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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR**

**(2020-21)**

**(SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA)**

**MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT**

**[SOCIAL SECURITY AND WELFARE MEASURES FOR  
INTER-STATE MIGRANT WORKERS]**

**SIXTEENTH REPORT**



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT**

**NEW DELHI**

**February, 2021/Magha, 1942 (Saka)**

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**MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT**

**[SOCIAL SECURITY AND WELFARE MEASURES FOR  
INTER-STATE MIGRANT WORKERS]**

*Presented to Lok Sabha on 11.02.2021*

*Laid in Rajya Sabha on 11.02.2021*



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT**

**NEW DELHI**

**February, 2021/Magha, 1942 (Saka)**

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**COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR**

**(2019-20)**

**Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab - Chairperson**

**MEMBERS**

**LOK SABHA**

2. Shri Subhash Chandra Baheria
3. Shri John Barla
4. Shri Raju Bista
5. Shri Pallab Lochan Das
6. Shri Pasunoori Dayakar
7. Shri Feroze Varun Gandhi
8. Shri Satish Kumar Gautam
9. Shri B.N. Bache Gowda
10. Dr. Umesh G. Jadhav
11. Shri Dharmendra Kumar Kashyap
12. Dr. Virendra Kumar
13. Adv. Dean Kuriakose
14. Shri Sanjay Sadashivrao Mandlik
15. Shri K. Navaskani
16. Shri Khalilur Rahaman
17. Shri D. Ravikumar
18. Shri Nayab Singh Saini
19. Shri Ganesh Singh
20. Shri Bhola Singh
21. Shri K. Subbarayan

**RAJYA SABHA**

22. Shri Oscar Fernandes
23. Shri Elamaram Kareem
24. Dr. Raghunath Mohapatra
25. Dr. Banda Prakash
26. Shri Rajaram
27. Ms. Dola Sen
28. Shri M. Shanmugam
29. Shri Dushyant Gautam
30. Shri Vivek Thakur
31. Shri Neeraj Dangi

**SECRETARIAT**

1. Shri T.G. Chandrasekhar - Joint Secretary
2. Shri D.R. Mohanty - Director
3. Ms. Miranda Ingudam - Deputy Secretary
4. Shri Kulvinder Singh - Deputy Secretary

**COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR  
(2020-21)**

**Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab - Chairperson**

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12. Adv. Dean Kuriakose
13. Shri Sanjay Sadashivrao Mandlik
14. Shri Khalilur Rahaman
15. Shri D. Ravikumar
16. Shri Nayab Singh Saini
17. Shri Naba Kumar Sarania
18. Shri Ganesh Singh
19. Shri Bhola Singh
20. Shri K. Subbarayan
- 21.@ *Vacant*

**RAJYA SABHA**

22. Shri Dushyant Gautam
23. Shri Neeraj Dangi
24. Shri Oscar Fernandes
25. Shri Elamaram Kareem
26. Dr. Raghunath Mohapatra
27. Dr. Banda Prakash
28. Ms. Dola Sen
29. Shri M. Shanmugam
30. Shri Vivek Thakur
- 31.\* Shri Naresh Bansal

**SECRETARIAT**

- |                            |   |                  |
|----------------------------|---|------------------|
| 1. Shri T.G. Chandrasekhar | - | Joint Secretary  |
| 2. Shri D.R. Mohanty       | - | Director         |
| 3. Ms. Miranda Ingudam     | - | Deputy Secretary |
| 4. Shri Kulvinder Singh    | - | Deputy Secretary |

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\* Nominated w.e.f. 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2020.

@ Vacancy occurred vice Shri P.K. Kunhalikutty resigned w.e.f 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2021.

## **INTRODUCTION**

I, the Chairperson, Standing Committee on Labour (2020-21) having been authorized by the Committee, present on their behalf this Sixteenth Report on 'Social Security and Welfare Measures for Inter-State Migrant Workers' relating to the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

2. The Committee took oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Labour & Employment on 20.07.2020; Ministries of Rural Development and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship on 07.08.2020; Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and Departments of Food & Public Distribution on 17.08.2020; Department of Consumer Affairs and Ministry of Health & Family Welfare on 31.08.2020.

3. The Committee considered and adopted this Report during the sitting held on 9th February, 2021.

4. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the representatives of the above cited Ministries/Departments of the Government of India for tendering evidence and placing before the Committee all the requisite information sought for in connection with the examination of the subject.

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

6. The Observations/Recommendations of the Committee and action to be taken by the Ministries/Departments concerned are reflected in a tabular form at Appendix VI.

**New Delhi;**  
**10<sup>th</sup> February, 2021**  
**21 Magha, 1942 (Saka)**

**BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB**  
**CHAIRPERSON**  
**STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR**

## CHAPTER - I

### INTRODUCTORY

1.1 In India migrant labours are predominantly employed in the informal segment and engaged in manual unskilled/semi-skilled jobs, which are typically high-risk and low paying. The perennial problems of the migrant labours entail lack of social security, access to welfare entitlements, proper accommodation, standard of living, identity proof and other documents for availing State given facilities, etc.

1.2 The Covid-19 crisis has exposed, in a tragic and graphic manner, the hard truth that millions of people in India have no recourse to a range of rights and basic amenities. While the pandemic has demonstrated the enormous value of health workers, it has also created and enhanced public awareness of the pivotal role played by the migrant workers in the development of India's economy. Around 100 million to 125 million such workers leave their villages, families and homes to get work wherever they can find it and toil hard to harvest crops, clean streets, run factories, build roads, construct houses etc. In a stark manner, the pandemic has revealed that millions of migrant workers have been left with little or no food security, livelihood options and a secure home despite they being indispensable for the all-round economic growth of the Country. The need for greater self-reliance for migrant workers and their families has never been more urgent as such workers look for the security of home, food and livelihood.

1.3 The current pandemic has forced the Government to give a serious thought to the plight of the migrant workers, given the scale of the unprecedented misery millions of them found themselves in during the crisis. Accordingly, the Government of India through its various organs formulated certain new schemes and aligned certain other schemes already in existence to mitigate the hardships of the migrant workers caused due to the Pandemic and the consequential lockdown. Such Schemes *inter-alia* include Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyan, Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojna, Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme, Affordable Rental Housing complexes, Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, etc.

1.4 Deeply anguished at the pathetic plight of the migrant labours during the crisis and with a view to assessing the efficacy of various Schemes launched/aligned to alleviate the conditions of such workers, the Committee took up the subject for examination and report. In the process, the Committee took oral evidence of the Ministries of Labour & Employment, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution (Departments of Consumer Affairs and Food and Public Distribution), Health and Family Welfare, Housing and Urban Affairs, Rural Development, and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship besides obtaining Background Information and written clarifications from these Ministries/Departments. Based on these oral and written depositions, the Committee have broached upon the subject in great details as enumerated in the succeeding Chapters.

## CHAPTER- II

### OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY (MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT)

2.1 The Ministry of Labour and Employment being the nodal Ministry and responsible for the issues concerning the Migrant Labours made a presentation before the Committee on 'Labour Reforms and Inter-State Migrant Workers highlighting *inter-alia* the background of State Reforms; Impact of the Reforms; Role of State Governments under the Industrial Disputes Act, Factories Act and the Contract Labour Act; Governance Reforms initiated by States; Fixed Term Employment; Inter-State Migrant Workers and available data on them; Building and other Construction Workers; and implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY) during the Covid Pandemic.

2.2 On Inter- State Migrant Workers, the Ministry apprised the Committee that the definition of inter-state migrant worker had been modified to include migrant workers employed directly by the employer, workers directly coming to destination State of their own besides migrant workers employed through contractors to promote mobility; introduction of new provision for setting up of a portal to create data base for migrant workers having facility of voluntary submission of data by self employed persons coming to the destination State wherein Aadhar has been made mandatory; Incorporation of a separate chapter for inter-state migrant workers in the Code on Social Security, 2020; adding an enabling provision for making rules for toll free helpline; carrying out of a study relating to safety and health of migrant workers; fixing of wage limit of an inter-state migrant workers at Rs. 18,000 pm or as may be specified by the Central Government; framing Rules for providing lump sum allowance for to and fro journey to the native place of migrant workers; Appropriate Governments to formulate scheme for portability of benefits of Public Distribution System and benefits which are available to BOC workers in their native States; extending all other benefits which are available as workers in the establishment they are serving such as ESIC, EPFO; etc.

2.3. Asked to furnish the data on Inter-State Migrant Workers as on 9.7.2020, the Ministry furnished the following information:-

(a) Migrant workers returned home (86,14,785)

(b) Migrant workers stayed back (1,90,054)

(c) Total migrant workers in various States (88,04,839)

2.4. On the Building and other Construction workers, the Ministry submitted that 2.58 crore workers had registered as Building & Other Construction Workers with various State Governments and majority of them were migrant workers. An Advisory was issued by the Minister of Labour & Employment on 24.03.2020 to all States and UTs to provide financial assistance to the BOCW through DBT from BOCW Fund maintained by them. Various State Governments have given grant ranging from Rs 1000 per month to 5,000 per month to B&OC workers. As on 10.07.2020, an amount of Rs.4,970 Crore has been transferred to the bank accounts of around 1.82 crore BOC workers. In addition, food relief packages were also provided to around 29 lakh workers.

2.5. On the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana during the Covid Pandemic, the Ministry submitted that the Government provided to EPF members -Employees' & Employers share of 24% of wages directly in the EPF accounts of low wage earning members (drawing wages less than Rs.15,000/-) benefiting 3.67 lakh establishments involving 72.03 lakh members. Further, a special COVID- advance from EPF account allowed to its members equivalent to 75% of EPF balance or 3 months wages' whichever was lower. As on 10 July 2020, an amount of Rs.6,987 Crore has been disbursed to 25.40 lakh members. Besides, the statutory contribution was reduced from 12% to 10% of wages and dearness allowances (except in case of PSUs and PMGKY beneficiaries) under Atma Nirbhar Bharat thereby benefitting 4.3 crore employees and 6.5 lakhs establishments.

2.6. As regards the 'One Nation, One Ration Card' Scheme, the Committee desired to know the form of identification stipulated for Migrant Labourers when they move from their native State to another State for work and the mechanism evolved to resolve the issue of portability and transfer of ration cards so as to assure the intended benefits of the 'One Nation, One Ration Card' to all especially to the Migrant Labourers. In response, the Ministry submitted as under:-

"Portability of the benefits of public distribution system for inter-state migrant worker either in his native State or the Destination State where he is employed has been provided in section 62 of the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code 2020. The appropriate Government shall make scheme in this regard."

2.7. On being asked to furnish updated State-wise data pertaining to States/UTs on the relief given to stranded Migrant Workers as well as to the Returnee Migrant Workers to tide over the adverse impact of Covid-19 Pandemic in terms of making available food grains, transport and also generation of work and other skilling opportunities, the Ministry responded as under:-

"To mitigate the adverse impact of COVID-19, approximately 80 crore beneficiaries are being provided additional 5 kg wheat or rice and 1 kg of preferred pulses, free of cost every month till November, 2020 under provisions of National Food Security Act. In response to the Government of India's directions, the State Welfare Boards have cumulatively disbursed more than Rs.5,000 crores, to approx. 1.83 crore Building and Other Construction Workers (BOCW) during lockdown and thereafter. In addition to this, around 30 lakh BOCW have also been provided food relief packages during lockdown. For the benefit of 50 lakh street vendors, Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA) Government of India has also launched SVA Nidhi Scheme to provide them collateral free working capital loan upto Rs.10,000/- to resume their lost livelihood due to Covid and lock-down. Apart from above, various initiatives have been taken by the Ministry of Labour and Employment as part of Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY) which, inter-alia, include (i) payment of 12% employers' share and 12% employees' share under Employees' Provident Fund (EPF), totalling 24% by the Government of India for six wage months from March to August, 2020 for all the establishments having up to 100 employees with 90% of such employees earning less than Rs.15,000 monthly wage; (ii) reduction in PF contribution from 12% to 10% of wages for the wage months of May, June and July, 2020; (iii) non-refundable Covid advance from the PF by amending the EPF Scheme, 1952; (iv) extension in the date of filing of returns; (v) issuing advisory to promptly attend to distress calls of workers /employees and also guide them in temporary shelters; (vi) using Building and other construction workers (BOCW) cess fund for transfer of adequate funds in the bank account of construction workers affected by COVID19 outbreak; (vii) supporting employees and workers by not terminating them and not cutting their wages; and (viii) for taking preventive measures to contain the spread of COVID-19."

2.8. The Ministry further apprised as under:-

"In order to boost employment and livelihood opportunities for migrant workers returning to villages, in the wake of COVID-19 outbreak, Government of India has launched Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan on 20th

June 2020. The Abhiyan focuses on durable rural infrastructure and providing modern facilities like internet in the villages. Skill Mapping of the rural migrant labour is also being done to enhance their employability on the basis of the skills, they possessed to enable them to work closer to their homes. The Abhiyan involves intensified and focused implementation of 25 target driven works to provide employment and create infrastructure in the rural areas of 116 districts of 6 States with a resource envelope of Rs.50,000 crore. Apart from this, the Ministry of Women and Child Development has launched various schemes for migrant workers who have returned to their native places. One of the schemes is Anganwadi services which has been extended to children of migrant workers. Ministry of Food Processing Industries have sanctioned 700 food processing/preservation and infrastructure projects in which migrant labourers will get employment. To provide employment to the migrant workers, Ministry of Transport and Highways has identified the ongoing works/new works for the road construction. The Ministry of Steel assisted migrant workers and their families with food packets and face masks, milk powder etc. The Department of Bio Technology has set up 30 Biotech – Kisan hubs in the country covering all Agro-climatic zones, 150 Districts including 101 aspirational districts which will help migrant workers to earn their livelihood through farming and expose them to the innovative methods of farming of high value crops. All the States/UTs have also been requested to maintain the details of all Migrant Labourers, who have reached their native places with details of their skill, nature of Employment, earlier place of Employment etc. States/UTs have also been requested to extend the benefit of different schemes which may be available to Migrant Workers. All the States/UTs have been requested to maintain the data base of Migrant Workers at their end".

2.9. On a specific query whether guidelines have been issued for an audit on the distribution of relief material to stranded Migrant Labourers and whether an element of social audit also prescribed; the Ministry replied in the negative and stated as under:-

"No such guidelines are issued."

2.10. As regards measures taken for identification of Migrant labours especially in the face of reports of many States failing to provide relief to stranded Migrant labourers despite their best efforts, due to shortcomings in the identification process; the Ministry responded as under:-

"Several letters/advisory have been sent to the States/UTs to identify the Migrant Labourers and maintain their complete details like bank account details, Mobile Number, Aadhaar Number etc. to provide them immediate financial relief as well

as food packages. Chief Labour Commissioner and Welfare Commissioners have also been actively involved in this work."

2.11. In response to a specific query as to whether local Governments or other Stakeholders have been involved in the efforts of identification of stranded Migrant Labourers; the Ministry replied in the affirmative and stated as under:-

"Yes. States/UTs have been requested to maintain the database with all the details of the migrant workers."

2.12. The Ministry also furnished State-wise data to the extent available on the total number of migrant workers displaced as per Government estimate which is reproduced as under:-

**DATA ON MIGRANT WORKERS (AS ON 9.7.2020)**

<b>SL No</b>	<b>Name of the State</b>	<b>No. of Migrant workers belonging to State who have returned to their home State*</b>
1	Andhra Pradesh	32,571
2	Andaman and Nicobar	4,960
3	Arunachal Pradesh	2,871
4	Assam	4,26,441
5	Bihar	15,00,612
6	Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu	43,747
7	Delhi	2,047
8	Haryana	1,289
9	Jammu & Kashmir	48,780
10	Jharkhand	5,30,047
11	Karnataka	1,34,438
12	Kerala	3,11,124
13	Ladakh	50
14	Lakshadweep	456
15	Madhya Pradesh	7,53,581
16	Maharashtra	1,82,990
17	Manipur	12,338
18	Meghalaya	4,266
19	Nagaland	11,750
20	Puducherry	1,694
21	Punjab	5,15,642
22	Rajasthan	13,08,130
23	Sikkim	33,015
24	Tamil Nadu	72,145

<b>25</b>	Telangana	37,050
<b>26</b>	Tripura	34,247
<b>27</b>	Uttar Pradesh	32,49,638
<b>28</b>	Uttarakhand	1,97,128
<b>29</b>	West Bengal	13,84,693
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,08,37,740</b>

**\* As per the data received from the State/UTs**

2.13. Asked to state about the initiative taken by the Ministry to replicate successful models adopted by certain States which have performed well during the Covid Pandemic in terms of giving relief to stranded labourers, the Ministry apprised as under:-

"NITI Aayog in collaboration with MoLE, other relevant Ministries, States, NGOs and Civil Society Organisations has formed a sub-group on Migrant Workers and likely to come up with suitable recommendations soon."

2.14. On being asked to make a special mention on the State-wise implementation of the Prime Minister Garib Kalyan Rozgar Abhiyan to address issues of returning Migrant Workers, the Ministry submitted as under:-

"In order to boost employment and livelihood opportunities for migrant workers returning to villages, in the wake of COVID-19 outbreak, Government of India has launched Garib Kalyan Rozgar Abhiyaan on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2020. The Abhiyaan is being coordinated/ monitored by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) and it focuses on durable rural infrastructure and providing modern facilities like internet in the villages. Skill mapping of the rural migrant labour is also being done to enhance their employability on the basis of the skills, they possessed to enable them to work closer to their homes. The Abhiyaan involves intensified and focused implementation of 25 target driven works to provide employment and create infrastructure in the rural areas of 116 districts of 6 States with a resource envelope of Rs.50,000 crore. Details are available in the MoRD portal [gkra.nic.in](http://gkra.nic.in)"

2.15. Asked to state the mechanism put in place and the status of registration of Migrant workers both at their place of origin and the recipient State; the Ministry stated that this was being done by the State/UTs Governments. The advisory was issued by MoLE on 27.07.2020 to all States/ UTs in this regard.

2.16. The Ministry further stated that in the Central Sphere, monitoring and capturing data on migration was being done by the Office of Chief Labour Commissioner whereas in the States/UTs, the data was captured by State/UT Governments.

2.17. Asked to comment on the need to implement unemployment insurance mechanism in the face of massive job losses, especially of Migrant labours; the Ministry submitted as under:-

"The ESI Act, 1948 offers social security to the workers employed in all factories and notified establishments employing 10 or more persons. Employees earning wages up to Rs.21,000/- (Rs.25,000/- in case of Persons with Disability) and working in covered factories & establishments are covered under ESI scheme. India being a vast country, employees are free to work anywhere in the country. For better opportunity, the workers move from one State to another and accordingly, the ESI Scheme protects their entitlements. Each insured person has unique insurance number and contribution particulars are mapped against unique identity of each beneficiary. The same can be continued to be used when there is change of employer and even when they have moved from State to State. They also have the option to choose two dispensaries, one for family members at regular place of residence and another for self at the place of work."

2.18. The Ministry supplemented on the issue as under:-

"Apart from various benefits, the employees covered under ESI Scheme are also entitled to unemployment allowance. There are two unemployment allowance schemes namely Rajiv Gandhi Shramik Kalyan Yojna (RGSKY) and Atal Beemit Vyakti Kalyan Yojna (ABVKY). The salient features of both the unemployment allowance schemes are as under: -

Rajiv Gandhi Shramik Kalyan Yojna (RGSKY):

Rajiv Gandhi Shramik Kalyan Yojana, has been introduced w.e.f. 01.04.2005 to provide unemployment allowance to the insured person who has been rendered unemployed on account of closure of factory/establishment, retrenchment or permanent invalidity not less than 40% arising out of non-employment injury.

Under the RGSKY, unemployment allowance is provided for two years. For first year the unemployment allowance is provided @ 50% average daily wages and for the second year the unemployment allowance is provided @ 25% of average daily wages.

Atal Beemit Vyakti Kalyan Yojna (ABVKY)

Atal Beemit Vyakti Kalyan Yojana was implemented as a Pan India Pilot Project for two years period i.e. from 01.07.2018 to 30.06.2020. Under the scheme, relief in the form of cash compensation for a maximum period of 90 days is given to Insured Person in case he gets unemployed. The scheme has been extended for one year i.e. w.e.f. 01.07.2020 to 30.06.2021. In order to provide benefit to Insured Person who become unemployed due to COVID 19 pandemic, the eligibility conditions have been relaxed and quantum of relief has been increased from 25% of average daily earning to 50% of average daily earning for the period 24.03.2020 to 31.12.2020. The extant notification for

enhanced relief has been published in the Gazette on 11.09.2020. All employees meeting the eligibility criteria are entitled to unemployment benefits mentioned above. There is no distinction in providing unemployment allowance to local or migrant workers covered as employees under ESI Act, 1948."

2.19. Inter-State Migrant Worker (ISMW) Act provides certain protections which include licensing, registration of migrant workers with Government authorities and issuing passbook to the workers recording their identity. Guidelines regarding wages and protections including accommodation, free medical facilities, protective clothing to be provided by contractor are also outlined in the above Act. In this context, the Committee desired to know concrete measures taken to ensure maximum registration of ISM Workers and robust implementation of the provisions contained in the Act. In reply, the Ministry, submitted as under:-

"Office of Chief Labour Commissioner in the Central Sphere and State/UTs in the State sphere are taking several steps for maximum registration of ISM workers."

2.20. On being asked to clarify on the Aadhar Card usage by the Migrant Labours in another place other than the one originally entered in the Card, the representative of the Ministry submitted in Oral evidence as under:-

"Sir, what you are suggesting is quite good. Aadhaar is mainly for their identity. It is because when we say 'one nation, one ration card' or when we faced the problem of these migrant workers during the lockdown also because of their identity and portability, so Aadhaar is mainly for their portability so that there may not be any impersonation. So, if he is moving from eastern India towards the South, portability with Aadhaar is very easy. So, it is mainly for portability. But definitely his nativity and where he is working, as a self-certification, whatever he gives in the portal, we can put that thing."

2.21. The Committee desired to know whether there should be an alternative to mandatory Aadhaar enrollment for the migrant labours. The Ministry did not offer any comments in this regard.

2.22. On being asked to state whether registration could be denied on the basis of perennial change of permanent addresses or non-updation of addresses of Migrant workers, the Ministry categorically replied in the negative.

2.23. In response to a specific query regarding the status of creation of a portal to capture database of migrant workers and the timeline for completion of this database,

the Ministry submitted that the proposal has been recently approved by the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) and efforts were being made to do it at the earliest. The Ministry further stated that the trial and launch of the portal might take a minimum of six months after which it would be available to State Governments to get it populated.

2.24. The Committee's attention was drawn to the failure on the part of a number of States to utilize thousand of crores of rupees collected as cess for welfare of Building and Other Construction Workers (BOCW). On being asked to state measures taken to address the issue, the Ministry submitted as under:-

"During Covid-19, Rs.5,012/- crore have been distributed by the State/UT welfare boards to 1.83 crore Building and Other Construction Workers directly into their bank accounts through DBT, most of whom are migrant workers."

2.25. On being asked about the status of the initiative taken by Appropriate Governments to formulate schemes for portability of PDS and other benefits available to BOCW in their native States, the Ministry stated as under :-

"Portability of food is already available in 24 States/UTs and remaining States/UTs are expected to be integrated at the earliest. For portability of other benefits to BOC workers all efforts are being made. A Committee for formulation of rules under the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code has been constituted."

2.26. Pointing out that due to absence of such portability, Migrant Labours stranded during lockdown were rendered total destitute, the Committee asked about the lessons learnt and roadmap ahead so as to obviate such situations in future. In reply, the Ministry clarified that the Government had taken several measures to provide relief to the migrant workers and the portal for data base of the unorganized workers was to be prepared to provide them timely relief during calamities and normal times.

2.27. Out of 2.58 crore workers, the 0.76 crore Building and Other Constructions Workers have not got any financial assistance. In that context, on being asked about the steps taken to provide financial assistance to the remaining BOCW, the Ministry stated as under:-

"Financial assistance to remaining BOC workers is to be provided by States/UTs BOC Welfare Boards. The Central Government is Monitoring the situation on

daily basis to ensure that remaining BOC workers are provided financial assistance at the earliest."

2.28. Asked to state the measures initiated to establish a more robust mechanism for prompt and speedy relief to cover all the workers; the Ministry submitted that for prompt and speedy relief to cover all workers, regular meetings were being held with States/UTs. The States/ UTs have been asked to cover left-out BOC workers promptly in a mission mode.

2.29. As regards steps contemplated to bring in synergy on the obligations cast on both the home State and the State where the migrant workers are engaged, the Ministry stated that detailed advisory guidelines have been issued in this regard to all the States/UTs from Labour Minister on 27.07.2020.

