objective of this Scheme by stating that "under National Overseas Scholarship Scheme (NOS) for SC Students for Higher Studies Abroad, 100 candidates from Scheduled Caste, De-notified, nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes, Landless Agricultural Labourers and Traditional Artisans are selected. The scholarship is provided for pursuing Masters Degree and Ph. D. abroad. The scholarship for pursuing Master Degree under the

scheme is granted for maximum period of 3 years or the completion of course whichever is earlier. In respect of Ph. D. the scholarship is granted for a period of 4 years or completion of course, whichever is earlier. As such the expenditure incurred on each candidate is spread over span of 3 to 4 years. Hence, the budget allocation will be sufficient for the financial year 2019-20, which is ₹ 20.00 crore”.

3.8 When the Department was asked about the reasons of under utilization of funds in the last two years, the Department replied that “under the NOS Scheme candidates, admissible/due scholarship funds in the form of Tuition Fees/ Maintenance allowances, contingency allowances etc. are directly paid to University/ NOS awardees concerned respectively by the Indian missions abroad on the advice of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. From the financial year 2017-18, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) started using Public Finance Management System (PFMS). The Indian Missions in various countries have different software for monitoring booking of expenditure. As such, the fund utilization as above is low due to delayed booking of expenditure by Pay and Account Office, MEA. It is pertinent to mention here that the regular release of Maintenance Allowance/other allowances to the Students abroad and reimbursement of fees to the Universities/Institutes directly by the Indian Missions abroad is not impacted. The issues of reconciliation of funds has been taken up with the MEA”.

3.9 The Department furnished the following statement of number of beneficiaries, State-wise, for the last 3 years and the current financial year, till date, under this Scheme:

State wise details of number of beneficiaries selected under National Overseas Scholarship Scheme					
S.No.	State	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
1	Andhra Pradesh	3	6	4	0
2	Arunachal Pradesh	1	0	0	0
3	Assam	1	0	0	0
4	Bihar	2	0	0	0
5	Chhattisgarh	4	1	0	0
6	Delhi	4	10	3	6
7	Gujarat	4	1	2	0
8	Haryana	1	2	5	4
9	Jammu & Kashmir	1	0	0	0
10	Jharkhand	2	0	0	0
11	Karnataka	3	10	3	7
12	Kerala	4	3	2	3
13	Madhya Pradesh	5	10	6	6
14	Maharashtra	53	95	53	39
15	Manipur	0	2	0	1
16	Orissa	0	3	1	2
17	Puducherry	0	0	0	1
18	Punjab	2	7	3	0
19	Rajasthan	1	3	0	1
20	Tamil Nadu	5	6	6	2
21	Telangana	2	6	3	4
22	Tripura	1	0	0	0
23	Uttar Pradesh	8	14	3	4
24	West Bengal	1	4	6	5
	TOTAL	108*	183*	100	85**
	* Includes carried forward slots from previous years.				
	**Selection Process for remaining slots is going on.				

3.10 When the Department was asked whether all the 30 seats which are earmarked for women candidates are filled every year with them, it was informed by the Department that “as per extant guidelines of the scheme, 30% of slots have been earmarked for female candidates in each selection year. During the year 2016-17 & 2017-18, the unfilled slots in the previous year were carried forward in the next financial year. The

year-wise details of the number of female candidates selected in the last 5 years are given below.-

Sl.No	Year	Total Candidates	No. of Male candidate	No. of female candidates
1.	2015-16	50	34	16
2.	2016-17	108	72	36
3.	2017-18	183	136	47
4.	2018-19	100	65	35
5.	2019-20**	85**	63	22

** as on 20.11.2019”

3.11 As regards the measures that have been adopted by the Department to publicize the Scheme specially in rural areas it was informed to the Committee that “this Department publicizes the Scheme through a radio play namely “Sanwarti Jaye Jeevan Ki Rahen”. Newspaper advertisements are issued. The guidelines of the scheme have also been uploaded on this Ministry’s website”.

3.12 The Committee note that under National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for SC Students, assistance is provided to the selected candidates from Scheduled Castes for pursuing higher studies i.e. Master level courses and Ph.D. programmes abroad in the fields of Engineering and Management, Pure and Applied Science, Agricultural Science and Medicine, International Commerce, Accounting & Finance and Humanities & Social Science. While the Scheme is one of its kind, the Committee find that it has been revised with effect from 20.07.2016 in the sense that the condition of 5 years mandatory stay in India after completion of course has been relaxed in any of the three conditions viz. if the candidate is able to obtain employment abroad/joins any other course/is married to a person settled abroad. The Committee are of the considered opinion that when the Department is spending a hefty sum of taxpayers' money to support foreign education for candidates from the country, it should be made mandatory for the scholarship holders to return to India after the completion of studies and serve the country for atleast 2 years. The Committee also desire the Department to take the initiative to help them gain employment in the regions/States where there is dearth of qualified professionals and motivate them to pursue specialised research in India. As the selection procedure was still going on for the year 2019-20 when the Committee was examining the subject, the Committee would like to be apprised of the final figures of the beneficiaries at the end of this financial year i.e. 2019-20.

3.13 The Committee note that there are 100 slots every year to be filled by the selected candidates under National Overseas Scheme for SCs. The Committee fail to understand that in a country of around 1.37 billion people, how can only 100

slots be considered enough to fulfill the purpose of the Scheme. The Committee also feel that possibly all the 100 slots in a year are filled by the candidates of 3 or 4 States/UTs of the country as the candidates are selected on first come first serve basis. In this situation candidates from other States may suffer. Therefore, the Committee recommend the Department to consider fixing State-wise slots up to a time-limit and if the number of slots from that State/UT remain unfilled beyond that, then the candidates from other States could be offered the scholarship. The Committee recommend that the Ministry should also chalk out a calendar to be followed by all the States to ensure uniformity and prevent any delay in the process of application for the candidates.

3.14 The Committee observe that the Department have introduced online processing of application forms for the Scheme of National Overseas Scholarship. The Committee feel that in rural areas where most of the time network connectivity is bad, filling an online application form may not succeed. Therefore, the Committee urge the Department to develop a suitable mobile Application through which the students can fill the form even if there is no accessibility to the computers or net connectivity. The Committee also feel that filling the applications offline in hardcopy at least for rural areas need to be continued so that those who have no ready access to mobile/computers could also fill the application forms for this Scheme.

3.15 The Committee note that the under the National Overseas Scholarship Scheme, Department had utilised ₹ 4.59 crore out of ₹ 15.00 crore in 2017-18 and ₹ 5.97 crore out of ₹ 15.00 crore in 2018-19. The Department have received ₹ 20.00 crore in 2019-20 and till 31st October, 2019, only ₹ 3.27 crore was utilised. In this regard, the Committee have been informed that as this scholarship is meant for the Masters and Ph.D. programmes, the disbursal of money is spread over a period of 3 or 4 years. Acknowledging the same, the Committee opine that the number of candidates are also increasing year after year under this Scheme, hence the utilisation of money should also register an increase. As the budgetary allocation for the year 2019-20 has been enhanced from ₹ 15.00 crore in 2018-19 to ₹ 20.00 crore in 2019-20, the Committee impress upon the Department to adopt stringent mechanism to overcome procedural lacunae and select more eligible candidates through proper publicity of the Scheme in order to achieve full utilisation of fund allocation.

3.16 The Committee are constrained to note that even in the States where SC population is very high such as Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, etc., there are nil or very less number of candidates selected for National Overseas Scholarship Scheme. The Committee are of the view that though the unfilled slots in the previous years are carried forward to the next financial year, still the Department should make extra efforts to advertise this Scheme through print/electronic media so that more and more people become aware of this Scheme.

II. CREDIT ENHANCEMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME FOR THE SCHEDULED CASTES

3.17 The Credit Enhancement Guarantee Scheme for the Scheduled Caste has been launched in May, 2015 under the aegis of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, under its social sector initiatives. The objective of the Scheme to promote entrepreneurship amongst the Scheduled Castes, by providing Credit Enhancement Guarantee to Member Lending Institutions (MLIs) being Banks and Financial Institutions (FIs), who shall be providing financial assistance to these SC entrepreneurs. The Government of India has initially allocated a corpus of ₹ 200 crore for the Scheme, out of which the guarantee shall be extended to the MLIs. Upto the Financial year 2018-19, loans aggregating to ₹ 39.18 crore have been sanctioned by some of the MLIs against which the total guarantee cover of ₹ 28.01 crore has been provided by Industrial Finance Corporation of India Limited (IFCI). The corpus of the fund has increased to ₹ 256.00 crore as on 31.03.2019. IFCI Ltd. is the nodal agency under the Scheme and shall issue the guarantee to the Banks and FIs, who shall be encouraged to finance Scheduled Caste entrepreneurs, so that these enterprises become profitable ventures. Under the Scheme, Sole Proprietorship, Companies, registered Partnerships and Societies belonging to Scheduled Castes are eligible for loans from ₹ 15 lakh and above, subject to a maximum guarantee cover of ₹ 5 crore. So far 31 Banks have been registered under the Scheme as MLIs.

3.18 The Department forwarded the following information regarding BE, RE and AE of last 3 years and target for the year 2019-20 for the above mentioned Scheme:

(₹ in crore)			
Year	BE	RE	AE
2016-17	10.00	0.01	0.01
2017-18	0.01	0.01	0.01
2018-19	0.01	0.01	0.01
Target 2019-20	0.01	-	0.00

3.19 When the Department was asked about the reasons of low allocation of funds as RE under this Scheme, it was replied by the Department that “the scheme envisages guarantee for the loans obtained by SC Entrepreneurs from Banks and the utilization of the funds depends largely on the sanction of the loans and invocation of guarantee by the banks. So far the outstanding guarantee commitment is ₹ 28.01 crore and the funds available with IFCI are ₹ 265 crore as on 30.09.2019 (corpus of ₹ 200.04 crore and interest thereon). Therefore, ₹ 1 lakh for each year were sought. More funds may be required in future as per need depending on the sanction of loans by the Banks”.

3.20 It was also stated by the Department that “this is a Credit Enhancement Guarantee Scheme for Scheduled Caste Entrepreneurs whereby the MLI will sanction the loans and guarantee cover is to be provided under the scheme, there was not much utilization of allocated funds under this Scheme”.

3.21 The Department furnished the following list of Member Lending Institutions (MLIs) under the Credit Enhancement Guarantee Scheme for the Scheduled Caste:

LIST OF MLIs IN CREDIT ENHANCEMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME FOR SCs

1. State Bank of India, Mumbai

2. Bank of Baroda, Mumbai
3. Oriental Bank of Commerce, Gurgaon
4. Allahabad Bank, Kolkata
5. Dena Bank, Mumbai
6. Syndicate Bank, Bengaluru
7. Union Bank of India, Mumbai
8. Bank of Maharashtra, Pune
9. IDBI Bank, Mumbai
10. Vijaya Bank, Bangalore
11. Corporation Bank, Mangalore
12. Punjab National Bank, New Delhi
13. Bank of India, Mumbai
14. Indian Bank, Chennai
15. Central Bank of India, Mumbai
16. Andhra Bank, Hyderabad
17. Canara Bank, Bengaluru
18. Punjab & Sind Bank, New Delhi
19. UCO Bank, Kolkata
20. Indian Overseas Bank, Chennai
21. United Bank of India, Kolkata
22. Karnataka Bank, Mangalore
23. Dhanlaxmi Bank, Thrissur
24. Pallavan Grama Bank, Salem
25. Sarva Haryana Gramin Bank, Rohtak, Haryana

3.22 When the Department was asked about the steps taken to spread awareness about this Scheme, it was replied that “IFCI has been making all out efforts to promote this Scheme through wide publicity by conducting seminars, conferences and awareness programmes in co-ordination with various Chapters of Dalit Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industries(DICCI) and attending State Level Bankers Committee (SLBC) meetings and contact meetings conducted by the Banks to promote various Government Schemes from time to time”.

3.23 Elaborating the mechanism to recover loan from the entrepreneurs, the Department stated that “as per the scheme, the recovery has to be carried out by Member Lending Institutions (MLIs) only. In the event of account turning Non

Performance Asset (NPA), the MLI shall invoke the guarantee. At present guarantee has been invoked in only one case. It is further informed that “the sourcing, sanction, documentation, monitoring, follow up and recovery of the loan” is the sole responsibility of Member Lending Institutions who are providing assistance to the Scheduled Caste (SC) entrepreneurs”.

3.24 The Department forwarded the following statement of beneficiaries covered under the Scheme since its inception in 2016-17:

LIST OF BENEFICIARIES, STATEWISE FOR THE LAST 3 YEAR AND CURRENT FINACIAL YEAR, ALONG WITH LOAN AMOUNT SANCTIONED IN EACH CASE.

(₹ in lakh)

Sl. No.	Company Name	Total Facility Amount Sanction by Banks	Eligible Guarantee Cover provided by IFCI	State & Bank Name
FY 2016-17				
1	Avani Metacast Pvt. Ltd.	185.00	148.00	Pune , Maharashtra
2	CPR Laboratories Pvt. Ltd.			Visakhapatnam , Andhra Pradesh
3	M/s. 20 th March Ventures Pvt. Ltd.	61.32	49.05	Pune, Maharashtra
4	M/s. Rathnam Pharmaceuticals Pvt. Ltd.	400.00	280.00	Hyderabad, Telangana
	Total	1092.32	789.25	
FY-2017-18				
1	M/s. Laxmi Barter Pvt. Ltd.	436.00	305.20	Patna, Bihar
2	M/s. Ram Sab Industries Pvt. Ltd.	50.00	50.00	Najafgarh, Delhi
3	M/s. Steeledge Pipes & Scaffolds Pvt. Ltd.	200.00	160.00	Bhailai, Chhattisgarh
4	M/s. Veracity Natural Resources Pvt. Ltd.	214.00	149.80	Nagpur, Maharashtra
		900.00	665.00	
FY- 2018-19				
1	M/s. Shakthi Infra Ventures (India) Pvt. Ltd.	196.25	157.00	Hyderabad, Telangana
2	M/s. Yash Cotyarn Pvt. Ltd.	146.00	116.80	Akola, Maharashtra

3	M/s. Jay Plast Pack Pvt. Ltd.	300.00	210.00	Pune ,Maharashtra
4	M/s. Chandan & Chandan Inds. Pvt. Ltd.	289.09	202.36	Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh
5	M/s. CPR Laboratories Pvt. Ltd. - A/c.II	50.00	40.00	Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh,
6	M/s. Siva Sai Seeds - Munagala (Telangana)	150.00	120.00	Mahabubnagar, Telangana
7	M/s. PJS Construction Pvt. Ltd., Basti, Gorakhpur, UP	60.00	60.00	Gorakhpur , Uttar Pradesh,
		1191.34	906.16	

FY- 2019-20

1	Prowess Industries Pvt. Ltd.	455.00	318.50	Pune, Maharashtra
2	Ram Sab Industries Pvt. Ltd.	10.00	10.00	New Delhi
	Total*	465.00	328.00	

*Upto 30st September, 2019.

3.25 The Committee note that Credit Enhancement Guarantee Scheme for the Scheduled Castes in one of its kind Scheme initiated by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment to enhance entrepreneurship amongst the Scheduled Castes through 31 banks, which is very important for their economic development. The Committee are distressed to note that only 13 candidates have been provided credit under this Scheme since its inception in 2016-17 till 30th September, 2019. The Committee, therefore, exhort the Department to review its present mechanism for implementation of this Scheme and modify it accordingly to provide credit to more eligible candidates under this Scheme. For this, the Department should make efforts to publicize it more through electronic and print media and sensitize Banks/Financial Institutions to be supportive to the SC entrepreneurs who are Credit seekers. The Committee are also of the considered opinion that in order to increase the number of beneficiaries in this Scheme, the Ministry should plan an exclusive outreach programme for the target population. The Department should also make use of the promotional mobile audio vans to publicize this Scheme in rural as well as urban areas.

3.26 The Committee are sad to note that the procedure for filling the application forms as well as getting selected for the benefit under this Scheme is not so easy for the persons of the target group as they belong to the most vulnerable and economically, educationally and socially weaker sections of the society. In fact, there are quite a few instances where the MLIs have shown lack of support and cooperation in extending credit to SC entrepreneurs. The Committee, therefore, feel that there is an urgent need of simplification of procedures and more support

to those who apply under Credit Enhancement Guarantee Scheme so that more and more people are able to apply and purpose of the Scheme is not defeated.

3.27 The Committee are sad to note that the application procedure is very complicated under this Scheme and this deters many eligible candidates from availing this Scheme. The Committee feel that simplification of application form would benefit the target population and increase the number of applicants. The Committee also recommend the Department to introduce a Helpline for this Scheme which would be of great help to solve the queries of the applicants/beneficiaries.

III. Self Employment Scheme of Liberation and Rehabilitation of Scavengers (SRMS)

3.28 The Central Sector “Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS) was revised in November, 2013 to provide the following rehabilitation benefits in consonance with the provisions of the “Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013” (MS Act, 2013).

Under this Scheme

- (i) One- time cash assistance of ₹ 40, 000 is provided to the identified manual scavenger.
- (ii) In addition to it, loans up to ₹ 15.00 lakh at concessional rate of interest to the manual scavenger/dependent are also provided.
- (iii) Credit linked back end capital subsidy up to ₹ 3,25,000 is provided to the manual scavenger/dependent.
- (iv) Skill Development Training up to two years with stipend of ₹ 3000 per month is given to the manual scavenger/dependent.