**2.30. The Committee note that the definition of 'Inter-State Migrant Worker' has since been modified to include migrant workers moving to a Destination State for employment on their own volition, besides Migrant Workers employed through contractors. The Committee have been apprised that, in line with the recommendations made by the Labour Committee, steps taken to alleviate the hardship faced by Migrant Labourers include, *inter-alia*, setting up a portal to create a database for Migrant Workers with the facility of voluntary submission of data by self-employed persons moving to a 'Destination State', for which Aadhar would be a basic requirement; incorporation of a separate Chapter on Inter-State Migrant Workers in the Social Security Code; addition of an enabling provision in the laws for making rules for setting up toll free helpline numbers; carrying out a study on 'Safety and Health of Migrant Workers'; providing for the Central Government to specify the wages applicable to Inter-State Migrant Workers; providing for payment of a lumpsum allowance for to and fro journey to the native place of Migrant Workers; formulation of Schemes by the appropriate Government for portability of benefits of Public Distribution Scheme (PDS) and other benefits as are available to BOC Workers in their native States; extension of benefits to migrant workers as are available to Workers in establishments covered under ESIC, EPFO, etc. Further, portability of benefits of PDS for Inter-**

**State Migrant Workers either in his native State or the destination State where he is employed has been enabled for in terms of Section 62 of the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions, Code, 2020. The Committee note that there are no reliable or authentic figures on the total number of Inter-State Migrant Workers. The figures on the number of migrant workers who returned to their home States following the outbreak of the Pandemic as furnished to the Committee are based on the information received by the Ministry from the States concerned. Further, as per the data furnished by the Ministry, an estimated 2.58 crore workers are reportedly registered as Building and Other Construction Workers with various State Governments, a majority of them being Migrant Workers. In addition to providing food relief packages to around 30 lakh workers, the Committee have been apprised that an amount of Rs.5,000/- crore has been transferred to aid 1.83 crore Building and Other Construction Workers. Also, under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, the relief provided following the outbreak of the Covid Pandemic included, remitting 24% of wages directly to the EPF Accounts of low wage earning members drawing less than Rs.15,000 in the beneficiary establishments; providing for extending a special Covid- Advance from the EPF accounts whereby an amount equivalent to 75% of EPF balance or three months wages, whichever is lower could be drawn - on this count, as on 10.07.2020, an amount of Rs.6,987 crore was reportedly disbursed to 25.40 lakh members; reducing the statutory contribution from 12% to 10% of wages and Dearness Allowance under Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme thereby benefitting 4.3 crore employers across 6.5 lakhs establishments etc. Also, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs launched the SVA Nidhi Scheme for the benefit of 50 lakh street vendors by way of providing collateral free working capital loan upto Rs.10,000/- for compensating lost livelihood due to the Pandemic and the lockdown. The Committee have also been apprised that in order to boost employment and livelihood opportunities for migrant workers returning to the villages in the wake of Covid outbreak, the Government launched the Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan on 20.06.2020 focussing on durable rural infrastructure and providing modern facilities like internet; skill mapping of rural migrant**

labour; extended Anganwadi Services to Children of Migrant labours; sanctioned 700 Food Processing/Presentation and infrastructure projects for employment generation for Migrant Labourers; identified ongoing / new works of road construction for Migrant Labours; and Set up of 30 Biotech-Kisan hubs in the Country to help Migrant Workers to earn livelihood through farming. The Committee note that a number of appreciable initiatives have been launched by the Government, which are aimed at benefitting the Migrant Labour. The Committee, however, note in this regard that neither any guidelines were issued nor enforced for distribution of relief material to stranded Migrant Labourers. Also, there has been no element of Social Audit prescribed. The absence of reliable and authentic data/information on the numbers of migrant workforce and their movement back to their home States following the outbreak of the Pandemic has apparently impacted the relief and rehabilitation measures. There has also been a need for enhanced transparency in the modalities and procedures involved in the distribution of Relief material to Migrant Labour and prescription of an element of audit both at the Department level and Social Audit by the Stakeholders. In short, since without identification and collation of data of the inter-State migrant workers no social security Scheme can be effectively extended to them, the Committee exhort the Ministry to persuade the native as well as the destination States to identify, collect and periodically update the record of such workers.

2.31. The Committee note with satisfaction that the existing unemployment insurance Schemes *viz.* Rajiv Gandhi Shramik Kalyan Yojana (RGSKY) and Atal Beemit Vyakti Kalyan Yojana (ABVKY) covers employees who are under the ambit of the ESI Scheme. The Committee, however, note with concern that a large number of migrant labourers especially in the unorganised sector are still left out of the ambit of the ESI Scheme thereby depriving them out of any unemployment insurance or allowances when they needed the most during the pandemic. Though concerted efforts have been made by the Government by way of extension of the ABVKY for one year till 30.06.2021 in order to provide benefit to insured persons who lost employment due to Covid-19 Pandemic alongwith

relaxation and increase in quantum of relief, etc., the Committee observe that the benefits would be accessible to only a handful of Migrants labourers who are fortunate enough to be covered under the ESI Scheme. The Committee are, therefore, of the considered opinion that the steps envisaged in the Social Security Code, 2020 to extend coverage of the Code to hitherto unorganised workers who are still left out of the ambit of ESI Scheme is a welcome step and needs speedy implementation and enforcement.

2.32. The Committee have, time and again reiterated the need for a credible real time database of all workers including unorganised workers as well as Inter-State Migrant Workers. While the initiative taken for creating an online Portal on Inter-State Migrant Workers with real time data updates is laudable, the Committee nevertheless, wish to point out that without a credible database, efforts to give relief in such unprecedented times of a Global Pandemic like the current one, may not be completely successful. The Committee also note that the information on the online portal on Migrant Workers also proposes to include aspects relating to trends of migration of workers and the Labour Bureau and NITI Aayog are involved in studying the issues. The Committee desire that the initiative be given the needed impetus, thrust and support so that the Nation can have a credible real time database of Inter-State Migrant Workers.

2.33 The Committee are pleased to take note of the Government's proposal, as contained in the Finance Minister's 2021 Budget Speech, to launch a portal that will collect relevant information on gig, building and construction workers among others in order to further extend the Government's efforts towards the unorganised labour force, particularly the migrant workers. The Committee desire that the process of launching the portal be expedited in the right earnest so as to facilitate the formulation of Health, Food, Skill, Insurance and Credit Schemes for the migrant workers including those working in strategic sectors and difficult areas.

2.34. The Committee note that Advisories were issued to States/UTs pertaining to welfare of Migrant Workers returning to destination States in the backdrop of

**Covid-19 Pandemic. The mechanisms that were put in place have apparently aided in providing a synergy in discharging the obligations cast on both the home States as well as States where the Migrant Workers are engaged/employed. In the light of the shortcomings or lacunae that may have come to light in undertaking relief and rehabilitation measures following the large-scale reverse migration, the Committee expect that the administrative mechanisms/systems available both at the Central and the State levels for tackling serious crises of the kind witnessed are addressed by taking appropriate measures.**

## CHAPTER - III

### **PROVISION OF FOOD ITEMS (DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS)**

3.1 The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution (Department of Consumer Affairs) elaborated their role under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKY) and Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme (ANBS) which were launched as a Governmental response to ameliorate the hardships faced by the poor and migrant labours due to livelihood disruptions caused by COVID-19 Pandemic.

#### **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKAY)**

3.2 In pursuance of the announcement made under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package as part of Economic Response to COVID-19, the Department of Consumer Affairs provisioned one kg pulse out of the Price Stabilisation Fund buffer stock, per household per month, free of cost, to 19.4 crore beneficiary Households as per the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA). The pulses were being distributed under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKAY), for a period of three months –April to June, 2020 to ameliorate the hardships caused by COVID-19.

3.3 The Committee were informed that the Department of Consumer Affairs maintained central buffer of pulses for price stabilisation. For the first time such distribution of pulses for NFSA beneficiaries was done to meet the challenging situation arising out of COVID-19 Pandemic. The process entailed allocation of five varieties of pulses, viz., Tur, Urad, Moong, Masoor, and Chana among the States/UTs according to their choice; processing the raw pulses; and then delivering the processed pulses to the designated delivery points decided by each State/UT. Delivery to designated points has been done by road, rail rake, ship, and through air lifting also.

3.4 NAFED has been appointed as the central nodal agency for this programme. As reported by States/UTs till 17.08.2020, against the 3 months allocation of 5.82 LMT, entire quantity has been made available to States/UTs of which 5.34 LMT (91.65%) has been distributed by State/UTs.

3.5 The Government of India further announced extension of PMGKAY beyond the initial period of April-June until the end of November, 2020. During the five months' period (July to November 2020), 1 kg whole Chana was to be provided free of cost to each family per month to beneficiaries already identified under the NFSA. It was proposed to supply 9.70 LMT milled cleaned whole Chana to States/UTs for distribution to all 19.4 crore beneficiary households under the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA).

3.6 As reported by NAFED on 17.08.2020, against the per month allocation of 1.94 LMT, 3.02 LMT has been dispatched to States and UTs, out of which 2.74 LMT has already been received by the States/UTs and 50,695 MT has been distributed for the month of July, 2020 and 9,384 MT has been distributed for the month of August, 2020.

3.7 During oral evidence the Committee were apprised by the Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs on the progress made by the Department in the distribution of pulses under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana (PMGKAY) and Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme (ANBS) to the poor and migrants whose livelihoods were disrupted due to COVID-19 Pandemic. The constraints faced and measures taken to iron out deficiencies as well as the coordination mechanism put in place with the State Governments, Monitoring Systems evolved at the Central level to oversee distribution methods were also placed before the Committee.

3.8 The representatives of the Department of Consumer Affairs also highlighted the challenges faced by them during the implementation of the PMGKAY viz. Public distribution of pulses taken by the Department for the first time; allocation of five varieties of pulses in different forms as per choice of States; processing of raw pulses and delivery to designated points as decided by States; unprecedented volume of milling for distribution; restricted movement due to Nationwide lockdown affecting availability of labour and milling services; arrangements of transport facility - Trucks, rakes, ships, airlifting; and syncing pulse distribution with rice/wheat distribution cycle in States/UTs.

3.9 The seven-steps involved in PMGKAY as highlighted by the representatives of the Department were as per the following sequence:

- i. Collect choice of pulse and identify State receiving point.
- ii. Tender and finalisation of agency for milling.
- iii. Lifting of raw pulses from NAFED godowns by Dal Mills.
- iv. Milling, Cleaning and Packing by Dal Mills.
- v. Transfer of pulses to State receiving points.
- vi. Transport of pulses to Districts/Fair Price Shops.
- vii. Distribution to final beneficiaries.

3.10 In response to a pointed query by the Committee on the number of beneficiaries, the representative of the Department clarified as under:

"Sir, it is 18.3 crore households. It is because the *chana* distribution is not on individual basis. It is per household. So, out of 19.4 crore households, 18.3 crore households have already been distributed one kg. *chana* per month for these three months – April, May and June under PMGKAY."

3.11 On being asked about subsequent developments, the representative deposed as under:

"Subsequently, under the extended PMGKAY, which is from July to November, again one kg. *chana* per month to the 19.4 crore households has to be distributed. As on date, the total amount which has been distributed by all the States put together is 89,000 MT."

3.12 As regards the varieties of pulses distributed, the representative of the Department apprised the Committee in oral evidence as under:

"Sir, let me clarify, under the PMGKAY from April to June, we were distributing all varieties of pulses. Therefore, as was mentioned in the presentation, we have given processed Tur, whole Moong, processed Masoor, whole *chana*, also *chana dal*... But under the extended PMGKAY, which is from July to November, which is currently ongoing, only whole *chana* is being provided across the country. There are no other pulses."

3.13 Asked to state whether 18.3 crore households out of 19.4 crore households had since been provided pulses for the initial three months i.e. April to June, 2020 the representatives replied in the affirmative and further stated that some States were still distributing their June quantities.

3.14 On being asked about the allocations and time lag in distributions of the pulses under the PMGKAY, the representative deposed as under:

"I may clarify that the allocations were made on the basis of beneficiary numbers multiplied by 1 kg. per household. There was a time lag ..., and there were problems of lifting of tur dal. For instance Bihar was given only tur dal on their

request. This was all based on the State's request whatever particular pulse they requested for. So, Bihar wanted tur dal. Therefore, the quantities were lifted from godowns, mill at the milling centres, dispatched primarily by rake. There have been time lags when it has reached. But to the beneficiary, if they did not get for April, when they get for May, they would get 2 Kg and if they took only in the month of June, they would get 3 Kg. at one go. So, the allocation has been made as per the full allocations. Those quantities have reached the States also as per the full allocation and distribution to beneficiaries is authorized to be as per full allocation which means 3 Kg. per household. So, even if it is delayed, he is bound to get that 3 Kg. of allocation for his household."

3.15 The Committee desired to have the State-wise status of the distribution of pulses. In reply, the Department of Consumer Affairs in their written submission apprised as follows:

- "As per NFSA allocation of 5.82 LMT of pulses, 5.83 LMT was dispatched by NAFED against which 5.80 LMT was received by States/UTs after rigorous quality checks, setting aside the damaged pulses. The States/UTs have distributed 5.47 LMT covering 18.26 crore beneficiary households against their adjusted allocation of 5.70 LMT. Distribution of pulses is still going on in some States which experienced severe initial lockdown conditions. The details of State/UT-wise progress of PMGKAY-1 may be seen at Annexure-I.
- Under PMGKAY-1, 19 States/UTs (namely, Andaman & Nicobar, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Delhi, Goa, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Lakshadweep, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Puducherry, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat) have completed their distribution, 5 States/UTs (namely, Assam, Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Sikkim and Uttarakhand) have completed more than 99% distribution, 6 States/UTs have completed more than 95% of their distribution, 3 States/UTs have completed more than 90% of their distribution and 1 State has completed 88% of its distribution. Distribution under PMGKAY- I is still undergoing in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh due to severe restriction on movement amidst prevailing pandemic situation.
- The Government of India further announced extension of PMGKAY beyond the initial period of April-June until the end of November, 2020. During the five months' period (July to November 2020), 1 kg whole Chana will be provided free of cost to each family per month to beneficiaries already identified under the NFSA. It is proposed to supply 9.70 LMT milled cleaned whole Chana to States/UTs for distribution to all 19.4 crore beneficiary Households under the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA). Already 4.88 LMT has been dispatched to States/UTs and distribution by the States/ UTs to beneficiary Households is ongoing."

3.16 As regards the coordination mechanism developed with the State Governments and NAFED to ensure lifting and delivery of pulses to the beneficiaries, the representative of the Department apprised in evidence as follows:

"There were two issues which you mentioned – one is about lifting of the quantities and the other is about monitoring of distribution. As far as lifting is concerned, since we do not provide under the PDS system, pulses and dal on a regular basis unlike foodgrain and wheat which is lifted from the locally available FCI godowns, this was supplied. Therefore, this was supplied by NAFED from buffer stock created under Price Stabilisation Fund and stored at Central Warehousing Corporation/State Warehousing Corporation godowns by truck or rake or whatever method of transport after processing and milling. So, it is a delivery based system. That is why, the entire details that we get is on the basis of the actual quantity which has been delivered to the States' delivery point. So, when we commenced this whole exercise, every State was asked to give us the exact locations where they want us to deliver dals or the chana as the case may be. To those delivery points, NAFED then supplied the quantities. They have taken it into their stock and then it has been released to the fair price shops. So, that is the process as far as making the quantities available is concerned."

3.17 Asked to elaborate the monitoring mechanism evolved for the purpose, the representative submitted:

"Next part is as to how do we do this monitoring. So, again, this was the first time that this Department has been involved in such a humongous PAN India exercise. What we did was that we allocated zones to Joint Secretaries and there were five Joint Secretaries to whom groups of States and UTs were assigned to talk to the nodal officer. We faced some peculiar issues also in this exercise. For instance, I will refer to Bihar where all our rakes have been going to Fatuha. There we used to be in touch with CONCOR, the Container Corporation of India, so that we would be coordinating the movements of rakes to Fatuha. Then we got a feedback that because of the lockdown, there are fewer labourers who are available to unload the stock. So, the movement of the rake is getting slowed. Then I spoke to the Bihar Government and they were able to provide passes to more labourers to do the faster unloading".

3.18 The representative further submitted as under:

"Then, just to give you a flavour of the complexity of the exercise, we were told that only during the day time, unloading is happening. Then CONCOR set up generators so that at night also, unloading could happen and we had a weigh bridge of SAIL. I spoke with CMD, SAIL. He offered us that weigh bridge so that it was much faster. So, we synchronised, tried to converge all the resources that are available for faster supply, faster turnaround and then it reaches the State in time to be synched with the next PDS cycle because the beneficiaries know certain dates when they are to approach the fair price shop. We could not disturb those dates also because of Corona. We also have to understand the

distancing and timing. It has to be such to avoid crowding. The most important task is to sync our availability with the PDS cycle of the State. That is the effort we did for the PMGKAY and that is the on-going effort with the current cycle under the PMGKAY."

3.19 On the status of extended PMGKAY, the Committee were apprised that out of 3.85 LMT dispatched, 2.93 LMT were received by States/UTs and quantity distributed by States stood at 75,417.30 MT for July; 12,382.63 MT for August; 1,229.88 MT for September and 16.53 MT for October.

### **Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme (ANBS) for Migrant Labour**

3.20 The Committee were informed that under ANB, for migrant labourers who were not covered under NFSA, 2013 or were without ration card in the State/UT in which they were stranded, whole Chana was provided @ 1kg per household per month, for two months i.e. May & June, 2020 free of cost. Such beneficiaries were estimated at 10% of total beneficiaries under NFSA. The percentage might differ from State to State depending on the actual number of migrant labour.

3.21 The Committee were further apprised that as on 17.08.2020, against a total allocation of 33,699.31 MT whole Chana for two months (May-June, 2020), 15,963.63 MT had been distributed by States/UTs to the stranded migrant workers. Distribution of whole Chana under ANB had benefitted about 1.02 crore house hold families of migrant labourers.

3.22 NAFED as the nodal agency has delivered the stock to the delivery points identified by the States/UTs. From these points, the States/UTs have transported the stock for distribution to the beneficiaries. All expenses including transportation and dealers' margin were being borne by the Department based on the NFSA rates. Thus, the entire expense on the PMGKAY and ANB programmes were being borne by the Central Government.

3.23 The representatives of the Department of Consumer Affairs in their presentation to the Committee during oral evidence highlighted the challenges faced during the implementation of ANB Scheme viz. Dependence on States for identification of migrant

workers; Migrant workers stranded on the way from place of work to place of domicile; Flexibility in allocation to States adopted; and Guidelines left to the States to evolve.

3.24 As regards the progress made in the implementation of ANB, the Committee were informed that out of the allocated 33,699.31 MT of whole chana, the actual quantity dispatched stood at 33,744.95 while the quantity received by States was 33,387.81 MT. The quantity actually distributed by States was 16,120.84 MT.

3.25 On a specific query as to whether the distribution of whole chana under the ANB Scheme was meant for migrant workers only, the representative of the Department of Consumer Affairs submitted as under:

"Sir, for all the beneficiaries, the number of beneficiary households is 19.40 crore as per the NFSA criteria. The principle for migrant workers was taken as a flat rate that 10 per cent of these beneficiaries may be migrant workers. So, on that presumption of 10 per cent, the quantities were calculated and quantities were, in the case of food grains, lifted by the States or to be lifted by the States because we supply to them."

3.26 In response to another specific query as to whether the distinction between beneficiaries as per the NFSA criteria per se and Migrant Labours who were the intended beneficiaries of the ANB Scheme, got blurred at some point of time, the representative replied in the affirmative.

3.27 The Committee sought data of distribution of pulses under the ANB Scheme relating to Migrant Workers stranded in certain States because of the lockdown where food shortage had been the major concern. In response, the Department furnished the following details:

- "Under ANB whole Chana was provided @ 1 kg per household per month for two months, May and June, free of cost to migrant labourers who were not covered under NFSA, 2013 or were without ration card in the States/UTs in which they were stranded. Such beneficiaries were estimated as 10% of total beneficiaries under NFSA.
- Under the ANB, against adjusted total allocation of 27,001.19 MT whole Chana for two months (May-June, 2020), 16,470.64 MT has been distributed by States/UTs to the stranded migrant workers. Distribution of whole Chana under ANB has benefitted about 1.65 crore households of migrant labourers. Details of State/UT—wise implementation of ANB may be seen at Annexure-II. Details of

district-wise distribution of Chana whole and beneficiary households has been received from 14 States/UTs which is enclosed at Annexure-III.

- In view of heavy floods in North Bihar affecting 17 districts, it was decided to deliver stocks by rail rake at ICD, Fatua. State Government was requested to make prompt arrangement for unloading at rake point, transit from rake point to distribution points. For distant located districts, supply was to be made through trucks. Details of district-wise distribution of pulse under PMGKAY-I distribution Bihar is at Annexure-IV.
- In view of the high priority accorded to supply and distribution of pulses under PMGKAY, Five Monitoring Groups headed by Joint Secretaries was constituted vide order dated 17.04.2020 and each was assigned one Zone comprising of several States/UTs for better coordination. They were supported by senior officials from NAFED. The status of stock dispatched to, and received by States/UTs and its distribution to final beneficiaries was regularly monitored by these groups on a daily basis. These Groups regularly interacted with the respective Secretary/Principal Secretaries of Food & Civil Supplies Departments/State Nodal Officers to arrange timely acceptance of delivered stock, quick unloading of stock, expediting its efficient movement to Fair Price Shops and prompt distribution to final beneficiaries. Recently, A PMGKAY Portal has been launched by the Department where all States/UTs can update their data on real time-basis.
- The Department interacted frequently with the nodal Agency, NAFED and States/UTs for ensuring prompt and smooth implementation of the scheme through telecoms, letters and Video conferences. There have been a number of Video Conferences held under the Chairmanship of Secretary (DoCA) and also co-chaired with Secretary, D/o Food & Public Distribution.
- The ANB Package has come to an end on 31.08.20. The balance of Chana whole under ANB Package will be adjusted against the allocation under extended PMGKAY.
- The details of distribution of Chana whole under ANB in the districts of Darjeeling and Kalimpong were called for from State Government of West Bengal and the report received from them is as follows:

District	Quota of Migrants	Allocation and lifting of Rice (MT)	Allocation and lifting of Chana whole (MT)	No. of beneficiaries lifted foodgrains	Offtake of Rice (MT)	Offtake of Chana (MT)
<b>Darjeeling</b>	105340	1053.4	50	102247	1022.47	48.95
<b>Kalimpong</b>	24179	241.79	10	24179	241.79	10.00

Source: Food and Civil Supplies Department, Government of West Bengal

- Pulses were provided free of cost to all States/UTs. All expenses including transportation and dealers' margin are being borne by this department based on the NFSA rates. Thus the entire expense on the PMGKAY and ANB programmes is being borne by the Central Government."

**3.28 The Committee note that as part of the Economic Response of the Government to Covid-19 Pandemic, the Department of Consumer Affairs have been entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining, provisioning and distribution of pulses to beneficiaries including the stranded migrant labours under the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) through two welfare schemes viz. Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKAY) and Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme (ANBS) aimed at ameliorating the hardships faced by the poor due to livelihood disruptions caused by the Pandemic. The Committee further note that under the PMGKAY Scheme, five varieties of pulses viz. Tur, Urad, Moong, Masoor and Chana were to be provisioned at the rate of one kg per household per month to 19.4 crore beneficiary households for three continuous months from April 2020 till June 2020 which was further extended for another five months i.e. from July to November 2020 for provision of only 1 kg chana per household per month through NAFED which is the Central nodal agency for this programme. The constraints/challenges faced by the Department in accomplishing the targets set under the Scheme include *inter-alia* task of distribution of pulses being handled by the Department for the first time; allocation of five varieties of pulses in different forms as per choice of States; processing of raw pulses and delivery to designated points as decided by States; unprecedented volume of milling for distribution; restricted movements due to Nationwide lockdown affecting availability of labour and milling services, arrangements of transport facility viz. Trucks, Rakes, Ships, Airlifting, etc; and syncing pulse distribution with rice/wheat distribution cycle in States/UTs. The Committee also find that the work**

of distribution entailed a complex seven step process viz. collection of choice of pulses with identification of State receiving points; tender and finalisation of Agency for milling; shifting of raw pulses from NAFED godowns by Dal Mills; Milling, cleaning and packing by Dal Mills; transfer of pulses to State receiving points; transport of pulses to Districts/fair price shops; and distribution to final beneficiaries. The Committee appreciate that despite the above constraints and complex process due to nationwide lockdown and resultant restriction in movements affecting the availability of labour and transport facilities for lifting and distribution of the pulses in time to the needy persons, as on 17.08.2020, against the three months allocation of 5.82 LMT, entire quantity has been made available to State/UTs out of which 5.34 LMT (91.65%) had already been distributed. It is equally encouraging to note that under the extended PMGKAY i.e. from July to November, 2020, 89000 MT of Chana has already been distributed by the States as part of free distribution of one kg Chana to 19.4 crore households by November, 2020. The Committee trust that with the progressive phasing out of the lockdown process which might have eased the initial problems/limitations to a considerable extent, the target of provisioning /distribution of pulses to the intended beneficiaries must have been achieved by the end of November, 2020. The Committee also desire that the Department of Consumer Affairs draw suitable lessons and remain adequately prepared for any such future unforeseen eventualities and assignments.

**3.29** According to the Department, since pulses were not provided under the regular PDS system unlike foodgrains and wheat which are drawn from available

FCI godowns, the pulses had to be supplied from NAFED Headhold Warehouses with processing and milling as required by truck or rake or other available means of transport making it a delivery based system wherein NAFED supplies to the identified delivery points which in turn released the same to fair price shops. As regards the monitoring mechanism, the Committee note that five officers of the Ministry were allocated zones of group of States/UTs where mid-term course correction and interventions were made as per feedback received so as to sync the availability of pulses with the PDS cycle. The Committee hope that with the much needed mid-term course corrections, monitoring and interventions made by the Central Government from time to time, the States/UTs are adequately enabled and empowered for faster and targeted distribution of pulses to all the poor and migrant beneficiaries so as to mitigate the hardships caused during the Pandemic. The Committee also desire that both the quality and quantity of the pulses have to be assured while delivering them to the beneficiaries.

3.30 The Committee note that under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme (ANBS) for Migrant Labours who are not covered under NFSA, 2013 or are without ration card in the State/UT in which they were stranded, whole chana was provided at the rate of 1 kg per household per month for two months i.e. May-June, 2020, free of cost. The Committee find that as on 17.08.2020, against a total allocation of 33,699.31 MT whole chana for the two months, 15,963.63 MT had already been distributed by States/UTs to the stranded migrant labourers benefitting about 1.02 crore house hold families of migrant labours. Some of the challenges faced by the Department during the implementation of ANB Scheme included *inter-alia*

dependence on States for identification of migrant workers; migrant workers stranded on the way from place of work to place of domicile; etc. It is a matter of serious concern to note the Department's affirmation that the distinction between beneficiaries as per the NFSA criteria per se and Migrant labours who were the intended beneficiaries of the ANB Scheme got blurred at some point of time. The Committee are deeply perturbed that due to lack of a credible database, the intended relief might not have reached migrant labourers in time resulting in utter chaos and confusion. The Committee hope that the Covid-19 Pandemic and the resultant challenges and lacunae observed in the system in the distribution of instant and immediate relief to the needy migrant labours are duly taken note of and appropriate lessons learned to iron out the systemic flaws and inadequacies so as to strengthen the preparedness to effectively deal with any such emergent situations. The Committee further urge that a credible database of unorganised workers especially that of migrant labourers be put in place with a sense of urgency so as to ensure seamless delivery of relief packages to them at the time of distress.

## **CHAPTER -IV**

### **DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD ITEMS (DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION)**

4.1. The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution (Department of Food and Public Distribution) highlighted the role and responsibility of the Department to ensure food security for the poor and vulnerable beneficiaries/households and migrants/stranded migrants in the backdrop of COVID-19 pandemic with overall disruptions of economic activities globally. The Department stated that they had taken concerted measures under three schemes viz. Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PM – GKAY) – with additional free-of-cost foodgrain for all NFSA beneficiaries @ 5 kg/person/month [ over and above regular monthly entitlements under the National Food Security Act (NFSA)]; Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme (ANBS) – Free-of-Cost foodgrain for migrants/stranded migrants @ 5 kg/person/month; and One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) – Empowering migrant beneficiaries to access subsidized foodgrains under NFSA through nation-wide portability of ration cards.

#### **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PM-GKAY)**

4.2. Pursuant to the announcement of ‘Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKP)’ to ameliorate the hardships faced by the poor due to economic disruptions caused by the Covid-19 outbreak in the country, the Department, on 30/03/2020, had initially allocated a total of about 120 Lakh Metric Tons (LMT) foodgrain (Rice/Wheat) under the PM-GKAY (Phase-I) to all States/UTs for additional free-of-cost foodgrain distribution to about all 80+ Crore beneficiaries covered under National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA), at the scale of 5 Kg per person per month for a period of three months (April-June 2020), over and above regular monthly NFSA food grain entitlements, so that poor and vulnerable families/beneficiaries did not suffer on account of non-availability of food grains and were able to access the same easily without facing any financial distress.

4.3. Keeping in view the need for continuous food-security support to the poor and the needy, the PM-GKAY was extended further for a period of next 5 months upto

November 2020 i.e. PM-GKAY (Phase-II). Accordingly, the Department on 30/06/2020 allocated another 201 Lakh MT foodgrain under PM-GKAY (Phase-II) for free-of- cost additional distribution to about all 80+ Crore NFSA beneficiaries in the Country during July to November 2020.

4.4. As far as distribution was concerned, the Department submitted that under PM-GKAY (Phase-I), States/UTs combined had lifted a total of more than 117.3 LMT (98%) of total allocated foodgrain from the FCI/Central Pool and reported a total distribution of nearly 111.42 LMT (93%) of allocated foodgrain for the period of three months April-June, 2020, as per following month wise-details:

- 94% of April quota to about 75.03 Crore beneficiaries,
- 94% of May quota to about 74.92 Crore beneficiaries, and
- 92% of June quota to about 73 Crore beneficiaries.

4.5. Further, as on 27.07.2020 under Phase-II of PMGKAY, all States/UTs combined had reportedly lifted nearly 33.4 LMT (83%) of monthly total allocation of 40.26 LMT for the month of July 2020, and so far, 17.23 LMT (43%) foodgrains had been distributed to 34.45 Crore NFSA beneficiaries.

4.6. On being asked whether any social audit had been done for the foodgrain distribution under PMGKAY, the Department apprised as under:-

“Social audit has been provisioned under NFSA and States/UTs are required to conduct social audit on regular basis. PM-GKAY scheme aimed at ameliorating the hardships faced by the poor due to economic disruptions caused by the Covid-19 outbreak in the country, so that no poor/vulnerable beneficiary/ household suffer on account of non-availability of foodgrains. Since, this scheme was launched for three months initially and later it was extended for 5 more months i.e. upto November, 2020, therefore, no specific/additional provision was made for social audit under the PM-GKAY scheme.”

4.7. The Department supplemented as under:-

“PM-GKAY Foodgrains are being issued to same beneficiaries who are covered under NFSA. The Social Audits and other accountability mechanisms mandated by National Food Security Act and PDS Control Order 2015 applies to Targeted Public Distribution System through which PM-GKAY scheme is being implemented”.

4.8. The Committee sought to know the total number of ration cards issued in India *vis-à-vis* the total number of ration shops and State wise details of distribution of 5 Kg rice as well as details of migrant beneficiaries. In reply, the Department stated that about 80.42 crore beneficiaries were covered under NFSA across the Country. The State wise information of beneficiaries and details of Ration Shops/ Fair Price Shops as furnished by the Department are as under:

Statement indicating State-Wise number of Persons/families Covered under National Food Security Act, 2013					
Sl. No.	States/ UTs	Ceiling of beneficiaries under NFSA (In lakh)	No. of families/persons identified under NFSA (in lakh)		Beneficiaries yet to be identified (In lakh)
			Total persons	% of beneficiaries covered	
1	Andhra Pradesh	268.22800	268.23000	100.00	-0.00200
2	Arunachal Pradesh	8.70545	8.21121	94.32	0.49424
3	Assam	251.89775	251.52924	99.85	0.36851
4	Bihar	871.16341	871.16341	100.00	0.00000
5	Chattisgarh	200.76817	200.77000	100.00	-0.00183
6	Delhi	72.77995	72.73324	99.94	0.04671
7	Goa	5.32181	5.31994	99.96	0.00187
8	Gujarat	382.84729	382.53587	99.92	0.31142
9	Haryana	126.49110	126.49000	100.00	0.00110
10	Himachal Pradesh	36.81586	28.64456	77.80	8.17130
11	Jharkhand	264.25385	263.70023	99.79	0.55362
12	Karnataka	401.93130	401.93000	100.00	0.00130
13	Kerala	154.80040	154.80012	100.00	0.00028
14	Madhya Pradesh	546.42214	546.42000	100.00	0.00214
15	Maharashtra	700.16683	700.17000	100.00	-0.00317
16	Manipur	25.05651	24.66972	98.46	0.38679
17	Meghalaya	21.45517	21.45517	100.00	0.00000
18	Mizoram	7.06296	6.68215	94.61	0.38081
19	Nagaland	14.78702	14.04687	94.99	0.74015
20	Odisha	326.21167	323.59616	99.20	2.61551
21	Punjab	141.44562	141.45000	100.00	-0.00438
22	Rajasthan	446.61960	446.62000	100.00	-0.00040

23	Sikkim	4.06582	3.78788	93.16	0.27794
24	Tamil Nadu	364.69365	357.33712	97.98	7.35653
25	Telangana	191.69600	191.62000	99.96	0.07600
26	Tripura	25.01833	24.82813	99.24	0.19020
27	Uttar Pradesh	1520.58643	1453.95453	95.62	66.63190
28	Uttarakhand	61.93849	61.94000	100.00	-0.00151
29	West Bengal	601.83770	601.83770	100.00	0.00000
30	A&N	0.63260	0.60862	96.21	0.02398
31	DNH&DD	3.55651	2.52195	70.91	1.03456
32	Lakshadweep	0.21868	0.22000	100.60	-0.00132
33	Chandigarh (DBT)	4.95915	2.79435	56.35	2.16480
34	Puduchery (DBT)	6.34390	6.30412	99.37	0.03978
35	J&K	72.69309	72.41067	99.61	0.28242
36	Ladakh	1.43913	1.43895	99.99	0.00018
<b>Total</b>		<b>8134.91134</b>	<b>8042.77191</b>	<b>98.87</b>	<b>92.13943</b>

**State-wise statement of FPS Automation FPSs as on  
25.08.2020**

(Statement in Descending Order of State/UT names)

Sl.	States/UTs	No. of Fair Price Shops	No. of ePoS Devices/ Autoamted FPSs	FPS Automati on (%)	Remarks
1	Andhra Pradesh	28,936	28,936	100%	<b>Completed / Almost Completed</b> 95% - 100% automation in 28 States/UTs  (6 UTs and 22 States)
2	Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu	114	114	100%	
3	Goa	456	456	100%	
4	Gujarat	17,210	17,210	100%	
5	Haryana	9,526	9,526	100%	
6	Himachal Pradesh	4,934	4,934	100%	
7	Jammu & Kashmir	6,002	6,002	100%	
8	Jharkhand	25,532	25,532	100%	
9	Lakshadweep	39	39	100%	
10	Maharashtra	52,532	52,532	100%	
11	Odisha	12,577	12,577	100%	
12	Punjab	17,525	17,525	100%	
13	Tamil Nadu	34,776	34,776	100%	
14	Telangana	17,170	17,170	100%	
15	Tripura	1,806	1,806	100%	
16	Uttar Pradesh	80,493	80,493	100%	

17	Kerala	14,189	14,155	100%	
18	Rajasthan	25,682	25,579	100%	
19	Madhya Pradesh	25,149	25,103	100%	
20	Ladakh	409	409	100%	
21	West Bengal	20,261	20,261	100%	
22	Mizoram	1,248	1,239	99%	
23	Sikkim	1,362	1,352	99%	
24	Karnataka	19,935	19,762	99%	
25	Chhattisgarh	12,304	12,004	98%	
26	Bihar	48,113	47,021	98%	
27	Andaman & Nicobar	464	445	96%	
28	Nagaland	1,691	1,619	96%	
29	Uttarakhand	9,908	7,634	77.0%	
30	Manipur	3,063	2,157	70.4%	
31	Arunachal Pradesh	1,943	25	1.3%	<b>Rollout Started</b>
32	Meghalaya	4,736	10	0.2%	
33	Assam	38,237	-	0.0%	
34	Delhi	2,018	-	0.0%	<b>Suspended w.e.f Apr'18</b>
35	Chandigarh (DBT)	NA	NA	NA	<b>DBT (Cash Transfers) (2 UTs)</b>
36	Puducherry (DBT)	NA	NA	NA	
	<b>Summary</b>	<b>5,40,340</b>	<b>4,88,403</b>	<b>90%</b>	

4.9. The Committee then enquired about the total number of grievances received pertaining to food grain distribution during lockdown and the action taken by Central/ State Governments thereon. In response, the Department submitted as under:-

“With a view to effectively handle the public grievances under NFSA, all States/UTs have set up toll-free number/online grievance redressal systems in their respective portals. This is in addition to the existence of District Grievance Redressal Officers (DGROs), Vigilance Committees at different levels and State Food Commissions (SFCs) to rationalize the coverage of beneficiaries under

NFSA. With the help of such mechanisms in place, the States/UTs are able to effectively address the grievances related to food grain distribution. A total of 1,140 complaints have been received from various sources i.e. Letter/ e-mail/PMO/Minister/etc. These complaints have been forwarded to concerned States for further appropriate action at the earliest as action is required to be taken by State functionaries.”

4.10. Asked to state the nature of complaints/ grievances and monitoring mechanism evolved by the Central Government to redress them appropriately, the Department informed as under:-

“Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and State/UT Governments. Central Govt. is responsible for procurement, allocation and transportation of food grains up to the designated depots of the FCI. The operational responsibilities for allocation and distribution of food grains within the States/UTs, identification of eligible beneficiaries/families, issuance of ration cards to them and supervision and monitoring of functioning of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) rest with the concerned State/UT Government. Therefore, as and when shortcomings/complaints are received from various sources i.e. letter, website, email, PMO/Minister/etc. by this Department regarding any irregularities in the functioning of the TPDS, such as delay in distribution, less quantity, sub-standard quality of foodgrains, etc, these are referred to the concerned State/UT for inquiry and appropriate action at their end at the earliest.”

4.11. The Committee then desired to know the status of FPS Automation in the Country especially Delhi. In response, the Department submitted as under:-

“About 4.88 Lakh (90%) of total 5.4 Lakh FPSs in the Country are automated by installing electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) devices for transparent distribution of foodgrains under TPDS. Automation of FPSs in Delhi was started from January’2019 but use of ePoS devices was suspended *w.e.f.* April 2018. DFPD had convened multiple meetings with concerned stakeholders and also sent letters from the level of Hon’ble Minister of CA, F&PD, Secretary (FPD), Joint Secretary (BP, PD) to Delhi Govt. to restart usage of ePoS device for foodgrain distribution. Technical assistance from NIC HQ is offered to all States/UTs for this purpose.”

4.12. In response to a pointed query regarding the States and UTs which reportedly didn’t carry out any distribution exercise under PMGKAY in the month of July i.e. the first month of extended scheme, the Department stated as under:-

“States/UTs are distributing foodgrains under PMGKAY in different Cycles. Most of the States are doing monthly distribution of food grains under PM-GKAY

(Phase -II) but A&N, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Sikkim are bi-monthly distributing foodgrains whereas Ladakh, Chandigarh, Puducherry and Punjab are distributing foodgrains in one go (for three months/six months in one go). Foodgrain distribution was delayed in these States/UTs due to different distribution cycle”.

4.13. Asked to state whether the Central Government was going to make PDS universal in certain States or in the whole Country at least till the pandemic subsided, the Department replied in the negative and stated that there was no proposal under consideration in the Department for making PDS universal.

As per the data on the status of food grain distribution under PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PM-GKAY) furnished by the Ministry, it was observed that while the Phase-I distribution was almost complete, Phase-II distribution percentage for the month of August, 2020 stood at zero for States of Bihar, Chandigarh, Puducherry, Punjab, Sikkim and West Bengal. In this context, the Committee desired to know the specific constraints/difficulties being faced by these States in the distribution process and the State-wise details. In reply thereto, the Department submitted as under:-

“Except a few States, where distribution of free foodgrains under PM-GKAY is progressing with delay due to adjustment of distribution cycles/calendar of regular NFSA foodgrains and PM-GKAY foodgrains and other logistical constraints, the progress of lifting and distribution of foodgrains in most States/UTs is satisfactory.

4.14. Specific details of States/UTs as furnished by the Department are as under:-

**States where Distribution of Foodgrains under PM-GKAY is progressing with Delay**

	State	Details	Current Status
1	Puducherry	Both UTs are implementing DBT and faced initial difficulties owing to absence of PDS supply chain/ Fair Price Shops in these UTs.	PM-GKAY (Phase - 1): Total distribution: 97% PM-GKAY (Phase - 2): Total distribution: 78% (Jul-Sep 20)
2	Chandigarh	PM-GKAY distribution in both states are being done in one go.	PM-GKAY (Phase - 1): Total distribution: 92% PM-GKAY (Phase - 2): Total distribution: 90.6% (Jul-Sep 20)

3	Punjab	State has planned to distribute the five month's foodgrains in one go.	PM-GKAY (Phase - 1): Total Lifting: 100% Total distribution: 94% PM-GKAY (Phase - 2): Total distribution: 6.6% (Jul-Sep 20)
4	West Bengal	PM-GKAY distribution in the state is happening with one-month lag.	PM-GKAY (Phase - 1): Total distribution: 97% PM-GKAY (Phase - 2): Total distribution: 78.6% (Jul-Sep 20)
5	Bihar	Distribution cycle starts in latter part of the month	PM-GKAY (Phase -1): Total distribution: 89% PM-GKAY (Phase -2): Total distribution: 77.9% (Jul-Sep 20)
6	Sikkim	PM-GKAY distribution in State is done on bi-monthly basis	PM-GKAY (Phase -1): Total distribution: 100% PM-GKAY (Phase -2): Total distribution: 62% (Jul-Sep 20)

On being asked whether any mid-term course corrections or interventions were made for streamlining the distribution of food grains under the PM-GKAY Scheme given the fact that it has been extended up to November, 2020, the Department submitted as under:-

“In Phase-I of PM-GKAY, i.e. April to June 2020, all States/UTs combined have lifted about 118 LMT (99%) of three-month foodgrain from the FCI/Central Pool. Further, all States/UTs combined have reported a distribution of over 111.52 LMT (93.5%) foodgrain. In phase II, as per reports up to 10/10/2020, all States/UTs combined have distributed 90.9% (36.62 LMT), 91.5% (36.87 LMT), 79% (31.64 LMT), 10% (4.04 LMT) foodgrain quota for the months of July, August, September and October 2020 respectively. Except a few States, where distribution of free foodgrains under PM-GKAY is progressing with delay due to adjustment of distribution cycles/calendar of regular NFSA foodgrains and PM-GKAY foodgrains and other logistical constraints, the progress of lifting and distribution of foodgrains in most States/UTs is satisfactory. Further, the implementation of PM-GKAY is closely monitored by the Department at all levels and is also regularly reviewed by the Hon'ble Minister of CA,F&PD/ Secretary (FPD) from time to time. During the past few months, the Hon'ble Minister of CA,F&PD/ Secretary (FPD) has convened VC meetings with State Food Ministers and Food Secretaries of all States/UTs and reviewed the status of PM-GKAY multiple times. Further, Department has been continuously advised and pursuing with States/UTs through meetings, VCs, letters, advisories, etc. for full-scale implementation of these schemes.”

4.15 Asked to respond to reports of failure on the part of the number of State Government in timely distribution of the allocated stock of food grains to the intended beneficiaries and monitoring mechanism put in place to overcome the impediments, the Department deposed as follows:-

“The implementation of PM-GKAY is closely monitored by the Department at all levels and is also regularly reviewed by the Hon’ble Minister of CA, F&PD/ Secretary (FPD) from time to time. In Phase-I of PM-GKAY, i.e. April to June 2020, all States/UTs combined have lifted about 118 LMT (99%) of three-month food grain from the FCI/Central Pool. Further, all States/UTs combined have reported a distribution of over 111.52 LMT (93.5%) food grain. In phase II, as per reports up to 10/10/2020, all States/UTs combined have distributed 90.9%, (36.62 LMT), 91.5% (36.87 LMT), 79% (31.64 LMT), 10% (4.04 LMT) food grain quota for the months of July, August, September and October 2020, respectively. Except a few States, where distribution of free foodgrains under PM-GKAY is progressing with delay due to adjustment of distribution cycles/calendar of regular NFSA food grains and PM-GKAY foodgrains and other logistical constraints, the progress of lifting and distribution of foodgrains in most States/UTs is satisfactory.”

4.16. In response to a specific query whether the main reason for failure in timely distribution of foodgrains was non-identification of migrant workers, the Department stated that the question of failure in distribution did not arise in view of the detailed justification furnished.

4.17. The Committee then desired to know the specific constraints being faced by the State Governments in the identification of migrant labours and measures taken to address the difficulties. In response, the Department submitted as under:-

“During implementation of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Plan, the ground level assessment by States indicated that majority of migrant persons had already left their States/UTs and had moved back to their home States/UTs. Further, setting up the scheme target and monitoring the progress under the scheme was challenging task owing to lack of concrete data on migrant labour inflow and outflow. A toll-free helpline/ new short code ‘14445’ for “One Nation One Ration Card” is allotted in all States/UTs. States/UT have been requested to immediately operationalise ‘14445’ and utilize it exclusively for migrant beneficiaries’ registration, awareness generation and grievance registration related to national portability etc.”

4.18. On being asked whether the guidelines issued by the Ministry to States/UTs for distribution of the food grain stock to intended beneficiaries and targeted persons were

being scrupulously adhered to by the State Governments, the Department stated as follows:-

“Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and State/UT Governments. Central Govt. is responsible for procurement, allocation and transportation of food grains up to the designated depots of the FCI. The operational responsibilities for allocation and distribution of food grains within the States/UTs, identification of eligible beneficiaries/families, issuance of ration cards to them and supervision and monitoring of functioning of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) rest with the concerned State/UT Government. In order to maintain supplies and securing availability and distribution of essential commodities, Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001 and TPDS control Order 2015 mandates the State and UT Governments to carry out all required action to ensure smooth functioning of TPDS. To ensure effective implementation of the scheme guidelines, implementation progress of schemes is being closely monitored by the Department at all levels and is also regularly reviewed by the Hon’ble Minister of CA,F&PD/ Secretary (FPD) from time to time through meetings, VCs, letters, advisories, etc. issued to States/UTs”.

#### **ATMA NIRBHAR BHARAT SCHEME (ANBS):**

4.19. Pursuant to the economic measures announced by the Government of India under the “Atma Nirbhar Bharat Package” (ANBP), the Department of Food and Public Distribution on 15/05/2020 had allocated a total quantity of about 8 Lakh MT of foodgrains (7 LMT Rice and 1 LMT Wheat) to all States/UTs for free-of- cost distribution to all migrants/stranded migrants and other needy persons across the Country who were neither covered under NFSA nor under any other State PDS Scheme or not able to access their NFSA food grains, to help them mitigate their food-security plight during the unprecedented COVID-19 situation.

4.20 The Committee were informed that on account of non availability of data regarding migrants across the Country with the Department, a liberal figure of 8 Crore migrant persons (10% of total 80 Cr. NFSA population) was estimated. Accordingly, a uniform allocation of monthly 4 LMT foodgrain (total 8 LMT) was communicated to all States/UTs (10% of respective monthly allotment under NFSA) for free-of-cost distribution to migrants/stranded migrants at a scale of 5 Kg per person per month for a period of two months i.e. May and June 2020.

4.21. The Committee were further apprised that the State/UT Governments were responsible for implementation of the ANB Scheme including issuance of guidelines within States/UTs, identification of migrants/stranded migrant persons and distribution of free food grains to them. Accordingly, State/UT Governments were given complete freedom in distribution and they were free to distribute this additional ration to anyone who did not possess any ration card. As per reports received from States/UTs up to 30.06.2020, a total of 6.38 LMT (80%) food grain were lifted from FCI/Central pool by all States/UTs combined up to the last date for lifting i.e. 25/06/2020.

4.22. In response to a specific query, the Department stated that although States/UTs made concerted efforts to identify target persons (*i.e.* migrants, stranded migrants, migrants in transit and migrants in quarantine centres, etc. in collaboration with other State Departments such as Labour Departments and relevant agencies/NGOs, etc.) on war footing for distribution of free food grains to them under ANBS, many States/UTs had informed that a majority of targeted migrants had already moved back to their home States/UTs where they might have access to NFSA/State Scheme foodgrains. Thus, the liberally allocated quantity of 8 LMT foodgrains under ANBS might not have been utilised/distributed completely.

4.23. The Department further submitted that initial estimates of 8 Crore migrants/stranded migrants were liberal. However, as indicated by States/UTs later, during the course of identification, approximately 2.8 Crore persons were projected to be covered by States/UTs combined, against which nearly 2.14 Crore persons were covered up to 30/06/2020 who had received a total of 1.07 LMT foodgrain until then.

4.24 As per the request of many States/UTs, the Government extended the distribution period of already lifted foodgrains by States/UTs up to 31/08/2020 and accordingly, as per reports from States/UTs up to 27/07/2020 a total of nearly 2.5 Crore persons had benefited under the Scheme who had been distributed with a total of 2.44 Lakh MT foodgrains under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme so far. Thus, adequate

provision of foodgrains had been made for reaching out to migrants/stranded migrants etc. under ANBS.

4.25. Asked to state the specific methodology adopted to arrive at the figure of 8 crore migrants, the Department submitted as under:-

“Initial estimates of about 8 Crore (80 Mn) migrants/stranded migrant persons were deliberately liberal and situational, since no data on actual or estimated number of such persons across the country was available with any Department or organisation. Accordingly, the Department had allocated a quantum of foodgrains to cover maximum migrants/stranded migrants in the country (upto 10% of total 80 Crore NFSA population in the Country) and allocated about 4 LMT foodgrain per month (10% of monthly 40 LMT allocated under NFSA) i.e. a total of 8 LMT for a period of two months, May and June 2020. Allocation of these foodgrains was communicated to all States/UTs in a uniform ratio of about 10% of their respective monthly allocation under NFSA. Therefore, the number of 8 Crore (80 Mn) persons should not to be construed as the real target but an intended target to serve, if it had existed. The real target could be taken as 2.8 crore(migrant workers) which was based on the assessment made by states by the end of May 2020. During the video conference of Hon’ble Minister, many States/UTs have requested to extend ANBP. Letters have also been received from Bihar, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal to extend ANBP for few more months.”

4.26. The Department supplemented as under:-

“In the absence of either actual or estimated data, with the objective to cover maximum number of migrant/stranded migrant persons during the unprecedented time of Covid-19 crisis, the Department had liberally estimated a figure of around 8 Cr. persons (roughly 10% of each State/UT NFSA population) and accordingly had on 15th May 2020 uniformly allocated 4 LMT of monthly foodgrains (also about 10% of monthly NFSA allotment of each State/UT) for a period of 2 months”.

4.27. The Committee then asked about the rationale to prune down the real target to 2.8 crore migrant labour. In reply, the Department submitted as follows:-

“The initial estimate of 8 Crore beneficiaries made in the light of absence of concrete data or estimates and was subject to such numbers existing on the ground and the required ground level assessment was immediately carried out by the States/ UTs by the end of May while going through the process of

identification and distribution. States/UTs were given complete freedom to identify migrants/ stranded migrants and other needy persons who didn't possess any Central/State Scheme ration card or was not able to access foodgrains due to crisis. Rigorous efforts were made by States/UTs and many of them also collaborated with their counterpart Labour Departments, District Administrations, Civil Societies, Industrial Associations, NGOs and other welfare organizations to identify and distribute foodgrains to maximum migrants/stranded migrant persons anywhere in their States/UTs may be in labour camps, construction sites, persons in transit, quarantine centers, shelter homes, etc and thus based on the identification/ surveys the States/UTs combined had indicated an estimated figure of about 2.8 Crore migrants/stranded migrants who could be potentially benefitted from the distribution of free foodgrains under the ANB Scheme. The estimate was also liberal and driven by their sense of abundant pre-caution so that no migrant/stranded migrant get left out."