3.29 The above scheme is implemented through National Safai Karamacharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC). The SRMS has been extended up to 2019-20. In addition to the existing rehabilitation benefits mentioned above, the following benefits would be provided under this Scheme to the target group from 2018-19 onwards:

- (i) Health camps to sensitize the target group on health and other aspects.
- (ii) Awareness camps for sewage/septic workers to create awareness on the use of safety equipment and devices.
- (iii) Small duration training courses on behavioral skill development.

3.30 The Department furnished the following information regarding BE, RE and AE of last 3 years and target for the year 2019-20 for the above mentioned Scheme:

(₹ in crore)			
Year	BE	RE	AE
2016-17	10.00	1.00	0.00
2017-18	5.00	5.00	5.00
2018-19	20.00	70.00	85.76
Target 2019-20	110.00	-	69.80

3.31 As is evident from the above Table, in 2018-19, AE i.e. ₹ 85.76 crore was ₹ 15.76 crore more than the RE of ₹ 70.00 crore. When the Department was asked the reasons for this extra utilization of funds in 2018-19 under this Scheme it was informed by the Department that, "the expenditure under SRMS during 2017-18 was based on the number of identified manual scavengers reported by the States and Union Territories as per survey conducted by the local authorities under "Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 (MS Act, 2013). A large number of insanitary latrines reported in Census-2011 have been converted into sanitary latrines under Swachha Bharat Mission implemented by the Ministries of Drinking Water and Sanitation and Housing and Urban Affairs. Social organizations working for manual scavengers reported that the manual scavengers who were servicing the insanitary latrines which since been converted into sanitary latrines remained unidentified. At the behest of NITI Aayog a Task Force was constituted to decide on a National Survey of manual scavengers to identify all the manual scavengers in the country. Based on the data of insanitary latrines converted under Swachha Bharat Mission and also inputs received from Social Organizations, a National Survey was undertaken in 170 districts of 18 States during 2018-19. Additional funds were required to provide rehabilitation

benefits to the manual scavengers identified under National Survey. Onetime Cash Assistance of ₹ 71.12 crore was released to 17,781 manual scavengers in 2018-19. In addition, other rehabilitation benefits viz. skill development training and capital subsidy to the manual scavengers and their dependents who availed bank loans for undertaking self employment projects were also required to be provided. The budget provision was enhanced to ₹ 85.76 crore for the year 2018-19 (₹ 15.76 crore for North-East) in anticipation of identification of manual scavengers in additional 16 districts of Assam. However, the survey reports of these districts were not received during 2018-19". However the Department also informed the Committee that "subsequently 4 States viz. Assam, Jharkhand, Karnataka, and Uttar Pradesh had requested for carrying out survey in 24 additional districts which is in progress."

3.32 When the Department was asked about the rehabilitation benefits provided to the identified manual scavengers after the survey, it was stated by the Department that "27,268 manual scavengers identified during the National Survey in 170 districts have been provided One Time Cash Assistance of ₹ 40,000/-, directly into their bank accounts. Remaining identified manual scavengers would be provided OTCA on receipt of complete details including bank accounts details of the manual scavengers from the concerned district authorities. As regards providing Skill Development Training, the data of identified manual scavengers with contact details, shared with the Sector Skill Councils and other Government Training Agencies with the instructions to create awareness and motivate the beneficiaries to undertake training programmes as per their strength, choice and requirement of local market so that they are suitably employed or could start their own self employment ventures after completion of the training." Regarding the average age of manual scavengers presently into this job, the Department

informed the Committee that “average age of manual scavengers identified under this survey is around 40 years. Since the dependants of the identified manual scavengers are also covered under the Skill Development Programme, all available training programmes with the Sector Skill Councils and other Government Training Agencies are offered to the beneficiaries to choose the training programme as per their strength, choice and local market conditions.”

3.33 The Department forwarded the following statement of beneficiaries covered under various components under SRMS for the last three years and current financial year:

Statement Showing the State-wise and Year-wise Physical Achievements of Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers as on 21.10.2019

S. No.	State	No. of MS identified under MS Survey 2013	No. of MS identified under National Survey 2018														
				One Time Cash Assistance						Skill Development Training				Capital Subsidy			
				MS Survey, 2013				National Survey, 2018									
				2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-19	2019-20	2018-19 (new Survey)	2019-20 (new Survey)	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-19	2019-20	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-19	2019-20
1	Andhra Pradesh	78	1982	8	2	1		1333	71	0	0	0	104	0	0	0	0
2	Assam	154	542	0	144	0		538	0	0	7	38	50	0	0	0	0
3	Bihar	137	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	18	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	Chhattisgarh	3	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Gujarat	0	108	0	0	0		96	0	0	7	12	0	0	0	0	0
6	Jharkhand	0	201	0	0	0		108	0	0	0	24	0	0	0	0	0
7	Karnataka	732	1754	17	293	102	18	818	138	0	51	29	120	0	0	0	0
8	Kerala	0	600	0	0	0		504	0	0	0	161	0	0	0	0	0
9	Madhya Pradesh	36	562	0	0	0		305	0	0	0	49	120	0	0	0	0
10	Maharashtra	0	7378	0	0	0		4605	879	0	0	0	117	0	0	0	0
11	Odisha	237	0	45	1	0		0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	Punjab	91	142	0	1	1	1	125	0	22	6	29	0	14	0	1	0
13	Rajasthan	338	2590	104	23	1		2037	0	53	73	107	126	0	0	0	0
14	Tamilnadu	363	62	108	38	7		34	7	0	0	29	0	0	0	0	75
15	Uttar Pradesh	12095	19712	1075	669	186	409	4968	7304	4298	126	1041	257	182	151	147	26

16	Uttarakhand	137	6033	0	0	0		1755	104	0	1	163	84	0	0	3	0
17	West Bengal	104	637	0	0	0		555	4	0	35	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		14505	42303	1357	1171	298	428	17781	8507	4373	334	1682	978	196	151	151	101

Footnotes:

- 1 J & K did not report identification of manual scavengers in both surveys
MS Survey 2013 was conducted in all States/UTs, however, only 13 States reported identification of manual scavengers and the remaining States reported NIL manual
- 2 scavengers.
National Survey of Manual Scavengers, 2018 was conducted in 18 States but Bihar, Haryana, J & K and Telangana reported NIL manual
- 3 scavengers.

3.34 As Skill Development Training is most significant part of the rehabilitation process of manual scavengers, the Department was inquired about the expenditure incurred for it, in their reply the Department furnished the statement of expenditure incurred for Skill Development Training under SRMS in the last three years as follows:-

Year	Expenditure Incurred (₹ in lakh)
2016-17	318.77
2017-18	348.49
2018-19	79.81

3.35 The Department further informed that during 2019-20 an amount of ₹ 2.035 crore has been utilized for Skill Development Training under SRMS. Further, about 3,000 manual scavengers/dependants are under mobilization for training by Sector Skill Councils and their associated Training Partners. On the training of these manual scavengers total amount of about ₹ 7.68 crore is expected to be incurred.

3.36 The number of beneficiaries covered under Skill Development Training in the last three years and no. of women in them are as follows:-

Year	No. of beneficiaries provided Skill Development Training	No. of Women trainees
2016-17	4373	1682
2017-18	334	69
2018-19	1682	895

3.37 The Committee observe that under the Self Employment Scheme of Liberation and Rehabilitation of Scavengers (SRMS), 42,303 Manual Scavengers were identified during National Survey of Manual Scavengers, 2018 but Skill Development Training has been imparted to only 1682 candidates in 2018-19 and 978 candidates in 2019-20. The Committee fail to fathom that why only 2660 manual scavengers have been imparted training, when Skill Development Training is an integral part of rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers. In the same way One Time Cash Assistance has also not been provided to all the identified Manual Scavengers but only to 298 in 2018-19 and 428 in 2019-20. Considering the above facts, the Committee exhort the Department to at least provide Skill Development Training to all the latest identified Manual Scavengers and also One Time Cash Assistance to all identified Manual Scavengers in order to fulfill the purpose of the Scheme. The Department should also ensure that they are gainfully employed in future in order to totally prohibit Manual Scavengers from the country. The Committee are of the view that the Department should conduct a survey regarding the age, gender and qualification of Manual Scavengers and their counseling should be done before imparting Skill Development Training to them. For this purpose, the Department should develop a focused capsule for their re-employment.