4.28. As regards the total food grain distribution during COVID -19 pandemic and the quantity of food grain lifted and distributed State wise, the Department apprised as follows:-

"Under Atma Nirbhar Bharat (ANB) package, States/UTs have lifted total 6.38 LMT foodgrains against total allocation of 8 LMT from FCI godowns. So far, total 2.62 LMT foodgrains have been distributed to 2.35 crore, 2.48 crore, 30.5 lakh and 11.31 lakh migrants in the month of May, June, July and Aug'20 respectively. So if the actual target is taken as 2.8 crore migrants as assessed by States, then performance of the Scheme in States is over 90%. Under Phase -I of PM Garib Kalyan Yojana (PM-GKAY), about 111.6 Lakh MT (93.5%) foodgrains have been distributed against total allocation of about 120 Lakh MT foodgrain during 3 Months of April-June 2020. (Monthly 40 LMT foodgrains). In the phase-II of PM-GKAY, about 201.3 Lakh MT foodgrain to be distributed during 5 Months of July-Nov. 2020. So far, total 82.2 lakh MT foodgrains have been lifted by States/UTs. About 34.9LMT (86.7%) and 20.3 LMT (50.6%) of free foodgrains have been distributed to NFSA beneficiaries in the month of July'20 and Aug'20 respectively". State wise distribution under PMGKAY was as under:-

Status of foodgrain distribution under PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PM-GKAY)								
SN	States/UTs	Monthly Allocation of Foodgrains (in MTs) for April, May and June'20	% of Foodgrain Distribution under PMGKAY (Phase-I)			Monthly Allocation of Foodgrains (in MTs) for 5 months (from July to Nov.'20)	% of foodgrain distribution under PM-GKAY(Phase II)	
			April' 20	May'2 0	June'2 0		July'20	Aug'20
1	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	304	99%	99%	99%	304	99%	57%
2	Andhra Pradesh	134,115	99%	97%	96%	134,115	97%	75%
3	Arunachal Pradesh	4,106	100%	100%	98%	4,106	99%	4%
4	Assam	124,486	100%	100%	98%	125,765	99%	23%
5	Bihar	432,248	91%	88%	87%	435,582	89%	0%
6	Chandigarh	1,376	92%	92%	92%	1,397	92%	0%
7	Chhattisgarh	100,385	100%	100%	100%	100,385	100%	87%
8	Daman & Diu D&NN	1,428	87%	87%	89%	1,440	88%	87%
9	Delhi	36,367	98%	93%	96%	36,367	96%	53%
10	Goa	2,660	98%	100%	96%	2,660	98%	94%
11	Gujarat	168,083	93%	97%	97%	191,268	96%	46%
12	Haryana	58,949	98%	97%	95%	63,245	97%	71%
13	Himachal Pradesh	14,322	94%	97%	90%	14,322	94%	22%
14	Jammu And Kashmir	36,025	100%	99%	99%	36,205	99%	22%
15	Jharkhand	131,850	92%	92%	91%	131,850	91%	36%
16	Karnataka	200,965	98%	98%	96%	200,965	98%	84%
17	Kerala		97%	92%	94%		94%	89%

		77,400				77,400		
18	Ladakh	719	98%	96%	95%	719	96%	5%
19	Lakshadweep	110	100%	100%	100%	110	100%	10%
20	Madhya Pradesh	273,210	85%	83%	57%	273,210	75%	0%
21	Maharashtra	350,085	90%	91%	90%	350,085	90%	36%
22	Manipur	12,284	100%	100%	99%	12,335	100%	51%
23	Meghalaya	10,728	100%	100%	100%	10,728	100%	29%
24	Mizoram	3,341	100%	91%	85%	3,341	92%	90%
25	Nagaland	7,023	100%	100%	84%	7,023	95%	70%
26	Odisha	161,798	91%	91%	91%	161,798	91%	76%
27	Puducherry	3,142	97%	97%	97%	3,172	97%	0%
28	Punjab	70,725	94%	94%	94%	70,725	94%	0%
29	Rajasthan	223,310	98%	98%	99%	223,310	98%	91%
30	Sikkim	1,894	100%	100%	100%	1,894	100%	0%
31	Tamil Nadu	178,669	93%	93%	90%	178,669	92%	75%
32	Telangana	95,810	93%	98%	97%	95,810	96%	94%
33	Tripura	12,414	95%	96%	96%	12,509	95%	87%
34	Uttar Pradesh	715,592	96%	97%	98%	732,141	97%	89%
35	Uttarakhand	30,579	99%	99%	100%	30,970	100%	47%
36	West Bengal	300,919	98%	98%	97%	300,919	98%	0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>39,77,421</b>	<b>94.3%</b>	<b>94.2%</b>	<b>92.1%</b>	<b>40,26,844</b>	<b>93.5%</b>	<b>50.6%</b>

4.29. As may be seen from the above data progress of food grain distribution under ANBP, the percentage of food grain distributed *vis-a-vis* lifted quantity was 0% for Andhra Pradesh; 1% for Telangana; 3% each for Goa and Jharkhand; 5% for Uttarakhand; 6% for Kerala; and 7% for Tamil Nadu. In this context, the Committee desired to know the reasons for such dismal distribution of food grains under ANBP scheme in these States and overall distribution details State-wise. In response, the Department submitted as under:-

“During distribution of the ANBP scheme beneficiaries, States/UTs found that majority of migrant persons had already left their States/UTs and had moved back to their home States/UTs. Further the return of migrant labour to States for work was very slow and not as per expectation. Furthermore, States of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Goa, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand, Kerala and Tamil Nadu have also issued States own scheme ration cards. Hence, migrant who had returned to such States were covered by NFSA or by State own scheme. As per the reports available from States/UTs, a total quantity of about 2.65 LMT food grains has been successfully distributed under the Scheme up to 31.08.2020 by all States/UTs combined, covering 2.35 Cr. persons in May 2020, over 2.48 Cr. persons in June 2020, about 31.43 Lakh persons in July 2020 and nearly 16 Lakh migrant persons in August 2020 (about 2.65 Crore persons on an average per month for the months of May and June respectively). Therefore, having served all identified and deserving ‘target group’ the scheme has been very successful in serving about 95% of the total 2.8 Cr. migrants/stranded migrants’ population estimated by the States/UTs.

Sl. No.	Heads		Migrants/stranded migrant population estimate/ coverage in Person (in crore)
1	Reported Coverage under ANBP by States/UTs	May 2020	<b>2.35</b>
		June 2020	<b>2.48</b>
		July 2020 (post-extension)	<b>0.314</b>
		August 2020 (post-extension)	<b>0.16</b>
2	Persons on an average per month for the months of May and June respectively).		<b>2.65</b>
3	Estimates of potential beneficiaries under ANBP indicated by States		<b>2.8</b>
4	% to estimated indicated by States/UTs		<b>95 % of the 2.8 Cr.</b>

The fact that even after the extension of the distribution time of the already lifted quantity of food-grains by the States/UTs to July and August, 2020, only over 31 lakh beneficiaries could be covered in July by all states and about 16 lakh beneficiaries in August, is an indication that all migrants/stranded migrants have been covered and the ANB scheme has served the purpose for which it was brought out.”

4.30. On being asked about the monitoring mechanism put in place both at the District/ State levels as well as at the Centre for lifting and distribution of food grain under the ANBP, the Department responded as under:

“Under ANBP, the responsibility of identification of migrants/ stranded migrants and other needy persons, setting up mechanism for distribution of food grains to them and its monitoring was entrusted to States/UTs. Implementation of ANBS was also closely monitored by the Department of Food and Public Distribution at all levels and is also regularly reviewed by the Hon’ble Minister of CA, F&PD/ Secretary (FPD) from time to time through VC meetings with State Food Ministers and Food Secretaries of all States/UTs.”

4.31. Asked to state concrete measures taken to make the States/District Administrations accountable for dismal performance of food grain distribution under ANBP Scheme, the Department submitted as under:

“Distribution under ANBP has been satisfactory as already explained in reply to other Questions. Further the Committee have been apprised that many States/ UTs informed that a majority of targeted migrants have already moved back to their home States/ UTs where they have access to NFSA/ State own Scheme food grains and therefore the liberally allocated quantity of 8 LMT food grains under Atma Nirbhar Bharat Package (ANBP) may not have been utilised/ distributed completely.”

4.32. On being asked to quantify and qualify the overall success of the Scheme, the Department stated as under:

“As per the reports available from States/UTs, a total quantity of about 2.65 LMT food grains has been successfully distributed under the scheme up to 31.08.2020 by all States/UTs combined, covering 2.35 cr. persons in May 2020, over 2.48 cr. persons in June 2020, about 31.43 Lakh persons in July 2020 and nearly 16 Lakh migrant persons in August 2020(About 2.65 crore persons on an average per month for the months of May and June respectively). Therefore, having served all identified and deserving ‘target group’ the scheme has been very successful in serving about 95% of the total 2.8 cr. migrants/stranded migrants’ population estimated by the States/UTs.”

4.33. The Committee desired to know whether the Department was contemplating any audit on the distribution/utilisation of foodgrains. The Department responded as under:

“Review of COVID related schemes i.e., PM-GKAY and Atma Nirbhar Bharat by Office of the Principal Director of Audit is currently undergoing.”

4.34. As regards the accountability mechanism put in place, the Department submitted as under:-

“Under ANBP, the responsibility of identification of migrants/ stranded migrants and other needy persons, setting up mechanism for distribution of Foodgrains, monitoring was entrusted to States/UTs. States/UTs maintain records of the distribution and have their own accountability mechanism. Further, implementation of ANBS is also closely monitored by the Department of Food and Public Distribution at all levels and is also regularly reviewed by the Hon’ble Minister of CA,F&PD/ Secretary (FPD) from time to time through VC meetings with State Food Ministers and Food Secretaries of all States/UTs.”

4.35. Asked to specify the lessons learnt and the need for establishment of a fool proof mechanism for prompt and timely access/distribution of food grains to all the needy especially the migrant labours and other needy people in times of national Pandemic situation to alleviate their distress, the Department deposed as under:-

“In wake of the COVID-19 crisis, to enable fool-proof mechanism for delivery of highly subsidised foodgrains to all migratory beneficiaries anywhere in the country during crisis period and normal times, the implementation of One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) plan has been made an integral part of the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan (ANBA). A total of more than 68.6 Cr. beneficiaries (i.e. around 85% of total NFSA population) in the 28 States/UTs are now potentially enabled with an option to lift their subsidised foodgrains through One Nation One Ration Card system as on October 1, 2020. Further, concerted and regular efforts are being made by the DoFPD to enable the facility of One Nation One Ration Card in remaining 8 States/UTs by March 2021.”

#### **One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC)**

4.36. As part of the efforts of the Department of Food and Public Distribution for bringing technology-driven reforms in the functioning of the Public Distribution System (PDS), the implementation of One Nation One Ration Card program is an endeavour to empower the migrant NFSA beneficiaries to access their food-security entitlements (under NFSA) anywhere in the Country through nation-wide portability of NFSA ration cards.

4.37. The Committee were apprised that this facility was being implemented by the Department in collaboration with States/UTs to ensure the delivery of subsidised food grains to all migrant NFSA beneficiaries/households who would get an option to lift their

entitled food grains from any Fair Price Shop (FPS) of their choice, anywhere in the Country, by using their existing/same ration card issued in their home State/UT, after going through biometric/Aadhaar authentication on an electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) device installed at the FPS.

4.38. According to the Department, the initiative aims to majorly benefit a large number of migratory beneficiaries, mostly workers, labourers, daily wagers, etc. in both organized and un-organized sectors, who frequently change their place of dwelling in search of temporary employment across the Country and who were traditionally deprived of their food-security entitlement in the event of migration outside their native place/village/town.

4.39. The main enablers of this initiative are the installation of ePoS devices at the FPSs with biometric/Aadhaar authentication facilities and Aadhaar seeding of all beneficiaries with their ration cards. Thus, eligible migrant beneficiaries may lift their quota of subsidized food grains in another State/UT by just providing either their ration card number or Aadhaar number to any FPS dealer, and the details of their available entitlements will be shown on that ePoS device and the beneficiary can lift desired quantity of available quota after biometric/ Aadhaar authentication on the ePoS device.

4.40. The Committee were informed that the Department of Food and Public Distribution initially operationalised the facility as inter-State portability in 4 States viz. Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Gujarat and Maharashtra w.e.f. August 2019. Four more States viz. Karnataka, Kerala, Haryana and Rajasthan also started inter-State portability w.e.f. October 2019 (clusters of two adjoining States each). Later, w.e.f. January 2020, with the integration of another 4 States viz. Goa, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Tripura the facility of “national portability” was seamlessly enabled in a single national cluster of 12 States.

4.41. As on July, 2020, the facility was seamlessly enabled in a single national-level cluster of 20 States/UTs, namely – Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka,

Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Telangana, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh covering approx. 63 crore (77%) NFSA beneficiaries who now have an option to lift their subsidised food grains anywhere in these 20 States/UTs through One Nation One Ration Card plan.

4.42. On boarding of 4 more States/UTs, namely Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur, Nagaland and Uttarakhand has been enabled *w.e.f.* 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2020, taking the total number of States/UTs covered under ONORC to 24. Further, efforts are also being made to integrate the remaining States/UTs in due course of time, with a target to achieve 100% National Portability by March 2021.

4.43. On being asked to state the arrangements put in place to create awareness about 'One Nation One Ration Card', the Department apprised as under:-

"The Department has been continuously advised and pursuing with States/UTs for wide-scale publicity and vigorous awareness generation activities, special drives/campaigns to promote the One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) system among PDS beneficiaries and public at large beside making concerted efforts to register all migrant beneficiaries, through FPS dealers, district level officers, DCs/DMs/SDMs, industrial associations, civil societies, NGOs, etc. Following initiatives have been taken for generating awareness about 'One Nation One Ration Card' among migrants :

- DFPD shared specimen/sample newspaper advertisements, posters, banners, etc. with all States/UTs under national portability (ONORC) and advised them to undertake wide-scale multi-modal publicity/campaigns about the initiative through newspapers, display at FPSs/Govt. offices/establishment, buses, labour camps, etc. and also advised them to send proposals for financial support from the Department for development/printing etc. of publicity material at DAVP approved rates.
- A dedicated National toll-free number/short-code – 14445 has been allotted to all States/UTs to operationalize this number and utilize the same for information dissemination/awareness about ONORC.
- In coordination with MyGov Team (MeitY) for the development of IEC material for awareness and information dissemination on ONORC through various mediums like TV, Radio, Print and Social Media – shared a comprehensive presentation and communication strategy with sample IEC material with them for development of communication material through MyGov channels

- Requested all States/UTs for delivery of SMSs to all ration card holders under NFSA for awareness generation about ONORC and distribution cycles, issue prices etc.”

4.44 The Committee then desired to know the procedure adopted for distribution of ration under ONORC in the event of only one/few members of a ration card holder family migrate and other family members stay back at their native place/ home state. In reply, the Department submitted as under:-

“Under ‘One Nation One Ration Card’, any member of a family may withdraw required quantity of foodgrains (within entitled quota) from any Fair Price Shop (FPS) of their choice after biometric/Aadhaar authentication on an electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) device. Remaining quantity of entitled foodgrains may be lifted by other family members stayed back in the home State. Therefore both full as well as partial portability is permitted.”

4.45 In response to a specific query on the representation of Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) in NFSA / ONOR, the Department apprised as under:-

“The National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) was enacted by the Government of India in the year 2013 and came into force w.e.f. 5th July 2013, to provide for food and nutritional security. The Act relies largely on the existing TPDS to deliver food grains as legal entitlements to weaker sections of society. The ‘One Nation One Ration Card’ system would largely benefit the numerous migratory beneficiaries such as labourers, daily-wagers, blue-collar workers, etc. who frequently change their place of dwelling in search of employment or for other reasons across the country. Such migrant beneficiaries, who otherwise get deprived of their quota of subsidised foodgrains shall now be able to access their food security anywhere in the Country without the need to surrender their existing ration card and to apply/obtain a new ration card in the State of their migration.”

4.46 In the context of One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) Programme seeking to bring technology reform for empowering Migrants to access PDS from any Fair Price Shop in the Country, the Committee desired to be apprised of the actual progress of implementation of the Scheme. In response, the Department stated as under:-

“As of October 1 , 2020 nearly 68.6 Cr. beneficiaries (i.e. around 85% of total NFSA population) in the following 28 States/UTs, namely – Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Ladakh, Lakshadweep, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamilnadu, Telangana, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, are now potentially enabled with an

option to lift their subsidised foodgrains through One Nation One Ration Card system. Further, concerted and regular efforts are being made by the DoFPD to enable the facility of One Nation One Ration Card in remaining States/UTs by 31st March 2021.”

4.47 Asked to state whether Biometric/Aadhar authentication on an electronic Point of State (ePOS) would be mandatory for availing the facility, the Department submitted as under:-

“Aadhaar based biometric authentication on an electronic Point of State (ePOS) serves as a technological platform for enabling fool-proof mechanism for delivery of highly subsidised foodgrains to all migratory beneficiaries anywhere in the country and prevents unauthorised foodgrain withdrawal from the quota of ration card holders through misuse of portability facility in other FPS/district/State. Hence, biometric/Aadhar authentication on an electronic Point of State (ePOS) has been made mandatory for availing this facility. Department is regularly making all possible efforts to increase the Aadhaar seeding in ration card and beneficiary level. In this connection, Department has prepared and issued guidelines/best practices for increasing Aadhaar Seeding and validating Aadhaar numbers with all States/UTs. The matter is regularly being pursued with lagging States/UTs to expedite the Aadhaar seeding with Ration Cards. In this regard, the timeline provided to States/UTs through Notification issued by the Department under Section- 7 of the Aadhaar Act (amended from time-to-time) has been extended up to 31/12/2020. Until then, no denial of entitlements to eligible beneficiaries has been strictly advised to all States/UTs in case of non-possession of Aadhaar and failure of Aadhaar authentication due to technical/ network/ connectivity/ linking issues or poor biometrics of beneficiary.”

4.48 On being asked whether the target date of March 2021 to achieve 100% National Portability was realistic, the Department submitted as under:-

“Recognising the immense potential on ONORC plan during crisis period, it has been made an integral part of the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan (ANBA). As on January 2020, 12 States/UTs consisting of 35.12 cr. (44%) NFSA population had enabled national portability under One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) plan. From May 2020 till September 2020, another 16 States/UTs have been added under One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) plan. As a result, nearly 68 cr. (85%) NFSA population in 28 States/UTs are now covered under the plan. Further, concerted and regular efforts are being made by the DoFPD to enable the facility of One Nation One Ration Card in remaining States/UTs by 31st March 2021.”

4.49 The Committee then desired to know the specific constraints that are faced in terms of data capturing of 'Migrant Labours' as well as their Aadhaar linkage/seeding and measures taken to iron out the bottlenecks. In reply, the Department stated as under:-

“Department is regularly making all possible efforts to increase the Aadhaar seeding in ration card and beneficiary level, including beneficiaries who are 'Migrant Labours'. The progress of Aadhaar seeding is slow mainly due to poor/negligible Aadhaar generation in Assam and Meghalaya and slow progress in West Bengal and Bihar. In this connection, Department has prepared and issued guidelines/best practices for increasing Aadhaar Seeding and validating Aadhaar numbers with all States/UTs. The matter is regularly being pursued with lagging States/UTs to expedite the Aadhaar seeding with Ration Cards. In this regard, the timeline provided to States/UTs through Notification issued by the Department under section- 7 of the Aadhaar Act (amended from time-to-time) has been extended up to 31/12/2020.”

4.50 As regards the coordination and monitoring mechanism put in place to ensure proper and effective implementation of the specific Schemes launched during the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Department stated as follows:

“The implementation progress of schemes launched during the COVID-19 pandemic is being closely monitored by the Department at all levels and is also regularly reviewed by the Hon'ble Minister of CA,F&PD/ Secretary (FPD) from time to time. DoFPD is making rigorous efforts through meetings, VCs, letters, advisories, etc. issued to States/UTs. Further, Department has been continuously advised and pursuing with States/UTs through meetings, VCs, letters, advisories, etc. for full-scale implementation of these schemes.”

**4.51 The Committee note that the Department of Food and Public Distribution, are primarily mandated with the policy objective to ensure food security for the Country through timely and efficient procurement and distribution of food grains. Pursuant to that the Department have ventured to ensure food security for the poor and vulnerable beneficiaries/households and migrants/stranded migrants in the backdrop of COVID-19 Global Pandemic causing economic disruptions worldwide through implementation of three Schemes viz. (i) Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PM-GKAY) with additional free-of-cost 5kg per person per**

month foodgrain for all beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) over and above their monthly entitlements; (ii) Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme (ANBS) with the provision of 5 kg per month per person free of cost foodgrains to Migrants/Stranded Migrants; and (iii) One Nation One Ration Card Scheme (ONORC) with the intention to empower migrant beneficiaries to access subsidized foodgrains under NFSA through nationwide portability of ration cards. The Committee appreciate that the Department have, through their responsive and timely intervention made concerted efforts during the most difficult time of nationwide Lockdown to ensure food security to the most needy people of the Country. The Committee, however, find that despite the best efforts made by the Department, complaints poured in regarding inaccessibility of basic foodgrains especially by Migrant Labours who were stranded in many States without access to work or food. It was heart rending to observe the movement of thousands of Migrant Labours all across the Country trying to go back to their home States on foot during the national lockdown period in dire desperation due to lack of any guarantee of work/food security at the places where they were stranded. While taking note of the noble intent of the Government to formulate the three Schemes to ensure food security to all vulnerable sections of people especially the migrant workers to ameliorate the hardships caused to them due to economic disruptions caused by COVID-19 pandemic, the Committee are however, of the considered opinion that the impact and efficacy of the efforts made would have been much productive had there been better coordination and organised monitoring.

**4.52 The Committee note that under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojna (Phase-I), the Department had initially allocated a total of about 120 Lakh Metric Tons (LMT) foodgrain (Rice/Wheat) to all States/Union Territories for additional free-of-cost food grain distribution to more than 80 crore beneficiaries covered under the National Food Security Act, 2013 at the scale of 5 kg per person per month for a period of three months (April-June, 2020) over and above regular monthly NFSA food grain entitlements. The package was further extended for a period of 5 more months (July-November, 2020) as PM-GKAY (Phase-II) with allocation of another 201 Lakh MT of foodgrains keeping in view the need for continuous food security support to the poor and the needy. The Committee find that as on 10.10.2020, in Phase-I of PM-GKAY i.e. April to June 2020, all States/UTs combined have lifted about 118 LMT (99%) of three months foodgrains from the FCI/Central Pool with reported distribution of over 111.52 LMT (93.5%) foodgrains and in Phase-II, all States/UTs combined have distributed 90.9% (36.62 LMT), 91.5% (36.87 LMT), 79% (31.64 LMT), 10% (4.04 LMT) foodgrains quota for the months of July, August, September and October, 2020 respectively. According to the Department, except for a few States viz. Puducherry, Chandigarh; Punjab; West Bengal; Bihar and Sikkim where distribution of foodgrains under PM-GKAY has been delayed due to adjustment of distribution cycles/calendar of regular NFSA foodgrains and PM-GKAY foodgrains and other logistical constraints, the overall progress of lifting and distribution of foodgrains in most States/UTs has been satisfactory. The Committee are, however, concerned to note that in some States, the distribution in Phase-2 of PM-GKAY**

was low. For instance, in the State of Punjab as well as the UTs of Puducherry and Chandigarh, the total distribution of grains was low, which is ostensibly on account of the plan to distribute five months grains in one go. The Committee are of the considered view that the very purpose and intent of the Scheme/ to provide timely food to the targeted beneficiaries especially the migrant labours are defeated when foodgrains are not periodically and continuously made available to vulnerable sections of the society. In this context, the Committee are of the firm opinion that if due to genuine constraints, monthly distribution as scheduled could not be done, then, at least efforts should have been made for bi-monthly distribution as was done by the State of Sikkim where 62% of Phase-II distribution has been achieved for July-Sept, 2020. The Committee desire the Department to draw lessons and act in unison with the State Governments to ensure in future that food grains are not allowed to be piled up for months together depriving the needy people of regular supply.

4.53 The Committee note that as on 16.10.2020, 1140 complaints from various sources were forwarded to States concerned for further appropriate action at their end at the earliest. The Committee further note that the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) envisages operation under the joint responsibility of the Central and State/UT Governments with the Central Government responsible for procurement, allocations and transportation of foodgrains upto the designated depots of FCI whereas operational responsibilities for allocation and distribution of food grains within the States/UTs, identification of eligible beneficiaries/families, issuance of ration cards to them and supervision and

monitoring of functioning of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) remain with the State/UT Government concerned. The Committee observe that even though the primary responsibility of timely distribution of food grains to ensure uninterrupted access to foodgrains by the needy during the Pandemic rests with the States/UTs, the overall responsibility vested in the Central Government cannot be undermined. The Committee, therefore, desire that a status report on the action taken by the State Governments/UTs concerned on the 1140 complaints received on the foodgrain distribution be prepared and corrective measures initiated to plug the loopholes.