3.38 The Committee are pained that manual scavenging is still prevalent in the urban areas in India and every now and then news of deaths of scavengers while manually cleaning the manholes are reported. The Committee are of the considered view that if manual scavenging is to be eliminated then the Department has to take implementation of this Scheme very seriously. The Committee urge

upon the Department to ask all State Governments/UT Administrations to direct their respective Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)/Municipal Corporations to strictly prohibit cleaning of manholes manually and conduct inspections to ensure that contractors do not resort to hiring manual scavengers for the job. Machines should be used instead of manual scavengers for this purpose. The Department should also issue instructions to the implementing agencies to take strong punitive action against those who are responsible for employing labourers for cleaning of manholes and blacklist them.

IV Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana (BJRCY)

3.39 This scheme for construction of hostels for Scheduled Caste (SC) students is one of the means to enable and encourage children/students belonging to these Castes (SC) to attain quality education. Such hostels are immensely beneficial to the students hailing from rural and remote areas of the country. While the scheme of construction of hostels for SC girls is in operation from the Third Five Year Plan (1961-66), the same for boys was started with effect from the year 1989-90. The scheme was revised in 2008 and recently on 10.09.2018.

(a) For Girls Hostels

100 per cent Central Assistance is provided to the State Governments/UT Administrations and Central & State Universities/Institutions, as per the cost norms prescribed in the Scheme.

(b) For Boys Hostels

- (i) 50 per cent central assistance is provided to State Governments on matching share basis.
- (ii) 100 per cent central assistance to UT Administrations.
- (iii) 90 per cent central assistance to Central Universities/Institutions. The remaining 10 per cent cost is to be borne by the Central University/ Institution concerned.
- (iv) For State Universities/ Institutions, the central assistance is 45 per cent. The remaining 55 per cent cost is to be borne by the State University/Institution and the State Government/UT Administration concerned in the ratio of 10:45.

Note: *In case the State Governments/ UT Administrations concerned do not contribute their expected share of 45 per cent to the State Universities/Institutions as prescribed above, the share of the former will also have to be borne by the Universities/Institutions, by raising their contribution to 55 per cent.*

3.40 The cost norms for construction/expansion of girls and boys hostels will be as under:

- | | | | |
|-------|----------------------------|---|--|
| (i) | North Eastern Region | : | ₹ 3.50 lakh per inmate |
| (ii) | Northern Himalayan Regions | : | ₹ 3.25 lakh per inmate |
| (iii) | Gangetic Plains & Lower | : | ₹3.00 lakh per inmate Himalayan Region |

In addition to the admissible central assistance under the Scheme, a one-time grant of ₹ 5000/- per student is also provided for making provisions of a cot, a table and a chair for each student and for common facilities like Television, Computer, Kitchen equipments, etc. This one-time grant shall be released after utilization of central assistance provided by the Government along with matching share of implementing agency, if any, and completion of construction of the hostel in all respects.

3.41 The Department have forwarded the following information regarding BE and AE and number of hostels sanctioned and the number of beneficiaries from the year 2015-16 to 2018-19 for Girls and Boys Hostels separately:

Physical and financial performance for Girls Hostels

year	Budget Estimates	Actual Expenditure	No. of hostels	No. of beneficiaries
	(₹ in crore)	(₹ in crore)	<i>sanctioned</i>	
2015-16	50.00	45.69	23	1755
2016-17	40.00	30.10	17	1250
2017-18	150.00	70.00	17	1700
2018-19	155.45	23.11	12	954

Physical and financial performance for Boys Hostels

year	Budget Estimates	Actual Expenditure	No. of hostels	No. of beneficiaries
	(₹ in crore)	(₹ in crore)	<i>sanctioned</i>	
2015-16	25.00	3.28	4	472
2016-17	5.00	4.90	12	700
2017-18	5.00	4.90	1	100
2018-19	5.00	13.45	15	1000

3.42 The Department have furnished following list of number of beneficiaries, Statewise, till date under Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana.

STATES	GIRLS	BOYS
ANDHRA PRADESH	271	220
BIHAR	690	800
CHHATTISGARH	1370	1050
ASSAM	180	238
GUJARAT	1375	1735
HIMACHAL PRADESH	358	267
HARYANA	959	137
JAMMU AND KASHMIR	250	100
JHARKHAND	250	850
KARNATAKA	646	750
KERALA	100	270
MADHYA PRADESH	1400	1650
MAHARASHTRA	1732	2367
MANIPUR	1005	100
ORISSA	12778	200
PUNJAB	425	131
RAJASTHAN	1725	1950
TAMIL NADU	250	3191
TRIPURA	20	50
UTTAR PRADESH	1098	1336
UTTRAKHAND	50	50
WEST BENGAL	3065	1256

3.43 The Committee are distressed to note that for such a significant educational Scheme for the welfare of Scheduled Castes boys, the budgetary allocation has been extremely low in the last three years i.e. only ₹ 5.00 crore from 2016-17 till 2018-19 and the expenditure is still lower than this allocation i.e. ₹ 3.28 crore in 2015-16 *vis-à-vis* BE of ₹ 2.25 crore and only ₹ 4.90 in 2016-17 and 2017-18 against BE of ₹ 5.00 crore. In addition to it, the number of sanctioned boys hostels reflects a sorry state of affairs regarding this Scheme. Only 4 hostels have been sanctioned in 2015-16, 12 in 2016-17, 01 in 2017-18 and 15 in 2018-19. The Committee are further dismayed to observe that there are only 50 boys inmates benefitted under the Scheme each in Tripura and Uttarakhand in the entire 11th and 12th Five Year Plan Period. Similarly 131 inmates have been covered in the States of Punjab and only 220 in Andhra Pradesh where there is a sizeable number of SC population. The Committee also find that these hostels have reportedly been sanctioned and there is no data available regarding hostels being functional. Taking into account the above facts, the Committee deplore this kind of lackadaisical approach of the Department in implementing this Hostel Scheme and exhort the Department to increase the budgetary allocation for this Scheme specially for Boys Hostels from the next financial year i.e. 2020-21. The Committee also desire the Department to improve its mechanism to monitor the Scheme properly and ensure that the hostels which have been sanctioned by the Department have been fully constructed by the State Governments and are also in use by the boys of the target group. As regards hostels for SC girls, the Committee feel that safety aspect should be monitored diligently in order to ensure a safe and secure environment for girl hostellers. The Committee believe that only releasing

the funds and sanctioning the hostels would not solve the purpose. This Scheme would only be beneficial if the Department keeps in mind the number of Scheduled Castes population of that State also while releasing the funds.

CHAPTER IV

BACKWARD CLASSES DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

NATIONAL FELLOWSHIP SCHEME FOR OBCS

4.1 The scheme aims at providing financial assistance to the Other Backward Classes (OBC) students in obtaining quality higher education leading to degrees such as M.Phil and Ph.D in universities, research institutions and scientific institutions.

4.2 The scheme is designed to provide a total number of 300 Junior Research Fellowships (JRFs) per year from the year 2014-15 onwards and 600 Senior Research Fellowships (SRFs) from 2015-16 to OBC students. The University Grants Commission (UGC) is the nodal agency for implementing the scheme and notifies the scheme through advertisements in the media at a suitable date. The scheme covers all universities/institutions recognized by the UGC. Fellowships are awarded to research students pursuing M. Phil. and Ph.D. The rate of fellowship for JRF level is ₹ 25,000 per month and for SRF level, it is ₹ 28 000 per month. An OBC student admitted to M.Phil./Ph.D. course in a University or academic institution after completing the required formalities of admission, is eligible for the award of Fellowship subject to provisions of the scheme as per the advertisement of UGC. The total period of award of JRF and SRF shall not exceed a period of 5 years.

4.3 The Department furnished the following information regarding BE, RE and AE of last 3 years and target for the year 2019-20 for the above mentioned Scheme:

(₹ in Crore)

Sl. No	Year	BE	RE	AE
1.	2016-17	27.00	27.00	27.00
2.	2017-18	40.00	40.00	20.00
3.	2018-19	110.00	30.00	30.00
4.	Target	70.00	-	52.50

	2019-20			
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4.4 As the Department utilized only ₹ 20 crore out of BE/RE ₹ 40 crore in 2017-18, the Department was asked the reasons of this less utilization of funds. It was submitted by the Department that “on the basis of demands projected by the UGC, which is the implementing agency in case of National Fellowship for OBCs, figures of Budget Estimates are finalized in accordance with the allocated budget provided by Ministry of Finance. The actual expenditure 2017-18 was ₹ 35,90,97,582 only which included ₹ 15,90,97,582 from the previous year 2016-17.

4.5 It was further stated by the Department that in 2018-19 also, RE had been drastically reduced from ₹ 110.00 crore to ₹ 30 crore because UGC had demanded only ₹ 30 crore during the year 2018-19 and release had been done with respect to demand. It was also informed by the Department that “the outstanding or unspent amount of previous year is carried forward to subsequent year. Accordingly the fund is released to UGC after adjusting the unspent balance of previous year”.