4.54 The Committee are deeply concerned to note that though Social audit has been provisioned under the National Food Security Act and States/UTs are required to conduct social audit on regular basis, no specific/additional provision was made for social audit under the PM-GKAY Scheme on the ground that the Scheme was initially launched for three months only and later it was extended for five more months. The Committee are not satisfied with the reasoning adduced by the Department as the intent of the Scheme was to ensure that no poor/vulnerable beneficiary/household suffer on account of non-availability of food grains which can be vindicated only through social audit. Moreover, keeping in view the fact that the provision of social audit exists under the National Food Security Act and PMGKAY foodgrains are being issued to the same beneficiaries covered under NFSA, the Committee urge that social audit on the distribution of foodgrain under the Scheme for eight months period i.e. April-November be carried out so that accountability is fixed and corrective measures taken. The

**Committee further desire that the findings of such social audits be placed in the public domain so as to ensure transparency of the whole Scheme.**

**4.55 The Committee note that about 4.88 lakh (Approximately 90 percent) of the total 5.4 lakh Fair Price Shops (FPSs) are being automated by installing electronic Points of Sale (ePOS) devices. However, it is a matter of serious concern that though automation of FPSs in Delhi was commenced from January, 2019, the use of ePOS devices has been suspended for which the Department of Food and Public Distribution through the Minister and the Secretary has taken up the matter with the Delhi Government to restart usage of ePOS devices. In view of the significance of the installation of ePOS devices in the process of automation of Fair Price Shops, the Committee exhort the Department to prevail upon all the State Governments, including the Government of Delhi to install and use such devices with a view to validate fair and transparent distribution of foodgrains from the FPSs.**

**4.56 The Committee note that under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Package (ANBP), the Department of Food and Public Distribution allocated a total quantity of about 8 lakh MT of foodgrain (7 LMT Rice and 1 LMT wheat) to all States/UTs for free of cost distribution to all migrants/stranded migrants and other needy persons across the Country who are neither covered under NFSA or under any other States PDS Scheme or not able to access their NFSA foodgrains to help them mitigate their food security plight during the unprecedented Covid-19 situation. As per the request made by many States/UTs, the Central Government extended the distribution period upto 31 August, 2020. Under the package, States/UTs have**

lifted 6.38 LMT foodgrains against the total allocation of 8 LMT foodgrains. According to the Department, on the basis of the reports received from the States/UTs, a total quantity of about 2.62 LMT foodgrains have been distributed upto 31.08.2020 covering around 2.35 crore persons in May, 2020, 2.48 crore persons in June, 2020, about 30.50 lakh persons in July, 2020 and 11.31 lakh migrants in August 2020 amounting to an overall success rate of distribution of foodgrains to more than 90 percent of the total target group of migrants/stranded migrants. The Department have clarified that many States/UTs informed that a majority of targeted migrants already moved back to their house States/UTs where they may have access to foodgrains under NFSA/State Schemes as a result of which the liberally allocated quantity of 8 LMT foodgrains and ANBS may not have been utilised/distributed completely. The moot point is that whether the foodgrains were actually delivered to the poor and migrant labours as depicted by the States/UTs. In this context, the Committee are of the considered opinion that the integration of the implementation of One Nation One Ration Card Plan with the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan is an appropriate and appreciable initiative towards establishing a fool-proof mechanism to ensure a hassle free distribution and actual delivery of foodgrains to the targetted beneficiaries. The Committee desire that the proposed integration be intensified so that it yields the intended outcomes in similar situations in future.

4.57 The Committee observe that since no data on actual or estimated number of migrants/ stranded migrant persons across the Country was available with any Department or Organisation, the Department of Food and Public Distribution had

liberally estimated a figure of around 8 crore such persons (roughly 10 percent of total 80 crore NFSA population in the Country) and allocated 8 LMT foodgrains to cover maximum migrants/ stranded migrants. While taking into cognisance the deliberately liberal and situational estimates of the Department with the well intended objective to cover maximum number of migrant laborers during the unprecedented crisis of Covid-19 Pandemic, the Committee are, however, of the firm opinion that it is high time the data on actual number of migrants/ stranded migrants across the Country be captured and periodically updated as exponentially liberal and unrealistic estimates may turn out counterproductive, especially in the areas of food distribution, housing facilities and skill training to migrant labour.

4.58 The Committee appreciate that as part of the efforts of the Department for bringing in technology-driven reforms in the functioning of the Public Distribution System, the implementation of One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) Programme is an endeavour to empower the migrant NFSA beneficiaries to access their food security entitlements (under NFSA) anywhere in the Country through Nation-wide portability of NFSA Ration Cards. The Committee further note that the facility is being implemented in collaboration with States/UTs to ensure delivery of subsidized foodgrains to all migrant NFSA beneficiaries/households who will get an option to lift their entitled food grains from any Fair Price Shops (FPS) of their choice anywhere in the Country by using their existing/same Ration Card issued in their home State/UT, after going through biometric/Aadhaar authentication on an electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) device installed at the FPS. The main enablers

of this initiative, primarily meant for migratory beneficiaries both in the organised and the un-organised sectors, are installation of ePoS Devices at the FPS, with Biometric/Aadhaar authentication facilities and Aadhaar seeding of all beneficiaries with their Ration Cards. It, therefore, becomes imperative that Aadhaar seeding of all beneficiaries Ration Cards need to be completed so that they are able to avail the facility without any hassles/ glitches. Further, being a technological driven mission, the technology backup needs to be made easily accessible and adequate support provisions be made in terms of both technical manpower and infrastructure so that no beneficiary is deprived of this facility for failure or breakdown of ePoS Machines.

4.59 As regards the outreach and coverage of the One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) Plan, the Committee find that already 20 States/UTs have seamlessly enabled the facility by July 2020 and eight more States have been boarded as on October, 2020 taking the number of States/UTs covered under ONORC to 28 covering about 85% of total NFSA population (68 crore). According to the Department, all out efforts are being made to integrate the remaining States/UTs with a target to achieve 100% National Portability by March, 2021. While taking note of the assurance of the Department, the Committee desire that the efforts initiated be strengthened and accelerated so as to integrate all the States/UTs into the ONORC plan and ensure cent percent National Portability by the targetted time line for the welfare of around 80 crore NFSA beneficiaries.

4.60 The Committee appreciate that the Department have also made concerted efforts to create awareness about the ONORC Schemes besides making efforts to

register all migrant beneficiaries. Since biometric/Aadhar authentication on an e-PoS has been made mandatory for availing the facility, the Department have issued guidelines/best practices for increasing Aadhaar seeding and validating Aadhaar numbers with all the States/UTs by 31 December, 2020. Until then no denial of entitlements to eligible beneficiaries has been strictly advised in case of non-possession of Aadhaar and in the event of failure of Aadhaar authentication due to technical/ network/connectivity/linking issues or poor biometrics of beneficiary. In this context, the Committee find that the progress of Aadhaar seeding was lagging mainly due to poor/negligible Aadhaar generation in States of Assam and Meghalaya and slow progress in the States of West Bengal and Bihar. The Committee desire that the constraints faced by certain States which is impeding the progress of Aadhaar seeding with Ration Cards of beneficiaries under the NFS Act be looked into seriously and sorted out appropriately within the timeframe so that the intended benefits of the Portability are reaped by all the beneficiaries. The Committee also hope that with the completion of registration and Aadhaar seeding, the oft-repeated complaints of absence of an accurate data on Migrant Labour coming in the way of implementation of many welfare Schemes targeted for them, will cease to exist to a greater extent.

4.61 One foremost novel feature of the ONORC plan that has engaged the attention of the Committee is that under the ONORC, any member of a family migrated to another State may avail the required quantity of foodgrains, within the entitled quota from any FPS of his choice after biometric/ Aadhar authentication while the remaining quantity of the entitled foodgrains may be

**lifted by other family members stayed back at the home State. The Committee believe that this unique feature of full as well as partial portability under ONORC would go a long way in mitigating the hardships faced by migrant labours who leave their family members at their home State. Therefore, robust implementation of the provision in tandem with the States/UTs demands paramount importance.**

## CHAPTER - V

### PROVISION OF ESSENTIAL AND ACCESSIBLE HEALTH CARE SERVICES (MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE)

5.1 The Committee desired to be apprised of the measures taken by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for provision of essential and accessible healthcare services for the poor and migrant labours in view of the unprecedented demand on the health system arising out of COVID-19 Pandemic, efforts made and the results achieved towards synchronizing the focus on COVID-19 related activities as well as continuing the provision of essential services, interaction and coordination with the States/Union Territories to assess and improve their preparedness; monitoring mechanism evolved, etc. In response the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare furnished the following detailed information:

(a) Measures taken/initiated towards providing accessible health care services to the un-organised sector workers and migrant labourers in particular.

Public Health and Hospitals being the State subject, all the States were requested to ensure the provision of services for COVID management and also towards the provision of essential services during the current public health challenge arising out of COVID-19, including for the un-organised sector workers and migrant labourers. States were pursued to ensure focus on COVID-19 related activities along with continued provision of other essential services. A letter was written by Secretary HFW dated 29.5.2020 (Annexure) to all the States duly sharing the detailed guidance note on maintaining essential services during COVID-19 and requesting the States to put-in place adequate measures and ensure that the migrants coming-in are enabled to access the required healthcare services so that their immediate and long-term healthcare needs are taken care and the migrants face no hardship for accessing healthcare service.

(b) Specific measures initiated and taken for providing health care services to the migrant workers who returned to their home States following the outbreak of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The needs of migrant workers for COVID-related Services were and continue to be addressed through:

- i. Guidance shared with the States/UTs for screening of Migrant Workers at the respective quarantine centres.
- ii. Access to free testing at Public Healthcare Facilities.
- iii. Access to free treatment at Pubic Healthcare Facilities if found positive

- iv. Access to hospital care for PMJAY eligible households, the free treatment at the empanelled COVID-19 Dedicated Hospitals through Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY).
- v. Provision of Universal Coverage free of charge services for all for Public Healthcare Facilities.
- vi. Screening and health check-ups were done at Quarantine Centres for returnee migrants.
- vii. Further, since 21<sup>st</sup> May 2020, weekly letters are being written to the States/UTs highlighting the projected cases for the upcoming three weeks and the adequacy of the hospital infrastructure for clinically handling the cases in the top 5-10 districts of the State and actions to be taken by the States to augment the surveillance, hospital infrastructure preparedness and testing capabilities to tackle the existing public health challenge to cater to the need as per evolving situation including for workers in unorganized sectors and migrant labourers.

(c) Measures taken for coordinating with the State Governments/Union Territories for extending health care services to the migrant workers, who returned to their home States.

Provisions of Non-COVID Essential Health Services including for workers in unorganized sectors and migrant labourers were and continue to be ensured through:

- i. Hon'ble HFM held VCs with all the State Health Ministers and reviewed their preparedness towards provision of essential health services during COVID-19.
- ii. Further, Hon'ble HFM wrote to all State Health Ministers asking States/UTs to all the blood banks and encourage the voluntary blood donation during the COVID-19 by facilitating the voluntary donors including through door step collection.
- iii. Detailed Guidance issued on provision of Essential services for all areas such as reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health, prevention and management of communicable diseases, treatment for chronic diseases to avoid complications, and addressing emergencies.(Annexure-1).
- iv. Access for basic services at AB-HWCs and Sub Health Centres and Primary Health Centres for the migrant population so that the migrants have access to healthcare and essential drugs and diagnostics.
- v. Regular Video Conferences with States by Secretary, Health & Family Welfare, Gol to review the action taken to maintain the Essential Services during COVID-19.

(d) Number of Inter-State migrant labourers, who may have availed/sought/needed health care attention/facilities on account of COVID-19 infection, as well as other ailments.

Specific Efforts for addressing the health needs

### a. Specific Efforts of the national Programmes

#### a.i. Efforts under National Viral Hepatitis Programme

- Amidst COVID 19 pandemic, guidelines for multi-month dispensation were issued to ensure uninterrupted supply of drugs for management of viral hepatitis. Further, during lockdown period a good inter-state coordination was ensured to address the needs of all patients including migrants.
- For example, state of Uttar Pradesh had patients migrated from Delhi, Rajasthan and Haryana and they were provided drugs at their residence through district health officials of the state of Uttar Pradesh. • As requested by the Haryana state through WhatsApp Group created by the program division including all State nodal officers, the migrant patients of Haryana were tracked in states of Punjab and Rajasthan for the continuation of treatment of Viral Hepatitis.
- Door step delivery of drugs in various states was done utilising state owned health schemes. Tracking of these migrant patients was ensured through various modes of communication including WhatsApp, SMS by State Nodal Officers and facilitated by the Program Division.
- Movement passes were issued to migrants during lockdown to avail treatment services with the help of District Administration in Punjab.
- In almost all states, multi-month dosage of drugs were dispensed for management of hepatitis C to avoid any disruption of treatment services.

#### a.ii. Efforts under National Leprosy Eradication Programme

- Guidance regarding uninterrupted supply of MDT to leprosy patients involved in migrant movement were issued to all States/ UTs.
- In order to track the migrant patients-on-treatment for leprosy, a National level WhatsApp group has been created, wherein States are sharing details of migrated patients with the States receiving the migrated patients.
- Tracking, Treatment follow -up and case management of migrated patients is being monitored by the Central Leprosy Division with several States/ UTs, e.g. Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Haryana Mizoram, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Chandigarh, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Puducherry.
- A number of migrant patients have been successfully tracked in different states, and the continuation of their treatment is being ensured.

### b. Specific Efforts of the States

States/UTs followed the guidance of various programmes issued duly adapting them to their local context and the specific efforts of the States presented by

them during the Video Conferences held with Group of the States is annexed at Annexure-2.

5. Public Health being a state subject, statistics regarding the number of Inter-State migrant labourers, who may have availed/ sought/ needed health care attention/facilities on account of COVID-19 infection, as well as other ailments, are not maintained centrally.

(e) Quantum of funds made available for providing health care facilities to the migrant workers in particular.

An amount of Rs.15,000 Cr. Was announced for COVID19 management, including for workers of un-organised sector and migrant labour.

Apart from suitable provision by states/UTs, funds have been released to states under the other schemes of the Ministry such as the National Health Mission to enable continued provision of essential services during the pandemic.

5.2 On the extent of access to healthcare services given to Migrant Workers through the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana or through the Ayushman Bharat, the representatives of the Ministry deposed during their oral evidence before the Committee as under:-

“Just to clarify, Ayushman Bharat PMJAY is based on entitlement-based approach. So, there is no enrolment. The beneficiaries are identified based on SECC (Socio-Economic Caste Census) of 2011. For urban areas, this list is based on the occupational categories and they include occupations like construction workers, plumbers, masons, labours, painters, home-based workers and transport workers. So, most of the migrant workers are in those categories and they should be covered in 2011 SECC. In addition, in rural areas, it is based on deprivation categories and most of these migrant workers should be in theory covered under those deprivation categories in rural areas. Our experience has been that since this database is very old, it is almost about ten years old, things have changed especially with respect to migrant workers because there is a large amount of mobility. So, while on paper, we can say that all the workers should be covered according to 2011 census, but in practice, the problem that we see is that large number of those, the list that we have, are not available and many of the migrant workers or the people who should be eligible for Ayushman Bharat on the ground level do not appear to be in the list.”

5.3 The representative supplemented on the issue:-

“Sir, we found three things. One, knowledge of our scheme among migrant workers, since they were not living in villages, was low. After they were coming back, we organized a campaign with the tagline ‘आयुष्मान भारत की छांव, शहर हो या गांव’ so that irrespective of where you are, you should get the benefits of

Ayushman Bharat. One of the key features of our scheme is portability. So, even if you are from, say, Bihar and working in Mumbai, you can go to any empanelled hospital in Mumbai or anywhere else in the country and take the benefit. So, there is no limitation of seeking benefits only within your home State. So, it can be availed of in the destination State or any other State. We were focusing on the knowledge and awareness about the portability feature of the scheme. Secondly, we also found that lot of hospitals were either scaling back their operations because of COVID or at least in some cases, some hospitals had closed their operations. So, we had a drive to empanel more hospitals. In the last four months, we have empanelled more than 3,000 hospitals which has brought our total number of hospitals empanelled to 23,000.”

5.4 Asked to state the details of testing and treatment of Covid-19, the representative submitted as under:-

Sir, it has been done in the last four months. As you mentioned, we had included testing and treatment of Covid as a package. So far, more than 26,000 treatments have been done under Ayushman Bharat and more than 1.5 lakh testings have been done. The numbers may look slightly small as compared to the total workload that we have. But, Sir, it has to be seen in the context that much of the services are being provided free. So, if people go for testing in Government hospitals, testing is free and Ayushman Bharat does not need to cover it. A lot of services are being provided for treatment and care in Government hospitals where Ayushman Bharat does not need to cover because it is free. It is only when they are going to private establishments, then Ayushman Bharat needs to cover it and ensure that no one is denied treatment or testing in private places.”

5.5 As regards adequate healthcare facilities in rural and small cities, the representatives of the Ministry deposed as under:-

“... Also, the issue that you have raised as to what is the bed capacity of these hospitals, we will give you the breakup. Now, the issue that remains is not only true for Ayushman Bharat but also in general for the health sector that much of the tertiary care facility is available only in big cities and big hospitals, and good quality hospitals are in big cities and that is the fact right now. In the long run, we are hoping that with Ayushman Bharat more investment in health sector will come because we are creating demand in rural areas, Tier-II and Tier-III cities. But that is going to be done in medium run. We are making all efforts to ensure that all private hospitals who meet our criteria should get empanelled”.

5.6 Asked to state the authentic number of migrant labours, the representative of the Ministry apprised as under:

“As I have mentioned earlier, we have been facing difficulties in a couple of areas. One is with regard to our database, SECC-2011. Since the quality of data

is poor, data is 10 years old, we find it difficult because there are a lot of genuinely eligible people who are not part of this scheme. For example, an issue was raised that a lot of migrant workers who returned home, their names are not in that list. So, obviously, we cannot provide support to them. That is, of course, one issue."

5.7 The Committee then desired to know the specific constraints faced in the identification of Migrant labours. In response the representatives of the Ministry deposed as under:-

"Sir, SECC is based on Census but it is not totally co-terminus with Census because they had taken the framework of the Census and gone back and collected some additional information. Yes, Sir. But the quality of SECC is different as compared to Census. We found a large number of missing families. There are some parts of villages which are totally out of SECC. So, the quality of SECC, especially in certain States is quite poor. For example, the Chief Ministers of UP, Bihar, MP, have actually written to us also about the bad quality of SECC. The quality of data from SECC is not good."

5.8 The representative of the Ministry supplemented as under :-

"Sir, the second constraint is four States have not joined our scheme. Odisha is one of them. Money is not a problem. But the problem is about portability. Telangana, West Bengal, Odisha, and Delhi have not joined our scheme. Especially, Kolkata, Hyderabad, and Delhi are big medical hubs where a lot of people from outside come there. So, they can play a major role in terms of providing portability and support. We are making efforts to bring them on-board so that we can benefit from a very good quality of health infrastructure that they have, but we have not been successful. Recently, Delhi has announced that, in principle, they agree to join the Ayushman Bharat. So, we are pursuing with Delhi."

5.9 On the other issues confronting the Government, the representatives submitted as under:-

"The third issue -- which was referred to -- is about the rates. Some of the rates that we have, are indeed low and we are looking at that aspect also. If the rate is low, which some hospitals do not find viable, then it is very difficult and unfair of us to expect that they will be providing services while losing money. So, we are looking at it also. We have already rationalized those rates to some extent. But based on the feedback that we have in the implementation of this scheme for the last almost two years, we will be looking at that again. This issue was discussed in our Governing Board meeting and we will be rationalizing the rates looking at those packages where we do not find uptake or use or services. The last issue is this. There is a vicious circle. In some districts and States, where the availability

and access to services are low, they do not have good hospitals. Since they do not have good hospitals, they do not have that kind of availability of services. The use of services is also low and due to this, the awareness about the scheme is low. When the awareness about the scheme is low, then again, the use of services is low. So, we need to break this vicious circle and have a heavy investment in these places. This is, particularly, true for Aspirational Districts. We have done this analysis in 116 Aspirational Districts.”

5.10 As regards portability of benefits and the amount of money spent on the migrant workers who have availed themselves of the Ayushman Bharat healthcare facility, the Ministry submitted as under:-

“Portability of benefits is a unique feature of Ayushman Bharat -Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) to enable scheme beneficiaries to avail health care services (as per defined health benefits packages) at empanelled public and private healthcare facilities across the Country. Although the expenditure on migrant workers is not specifically maintained under AB-PMJAY, it is understood that migrant workers, given the itinerant nature of their occupation, are more likely to avail the benefits of AB-PMJAY through the portability feature. As on 05.11.2020, a total of 1,39,996 hospitalizations amounting to Rs. 311 Crore have been authorized under the portability feature of AB-PMJAY.”

5.11 On being asked about the original Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) involved with the NHA cashless Health Coverage Scheme, the Ministry replied as under:-

" Ayushman Bharat comprises two inter-related components, which are:

- a. Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs)
- b. Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY)

Ayushman Bharat - PMJAY is the component which provisions health cover of Rs. 5 lakh per family per annum to poor and vulnerable families for cashless secondary and tertiary care hospitalization. National Health Authority (NHA) has been set up as an attached office to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to continuously guide and monitor the implementation of AB-PMJAY at the national level. Further, the States and UTs implementing AB-PMJAY have set up State Health Agencies to operationalize and manage the scheme at the State level. “

5.12 Asked to state the total number of migrant workers who have been beneficiaries of the Scheme, the Ministry furnished the following information:-

“AB-PMJAY aims to provide health cover of Rs. 5 Lakh per family per year, for secondary and tertiary care hospitalizations, to around 10.74 crore families (approx.. 50 crore individuals) identified from the Socio-economic Caste Census

database on the basis of select deprivation and occupational criteria in rural and urban areas respectively. The entitlement criteria is outlined below

(I) The different categories in rural area include:

i) Automatically included households (based on fulfilling any of the 5 parameters of inclusion):

- a. Households without shelter.
- b. Destitute, living on alms.
- c. Manual scavenger families.
- d. Primitive tribal groups.
- e. legally released bonded labour

ii) Families based on Standard Deprivation Parameter

- a. Only one room with kucha walls and kucha roof (D1)
- b. No adult member between age 16 to 59 (D2)
- c. Female headed households with no adult male member between age 16 to 59 (D3)
- d. Disabled member and no able bodied adult member (D4)
- e. SC/ST households (D5)
- f. Landless households deriving major part of their Income from manual casual labour (D7)

II. For urban areas, 11 defined occupational categories are entitled under the scheme –

- i. Rag picker
- ii. Beggar
- iii. Domestic worker
- iv. Street vendor/ Cobbler/hawker / Other service provider working on streets
- v. Construction worker/ Plumber/ Mason/ Labor/ Painter/ Welter/ Security guard/ Coolie and other head-load worker
- vi. Sweeper/ Sanitation worker / Mali
- vii. Home-based worker/ Artisan/ Handicrafts worker / Tailor
- viii. Transport worker/ Driver/ Conductor/ Helper to drivers and conductors/ Cart puller/ Rickshaw puller
- ix. Shop worker/ Assistant/ Peon in small establishment/ Helper/ Delivery assistant / Attendant/ Walter
- x. Electrician/ Mechanic/ Assembler/ Repair worker
- xi. Washer-man/ Chowkidar

It may be noted that is no separate criteria for migrant workers however it is assumed that majority of the migrant workers fall within the aforementioned occupational criteria.

**5.13 Public Health being a State Subject, the role of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has been centered mainly on overall monitoring and co-ordination. This task has been undertaken by the Ministry by way of issue of detailed guidance notes to States on maintaining essential health services following the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic and advising the States to put-in place adequate measures for facing the public health challenges posed, inclusive of the health care requirements of the unorganised sector workers and migrant labourers. Specific measures initiated and taken for providing health care services to the migrant workers' who were returning to their home States include issuing advisories on providing access to health care facilities for migrant workers, screening and Health check-up of migrant workers/returnee migrants at the Quarantine Centres; providing access to free testing and treatment if found 'Covid positive' at Public Healthcare Facilities; treatment at the empanelled Covid-19 Dedicated Hospitals through Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY); provision of universal coverage of free of charge services in all Public Healthcare Facilities; etc. Also, measures have been taken for coordinating with States/UTs for extending non-Covid health care services to migrant workers who returned to their home States viz. Video Conferencing for reviewing the preparedness towards provision of essential health services; augmenting Blood Banks by facilitating voluntary donors through door step collection; issue of detailed Guidelines on provision of essential health services; access for basic services at AB-HWCs and Sub-Health Centres and Primary Health Centres for the**

migrant population for easy access to essential drugs and diagnostics etc. An amount of Rs.15,000 crore was announced for Covid Management, components of which included, providing care for workers in the unorganised sector and migrant labourers. The Committee are appreciative of the work done by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare as also the Health Departments in States/UTs towards providing specific healthcare and easy access to diagnostics and medicines for Migrant Workers. The Committee hope that the initiatives taken are earnestly carried forward with fervour in the coming times so as to strengthen the health care system available for the unorganized sector workers and migrant labourers, who are from the weaker sections.

5.14 The Committee, nevertheless, are concerned to note that the Ministry could not provide data on Migrant Labourers who may have sought, needed or availed health care attention/facilities on account of being afflicted by Covid-19 infection as well as other ailments. There is no authentic or reliable data on the health status or requirements of Inter-State migrant labourers, or their numbers, that is maintained centrally. The Committee desire that a suitable mechanism be evolved for creating and maintaining such a data base, specifically covering aspects relating to the health status and requirements of Migrant Labourers. To this end, the Central Health Ministry, as the nodal Ministry needs to put in place a coordinating mechanism with the States/UTs for maintenance of real-time data on various parameters pertaining to the health of Migrant Labourers. Ideally this data needs to be linked with the online portal on data of Inter-State Migrant labourers, which the Ministry of Labour & Employment is proposing to put in place. The

**Committee desire that this possibility be explored by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.**

**5.15 On the extent of access to healthcare services provided to Migrant Workers under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) or Ayushman Bharat, the Committee note that the Schemes, being entitlement based, the beneficiaries thereof are identified on the basis of Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) of 2011. In the urban areas, the census list is based on occupational categories viz. construction workers, transport workers etc., which would include most migrant workers. However, the database being very old, that is, of 2011, in actual practice, many of the migrant workers or people who should otherwise be eligible for benefits under Ayushman Bharat at the ground level do not find place in the list. As for rural areas, the SECC list is based on ‘deprivation categories’ which should also ideally cover all migrant workers but in actuality, does not. The Committee, therefore, note that determining the entitled beneficiaries on the basis of SECC data of 2011, which is outdated is flawed and not ideal. Building a credible real time database is the ‘sine-qua non’ for undertaking any relief measures specific to Inter-State Migrant Labour, particularly in view of the high mobility rate of migrant labour. The Committee, therefore, recommend that appropriate steps be taken in the right earnest and in collaboration with the Departments concerned for drawing up a more accurate, reliable and credible database on Migrant Labourers.**

**5.16 A noteworthy as well as useful feature of the Ayushman Bharat Scheme is ‘portability’, whereby the beneficiaries can avail medical facilities anywhere in the**

Country. As per the data furnished to the Committee, the total number of hospitals empanelled under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme is 23,000 with a total of 1.5 lakh Covid tests and 26,000 treatments done in a period of four months. Further, cumulatively, a total of 12.6 crore e-cards have been said to be issued from the time of inception of the Scheme w.e.f. 23<sup>rd</sup>September,2018 with the number of cumulative hospital admissions amounting to 1.2 crores. The Committee also find that total authorised claims for this fiscal year 2020-21 amounted to Rs.2,351 crore for 24 lakhs hospital admissions. The Committee desire that the monitoring and coordination mechanism be further strengthened so as to maximise the intended benefits of portability under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme.