4.6 As regards demand for the enhanced allocation of funds of ₹ 70 crore in 2019-20, under this Scheme, the Department justified it by stating that “the net demand of UGC is ₹ 122.00 crore during current financial year 2019-20 due to revision of fellowship rates w.e.f. 01.01.2019. Further, Department has already released ₹ 52.50 crore as on 31.10.2019.

4.7 When the Department was asked about the procedure of selection of the candidates for awarding fellowships, it was informed by the Department that “Other Backward Class (OBC) candidates who have qualified National Eligibility Test – Junior

Research Fellowship (NET-JRF) of UGC or UGC-Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (UGC-CSIR) Joint Test should enroll for the course in the eligible Universities/Institutions/Colleges within six months from the date of declaration of results by UGC in respect of the above and be registered within 1 year from date of enrolment. Fellowships are provided only after registration for the course”. The Department further stated that “the targeted number of slots set under the Scheme is achieved by the Department every year. However, outstanding amount, if any, is carried forward to next year”.

4.8 When the Department was enquired about the efforts to create awareness about this scheme throughout the country, it was replied that “UGC is the nodal agency for implementing this scheme throughout the country and for the purpose of creating awareness UGC publishes and advertises the scheme from time to time. In addition, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment also creates awareness by media campaign and displays the Scheme on its website. UGC has a dedicated portal for the same.

4.9 It was further submitted by the Department that in order to find out the reasons for less number of applicants for the scholarship resulting in under-utilization of funds an evaluation study is being carried out by the Department for the continuation of the scheme for the 15th Finance Commission Cycle.

4.10 The Committee note that National Fellowship Scheme for OBCs is a significant scheme which aims at providing financial assistance to the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) students in obtaining quality higher education leading to degrees such as M.Phil and Ph.D in universities, research institutions and scientific institutions. The Committee find that the Department had utilized ₹ 20.00 crore in 2017-18 *vis-à-vis* BE and RE of ₹ 40.00 crore and ₹ 30.00 crore *vis-à-vis* ₹ 110.00 crore of BE and ₹ 30.00 crore of RE in 2018-19. In 2019-20 also BE of ₹ 70.00 crore has been allocated under this Scheme. The Committee note that ₹ 52.50 crore has been utilized by the Department till 31st October, 2019. The Committee learn that there are very less candidates selected under this Scheme despite a dedicated portal in UGC for the same and as the Scheme is implemented by University Grants Committee (UGC) the amount demanded by UGC is released by the Department to them for disbursement to the candidates. The Committee are constrained to note that only ₹ 30.00 crore have been demanded by the UGC in 2018-19 although ₹ 110.00 crore were allocated for the Scheme. Similarly, only ₹ 20.00 crore were demanded by UGC in 2017-18. As less number of applicants is the main reason behind under utilization of funds under the Scheme and an evaluation study is already in process, the Committee would like to be apprised of its findings, and the final status of the Scheme.

CHAPTER V

SOCIAL DEFENCE

WELFARE OF SENIOR CITIZENS

I. RASHTRIYA VAYOSHREE YOJANA

5.1 Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY) was announced by Hon'ble Finance Minister in the Budget Speech of 2015-16. The scheme was launched in April, 2017. This is a Central Sector Scheme funded from Senior Citizen's Welfare Fund. Under the Scheme of RVY, aids and assisted living devices are provided to Senior Citizens belonging to BPL category who suffer from age related disabilities such as low vision, hearing impairment, loss of teeth and loco-motor disabilities. The aids and assisted devices viz. walking sticks, elbow crutches, walker/crutches, tripods/quadpods, hearing aids, wheelchairs, artificial dentures and spectacles are provided to eligible beneficiaries. The Scheme is being implemented by Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO) which is a Public Sector Undertaking under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities).

5.2 The Department furnished the following information regarding BE, RE and AE of last 3 years and target for the year 2019-20 for the above mentioned Scheme:

(₹ in Crore)				
Sl. No	Year	BE	RE	AE
1.	2016-17	0.00	0.00	0.00
2.	2017-18	0.00	0.00	1.50
3.	2018-19	0.01	0.01	106.51
4.	Target 2019-20	0.01	-	-

5.3 When the Department was asked about the reasons of not earmarking funds separately for the scheme of Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana, it was replied that "the Finance

Minister in his Budget Speech during 2015-16, had announced creation of a “Senior Citizens’ Welfare Fund” by utilizing unclaimed deposits, which will be appropriated for, inter-alia, subsidizing the premium of pensioners, BPL Card Holder, etc. The formulation of a Scheme for distribution of physical aids and Assisted-Living Devices to the Senior Citizens of the BPL Category, who are suffering from age-related disabilities, was also announced in budget speech. This scheme was to be entirely funded from Senior Citizen’s Welfare Fund (SCWF), by Department of Social Justice and Empowerment.

5.4 The Department forwarded the following statement of number of beneficiaries, State-wise, under the Scheme of Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana:

State- Wise Beneficiaries under RVY Scheme during the FY 2018-19

Sl. No	Name State/UT	Female NoB	Total NoB
1	Andaman Nicobar	125	342
2	Andhra Pradesh	1124	2676
3	Arunachal Pradesh	206	384
4.	Bihar	100	261
5.	Chhattisgarh	237	711
6.	Delhi	895	1971
7.	Gujarat	233	861
8.	Haryana	219	563
9.	Himachal Pradesh	58	118
10	Jharkhand	803	1839
11	Karnataka	344	1320
12	Kerala	144	275
13	Lakshadweep	295	528
14	Madhya Pradesh	4281	11024
15	Maharashtra	5468	18401
16	Meghalaya	3613	5469
17	Nagaland	1164	2661
18	Punjab	749	1434
19	Rajasthan	1059	2707
20	Sikkim	728	1814
21	Tamil Nadu	535	1415
22	Telangana	1730	1473
23	Uttar Pradesh	1987	5831
24	Uttarakhand	605	1537

Total	26702	65615
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5.5 The Department further informed that only two Schemes are being run by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment for the welfare of Senior Citizens viz. (i) Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana and (ii) National Action Plan for Senior Citizens.

5.6 Regarding the procedure of implementation of the Scheme the Department have informed that “₹ 124.01 crore were released to ALIMCO (sole implementing agency of RVY) and 262295 devices were provided to 101055 beneficiaries till now. Out of this amount, approximately ₹ 70 crore has been utilized and the rest of the amount is being utilized for the remaining distribution camps in the selected districts”.

5.7 The Committee note that Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY) is a Scheme run by the Department for the Welfare of Senior Citizens in which aids and assisted devices viz. walking sticks, elbow crutches, walker/crutches, tripods/quadpods, hearing aids, wheelchairs, artificial dentures and spectacles are provided to eligible beneficiaries. The Scheme was initiated in 2016-17 but there was 'nil' utilization of funds in that year and only ₹ 1.50 crore was utilized in 2017-18 and in 2018-19 ₹ 106.51 crore were utilized against the RE of ₹ 0.01 crore. In 2018-19, the Department have utilized ₹ 106.51 crore from Senior Citizen's Welfare Fund and again 2019-20 only ₹ 0.01 crore have been allocated under this Scheme. The Committee note that there are only two Schemes run by the Department at present for the Welfare of Senior Citizens. In the other Scheme also there is 'nil' utilization of funds in 2018-19 as it is a new Scheme launched in the year 2018-19. The Committee note that there is no separate allocation for this Scheme by the Department and the funds are utilized entirely from Senior Citizens' Fund. The Committee wonder when whole expenditure of this Scheme is met by the Senior Citizens' Fund what is the requirement of creating a separate Head for this Scheme. The Committee, therefore, feel that the Department should create a separate head for the Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana, so that the other aspects of the Scheme such as organizing camps, survey for selection of beneficiaries etc. may not suffer due to paucity of funds. The Committee also desire that the Members of Parliament should be intimated while organizing camps for distributing aids and appliances to the Senior Citizens in their respective constituencies.

5.8 The Department have utilized ₹ 106.51 crore in 2018-19 from the Senior Citizens Fund. The Committee would like to know about the break-up of these funds

in the areas of its utilization. The Committee also desire to know whether this Scheme is still in continuation or not.

5.9 The Committee note that the Scheme of Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY) is only performing well in the States of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, elsewhere the Scheme does not seem to be picking up so well. Taking into cognizance the huge population of 10.36 crore (8.56 per cent) of Senior Citizens in the country, the Committee urge upon the Department to formulate a strategy to impeccably implement this Scheme in co-ordination with the State Governments/UT Administrations to benefit more and more Senior Citizens. The Committee feel that the States of Bihar, Kerala and Himachal Pradesh need to focus more in this direction so the Department should co-ordinate with these States and pursue them to introduce remedial measures for better implementation and hence to include more beneficiaries under this Scheme.

II. NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

5.10 During 2019-20, the Department introduced one scheme in Social Defence Sector namely National Action Plan for Senior Citizens. The National Action Plan for Senior Citizens (NAPSrC) has been recently brought out during the current year by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment to achieve healthy, happy and active ageing for effective implementation of provisions contained in National Policy for Older Persons (NPOP), 1999 and Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (MWPSA) Act, 2007. The NAPSrC lays down in one document, the vision, mission and the plan of action of the Government of India for welfare and well being of senior citizens of the country. It brings together articulation of each of the current schemes, future plans, strategies and targets and maps it with schemes/programmes, accountabilities, financials and clear outcomes. This Plan takes care of the top four needs of the senior citizens viz financial security, food, health care and human interaction /life of dignity. It also includes the facets of safety/protection and general wellbeing of the elderly beginning from awareness generation and sensitization of the society. The Plan has been drafted on the basis of several discussions and deliberations, which the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment had with Officers of Central Ministries/Department dealing with the issues related to the Senior Citizens and representatives from National Institute of Social Defence (NISD), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), All India Senior Citizens Confederation (AIISCON), National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRD), Tata Trust, Regional Resource & Training Centres of Senior Citizen Division of the Ministry, etc.

Development objectives of the NAPSrC are:

- i. Financial Security
- ii. Health Care and Nutrition
- iii. Shelter and Welfare
- iv. Protection of life and property of Senior Citizens
- v. Active and Productive Ageing with Intergenerational Bonding and Skill Development
- vi. Accessibility, transport and Age friendly environment
- vii. Awareness Generation and Capacity Building
- viii. Promoting Silver Economy: senior friendly industrial goods and services in the society
- ix. Research and Study
- x. Project Management

Under the National Action Plan for Senior Citizens the States have been provided funds in accordance with the population of the States, and have been requested to come up with the State Action Plans. While the NAPSrC aims at convergence of various existing Government Schemes, it also provides the States with decision making on issues such as selection of beneficiaries and projects, etc.

5.11 The Committee note that the National Action Plan for Senior Citizens is a good move in the direction of welfare of the Senior Citizens initiated by the Department during 2019-20 with the objectives of financial security, health care and nutrition, shelter and welfare, protection of life and property of Senior Citizens, etc., which are imperative for the healthy and happy ageing and safety and security of the Senior Citizens. The Committee, therefore, impress upon the Department to ensure its proper and effective implementation in all the States/UTs in future and cover more and more beneficiaries under this Scheme. The Committee would like to know about the progress achieved by the Department in this regard at the end of this financial year.

NEW DELHI;

10 December, 2019
19 Agrahayana, 1941 (Saka)

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

MINUTES OF THE SECOND SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2019-20) HELD ON TUESDAY, 5TH NOVEMBER, 2019

The Committee met from 1100 hrs. to 1330 hrs. in Committee Room No. 139, First Floor, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SMT. RAMA DEVI - CHAIRPERSON

**MEMBERS
LOK SABHA**

2. Shri Durga Prasad Rao Balli
3. Shri Shafiqur Rahman Barq
4. Shri Bholanath 'B.P. Saroj'
5. Shri Chhatar Singh Darbar
6. Shri Y. Devendrappa
7. Smt. Maneka Sanjay Gandhi
8. Shri Abdul Khaleque
9. Smt. Ranjeeta Koli
10. Shri Vijay Kumar
11. Dr. Lorho S. Pfoze
12. Shri Arjun Singh
13. Smt. Supriya Sule
14. Smt. Rekha Arun Verma

RAJYA SABHA

15. Shri N. Chandrasegharan
16. Shri Biswajit Daimary
17. Shri P. L. Punia
18. Shri Ramkumar Verma

SECRETARIAT

1. Smt. Anita B. Panda - Joint Secretary
2. Smt. Vatsala P. Joshi - Director

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

Sl. No.	Name	Designation and Organization
1.	Ms. Nilam Sawhney	Secretary
2.	Ms Upma Srivastava	Additional Secretary
3.	Shri Surendera Singh	Joint Secretary
4.	Ms Kalyani Chadha	Joint Secretary
5.	Shri R. P Meena	Joint Secretary
6.	Ms Radhika Chkravarthy	Joint Secretary
7.	Shri Sanjay Pandey	Joint Secretary & Financial Adviser
8.	Ms. Yogita Swaroop	Economic Adviser
9.	Shri K. Narayan	CMD – NSFDC, NBCFDC and NSKFDC

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee and the representatives of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment) to the sitting of the Committee convened to have discussion on Demands for Grants (2019-20) pertaining to their Department. Referring to the Directions by the Speaker to keep the proceedings of the Committee 'Confidential', till a report on the subject is presented to the House, the Chairperson asked the Secretary of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment to introduce her team and give an overview of the subject matter.

3. The Secretary accordingly briefed the Committee about overall performance of the Department, detailing the budgetary allocations, actual expenditure incurred, physical targets set and achieved under various schemes/programmes with the help of a power point presentation. The major issues discussed at the meeting relating to Demands for Grants (2019-20) of the Department are as follows:-

- (i) Action Plan of the Department to achieve the target of full utilization of the allocated funds provided to the Department under Plan head for 2019-20.
- (ii) Strategy adopted to deal with the perennial problem of late receipt of utilization certificates by the Department from State Governments/Implementing Agencies.
- (iii) Strategy adopted by the Department to clear the pending arrears in Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme for Scheduled Castes.
- (iv) Lack of proper implementation of the Schemes related to the welfare of the Senior Citizens;
- (v) Meagre amount of pension given to old men and women by the Department, hence the need to revise the same;
- (vi) Lack of Schemes for the welfare of old destitute women at religious places like Vrindavan, Mathura etc.
- (vii) Non-utilization of funds in the Scheme for Liberation and Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS) in the last few years.
- (viii) Less number of beneficiaries in Skill Development Training Programme under Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS)
- (ix) Reasons for less utilization of allocated funds under the National Overseas Scholarship Scheme.
- (x) Criterion for selection of candidates under National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for SC students.
- (xi) Steps taken by the Department to curb the possible brain drain under National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for SC students.

- (xii) Lack of proper implementation of the Scheme on construction of Hostels for SC Boys and Girls under Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawaas Yonana.
- (xiii) Lack of Schemes by the Department for the welfare/rehabilitation of the Beggars.
- (xiv) Lack of proper implementation of credit Enhancement Guarantee Scheme for SCs.
- (xv) Functioning of the Scheme for prevention of Alcoholism and Substance (Drugs) Abuse through NGOs/Implementing Agencies.

4. The Secretary also responded to the queries raised by the Members. The Chairperson then directed the Department to furnish written replies to all the queries raised by Members to the Secretariat at the earliest for early finalization of the Report.

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

The witnesses then withdrew.

(The Committee then adjourned.)

MINUTES OF THE SIXTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT HELD ON TUESDAY, 10th DECEMBER, 2019.

The Committee met from 1500 hrs. to 1550 hrs. in Committee Room 'D', Ground Floor, PHA, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SMT. RAMA DEVI - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Smt. Sangeeta Azad
3. Shri Durga Prasad Rao Balli
4. Dr. Shafiqur Rehman Barq
5. Shri Bholanath (B.P. Saroj)
6. Shri Y. Devendrappa
7. Shri Abdul Khaleque
8. Smt. Geeta Kora
9. Shri Dhanush M. Kumar
10. Shri Lorho S. Pfoze
11. Smt. Supriya Sule
12. Smt. Rekha Arun Verma

RAJYA SABHA

13. Smt. Jharna Das Baidya
14. Shri Abir Ranjan Biswas
15. Smt. Sarojini Hembram
16. Shri P.L. Punia
17. Smt. Wansuk Syiem
18. Shri Ram Kumar Verma

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Smt. Anita B. Panda | Joint Secretary |
| 2. Dr. Vatsala Joshi | Director |

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee.

3. The Committee then took up for consideration the following draft Reports of the Committee :-

(i) First Report on Demands for Grants (2019-20) of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Social Justice and Empowerment).

(ii) ****

(iii) ****

(iv) ****

(v) ****

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

The Committee then adjourned.