5.17 The Committee were apprised that constraints faced in the implementation of Ayushman Bharat Scheme include *inter-alia* poor quality of the database, with the SECC 2011 information, which is old and outdated forming the basis for determining the eligible persons; some States not having joined the Scheme thereby leading to problems in portability and support to the Migrant Labourers in these States; lack of good hospitals in some States leading to inability to provide services; low level of awareness about the Scheme, etc. The Committee, however, find that despite these serious constraints, as on 5.11.2020, a total of 1,39,996 hospitalisations involving an expenditure of Rs.31.1 crore have been authorised under the portability feature of Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY). The Committee are of the considered opinion that the vicious circle of the constraints faced in the implementation of the Ayushman

**Bharat Scheme needs to be broken through concerted efforts and in coordination with State Authorities so that the intended benefits of the Scheme reach to each and every Migrant Worker in every nook and corner of the Country. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare alongwith the National Health Authority (NHA) should make more concerted efforts to optimise the benefits of the Scheme in favour of the really needy Inter-State Migrant Workers.**

## CHAPTER - VI

### PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING FACILITIES

#### (MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS)

##### **AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING COMPLEXES (ARHCs)**

6.1 Pursuant to the Government of India's vision to promote economic activities through 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat' post Covid-19 Pandemic, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) after consultation with Central Ministries, States/UTs and other Stakeholders from Public/Private Sectors has launched Affordable Rental Housing Complexes (ARHCs) as a sub-Scheme under 'Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban' with a view to providing dignified living to urban migrants/poor near their workplace at affordable rent. This initiative which is being taken up for the first time in the Country has been necessitated due to large scale reverse migration of urban migrants/poor on account of Covid-19 Pandemic; non-availability of housing close to the workplace adversely impacting productivity; requirement of affordable rental housing rather than ownership etc.

6.2 The aims and objectives of the ARHCs Scheme are:

- i. Address the vision of 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat' by creating affordable rental housing for urban migrants/poor;
- ii. Provide dignified living with necessary civic amenities near their workplace on affordable rent;
- iii. Create conducive ecosystem for Public/Private Entities to leverage investment in rental housing.

6.3 The salient features of the Scheme are as under:

- i. To be implemented in all Statutory Towns, Notified Planning Areas and areas under Special Area/Development Authorities/Industrial Development Authorities;
- ii. Projects to be considered till March 2022;

- iii. ARHCs can be a mix of Single/Double bedroom DUs (30/60 sqm carpet area) with living area, kitchen, toilet and bathroom and Dormitory Bed (10 sqm carpet area) with common kitchen, toilet and bathroom;
- iv. A maximum of 33% houses with double room permissible in a project;
- v. Institutional Rental Mechanism: In-block renting for smooth implementation and sustained income;
- vi. Two-pronged strategy for implementation (Two Models).

6.4 The Scheme is proposed to be implemented through two Models i.e. Model - I entails utilising/converting existing Government (Central/State) funded vacant houses into ARHCs under Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode or by Public Agencies; and Model-2 envisages incentivising Public/Private entities to construct, operate and maintain ARHCs on their own available vacant land.

6.5 The funding pattern for Model-I and Model-2 was stated to be as under:

Model-I:

- i. Investment of Concessionaire
- ii. VGF from Central Assistance released to States/UTs for JnNURM/RAY projects, if needed
- iii. Approximately 75,000 Government funded existing vacant houses to be converted as ARHCs, initially

Model-2

- i. Investment of Entities
- ii. TIG of Rs. 1,00,000/- for double bedroom, Rs. 60,000/- for single bedroom and Rs. 20,000/- per Dormitory Bed, only for projects using innovative and alternate technology

6.6 As regards incentives, the Committee were apprised that the following incentives would be extended by the Government of India and States/UTs/ULBs to the entities to develop and operate ARHCs:

- i. Exemption of Income Tax on any profits and gains derived from the operation of ARHCs.
- ii. Exemption of Goods and Service Tax (GST) on any profits and gains derived from operation of ARHCs.

- iii. Concessionaire shall receive project finance/loan at lower interest rate through concessional window under Affordable Housing Fund (AHF) by Housing Finance Companies (HFCs) and Priority Sector Lending (PSL) by Commercial Banks, upon inclusion of ARHCs in Harmonized Master List (HML) on the same lines of 'Affordable Housing'.
- iv. Single window system for approval of design/ drawings and other statutory approvals within 30 days, after which proposed project will be considered as deemed approved for construction.
- v. Trunk infrastructure facilities like road, sanitation services, water, sewerage/ septage, drainage, electricity etc. to be provided upto the project site.
- vi. Municipal services such as water supply, electricity, house/ property tax, sewerage/ septage charge etc. to be levied at par with the residential projects.

Additional grant in the form of Technological Innovation Grant(TIG) is provisioned by MoHUA for projects using innovative, sustainable, green and disaster-resilient technologies as well as building materials for cost effective, faster and quality construction of ARHCs. The TIG of Rs. 60,000/-per house (Single Bedroom), Rs. 1,00,000/- (Double Bedroom) and Rs. 20,000/-per Dormitory Bed will be provided as per the Scheme Guidelines."

6.7 Regarding the expected benefits/outcomes, the Ministry submitted the following information:

- i. The urban migrant/ poor will get better and decent living environment through creation of ARHCs near their workplaces.
- ii. It would provide an opportunity and enabling framework for States/ UTs to convert vacant housing stocks constructed from their own funds into ARHCs.
- iii. Vacant housing stock of Central/State/UT Government funded will be converted into ARHCs for economically productive use.
- iv. Industries will be benefitted through sustained supply of workforce.
- v. Dignified living conditions of migrant labour/ poor will result in improved productivity and workmanship for eventual economic gain.
- vi. It would create a conducive environment for Entities to develop ARHCs on their own available vacant land which will propel new investment opportunities and promote entrepreneurship in rental housing sector.

- vii. It would create an enabling environment for Public/ Private Entities to offer their available vacant land for such entrepreneurial opportunity of developing ARHCs, which would propel further investment.
- viii. Promoting affordable rental housing will ensure inclusive urban development by providing livable housing options to the urban migrants/ poor at reasonable rent and encourage prevention of future unplanned growth of slums.

6.8 The Committee desired to know the difference between the Urban poor and the migrant workers who have been identified as the primary beneficiaries of ARHCs. In response, the Ministry submitted as under:

"Under ARHCs both urban poor as well as migrant workers are classified as same category, under larger ambit of Economically Weaker Section (EWS)/Low Income Group (LIG) segment. However, urban migrants for ARHCs mean a person or groups of people/ families who take a conscious decision to move away or relocate from their village/ towns to other cities/ towns temporarily or permanently, for seeking employment opportunities/ education/ health visits etc. Similarly, urban poor is a person from informal sectors belonging to EWS/ LIG categories, residing in a city on rent or otherwise and do not own house in the city. They may include street vendors, rickshaw pullers, other service providers etc."

6.9 When asked about the specific constraints encountered during the Pandemic in the implementation of Affordable Rental Housing Complexes (ARHCs) and steps taken to address them, the Ministry apprised as under:

"This scheme was conceived during the lockdown period caused due to COVID-19 pandemic. During this period, a series of consultations with various stakeholders were held through Video Conferencing. Subsequently, the scheme was formulated and launched on 31st July, 2020. The scheme is currently in its preparatory phase and States/ Union Territories (UTs) are in the process of signing the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with MoHUA for implementation of the scheme."

6.10 Asked to furnish details of draft Memorandum of Agreement sent to various States and the response of the State Governments, the Ministry submitted as under:

"The draft MoA was shared with States/UTs for implementation of the scheme. The States/UTs have responded positively on this matter as they are eager to start the implementation of this ambitious scheme. So far, 22 States/UTs have signed MoAs with MoHUA. The Ministry is pursuing with remaining States/UTs to sign the same at the earliest."

6.11 In oral evidence, the Secretary supplemented as under:

"...The plan was approved by the cabinet on 8 July, 2020. A memorandum of agreement has been drafted and sent to the states/UTs. Accordingly, states/UTs have been told that you will give use permission, you will give extra 50 percent FAR, free of cost. Whatever expenses incurred, will be given to the municipality at the residential rate. Full details have been sent in the agreement. It has been sent a few days ago. As you know, it will be approved from the state cabinet, they also have their own internal process. We had given time till 31 August for this. Whether within a month it comes from 10 states or 15 states, our expression of interest is ready. All this work was being done in between. Its complete details are ready. It has also been shared with the states. The state will do it from there and we will do it from here. They will be given three months time to do whatever they want to offer..."

6.12 In response to another related specific query, the Ministry submitted as under:

"The ARHC scheme has been designed after a detailed consultation with concerned Central Ministries/Departments, States/UTs, Financial Institutions and other stakeholders from Private/ Public Sector. All States/UTs have shown their keen interest in ARHCs during various consultation meetings held with them. So far, 22 States/UTs have signed MoAs with MoHUA including Punjab and Puducherry."

6.13 When the Committee desired to know about the relief in terms of loan being offered under the ARHCs, the Ministry deposed as under:

"ARHC has been included in "Harmonized Master List of Infrastructure" sub-sectors issued by Ministry of Finance under the Category "Social and Commercial Infrastructure". With this, Public/Private Entities will be eligible to get Project Finance/ Loan at relatively lower interest rate through concessional window by Affordable Housing Finance Companies (AHF) and Primary Sector Lending (PSL) by Commercial Banks."

6.14 The Committee then asked whether affordable rental housing complexes have been included in 'harmonized master list of infrastructure' and notification issued. In reply, the Ministry stated as under:

"Harmonized Master List (HML) of Infrastructure sub-sector includes broad areas including transport and logistics, Energy, Water & Sanitation, Communication and Social & Commercial Infrastructure and Affordable Housing. Affordable rental housing has been included in the HML under category "Social and

Commercial Infrastructure” as per Gazette Notification No. 213(CG–DL–E-28082020-221418)dated August 28, 2020. "

6.15 As regard the norms fixed for allotment of houses under ARHCs, the Ministry submitted as under:

"ARHCs will be constructed in all Statutory Towns as per Census 2011 and Towns notified subsequently, Notified Planning Areas and areas of Development/ Special Area Development/ Industrial Development Authorities. States/UTs may consider any project as ARHCs in any other areas after due notification. However, the beneficiaries will be urban migrants/poor of EWS/ LIG category who come from rural areas or small towns for seeking better employment opportunities in urban areas.

For the purpose of allotment of these complexes, Concessionaire/ Entity may tie up with local industry/ manufacturers/ service providers/ educational/ health institutions/ market associations/ others employing urban migrants/ poor to provide accommodation in-block and remit rental by deducting directly from their salary/ fees/ any kind of remuneration, as feasible. Existing vacant houses of scattered nature shall not be considered as ARHCs. These rental housing complexes may also be run through partnership with Aggregators."

6.16 Asked to state the mechanism put in place/contemplated to check malpractices and keep the middleman away in the allotment of houses both under ARHC and PMAY-U, the Ministry submitted as under:

"A robust mechanism has been set up at Centre/State/UT/ULB level to identify and allot houses under ARHCs as well as PMAY(U) to keep away middleman. Under these schemes, the beneficiaries are being/will be transparently selected after appropriate due diligence at ULB level and list of selected beneficiaries is being displayed in public domain through a dedicated MIS system i.e. /<https://pmay-urban.gov.in/> and <http://arhc.mohua.gov.in/>.In case, the complaints received by the Ministry are being addressed suitably at appropriate level as per law of the land and track of all complaints/grievances are being maintained. Therefore, to check malpractices and keep middleman away in the allotment of houses both under ARHC and PMAY-U, the Ministry follows a zero-tolerance policy in this regard."

6.17 When asked about the number of complaints raised/received on the PMAY-U and steps taken to address them, the Ministry submitted as under:

"Through a dedicated complaint redressal system set up by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Government of India, grievances of all nature pertaining to PMAY-U at different National/State/UT level are comprehensively addressed.

Further, MoHUA has also set up a dedicated Public Grievance Cell at HFA Directorate to address the grievances on a day to day basis on PMAY(U). It is also confirmed that all States/ UTs implementing PMAY-U have set up a grievance cell at State/ULB level so that grievances are adequately addressed. Additionally, Government of India is also providing call centre support through MoHUA/NHB/HUDCO/SBI to address their queries/complaints/clarifications."

6.18 The Committee were informed that construction of 67 lakh houses had commenced and houses to 35 lakh people had already been handed over. The Committee desired to know details of State-wise and also category-wise allottees, who finally got allotment of houses and the time line fixed for the construction of the remaining houses. In response, the Ministry submitted as under:

"State/ UT-wise houses completed/delivered under various income categories under PMAY-U are as under:

S. No.	Name of the State/ UT	Economically Weaker Section (EWS)	Lower Income Group (LIG)	Middle Income Group (MIG)	Total Houses Completed under PMAY-U
1	A&N Islands (UT)	18	3	-	21
2	Andhra Pradesh	3,07,986	11,105	15,494	3,34,585
3	Arunachal Pradesh	2,822	5	32	2,859
4	Assam	18,872	692	929	20,493
5	Bihar	63,401	4,540	4,475	72,416
6	Chandigarh (UT)	5,081	164	366	5,611
7	Chhattisgarh	88,164	6,810	3,658	98,632
8	Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu	1,827	1,654	334	3,815
9	Delhi (UT)	25,818	8,279	10,083	44,180
10	Goa	53	453	675	1,181
11	Gujarat	2,43,777	1,39,990	38,120	4,21,887
12	Haryana	7,870	8,208	11,518	27,596
13	Himachal Pradesh	3,020	402	365	3,787
14	Jammu & Kashmir (UT)	7,061	1,109	290	8,460
15	Jharkhand	73,228	3,557	4,542	81,327
16	Karnataka	1,38,423	13,507	35,775	1,87,705
17	Kerala	69,171	5,720	3,228	78,119
18	Ladakh (UT)	341	23	6	370
19	Lakshadweep (UT)	-	-	-	-
20	Madhya Pradesh	2,93,493	30,810	12,725	3,37,028
21	Maharashtra	1,21,845	1,41,038	82,094	3,44,977
22	Manipur	3,962	139	16	4,117
23	Meghalaya	903	100	22	1,025
24	Mizoram	2,628	703	103	3,434
25	Nagaland	4,172	9	11	4,192
26	Odisha	67,296	2,098	3,166	72,560
27	Puducherry (UT)	3,025	309	362	3,696
28	Punjab	13,287	8,310	7,443	29,040
29	Rajasthan	59,395	26,212	15,663	1,01,270
30	Sikkim	234	18	8	260

31	Tamil Nadu	2,65,251	20,601	24,517	3,10,369
32	Telangana	72,093	11,295	27,794	1,11,182
33	Tripura	41,948	498	427	42,873
34	Uttar Pradesh	4,65,016	30,481	38,596	5,34,093
35	Uttarakhand	7,956	4,729	3,255	15,940
36	West Bengal	1,78,638	16,115	14,375	2,09,128
<b>Total</b>		<b>26,58,075</b>	<b>4,99,686</b>	<b>3,60,467</b>	<b>35,18,228</b>

6.19 The Ministry further submitted that the remaining houses were in different stages of construction and would be completed before the Mission period i.e. March 2022. Usually the construction period is 24-36 months in the project cycle, subject to necessary/required compliances and approvals.

6.20 In oral evidence, elaborating the matter the Secretary deposed as follows:

"... The Prime Minister has started the 'Housing For All' scheme and said that when we will celebrate the 75th anniversary of Independence, everyone will have their own house. I am happy that according to the demand assessment conducted by States/UTs, we have a total demand of one crore twelve lakhs, against which we have sanctioned one crore seven lakh. Construction work of 67 lakh houses has started and 35 lakh people have been given houses. There are some houses which are being constructed on their own land, but there are three different types, in which big housing projects are made, in which allotment of houses are given. Right now the whole world is struggling with Covid epidemic. We saw that when the lockdown ended, a large number of workers were migrating because they did not have a house to live in and did not have social security, so they were going back to their villages. Those who are migrant labour do not have enough money to build their houses and they go from place to place in search of work. They either live in slums or live in areas outside the city to save their money. For this, the Government thought that why should not arrange for rental housing for such people and the plan for Affordable Rental Housing in the country was approved by the Cabinet..."

6.21 The Committee then desired to know the number of houses sanctioned under EWS category. In reply, the Ministry submitted as under:

"The beneficiaries under PMAY-U belongs to EWS category, except Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS) component of the scheme which covers beneficiaries of EWS, LIG and MIG categories. Out of 1.06 crore total sanctioned houses under PMAY(U), 96,98,713 beneficiaries belong to EWS category."

6.22 Asked to state the benefits the Government would be giving to the unorganized sector workers under ARHCs, the Ministry applied as under:

"Beneficiaries of unorganized sectors such as street vendors, rickshaw pullers and other service providers are part of target groups of this scheme. Therefore, like any other segment of target groups, unorganized sector workers will get benefit of dignified houses through this scheme further improving their standard of living and economy."

6.23 Asked to state the specific efforts made to achieve the target under ARHC by March, 2022, the Ministry deposed as under:

"In order to achieve the target under ARHCs by March 2022, following steps have been taken so far:

- i. Operational Guidelines of ARHCs along with other implementation framework have been circulated to all States/ UTs for planning and implementation. E-copy of the guidelines has been uploaded on the websites of ARHC, PMAY-U and MoHUA.
- ii. MoHUA is pursuing with States/UT for signing the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) for implementation of this scheme. So far, 22 States have signed the MoA with MoHUA.
- iii. For the ease of States/UTs, a model Request for Proposal (RFP) has been shared with them for selection of Concessionaire to develop existing Government funded vacant housing complexes to be converted as ARHCs for a period of 25 years under Repair/Retrofit, Develop, Operate and Transfer (RDOT) on Public Private Partnership (PPP) Mode or by Public agencies.
- iv. Expression of Interest (EoI) has been prepared for shortlisting of Public/Private Entities for construction of ARHCs on their own vacant land.
- v. A sustained and focused Information Education and Communication (IEC) strategy for outreach and off take of ARHCs has been prepared. A whiteboard animation on ARHCs along with various brochures, leaflets and other communication materials have been designed and shared with the stakeholders. "

6.24 The Committee queried about the measures taken/proposed to protect the interest of both poor tenants and the landlords so as to ensure a healthy environment for rental housing. In response, the Ministry submitted as follows:

"The Ministry has proposed a Model Tenancy Act (MTA) which will replace existing tenancy laws and will balance and protect the interest of both the tenant and landlord and thereby, creating healthy environment for rental housing. A Cabinet Note on Model Tenancy Act was sent to Cabinet Secretariat on 18.02.2020 seeking approval of the Union Cabinet. However, considering the overarching impact of MTA on various sections of the society, it was deemed appropriate that MTA along with a Background Note may be circulated to public in the State/UTs in local/vernacular language soliciting their suggestions/

comments. Accordingly, MTA has been sent to States/UTs for translation in respective local/vernacular languages to seek the comments of public/stakeholders on revised draft MTA and send the same to the Ministry along with their comments by 15th November, 2020. Thereafter, matter will be placed before the Union Cabinet for approval for circulation of MTA to States/UTs to legislate/ adopt."

6.25 The Secretary, MoHUA supplemented in evidence as under:

"...I would like to bring one more thing to the notice of the Hon'ble Committee that the laws of tenancy are very arrogant. People want to leave their house empty, but do not want to rent them. The law was made that once it is given on rent, then it is difficult to vacate the house. For this, we have introduced a new model Tenancy Law, for which our ministry has been trying for the last three years and now we have come to this stage to take it to the cabinet very quickly and give it to the states, so that both landlord and tenants may enjoy equal rights. In this, nobody will give anything on rent without agreement. The number of future houses will be according to the rent. Its entire law has been made. The consent of 22 states have also been received for this. We will take it to the cabinet very soon and work with the States to get the new law."

**6.26 The Committee note that launching of the Scheme for Affordable Rental Housing Complexes (ARHCs) in July, 2020, as a sub-scheme under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U) for providing accommodation at affordable rent to the urban migrant/poor near their workplace was necessitated due to large scale reverse migration of urban migrants/poor that was witnessed following the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic. Problems pertaining to housing with proper civic amenities for the migrant workforce were brought to the forefront with the large scale 'reverse migration' that was witnessed. Both by way of utilising existing Government funded vacant houses by converting them into ARHCs and also by incentivising Private/Public entities to construct, operate and maintain ARHCs on their own vacant land, the Scheme aims to provide affordable rental housing for urban migrants/poor, and thereby add to their productivity level as well. The**

scheme, currently being in the preparatory phase with the States/Union Territories in the process of signing the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with the Ministry, it is apparent that ARHC complexes may not be provided to the migrant labourers immediately. However, once scheme is implemented in right earnest and spirit, the migrant labour would be provided with the much-needed housing facility at their work place. The Committee further note in this regard that the scheme is a first-time effort in the country in addressing the problem of housing, which is a part of the myriad problems confronting the migrant labour in urban areas. They also note that non-availability of proper housing near the 'work place' has been a major contributory factor for the reverse migration of urban migrants/poor that was witnessed. The Committee, therefore, recommend that signing of the MoA with all the States be expedited, if not completed by now, and the ARHC scheme be implemented at the earliest. The Committee hope that in the near future, when the Scheme would be finally rolled out, affordable houses with proper civic facilities would be provided to the migrant laborers.

6.27 The Committee note that for making ARHCs a reality, certain incentives are being given under both the models envisaged for implementing the scheme viz. usage of existing vacant Government houses; and undertaking the construction, operation and maintenance of ARHCs by private entities. The incentives to be provided include, exemption from Income Tax and GST on any profits and gains derived from operation of ARHCs, providing project finance/loans at lower interest rate through concessional window under Affordable Housing Fund, single window system for approval of design/drawings and other statutory

approvals within 30 days, municipal services such as water and electricity etc. The proposal of the Government to allow tax holiday till March, 2022 and tax exemption for notified Affordable Rental Housing Projects, as contained in the Finance Minister's 2021 Budget Speech is a matter of consolation and in sync with the Government's commitment to promote supply of ARH for migrant workers. The Committee trust that these incentives are actually made available without hindrance so that the housing complexes come up at an early date and thereby go a long way in addressing the hardships faced by the migrant labour.

6.28 The Committee note that under the scheme for providing ARHCs in urban areas, the migrant workers are not categorized as a distinct category or a 'subset' and are covered under the larger ambit of Economically Weaker Section (EWS)/Low Income Group (LIG) Segment. The Committee are of the view that there is a need to ensure that including the migrant/poor as a part of the EWS/LIG category does not, in any way, go against the interest of the migrants. The Committee desire that the Ministry should accord priority to the migrant workers/labourers in the ARHC Scheme. The Committee wish to be apprised of the measures taken in this direction.

6.29 As informed, the scheme for building ARHCs has been included under the Category "Social and Commercial Infrastructure" in the "Harmonized Master List of Infrastructure" sub-sectors issued by Ministry of Finance. This would make the Public/Private Entities eligible to secure project finance/ loans at relatively lower interest rate through concessional window from Housing Finance Companies (AHF) and by way of Priority Sector Lending (PSL) from Commercial Banks. The

**Harmonised Master List (HML) of infrastructure sub-sectors under which ARHC has been included covers areas such as transport and logistics. The Committee hope that, as planned, the public/private entities evince interest in availing the concession, and thereby contribute in meeting the housing requirement of the poor.**

**6.30 In regard to the norms for allotment of houses in ARHCs, the Ministry has apprised the Committee that the concessionaire/entity may tie up with the local industry/manufacturers/service providers/educational health institutions etc. to provide accommodation en-block and remit the rent by deducting directly from their salary/fees. The Committee would, in this regard emphasize on ensuring that the concessionaire/entity etc. concerned follows a transparent process in the matter of allotment of accommodation in the housing complexes to the migrant labourers; and fair dealing to all the deserving migrant labourers. Steps also need to be taken to ensure that all eligible migrant labourers secure accommodation in the housing complexes. Further, there may also be a need for setting up a grievance redressal system exclusively for ARHCs for enabling expeditious redressal of the grievances of the migrants on matters relating to allotment.**

**6.31 As for the number of issues and complaints received in regard to Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, the Ministry has submitted that through a dedicated complaint redressal system set up by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Government of India, grievances of all nature pertaining to PMAY-U at different National/State/UT level are comprehensively addressed. Further, MoHUA has also set up a dedicated Public Grievance Cell at HFA**

Directorate to address the grievances on a day- to- day basis on PMAY(U). Further, all States/ UTs implementing PMAY-U have reportedly set up grievance cells at State/ULB level so that grievances are adequately addressed. Additionally, Government of India is also providing call centre support through MoHUA/NHB/ HUDCO/SBI to address their queries/complaints/clarifications. However, the Ministry has not furnished details of the number and nature of grievances/complaints received under PMAY, which was called for. The Committee, while desiring that the requisite information is furnished also emphasize on ensuring that system of redressal of grievances is robust and considerate in resolving the genuine concerns and difficulties.

6.32 While the ARHC Scheme was conceived and launched during the lockdown imposed due to Covid-19 pandemic in July, 2020, and is in its preparatory phase, with a view to making the scheme operational by the targeted date of March, 2022, the Ministry have initiated a slew of measures. These include, circulation of the operational guidelines of ARHCs alongwith the implementation framework to all States/UTs for planning and implementation, signing the Memorandum of Agreement with all the States etc. The Committee would, in this regard, emphasise on ensuring that the timeline of March, 2022 is adhered to strictly. The Committee also recommend that the review of the progress in implementing the ARHCs scheme be made from time to time. The Committee would also like to be kept apprised of the progress of the implementation of the scheme.