**** Not related with the Report.

APPENDIX

STATEMENT OF OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Sl. No.	Para	Observations/Recommendations
1	2	3
1.	2.12	<p>The Committee note that the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment have been utilizing almost all funds allocated to them every year from 2016-17 till 2018-19. The Committee are happy that the Department is committed to reducing the pendency of arrears in Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for SCs. The Committee have been informed that in the current fiscal, they have utilized 58.17 per cent till 31st October, 2019 i.e. ₹ 5169.03 crore out of the total fund allocation of ₹ 8885 crore. It is evident that the requirements of this Department are much more to provide Scholarships, than allocation actually provided to them, particularly since they have failed to receive their projected demand. The Committee find that the Department submitted its requirement of ₹ 14871.37 crore to the Ministry of Finance but received only ₹ 8885.00 crore for the year 2019-20 which adversely affected the Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for SCs and Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for OBCs. The shortfall were reportedly ₹ 4198.18 crore and ₹ 1140.00 crore respectively in both Schemes, which the Committee finds quite disappointing. The Committee learn that the Department have put forth extra demand of ₹ 4-5 thousand crore to the Ministry of Finance to fill this gap which was statedly not accepted till the Committee examined the subject. Hence they would like to know the status now. As there were reportedly huge arrears pending under the Scheme of Post Matric Scholarship for SCs and even though the Department had released ₹ 5928.15 crore upto 2017-18 to all the States/UTs, the arrears have not been completely cleared, therefore, the Committee expect that the Department must have vigorously pursued Ministry of Finance to grant the extra funds demanded by them to clear the arrears and to ensure smooth functioning of all the Schemes/programmes of the Department at the supplementary Demands for Grants stage. The Committee would like to be apprised of the additional funds allocated, if any, and the position of arrears at the action taken stage.</p>
2.	2.13	<p>The Committee note that during the year 2017-18 and 2018-19 actual expenditure under some of the Schemes of the Department viz. Pre Matric Scholarship for OBC students (ii) Assistance for Skill Development of OBCs/DNTs/EBCs (NGO Scheme) was very low vis-à-vis its budgetary allocation and the allocated budgetary amount could not be utilized fully by the Department. The Committee find that the Department has been repeatedly citing</p>

		<p>reasons such as non-receipt of complete and adequate proposals from the States/UTs, non-receipt of proposals and UCs in time. The Committee note from the proceedings of the Coordination meetings of the Department that problems range from lack of computerization to inadequate coordination mechanism to low recovery from beneficiaries etc. Also Apart from State Channelizing Agencies, there are several agencies/bodies involved in Schemes and thus an effective coordination is a must. With a large number of dependable information tools/technology available at hand, the Committee are sanguine that many challenges can be tackled so as to attain fiscal prudence. The Committee desire the Department to work hard in handling all challenges and supporting State agencies as their mandate is unique and much valuable for the Society.</p>
3.	2.14	<p>The Committee observe that the details of beneficiaries under the Scheme Post Matric Scholarship for SCs (PMS-SC) are still awaited from many States for the year 2018-19. The Committee are dismayed to note that though more than half of the financial year i.e. 2019-20 has passed, yet the Department still have no details of the beneficiaries of previous year. The Committee wonder that under these circumstances how the Department would manage to assess the pendency of the arrears under this Scheme and on what basis would it manage to take measures to clear the pending arrears. The Committee, therefore, urge upon the Department to take up this issue with the concerned States/UTs on urgent basis so that the details of the beneficiaries are provided without delay to the Department and the Department could decide the future plan of action for clearing the pendency in arrears and also provide assistance to the fresh eligible candidates under this Scheme.</p>
4.	2.15	<p>The Committee note that there are few Schemes under which the Department has not been able to utilize full amount of allocated funds such as Pre-Matric Scholarships for the children of those engaged in unclean occupations and Scheme for Education and Economical Development of De-notified and Nomadic Tribes etc. The Committee are dissatisfied to note that non-receipt of proposals in time by the Department under these Schemes is the major reason behind less utilization of funds which is an oft-repeated stance taken by them. It is high time that the Department takes concrete steps towards solving this issue of non-sending of adequate and complete proposals by the States/UTs in time. The Committee suggest that the Department could depute capable staff who can provide either necessary on-line expertise to the State Departments or counseling <i>via</i> video conferencing regarding sending of appropriate proposals well in time to them which would result in full and proper utilization of funds to benefit larger number from the target groups.</p>

5.	3.12	<p>The Committee note that under National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for SC Students, assistance is provided to the selected candidates from Scheduled Castes for pursuing higher studies i.e. Master level courses and Ph.D. programmes abroad in the fields of Engineering and Management, Pure and Applied Science, Agricultural Science and Medicine, International Commerce, Accounting & Finance and Humanities & Social Science. While the Scheme is one of its kind, the Committee find that it has been revised with effect from 20.07.2016 in the sense that the condition of 5 years mandatory stay in India after completion of course has been relaxed in any of the three conditions viz. if the candidate is able to obtain employment abroad/joins any other course/is married to a person settled abroad. The Committee are of the considered opinion that when the Department is spending a hefty sum of taxpayers' money to support foreign education for candidates from the country, it should be made mandatory for the scholarship holders to return to India after the completion of studies and serve the country for atleast 2 years. The Committee also desire the Department to take the initiative to help them gain employment in the regions/States where there is dearth of qualified professionals and motivate them to pursue specialised research in India. As the selection procedure was still going on for the year 2019-20 when the Committee was examining the subject, the Committee would like to be apprised of the final figures of the beneficiaries at the end of this financial year i.e. 2019-20.</p>
6.	3.13	<p>The Committee note that there are 100 slots every year to be filled by the selected candidates under National Overseas Scheme for SCs. The Committee fail to understand that in a country of around 1.37 billion people, how can only 100 slots be considered enough to fulfill the purpose of the Scheme. The Committee also feel that possibly all the 100 slots in a year are filled by the candidates of 3 or 4 States/UTs of the country as the candidates are selected on first come first serve basis. In this situation candidates from other States may suffer. Therefore, the Committee recommend the Department to consider fixing State-wise slots up to a time-limit and if the number of slots from that State/UT remain unfilled beyond that, then the candidates from other States could be offered the scholarship. The Committee recommend that the Ministry should also chalk out a calendar to be followed by all the States to ensure uniformity and prevent any delay in the process of application for the candidates.</p>
7.	3.14	<p>The Committee observe that the Department have introduced online processing of application forms for the Scheme of National Overseas Scholarship. The Committee feel that in rural areas where most of the time network connectivity is bad, filling an</p>

		online application form may not succeed. Therefore, the Committee urge the Department to develop a suitable mobile Application through which the students can fill the form even if there is no accessibility to the computers or net connectivity. The Committee also feel that filling the applications offline in hardcopy at least for rural areas need to be continued so that those who have no ready access to mobile/computers could also fill the application forms for this Scheme.
8.	3.15	The Committee note that the under the National Overseas Scholarship Scheme, Department had utilised ₹ 4.59 crore out of ₹ 15.00 crore in 2017-18 and ₹ 5.97 crore out of ₹ 15.00 crore in 2018-19. The Department have received ₹ 20.00 crore in 2019-20 and till 31 st October, 2019, only ₹ 3.27 crore was utilised. In this regard, the Committee have been informed that as this scholarship is meant for the Masters and Ph.D. programmes, the disbursal of money is spread over a period of 3 or 4 years. Acknowledging the same, the Committee opine that the number of candidates are also increasing year after year under this Scheme, hence the utilisation of money should also register an increase. As the budgetary allocation for the year 2019-20 has been enhanced from ₹ 15.00 crore in 2018-19 to ₹ 20.00 crore in 2019-20, the Committee impress upon the Department to adopt stringent mechanism to overcome procedural lacunae and select more eligible candidates through proper publicity of the Scheme in order to achieve full utilisation of fund allocation.
9.	3.16	The Committee are constrained to note that even in the States where SC population is very high such as Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, etc., there are nil or very less number of candidates selected for National Overseas Scholarship Scheme. The Committee are of the view that though the unfilled slots in the previous years are carried forward to the next financial year, still the Department should make extra efforts to advertise this Scheme through print/electronic media so that more and more people become aware of this Scheme.
10.	3.25	The Committee note that Credit Enhancement Guarantee Scheme for the Scheduled Castes in one of its kind Scheme initiated by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment to enhance entrepreneurship amongst the Scheduled Castes through 31 banks, which is very important for their economic development. The Committee are distressed to note that only 13 candidates have been provided credit under this Scheme since its inception in 2016-17 till 30 th September, 2019. The Committee, therefore, exhort the Department to review its present mechanism for implementation of this Scheme and modify it accordingly to provide credit to more eligible candidates under this Scheme. For