6.33 The Committee note that the Ministry has proposed a Model Tenancy Act (MTA) to replace the existing tenancy laws. The Law proposes to strike a balance

in protecting the rights of tenants as well as the landlords in equal measure. As per the proposed law, as per the information furnished, rentals would be based only on agreements entered into. The Committee further note that the draft MTA alongwith a background note has been sent to all the States/UTs for translation into respective local/vernacular languages to seek the comments of public and stakeholders and return to the Ministry with the comments of the State Governments. The Committee note that the proposed law is aimed at promoting rental housing on a large scale *inter-alia* by striking a balance between the interest of the landlords and the tenants. The Committee would like to be kept apprised of the progress made in implementing the Model Tenancy Act.

6.34 Under PMAY-U, the Committee have been informed that construction of 67 lakh houses had commenced and houses to about 35 lakh people have been handed over, out of which 26,58,075 houses have been allotted to the Economically Weaker Section (EWS), 4,99,686 houses to Lower Income Group (LIG) and 3,60,467 houses to Middle Income Group (MIG). Though it is a matter of consolation that out of the 35 lakh houses, as many as 31 lakh houses have been allotted/delivered to EWS & LIG categories of people, the Committee desire that while allotting such houses, the interest of migrant workers be accorded utmost importance and therefore the proportion of migrant workers among the EWS category be clearly reflected in the allotment of houses.

## CHAPTER - VII

### PROVISION OF EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING FACILITIES - RURAL

#### (MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT)

7.1 As regards the social security and welfare measures for the inter-state migrant workers, the Committee were informed about the three schemes, namely (i) Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) (ii) Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Gramin (PMAY-G) and (iii) Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyan (GKRA) being implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development, details of which are as under:

#### (i) Mahatma Gandhi NREGA

7.2 The core objectives of the scheme formulated under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (Mahatma Gandhi NREGA), 2005 are as follows:

- a) Providing not less than one hundred days of unskilled manual work as a guaranteed employment in a financial year to every household in rural areas as per demand, resulting in creation of productive assets of prescribed quality and durability;
- b) Strengthening the livelihood resource base of the poor;
- c) Proactively ensuring social inclusion; and
- d) Strengthening Panchayat Raj institutions:

Provided that the said objectives are applicable where the adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work subject to the conditions laid down by or under this Act and in the scheme.

7.3 The Committee were further informed that for the works undertaken in the Scheme, by the Gram Panchayat and other implementing agencies, the cost of the material component including the wages of the skilled and semi-skilled workers, would not exceed forty percent at the district level.

The focus of the scheme was stated to be on the following works:

- a) Public works relating to Natural Resources Management
- b) Community assets or individual assets for vulnerable sections (only for households)
- c) Common Infrastructure [Including for NRLM] compliant Self Help Groups
- d) Rural infrastructure

7.4 Explaining the permissible works under the Scheme, the Ministry submitted that there were 262 works which were permissible under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA falling under the above four categories, out of which 182 works related to Natural Resource Management (NRM) and out of these 182 NRM works, 85 were water related and 164 of the total works were related to Agri and Agri-allied works. All these permissible works were meant to provide opportunity for wage employment for unskilled workers including the migrant workers.

7.5 The Ministry further apprised that the Scheme was a demand driven wage employment programme and any adult individual as well as the returnee migrant workers having a job card issued under the programme could demand for work. States/UTs were requested to provide job card to all such returnee migrants as per the provision of the Act.

7.6 Asked to state the person days employment generated, the Ministry submitted that the programme had a ready shelf of projects from which the new works could be drawn and stated and there was provision of about 280 crore persondays employment (Labour Budget) which could be provided on demand.

7.7 The Ministry further explained that stress was given on taking up of works benefitting individual beneficiaries as well as larger community works related to Water Conservation and irrigation works. Such works had the potential to provide mass employment on demand. About 155 crore persondays employment was said to have been generated in the rural areas against the demand by the beneficiaries which includes the returnee migrants as well.

7.8 The Ministry submitted that during the difficult time of the COVID-19 pandemic, various steps were taken to mitigate the hardship of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS Workers. Necessary directives/SoPs were issued to the States to observe social distancing norms and all health related precautions while carrying out Mahatma Gandhi NREGS works. An amount of Rs.6,800 crore was released in the 1<sup>st</sup> week of April 2020 amid

COVID-19 and thereafter, a sum of about Rs.50,000 crore was released towards wage and material payments. The material payments included payment for skilled and semi skilled workers.

7.9 Asked about Nutri-Garden Scheme, the Committee were informed that the MoRD had issued guidelines for promoting Nutri-Garden for individual beneficiaries and community in convergence with State Schemes and National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM), promoting water conservation and water management in the country in convergence with Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DoDWS), Department of Land Resources (DoLR). Department of Water Resources (DoWR), River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation (RD&GR), construction of Gram Panchayat building in a mission mode in convergence with Finance Commission Funds and promotion of fodder farms in convergence with Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying (DAHD) and the work of construction of Community Sanitary Complex (CSC) in convergence with Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) (SBM-G). These works were directed towards enhancing employment opportunities and meet out demand by Mahatma Gandhi NREGS workers in rural areas including the returnee migrant workers. Many of such works were having employment opportunities for skilled and semi skilled workers including construction workers etc.

7.10 Elaborating the fund allocation/additional provision, generation of person days and coordination with the State Government, the Secretary MoRD submitted in evidence as follows:-

"...Against the total approved labour budget of about 282 crore person days, about 165 crore person days have been generated. The Parliament approved the budget of about Rs. 61,500 crore against which we have spent about Rs. 53,000 crore by now. The Hon'ble Finance Minister made an announcement of Rs 40,000 crore to be increased in the supplement. As and when Parliament approves that will increase. By now, about 25 lakh works have been completed. If you see the person day's progress which happened till now, in the month of April, it was somewhat subdued because of the lockdown issues. About 14 crore person days have been generated during that period. If you see in the month of May, 57 crore person days were generated, in the month of June, 64 crore

person days were generated and in the month of July, it was about 29 crore person days...We have not made a very clear-cut differentiation between the persons who have returned and persons who are there. The scheme's aim is to provide work to all households up to the limit under the scheme irrespective of whether they are returnees or residents in the village itself. For this, we have taken initiatives. For example, we have given advisories to State Governments saying that they should follow the guidelines of the Ministry of Home Affairs while taking up MGNREGA work, they should give priority to irrigation and water conservation works."

7.11 In response to a specific query of the Committee, the Ministry apprised that for the financial years 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20 & 2020-21 about 39,60,838, 31,57,155, 31,85,974 & 77,63,317 Job cards had been issued by various State Governments.

7.12 Asked about participation of women in the MGNREGA, the Ministry submitted that the women participation under the scheme during the financial years 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21 were 48.64, 50.05, 50.59 and 49.61 percent respectively.

7.13 Asked to state the special initiatives taken while carrying on MGNREGA works in the wake of Covid-19 Pandemic, the Ministry submitted as follows:

- i. Strict adherence to the Guidelines of Ministry of Home Affairs while taking up Mahatma Gandhi NREGA works
- ii. Priority given to irrigation and water conservation works
- iii. Promoting water conservation and water management in convergence with DoDWS, DoLR, DoWR and RD&GR
- iv. Construction of Gram Panchayat building in a mission mode in convergence with Finance Commission Funds

7.14 As regards linking the MGNREGA works with the Garib Kalyan Rozgar Abhiyan, the Ministry submitted as under:

"Under the Garib Kalyan Rozgar Abhiyaan, Government of India has decided to include works under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA among the selected 25 works covering 12 Ministries/Department of Central Government. All such works have

the potential to provide mass employment and also help in saturation of public infrastructure."

ii. **Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana - Gramin (PMAY-G)**

7.15 Rural housing programme, as an independent programme, started with Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) in January 1996. Although IAY addressed the housing needs in the rural areas, certain gaps were identified during the concurrent evaluations and the performance Audit by Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India in 2014. To address these gaps in the rural housing programme and in view of Government's commitment to providing "Housing for All" by 2022, the IAY has been re-structured into Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana –Gramin (PMAY-G) w.e.f. 1st April 2016.

7.16 PMAY-G aims at providing a pucca house, with basic amenities, to all houseless householder and those households living in kutcha and dilapidated house, by 2022. The immediate objective is to cover 1.00 crore household living in kutcha house/dilapidated house in three years from 2016-17 to 2018- 19. The minimum size of the house has been increased to 25 sq.mt (from 20 sq.mt) with a hygienic cooking space. The unit assistance has been increased from Rs. 70,000 to Rs. 1.20 lakh in plain and from Rs.75,000 to Rs 1.30 lakh in hilly States, difficult areas and IAP district. The cost of unit assistance is to be shared between Central and State Government in the ratio 60:40 in plain areas and 90:10 for North Eastern and the Himalayan States.

7.17 One of the most important features of PMAY-G is the selection of beneficiary. To ensure that assistance is targeted at those who are genuinely deprived and that the selection is objective and verifiable, PMAY-G instead of selecting a beneficiary from among the BPL households selects beneficiary using housing deprivation parameters in the Socio Economic and Caste Census (SECC), 2011 data which is to be verified by the Gram Sabhas.

7.18 In PMAY-G, programme implementation and monitoring is carried out through an end to end e-Governance model- Using Awaas Soft and Awaas App. While Awaas Soft

is a work –flow enabled, web-based electronic service delivery platform through which all critical functions of PMAY-G, right from identification of beneficiary to providing construction linked assistance (through PFMS), will be carried out; Awaas App-a the mobile application is to be used to monitor real time, evidence based progress of house construction through date and time stamped and geo-referenced photographs of the house. The two IT application help identify the slip ups in the achievement of targets during the course of implementation of the programme. All payments to beneficiary is to be through DBT to beneficiary’s Bank/post office accounts registered in Awaas Soft MIS.

7.19 Physical progress under PMAY-G Phase I (2016-17 to 2018-19) were stated to be as follows:

<b>PARAMETER</b>	<b>Phase I: 2016-17 to 2018-19</b>
Target allocated	1 Crore
Sanctions	98,22,408 (98%)
1 <sup>st</sup> Instalment	97,37,458 (97%)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Instalment	93,60,528 (94%)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Instalment	90,19,303 (90%)
<b>Completed</b>	<b>89,46,698 (89%)</b>

7.20 Physical progress under PMAY-G Phase - II (2019-20 to 2021-22) were stated to be as follows:

<b>PARAMETER</b>	<b>(2019-20)</b>
Target allocated	60 lakh
Sanctions	52,88,333 (88%)
1 <sup>st</sup> Instalment	49,73,196 (83%)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Instalment	36,58,680 (61%)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Instalment	23,11,514 (39%)
<b>Completed</b>	<b>22,05,283*(37%)</b>

\* In addition, 62,954 IAY houses also got completed

<b>PARAMETER</b>	<b>(2020-21)</b>
Target allocated	61.5 lakh
Sanctions	9,33,914 (15%)

1 <sup>st</sup> Instalment	2,89,504 (4.7%)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Instalment	17,022 (0.3%)
<b>Completed</b>	<b>1,867* (0.03%)</b>

\* In addition, 11,839 IAY houses also got completed

**(iii) Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyan (GKRA)**

7.21 The Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan (GKRA) is a 125-day Abhiyan launched on 20th June, 2020 with a mission to address the issues of returnee migrant workers and similarly affected rural population by Covid-19 pandemic through a multipronged strategy of providing immediate employment & livelihood opportunities to the distressed, to saturate the villages with public infrastructure and creation of livelihood assets to boost the income generation activities and enhance long term livelihood opportunities by giving focus on 25 works in 116 selected districts across 6 States with a resource envelope of Rs 50,000 crore. GKRA aims to provide livelihood opportunities to returning migrants and similarly affected rural citizens, Saturate villages with public infrastructure- Anganwadis, Panchayat Bhawans, Community Sanitary Complexes etc.

7.22 As regards the coverage, the Ministry submitted that this Abhiyaan aimed to cover 116 districts (including 27 Aspirational Districts) across six States namely Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. To address the hardship of a large number of returnee migrant workers; districts with 25,000 and more returnee migrant workers have been selected.

7.23 Asked to state the duration of the Abhiyan, the Ministry apprised that Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan (GKRA) would be operational for a period of 125 days, commencing from 20th June, 2020 and its intended beneficiaries would be returnee migrant workers and similarly affected rural population of the said six States. The Department of Rural Development (DoRD), GoI would work as the Nodal Department to co-ordinate the implementation, monitoring and outcome of the Abhiyan. Further a committee of Secretaries (CoS) under the Cabinet Secretary was being set up for review of the Abhiyaan. There would be a Central Coordinator for the Abhiyaan to coordinate with the participating Departments/Ministries of the Central Government and with the Nodal Officers of the State Governments.

**7.24 The Committee note that the focus of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is to provide Public works relating to Natural Resources Management; Community Assets or Individual Assets for the vulnerable Sections; Common Infrastructure including NRLM Compliant Self-Help Groups; and Rural Infrastructure. The Committee also find that there are 262 works viz. Agriculture, Agri-allied, water related etc. which are permissible under the Scheme falling under the above cited four categories and meant to provide opportunity for wage employment for the unskilled workers including the migrant workers. The Committee are of the firm opinion that there is no better Scheme than the MGNREGS to provide sustainable livelihood to the unskilled workers including the inter-state migrant labours. In fact, by enacting the MGNREGA Law in 2005, the Indian Parliament had set in motion a process that provides for a specific and significant welfare provision, constitutive of the very idea of citizenship. As socio-economic rights, including the right to work, have long been part of the Directive Principles of State Policy, the Committee trust that the Ministry must have provided adequate opportunity for wage employment for the unskilled workers, especially the migrant workers in the 262 permissible works under MGNREGA. The Committee also desire that the Ministry should unfailingly continue with their endeavour in the provision of wage employment to the unskilled/migrant workers not only during Pandemics but for all times, to meet any contingency and cater to the basic needs of the poorer sections of the Society.**

**7.25** The Committee note that during the years 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21, about 39.61 lakh, 39.60 lakh, 31.86 lakh and 77.63 lakh job cards have been issued by various State Governments. Since the MGNREG Scheme is a demand driven wage employment programme and Job Cards are essential for any adult individual including the returnee migrant workers to demand for work, the Committee would like the Ministry to impress upon the State Governments to ensure that the process of issuing Job Cards be made more transparent and robust so that no needy adult person, more so the migrant and women labours are deprived of employment and livelihood.

**7.26** The Committee note that the Scheme has a ready shelf of Projects from which new works could be drawn and started. In this context, the Committee find that against the total approved Labour Budget of about 282 crore persondays employment approximately 165 crore persondays have already been generated. As regards the budgetary allocation and utilisation, the Committee observe that against an allocation of Rs. 61,500 crore, the Ministry have already utilised Rs. 53,000 crore. An additional allocation of Rs. 40,000 crore is on the anvil . The Committee recommend that efforts be intensified to generate the targeted persondays so as to ensure optimum utilisation of the allocated funds.

**7.27** The Committee appreciate that the Ministry of Rural Development are engaged in the promotion of lot of activities in the rural areas. Such activities *inter-alia* include promotion of Nutri-Garden for individual beneficiaries and community in convergence with State Schemes and NRLM; water conservation and water management in convergence with Department of Water Resources and

**River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation; construction of Gram Panchayat Building in a mission mode in convergence with Finance Commission Funds; fodder farms in convergence with Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying etc. In view of the fact that such works are having ample employment opportunities in the rural areas, the Committee would like the MoRD to persist with such works in collaboration with other Ministries/Departments and the State Governments, besides exploring more such avenues, so as to consistently enhance employment opportunities for the MGNREGS workers including the returnee migrant labours, thereby mitigating the hardships faced by them during unforeseen situations like Covid-19 Pandemic.**

**7.28 The Committee note that the Indira Awas Yojana has been restructured into Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana - Gramin (PMAY-G) w.e.f. 1st April, 2016 to address some gaps, as pointed out by the C&AG of India, in the rural housing programme as well as to provide "Housing for All" by 2022. The immediate objective of PMAY-G is to cover one crore households living in kutcha/dilapidated houses within a period of three years i.e. from 2016-17 to 20158-19. The Committee find that out of the total target of one crore houses, around 89.50 lakh houses have been completed during the said three years which is a commendable performance. However, the Committee are deeply concerned with the below par performance on the matter during the years 2019-20 and 2020-21. To illustrate, during 2019-20 out of the sanctioned target of around 52.89 lakh houses only 22.68 lakh houses, including around 63,000 IAY houses could be completed. Similarly during the year 2020-21 out of the sanctioned target of 9.34 lakh houses**

only around 14,000 houses including 11,839 IAY houses could be completed. While expressing their displeasure at the tardy progress of construction of houses under the PMAY-G during the years 2019-20 and 2020-21, the Committee exhort the Ministry to take all requisite measures and effectively address the bottlenecks so that the Government's appreciable commitment to provide "Housing for All" by 2022 is indeed honoured.

7.29 The Committee appreciate that PMAY-G, instead of selecting a beneficiary from among the BPL households, selects the beneficiary using housing deprivation parameters as per the Socio Economic and Caste Census (SECC), 2011 data which is to be verified by the Gram Sabhas. The Committee are of the considered opinion that it is an appropriate method to ensure that the selection is objective and verifiable. The Committee desire that the process be made more robust so that assistance is given to those who are genuinely deprived of a house.

7.30 The Committee are pleased to note that the Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyan Yojana (GKRAY) is a 125 day Abhiyan launched on 20th June, 2020 with a mission to address the problems of returnee migrant workers and similarly affected rural population by Covid-19 pandemic through a multipronged strategy of providing immediate employment and livelihood opportunities to the distressed masses. What is more encouraging is the fact that under the GKRAY, the Government of India have decided to include works under the MGNREGS among the selected 25 works covering 12 Ministries/Departments of the Central Government. The Committee feel that it is a step in right direction as all such

works have huge potentials to provide mass employment and also help in saturation of public infrastructure. The Committee recommend that the convergence of works under GKRAY and MGNREGS be further strengthened so as to ensure creation of long term livelihood assets for the poor rural masses including the migrant workers.

## CHAPTER – VIII

### PROVISION OF SKILL TRAINING

#### (MINISTRY OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP)

##### **A. Garib Kalyan Rozgar Abhiyaan (GKRA) under the Centrally Sponsored Centrally Managed (CSCM)**

8.1 The Government of India has launched “Garib Kalyan Rozgar Abhiyaan (GKRA)” with a mission to address the issues of returnee migrant workers and similarly affected rural population by Covid-19 pandemic through a multipronged strategy of providing immediate employment & livelihood opportunities to the distressed, to saturate the villages with public infrastructure and creation of livelihood assets to boost the income generation activities and enhance long term livelihood opportunities by giving focus on 25 works in 116 selected districts across 6 States. In order to support GKRA, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has decided to impart skill development training to migrants returned due to pandemic in 116 districts of 6 States namely Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. Skill mapping of all returning migrants was done. The details of such skilled personnel were uploaded on the ASEEM portal, the directory of skilled personnel developed by the Ministry and launched in July 2020, so that their profile would become available to industries looking for skilled personnel.

8.2 The Committee were informed that PMKVY 2016-20 has been extended till March’ 21. The last date for enrollment under the scheme was 31.03.2020 which was extended till 30th September, 2020 for NE region for enrollment of reverse migrants. Further, the Ministry were assisting GKRA by implementing PMKVY scheme only for reverse migrants in GKRA districts and targets for the same has been allocated under CSCM component of PMKVY. Since the budget available for PMKVY in year 2020-21, was enough only for completing training of existing commitments, the Ministry had proposed launch of PMKVY 3.0 for five years from 2020-21 to 2025-26. However, the Ministry of Finance had agreed to examine only a limited PMKVY proposal for the year 2020-21. Accordingly, draft EFC memorandum for PMKVY 3.0 (2020-21) has been

submitted for inter-ministerial consultation. Also, as per the direction of the Ministry of Finance, a separate scheme would be implemented during FY 2021-26 which would be co-terminus with the 15th Finance Commission period. Under the proposed PMKVY 3.0 (2020-21), based on the experience of implementation of PMKVY so far, there was a fundamental change in the approach of training. The basic orientation of the scheme was being changed from being supply driven to demand driven. District level planning shall be the fundamental instrument for its implementation. With the approval of this scheme, the Ministry expected that the new approach on skilling would be implemented from this year itself.

8.3 The Committee then desired to know about the specific attention paid towards the poor and migrant workers while imparting skill training. In reply, the Ministry submitted as under:

"PMKVY (2016-20) is for all sections of the society, and it is mainly the poorer sections of society who come forward to avail of training under the scheme. So far there was no separate emphasis on migrant workers in the scheme. But, in light of the migrant crisis caused due to the CoVID-19, a targeted skilling programme has been planned under PMKVY in the 116 districts which have been taken up under GKRA."

8.4 On being asked about the efforts made by the Ministry in providing skill based training on the needs of a particular area/people and the outcome thereof, the Ministry submitted as under:

"The skill based training has been designed in such a manner that it is industry driven and the industry decides on the job roles which need to be taken up for training based on industry demand. Under PMKVY (2016-20), training is being imparted in National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) aligned job roles developed by industry led Sector Skill Councils. The Training Centres apply for targets to conduct training in job roles which are relevant to the local needs / area of the centre established. PMKVY (2016-20) has two components known as Centrally Sponsored Centrally Managed (CSCM) being implemented by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and Centrally Sponsored State Managed (CSSM) being implemented by State Skill Development Missions of the States/ UTs popularly known as State- Engagement Component of PMKVY (2016-20). Under CSSM component of PMKVY 2016-20, 25% of the funds and

corresponding physical targets of PMKVY 2016-20 have been allocated to the States/UTs. The State engagement component provides flexibility to States/UTs to identify additional job roles as per the local needs to cater to local skill demand & aspirations. In addition to the above, under upcoming PMKVY 3.0, District Skill Committees have been entrusted with the responsibility of mobilizing candidates, identifying their aspiration, consolidating local job demands and facilitating batch creation based on local job opportunities and youth aspirations."

8.5 Further, it was decided to skill/ reskill/ upskill, the returnee migrants in job roles which are in demand in these districts, with focus being on those migrants who were likely to stay back in their home districts. Accordingly, a target of 3 lakh candidates (1.5 lakh each for Short Term Training and Recognition of Prior Learning) for skill development training under Centrally Sponsored Centrally Managed (CSCM) component of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) has been allocated for these 116 districts. The Ministry were focusing on District specific demand driven skilling for sustainable livelihood opportunities in these identified districts.