		<p>this, the Department should make efforts to publicize it more through electronic and print media and sensitize Banks/Financial Institutions to be supportive to the SC entrepreneurs who are Credit seekers. The Committee are also of the considered opinion that in order to increase the number of beneficiaries in this Scheme, the Ministry should plan an exclusive outreach programme for the target population. The Department should also make use of the promotional mobile audio vans to publicize this Scheme in rural as well as urban areas.</p>
11.	3.26	<p>The Committee are sad to note that the procedure for filling the application forms as well as getting selected for the benefit under this Scheme is not so easy for the persons of the target group as they belong to the most vulnerable and economically, educationally and socially weaker sections of the society. In fact, there are quite a few instances where the MLIs have shown lack of support and cooperation in extending credit to SC entrepreneurs. The Committee, therefore, feel that there is an urgent need of simplification of procedures and more support to those who apply under Credit Enhancement Guarantee Scheme so that more and more people are able to apply and purpose of the Scheme is not defeated.</p>
12.	3.27	<p>The Committee are sad to note that the application procedure is very complicated under this Scheme and this deters many eligible candidates from availing this Scheme. The Committee feel that simplification of application form would benefit the target population and increase the number of applicants. The Committee also recommend the Department to introduce a Helpline for this Scheme which would be of great help to solve the queries of the applicants/beneficiaries.</p>
13.	3.37	<p>The Committee observe that under the Self Employment Scheme of Liberation and Rehabilitation of Scavengers (SRMS), 42,303 Manual Scavengers were identified during National Survey of Manual Scavengers, 2018 but Skill Development Training has been imparted to only 1682 candidates in 2018-19 and 978 candidates in 2019-20. The Committee fail to fathom that why only 2660 manual scavengers have been imparted training, when Skill Development Training is an integral part of rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers. In the same way One Time Cash Assistance has also not been provided to all the identified Manual Scavengers but only to 298 in 2018-19 and 428 in 2019-20. Considering the above facts, the Committee exhort the Department to at least provide Skill Development Training to all the latest identified Manual Scavengers and also One Time Cash Assistance to all identified Manual Scavengers in order to fulfill the purpose of the Scheme. The Department should also ensure</p>

		that they are gainfully employed in future in order to totally prohibit Manual Scavengers from the country. The Committee are of the view that the Department should conduct a survey regarding the age, gender and qualification of Manual Scavengers and their counseling should be done before imparting Skill Development Training to them. For this purpose, the Department should develop a focused capsule for their re-employment.
14.	3.38	The Committee are pained that manual scavenging is still prevalent in the urban areas in India and every now and then news of deaths of scavengers while manually cleaning the manholes are reported. The Committee are of the considered view that if manual scavenging is to be eliminated then the Department has to take implementation of this Scheme very seriously. The Committee urge upon the Department to ask all State Governments/UT Administrations to direct their respective Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)/Municipal Corporations to strictly prohibit cleaning of manholes manually and conduct inspections to ensure that contractors do not resort to hiring manual scavengers for the job. Machines should be used instead of manual scavengers for this purpose. The Department should also issue instructions to the implementing agencies to take strong punitive action against those who are responsible for employing labourers for cleaning of manholes and blacklist them.
15.	3.43	The Committee are distressed to note that for such a significant educational Scheme for the welfare of Scheduled Castes boys, the budgetary allocation has been extremely low in the last three years i.e. only ₹ 5.00 crore from 2016-17 till 2018-19 and the expenditure is still lower than this allocation i.e. ₹ 3.28 crore in 2015-16 <i>vis-à-vis</i> BE of ₹ 2.25 crore and only ₹ 4.90 in 2016-17 and 2017-18 against BE of ₹ 5.00 crore. In addition to it, the number of sanctioned boys hostels reflects a sorry state of affairs regarding this Scheme. Only 4 hostels have been sanctioned in 2015-16, 12 in 2016-17, 01 in 2017-18 and 15 in 2018-19. The Committee are further dismayed to observe that there are only 50 boys inmates benefitted under the Scheme each in Tripura and Uttarakhand in the entire 11 th and 12 th Five Year Plan Period. Similarly 131 inmates have been covered in the States of Punjab and only 220 in Andhra Pradesh where there is a sizeable number of SC population. The Committee also find that these hostels have reportedly been sanctioned and there is no data available regarding hostels being functional. Taking into account the above facts, the Committee deplore this kind of lackadaisical approach of the Department in implementing this Hostel Scheme and exhort the Department to increase the budgetary allocation for this Scheme specially for Boys Hostels from the next financial year i.e. 2020-21. The Committee also desire the Department to

		<p>improve its mechanism to monitor the Scheme properly and ensure that the hostels which have been sanctioned by the Department have been fully constructed by the State Governments and are also in use by the boys of the target group. As regards hostels for SC girls, the Committee feel that safety aspect should be monitored diligently in order to ensure a safe and secure environment for girl hostellers. The Committee believe that only releasing the funds and sanctioning the hostels would not solve the purpose. This Scheme would only be beneficial if the Department keeps in mind the number of Scheduled Castes population of that State also while releasing the funds.</p>
16.	4.10	<p>The Committee note that National Fellowship Scheme for OBCs is a significant scheme which aims at providing financial assistance to the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) students in obtaining quality higher education leading to degrees such as M.Phil and Ph.D in universities, research institutions and scientific institutions. The Committee find that the Department had utilized ₹ 20.00 crore in 2017-18 <i>vis-à-vis</i> BE and RE of ₹ 40.00 crore and ₹ 30.00 crore <i>vis-à-vis</i> ₹ 110.00 crore of BE and ₹ 30.00 crore of RE in 2018-19. In 2019-20 also BE of ₹ 70.00 crore has been allocated under this Scheme. The Committee note that ₹ 52.50 crore has been utilized by the Department till 31st October, 2019. The Committee learn that there are very less candidates selected under this Scheme despite a dedicated portal in UGC for the same and as the Scheme is implemented by University Grants Committee (UGC) the amount demanded by UGC is released by the Department to them for disbursal to the candidates. The Committee are constrained to note that only ₹ 30.00 crore have been demanded by the UGC in 2018-19 although ₹ 110.00 crore were allocated for the Scheme. Similarly, only ₹ 20.00 crore were demanded by UGC in 2017-18. As less number of applicants is the main reason behind under utilization of funds under the Scheme and an evaluation study is already in process, the Committee would like to be apprised of its findings, and the final status of the Scheme.</p>
17.	5.7	<p>The Committee note that Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY) is a Scheme run by the Department for the Welfare of Senior Citizens in which aids and assisted devices <i>viz.</i> walking sticks, elbow crutches, walker/crutches, tripods/quadpods, hearing aids, wheelchairs, artificial dentures and spectacles are provided to eligible beneficiaries. The Scheme was initiated in 2016-17 but there was 'nil' utilization of funds in that year and only ₹ 1.50 crore was utilized in 2017-18 and in 2018-19 ₹ 106.51 crore were utilized against the RE of ₹ 0.01 crore. In 2018-19, the Department have utilized ₹ 106.51 crore from Senior Citizen's Welfare Fund</p>

		<p>and again 2019-20 only ₹ 0.01 crore have been allocated under this Scheme. The Committee note that there are only two Schemes run by the Department at present for the Welfare of Senior Citizens. In the other Scheme also there is 'nil' utilization of funds in 2018-19 as it is a new Scheme launched in the year 2018-19. The Committee note that there is no separate allocation for this Scheme by the Department and the funds are utilized entirely from Senior Citizens' Fund. The Committee wonder when whole expenditure of this Scheme is met by the Senior Citizens' Fund what is the requirement of creating a separate Head for this Scheme. The Committee, therefore, feel that the Department should create a separate head for the Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana, so that the other aspects of the Scheme such as organizing camps, survey for selection of beneficiaries etc. may not suffer due to paucity of funds. The Committee also desire that the Members of Parliament should be intimated while organizing camps for distributing aids and appliances to the Senior Citizens in their respective constituencies.</p>
18.	5.8	<p>The Department have utilized ₹ 106.51 crore in 2018-19 from the Senior Citizens Fund. The Committee would like to know about the break-up of these funds in the areas of its utilization. The Committee also desire to know whether this Scheme is still in continuation or not.</p>
19.	5.9	<p>The Committee note that the Scheme of Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY) is only performing well in the States of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, elsewhere the Scheme does not seem to be picking up so well. Taking into cognizance the huge population of 10.36 crore (8.56 per cent) of Senior Citizens in the country, the Committee urge upon the Department to formulate a strategy to impeccably implement this Scheme in co-ordination with the State Governments/UT Administrations to benefit more and more Senior Citizens. The Committee feel that the States of Bihar, Kerala and Himachal Pradesh need to focus more in this direction so the Department should co-ordinate with these States and pursue them to introduce remedial measures for better implementation and hence to include more beneficiaries under this Scheme.</p>
20.	5.11	<p>The Committee note that the National Action Plan for Senior Citizens is a good move in the direction of welfare of the Senior Citizens initiated by the Department during 2019-20 with the objectives of financial security, health care and nutrition, shelter and welfare, protection of life and property of Senior Citizens, etc., which are imperative for the healthy and happy ageing and safety and security of the Senior Citizens. The Committee, therefore, impress upon the Department to ensure its proper and effective implementation in all the States/UTs in future and cover</p>

		<p>more and more beneficiaries under this Scheme. The Committee would like to know about the progress achieved by the Department in this regard at the end of this financial year.</p>
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