8.6 The Committee desired to have the details of the identified 116 Districts of the Six States under GKRA and the corresponding targets under Short Term Training (STT) and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). In reply, the Ministry furnished the following details:

The list of identified 116 districts of 6 States under GKRA and corresponding targets under Short Term Training (STT) and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is given below:

<b>District Wise Target under STT &amp; RPL for Migrant Workers</b>					
<b>S. No.</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>No. of Returned Migrants</b>	<b>STT Target</b>	<b>RPL Target</b>
1	Bihar	East Champaran	153022	3442	3442
2	Bihar	Katihar	141944	3195	3195
3	Bihar	Madhubani	124572	2808	2808
4	Bihar	Gaya	117294	2646	2646
5	Bihar	West Champaran	117200	2644	2644
6	Bihar	Darbhanga	103007	2327	2327
7	Bihar	Araria	100973	2252	2252
8	Bihar	Muzaffarpur	100672	2245	2245

<b>District Wise Target under STT &amp; RPL for Migrant Workers</b>					
<b>S. No.</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>No. of Returned Migrants</b>	<b>STT Target</b>	<b>RPL Target</b>
9	Bihar	Purnia	96948	2162	2162
10	Bihar	Saran	87190	1944	1944
11	Bihar	Rohtas	82739	1845	1845
12	Bihar	Samatipur	81793	1824	1824
13	Bihar	Banka	76693	1710	1710
14	Bihar	Khagaria	70449	1571	1571
15	Bihar	Begusarai	67904	1514	1514
16	Bihar	Supaul	64356	1435	1435
17	Bihar	Bhagalpur	63962	1426	1426
18	Bihar	Saharsa	63898	1425	1425
19	Bihar	Aurangabad	58265	1299	1299
20	Bihar	Buxar	56096	1251	1251
21	Bihar	Vaishali	55356	1234	1234
22	Bihar	Kishanganj	53793	1200	1200
23	Bihar	Madhepura	51449	1147	1147
24	Bihar	Sitamarhi	49294	1099	1099
25	Bihar	Bhojpur	48737	1087	1087
26	Bihar	Siwan	46806	1044	1044
27	Bihar	Patna	46312	1033	1033
28	Bihar	Nalanda	46215	1031	1031
29	Bihar	Gopalganj	42754	953	953
30	Bihar	Jamui	33645	750	750
31	Bihar	Nawada	32419	723	723
32	Bihar	Kaimur	25028	558	558
33	Jharkhand	Giridih	42634	951	951
34	Jharkhand	Hazaribagh	38134	850	850
35	Jharkhand	Godda	28733	641	641
36	Odisha	Ganjam	125587	2801	2801
37	Odisha	Balasore	35633	795	795
38	Odisha	Bolangir	30141	672	672
39	Odisha	Bhadrak	27801	620	620
40	Madhya Pradesh	Balaghat	102962	2296	2296
41	Madhya Pradesh	Jhabua	86397	1927	1927
42	Madhya Pradesh	Tikamgarh	79693	1777	1777
43	Madhya Pradesh	Chhatarpur	60931	1359	1359
44	Madhya Pradesh	Rewa	58676	1308	1308
45	Madhya Pradesh	Satna	57360	1279	1279
46	Madhya Pradesh	Sagar	52793	1177	1177
47	Madhya Pradesh	Panna	46880	1045	1045
48	Madhya Pradesh	Bhind	39723	886	886

<b>District Wise Target under STT &amp; RPL for Migrant Workers</b>					
<b>S. No.</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>No. of Returned Migrants</b>	<b>STT Target</b>	<b>RPL Target</b>
49	Madhya Pradesh	Alirajpur	39420	879	879
50	Madhya Pradesh	Betul	37946	846	846
51	Madhya Pradesh	Khandwa	37147	828	828
52	Madhya Pradesh	Shahdol	34708	774	774
53	Madhya Pradesh	Dhar	33228	741	741
54	Madhya Pradesh	Dindori	33075	738	738
55	Madhya Pradesh	Katni	32569	726	726
56	Madhya Pradesh	Chhindwara	31930	712	712
57	Madhya Pradesh	Seoni	31290	698	698
58	Madhya Pradesh	Mandla	30283	675	675
59	Madhya Pradesh	Khargone	29792	664	664
60	Madhya Pradesh	Shivpuri	29517	658	658
61	Madhya Pradesh	Barwani	28865	644	644
62	Madhya Pradesh	Sidhi	28485	635	635
63	Madhya Pradesh	Singrauli	28268	630	630
64	Uttar Pradesh	Siddharthnagar	161796	3608	3608
65	Uttar Pradesh	Prayagraj	104009	2319	2319
66	Uttar Pradesh	Gonda	93842	2093	2093
67	Uttar Pradesh	Maharajganj	86847	1937	1937
68	Uttar Pradesh	Bahraich	82853	1848	1848
69	Uttar Pradesh	Balrampur	71254	1589	1589
70	Uttar Pradesh	Jaunpur	69450	1549	1549
71	Uttar Pradesh	Hardoi	68972	1538	1538
72	Uttar Pradesh	Azamgarh	68801	1534	1534
73	Uttar Pradesh	Basti	64243	1433	1433
74	Uttar Pradesh	Gorakhpur	61638	1375	1375
75	Uttar Pradesh	Sultanpur	55534	1238	1238
76	Uttar Pradesh	Kushinagar	53987	1204	1204
77	Uttar Pradesh	Santkabirnagar	52887	1179	1179
78	Uttar Pradesh	Banda	51730	1154	1154
79	Uttar Pradesh	Ambedkarnagar	51338	1145	1145
80	Uttar Pradesh	Sitapur	46894	1046	1046
81	Uttar Pradesh	Varanasi	44906	1001	1001
82	Uttar Pradesh	Ghazipur	44069	983	983
83	Uttar Pradesh	Pratapgarh	43743	975	975
84	Uttar Pradesh	Rae bareli	42995	959	959
85	Uttar Pradesh	Ayodhya	39153	873	873
86	Uttar Pradesh	Deoria	37345	833	833
87	Uttar Pradesh	Amethi	35151	784	784
88	Uttar Pradesh	Lakhimpurkheri	34838	777	777

District Wise Target under STT & RPL for Migrant Workers					
S. No.	State	District	No. of Returned Migrants	STT Target	RPL Target
89	Uttar Pradesh	Unnao	33382	744	744
90	Uttar Pradesh	Shrawasti	33024	736	736
91	Uttar Pradesh	Fatehpur	30755	686	686
92	Uttar Pradesh	Mirzapur	30024	670	670
93	Uttar Pradesh	Jalaun	26958	601	601
94	Uttar Pradesh	Kaushambi	25438	567	567
95	Rajasthan	Pali	140023	3123	3123
96	Rajasthan	Udaipur	127493	2843	2843
97	Rajasthan	Jalore	105659	2356	2356
98	Rajasthan	Nagaur	86990	1940	1940
99	Rajasthan	Sirohi	76408	1704	1704
100	Rajasthan	Dungarpur	63387	1414	1414
101	Rajasthan	Sikar	48591	1084	1084
102	Rajasthan	Rajsamand	46345	1033	1033
103	Rajasthan	Barmer	46329	1033	1033
104	Rajasthan	Chittorgarh	45600	1017	1017
105	Rajasthan	Alwar	45377	1012	1012
106	Rajasthan	Karauli	42040	937	937
107	Rajasthan	Bikaner	41388	923	923
108	Rajasthan	Jodhpur	39820	888	888
109	Rajasthan	Bhilwara	38455	858	858
110	Rajasthan	Bharatpur	38355	855	855
111	Rajasthan	Banswara	32929	734	734
112	Rajasthan	Ajmer	32564	726	726
113	Rajasthan	Hanumangarh	30217	674	674
114	Rajasthan	Churu	27628	616	616
115	Rajasthan	Jhunjhunu	27497	613	613
116	Rajasthan	Jaipur	26047	581	581
<b>Total</b>			<b>6718384</b>	<b>150000</b>	<b>150000</b>

8.7 As regards the key update and status of training under PMKVY, the Committee were informed that the list of trainees and the job roles in which training would be done has been identified. Now the process of selection of training providers for providing this training in these specific job roles is being done. For this an Expression of Interest (EOI) for selection of training provider has been released on PMKVY official website on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2020.

8.8 The Committee were further informed that the district wise job role mapping was included in the EOI. The collation of job roles, basis updated recommendation from Districts, were done and the top 5 sectors and job roles were as mentioned below:

Top 5 job roles:	Top 5 sectors:
Mason General	Construction
Self Employed Tailor	Apparels
Sewing Machine Operator	Electronics & Hardware
Assistant Electrician	Agriculture
Organic Grower	Retail

8.9 In response to a specific query, the Committee were apprised that with the Ministry of Home Affairs permitting conduct of skill training from 21<sup>st</sup> of September, 2020 the following Timelines were put in place for implementation:

S. No.	Key Activities	Tentative Timelines
1	Release of notification for submission of EOI –under GKRA-Completed	24 <sup>th</sup> August 2020
2	Tentative timeline for initiation of training by TP	29 <sup>th</sup> September 2020

8.10 With regard to the actual progress made, the Ministry apprised that (i) District wise division of targets have been completed; (ii) six nodal officers have been appointed by the Ministry to handhold, monitor and facilitate District Administration; (iii) virtual training meetings held with State's Principle Secretaries and District Collectors; (iv) Data for 60 lakh migrants collected from 116 Districts uploaded; and (v) 2.64 lakh migrants shortlisted by 93 Districts for training.

8.11 In response to a specific query regarding the challenges faced in imparting skill trainings, the Ministry submitted that such challenges *inter-alia* included (i) challenges of informal sector which include Small Size of Enterprises, with low demand of skilled workers; Increasing employment of Contractual employees, with no incentive for employers in skilling them; Low level of Education and lack of vocational Skills; No consolidated mapping of employees in the sector; Difficulty in Mapping Skill Requirement and (ii) Economic challenges in skill Development initiatives which *inter-*

*alia* included Labour Market Mismatches: Native districts having limited opportunities matching with skills sets of reverse migrants; Economic Stress: economy of native districts under stress due to lesser remittances (since migrants have returned), has to cater to a larger population due to returning migrants with same resources; and healthcare related strain; etc.

## **II. LAUNCHING OF ASEEM (Aatmanirbhar Skilled Employee Employer Mapping)**

8.12 The Committee were informed that in order to have a directory of entire skilled workforce in the country, an integrated skill management information system namely ASEEM (Aatmanirbhar Skilled Employee Mapping) has been launched on 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2020. The skilled migrant workers were also being onboarded on this system. ASEEM portal has been designed as a directory of skilled workforce, with the objective of making available to the industry the skilled workforce they need anywhere in the country, thereby also facilitating better livelihood opportunities to the skilled manpower.

8.13 The Ministry further submitted as under:

"ASEEM portal is a directory of skilled personnel only, and the unskilled personnel are not targeted to be onboarded on the portal. The registering of skilled manpower is done from details of manpower available under various formal skilling system like ITI and NSDC. Hence, over a short time all those who are trained in NSQF aligned courses are likely to be onboarded."

8.14 In response to a specific query, the Ministry apprised that ASEEM portal would help skilled people to find sustainable livelihood opportunities. The Portal was launched on 10.07.2020 and about 24 lakh skilled candidates profiles have been uploaded, about 2.1 lakh jobs have been posted, 48 thousand jobs have been offered and about 5 thousand candidates have been placed.

8.15 In reply to another query regarding the mechanism put in place to enable an unskilled migrant feed his/her details on the ASEEM Portal, the Ministry stated that they would feed the name and telephone number of the migrants on the Portal.

8.16 The Ministry further submitted as follows:

"Out of the 97.73 lakh candidates onboarded onto ASEEM portal till 11.9.2020 close to 85 lakh candidate trainees are from PMKVY 2.0/ITI/Fee based programme. The remainnig are the candidates who have registered under GKRA initiatives and SWADES (Skilled Workers Arrival Database for Employment and Support) and as on 11.09.2020 candidates looking for Jobs were 5,50,808 and the total candidates offered Jobs were 3,19,772."

### **III. Jan Shikshan Sansthan Scheme (JSS)**

8.17 As regards JSSs, the Committee were informed that Jan Shikshan Sansthan took proactive role in the community based programme, on the spot needs and requirements during post-covid period. Due to rapid spread of pandemic disease COVID-19, JSSs spontaneously decided to help the community especially in their cleanliness practices through awareness programmes including health modules, production and distribution of masks, distribution of free dry ration and food packets, etc. JSSs had distributed 16.80 lakh masks free to the public and district administration. They had imparted training in preparation of sanitizer, liquid soap and masks, etc. They had also created awareness among the masses about corona virus. JSS functionaries propagated the message of social distancing and wearing mask to the public and JSS beneficiaries.

8.18 The Committee were further informed that 31 districts of Uttar Pradesh have been identified for imparting vocational training to migrant workers, who had returned to their native place during Covid 19. Out of these 31 districts, there were 24 JSSs functional in 22 districts. A meeting was held by the MSDE with the officials of the State Government on 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2020 through video conferencing, in which, it was decided that migrant workers with movement limitation/females should be linked to JSS for training. MSDE has already issued instructions to JSSs to impart training to the migrant workers if they are interested in training in operational areas. In compliance of this decision, district administration of some districts had called Directors of JSSs of their districts to train migrant workers. Some of the JSSs in Uttar Pradesh have already conducted survey of these migrant workers and the mapping of skill was going on. The

training was going to start from the last week of August or first week of September 2020 depending on the Covid 19 situation in the district.

8.19 In reply to a specific query of the Committee regarding the suspended JSSs, the Ministry submitted that the reasons of non-performance were periodically assessed through JSS dashboard, inspections and half yearly/yearly review meetings. As on date, Grants-in Aid of 27 JSSs has been withheld on account of either poor performance or irregularities noticed in their functioning. The Ministry has taken corrective actions to ensure effective implementation of the scheme by the JSSs as per the guidelines.

8.20 As regards the monitoring mechanism put in place to ensure effective functioning of the Scheme, the Ministry apprised that the Directorate of Jan Shikshan Sansthan (DJSS) has been set-up for the approval of the annual action plans of JSS, supervision and monitoring the performance of JSSs, recommendations for release of grants, providing technical and academic support to the scheme of Jan Shikshan Sansthan. The performance of the JSSs was being reviewed in the half-yearly and annual review meetings. The progress of JSSs was also periodically reviewed by the officers of the Ministry during their visits to States/UTs. The JSS activities and programme were monitored by the respective Board of Management of the Jan Shikshan Sansthans. The Members of the Board of Management included, among others, a Representative of the District Collector from the Skill Development or Rural Development Department; two representatives from the field of Skill Development; one principal of the local ITI/Polytechnic or his representative, two representatives representing local employers/ a nominee of the Joint Secretary of the MSDE, an Officer of the District Industries Centre and the Director JSS as Member Secretary. Members of the Board of Management members were being encouraged to visit the training centers. In addition, the Ministry were also bringing on board various district Skill Committees across States for effective monitoring of implementation of the scheme. The Ministry has also assigned the task of impact evaluation of the scheme to Indian Institute of Public Administration New Delhi, whose report would also be used for taking appropriate actions for the effective outcome of the scheme.

**8.21 The Committee note that the Government of India have launched Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyan (GKRA) to address the issues of returnee migrant workers and similarly affected rural population by Covid-19 pandemic in order to provide them immediate employment and livelihood opportunities by giving focus on 25 works in 116 selected districts across six States namely Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. In order to support GKRA, the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship have decided to impart skill development training to the migrants in the 116 selected districts in these six States. The Ministry are assisting GKRA by implementing PMKVY Scheme only for the reverse migrants in GKRA Districts and targets for the same have been allocated under the Centrally Sponsored Centrally Managed (CSCM) component of the PMKVY in light of the migrant crisis caused due to the Covid-19. It may be pertinent to mention here that the PMKVY (2016-20) has two components known as Centrally Sponsored Centrally Managed (CSCM) being implemented by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and Centrally Sponsored State Managed (CSSM) being implemented by State Skill Development Missions of the States/UTs popularly known as State Engagement Component of PMKVY. In this context, the Committee find that the Ministry have decided to skill/reskill/upskill the returnee migrants in job roles which are in demand in the said 116 Districts with focus being on those migrants who are likely to stay back in their home districts. Accordingly, a target of 3 lakh candidates (1.5 lakh each for Short Term Training and Recognition of Prior Learning) for skill development training under CSSM component of PMKVY has been allocated for the 116**

Districts. As regards the actual progress made, the Committee find that data for 60 lakh migrant workers collected from the 116 Districts have been uploaded and 2.64 lakh such workers have been shortlisted by 93 Districts for training. It is also encouraging to find that the Ministry, besides holding virtual meetings with the Principal Secretaries and District Collectors, have also appointed six nodal Officers to handhold and monitor the District Administration. While taking note of the various appreciable efforts made by the Ministry to impart skill training to the returnee migrants under the CSCM and CSSM components of the PMKVY, the Committee believe that substantial number of migrants out of the 2.64 lakh identified migrants must have been imparted skill development training by now and able to get employment and livelihood opportunities in the Districts. The Committee desire that since the focus is on District specific demand driven skill training, the Ministry should impress upon the remaining 23 District Administrations to identify and shortlist the returnee migrants in their respective Districts so as to skill/reskill/upskill them for getting sustainable livelihood opportunities.

8.22 The Committee note that in their endeavour to impart skill trainings to the poorer sections of the society including the migrant workers, the Ministry are facing a number of challenges which *inter-alia* include low demand for skilled workers, increasing employment of contractual workers with no incentive for employers in skilling them, difficulty in mapping skill requirement, labour market mismatches, economic stress, etc. The Committee call upon the Ministry to minutely look into the issues that impede the smooth skill training of the needy

sections of the society and take requisite corrective measures accordingly in tandem with other Ministries/Departments concerned so that the noble intent of skilling the poor people is truly achieved.

**8.23** The Committee observe that the Ministry have proposed to launch PMKVY 3.0 for five years from 2020-21 to 2025-26. However, the Ministry of Finance have agreed to examine only a limited PMKVY proposal for the year 2020-21 and accordingly draft EFC Memorandum for the said year has been submitted for inter-ministerial consultation. The Committee further note that as per the direction of the Ministry of Finance, a separate scheme would be implemented during 2021-26 which would be co-terminus with the 15th Finance Commission period. Since there is a fundamental change in the approach of training under PMKVY 3.0 and the basic orientation of the Scheme is being changed from being supply driven to demand driven, the Committee exhort the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship to constantly pursue the matter with the Ministry of Finance so that PMKVY 3.0 and the proposed separate Scheme are launched at an early date for the benefit of the poorer sections of the society, especially the inter-State migrant workers.

**8.24** The Committee are pleased to note that an integrated skill management information system namely ASEEM (Aatmanirbhar Skilled Employee Mapping) has been launched on 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2020 in order to have a directory of the entire skilled workforce in the Country, including the migrant workers. As a result as on 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2020 a total of 97.73 lakh skilled candidates' profiles have been uploaded, the number of candidates looking for jobs has been 5,50,808 out of

which 3,19,772 candidates have been offered jobs. The Committee are concerned to note the wide gap between the number of skilled candidates seeking job *vis-a-vis* the candidates actually offered jobs. As the objective of the ASEEM Portal is to make available to the industry the skilled workforce according to their need anywhere in the Country thereby also facilitating better livelihood opportunities to the skilled manpower, the Committee impress upon the Ministry to look into the issues that impede maximum placement of the interested skilled candidates registered on the Portal and take suitable corrective measures accordingly so that the gap is bridged and the objective truly achieved.

8.25 The Committee note that under the Jan Shikshan Sansthan Scheme the Ministry have issued instructions to such Sansthans to impart training to the Migrant workers if they are interested in training in operational areas. As a result, 31 Districts of Uttar Pradesh have been identified for imparting vocational training to the migrant workers who had returned to their native place during Covid-19. Out of these 31 Districts, 24 JSSs have been functional in 22 Districts and some of the JSSs have already conducted survey of the returnee migrant workers and the mapping of the skill training has been going on. As the Scheme aims to impart vocational training to the interested returnee migrant workers, the Committee impress upon the Ministry to accelerate the process of identification and training to such migrant workers not only in Uttar Pradesh but elsewhere too so as to enable them to earn sustainable livelihood.

8.26 The Committee appreciate that the Jan Shikshan Sanshtans have taken proactive role during the Covid-19 Pandemic through community based

awareness programmes including health modules, production and distribution of masks, distribution of free dry ration and food packets etc. However, the Committee are deeply concerned to find that Grants-in-aid to 27 JSSs across the Country has been withheld on account of either poor performance or irregularities noticed in their functioning. Though the Ministry have reportedly taken corrective actions to ensure effective implementation of the Scheme as per the Guidelines, the Committee desire that the monitoring mechanism evolved for the purpose be further strengthened and fortified, especially by associating the Public Representatives, so as to have a proper impact evaluation of the Scheme as well as to deter fraudulent activities resorted to by some JSSs.

New Delhi;  
10<sup>th</sup> February, 2021  
21 Magha, 1942 (Saka)

BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB  
CHAIRPERSON  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR**  
**(2019-20)**

**Minutes of the Twenty Eighth Sitting of the Committee**

The Committee sat on Monday, the 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2020 from 1100 hrs. to 1330 hrs. in Main Committee Room, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

**PRESENT**

**Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab – CHAIRPERSON**

**MEMBERS**

**LOK SABHA**

2. Shri Subhash Chandra Baheria
3. Shri Raju Bista
4. Shri Feroze Varun Gandhi
5. Shri Satish Kumar Gautam
6. Dr. Umesh G. Jadhav
7. Shri Dharmendra Kumar Kashyap
8. Shri Nayab Singh Saini
9. Shri Bhola Singh

**RAJYA SABHA**

10. Shri Rajaram

**SECRETARIAT**

1. Shri T.G. Chandrasekhar - Joint Secretary
2. Shri P.C. Choulda - Director
3. Shri D.R. Mohanty - Additional Director
4. Ms. Miranda Ingudam - Deputy Secretary
5. Shri Kulvinder Singh - Deputy Secretary

**Witnesses**  
**Representatives of the Ministry of Labour & Employment**

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>
1.	<b>Shri Heeralal Samariya,</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
2.	<b>Ms. Anuradha Prasad,</b>	<b>Additional Secretary</b>
3.	<b>Shri R.K. Gupta,</b>	<b>Joint Secretary</b>
4.	<b>Shri Ajay Tiwari,</b>	<b>Joint Secretary</b>

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee and the representatives of the Ministry of Labour & Employment to the sitting of the Committee, convened to have a briefing on 'Changes in Labour Laws effected by the State Governments during Lockdown (since last week of March, 2020); and 'Issues relating to Migrant Labour Force during Covid-19 Pandemic in India'. Drawing the attention of the witnesses to Direction 58 of the 'Directions by the Speaker' regarding confidentiality of the proceedings during deposition before the Parliamentary Committees, the Chairperson asked the Secretary, Labour & Employment to give an overview of the two issues mentioned above.

3. The Secretary, accordingly, briefed the Committee on the various issues involved with 'Labour Reforms and Inter-State Migrant Workers'. The Joint Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment also *inter-alia* highlighted background of Labour Reforms initiated by various State Governments and their impacts; issues of concern pertaining to the Inter-State Migrant Workers with specific emphasis on the need for a robust database and portability of social security benefits; financial and other relief meted out to the Building and Other Construction Workers during the pandemic; implementation of Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana etc.

4. The Members then raised certain specific queries pertaining to apparent contradictions of State Labour Reform initiatives with the Central Government's attempt towards Codification and standardisation of labour laws; Non-existent Data on Inter

State Migrant Workers (ISMW); limitations of using only Aadhar based identification for ISMW; need for portability of social security benefits to ISMWs; abject failure on the distribution of food grains to ISMWs during the pandemic due to lack of accurate ground level data; need for skill mapping while capturing data on ISMWs; need for robust monitoring mechanism and more accountability for optimum utilisation of Cess collected for BOCWs by State Welfare Boards; provision for Unemployment Insurance Allowance; more clarity on PM Garib Kalyan Yojana; Guidelines for ISMWs in Aspirational Districts; feasibility of portability of Migrants into MGNREGA Scheme; etc. The representatives of the Ministry responded to the queries raised by the Members.

5. As some points required detailed and statistical replies, the Chairperson asked the Secretary, Ministry of Labour & Employment to furnish written replies thereon. The Secretary assured to comply.

6. The Chairperson thanked the Secretary and other representatives of the Ministry for furnishing available information on the subject matter and responding to the queries of the Members.

(The witnesses then withdrew)

[A copy of the audio-recorded verbatim proceedings was kept on record]

**The Committee then adjourned.**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR**  
**(2019-20)**

**Minutes of the Thirtieth Eighth Sitting of the Committee**

The Committee sat on Friday, the 7<sup>th</sup> August, 2020 from 1100 hrs. to 1430 hrs. in Main Committee Room, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

**PRESENT**

**Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab – CHAIRPERSON**

**MEMBERS**

**LOK SABHA**

2. Shri Subhash Chandra Baheria
3. Shri Raju Bista
4. Shri Satish Kumar Gautam
5. Dr. Umesh G. Jadhav
6. Shri Dharmendra Kumar Kashyap
7. Dr. Virendra Kumar
8. Shri Nayab Singh Saini
9. Shri Bholu Singh

**RAJYA SABHA**

10. Shri Rajaram
11. Shri Neeraj Dangi
12. Shri Dushyant Gautam
13. Shri Vivek Thakur

**SECRETARIAT**

1. Shri T.G. Chandrasekhar - Joint Secretary
2. Shri P.C. Choulda - Director
3. Shri D.R. Mohanty - Additional Director
4. Ms. Miranda Ingudam - Deputy Secretary
5. Shri Kulvinder Singh - Deputy Secretary

## Witnesses

### **Representatives of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>
<b>Shri Praveen Kumar</b>	<b>Secretary, MSDE</b>
<b>Ms. Juthika Patankar</b>	<b>Additional Secretary, MSDE</b>
<b>Shri K.C. Gupta</b>	<b>Joint Secretary, MSDE</b>
<b>Shri Manish Kumar</b>	<b>CEO, NSDC</b>

### **Representatives of the Ministry of Rural Development**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>
<b>Shri Nagendra Nath Sinha</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
<b>Shr Prasant Kumar</b>	<b>Special Secretary</b>
<b>Shri Rohit Kumar</b>	<b>Joint Secretary</b>

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee and the representatives of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship to the sitting of the Committee, convened to have a briefing on the Subject 'Social Security and Welfare Measures for Inter-State Migrant, Unorganised and Informal Sector Workers'. Drawing the attention of the witnesses to Direction 58 of the 'Directions by the Speaker' regarding confidentiality of the proceedings during deposition before the Parliamentary Committees, the Chairperson asked the Secretary, Skill Development & Entrepreneurship to give an overview on the issues pertaining to social security of the migrant and unorganised workers.

3. The Secretary, accordingly, briefed the Committee on various issues involving the Indian Labour Market and its skilling requirements with particular emphasis on the emerging challenges arising out of Covid impact for addressing the needs of migrant workers. The challenges of informal sector with an estimated 42.2 crore workers

amounting to 90.55 percent of the total labour force, which bore the brunt of impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic were also highlighted by the representatives of the Ministry. The Committee were also apprised of the Labour Market Mismatches; Economic stress due to returning Migrants; lack of opportunities in Districts where reverse migration took place; Uncertain Industrial Sentiment; Weak Institutional Capacity for training ecosystem; need for changes in Skill Training Value Chain activities due to requirement of social distancing; limitations of online programmes, constraints faced in operational preparedness at Training Centres; inadequate base of organised manufacturing etc. The representatives of the Ministry also gave a brief account of the performance and achievements under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) with special emphasis on the skilling of migrant worker under the PMKVY and the progress of Atmanirbhar Skilled Employee-Employer Mapping (ASEEM) Portal for skill matching as well as the 'Apprenticeships Programme' and Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS).

4. The Members then raised certain specific queries on the issues highlighted. The representatives of the Ministry responded to the queries raised by Members. As some points required detailed and statistical data, the Chairperson asked the Secretary to furnish written replies thereon within 10 to 15 days. The Secretary assured to comply.

5. The Chairperson thanked the Secretary and other representatives of the Ministry for furnishing the available information on the subject matter and responding to the queries of the Members.

(The witnesses then withdrew)

6. The representatives of the Ministry of Rural Development were then called in and the Chairperson welcomed them to the sitting.

7. Drawing the attention of the witnesses to Direction 58 of the 'Directions by the Speaker' regarding confidentiality of the proceedings during deposition before Parliamentary Committees, the Chairperson asked the Secretary, Rural Development to give an overview of the issues pertaining to generation of work for Migrant Labours and Returnee Migrant Labours in rural areas under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA, Pradhan

Mantri Awaas Yojana, Gramin and Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyan. The Secretary accordingly, highlighted *inter-alia* State-wise performance of MGNREGA with the National Person Days of Work Generated in 2020. Initiatives highlighted by the Ministry included *inter-alia* call for strict adherence to guidelines; priority to irrigation and water conservation works; promoting water conservation and water management; constructions of Gram Panchayat in Mission Mode; Fodder Development Works; Promotion of Nutri-Gardens etc. The representatives also apprised the Committee of the progress made in the PMAY - Gramins and Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyan (GGRA).

8. The Members then raised certain specific queries to which the representatives responded to. The Chairperson asked the Secretary to furnish written replies within 10 to 15 days on various details sought by the Members and also those where statistical data were to be furnished. The Secretary assured to comply.

9. The Chairperson thanked the Secretary and other representatives of the Ministry for furnishing the available information on the subject matter and responding to the queries of the Members.

(The witnesses then withdrew)

[A copy of the audio-recorded verbatim proceedings was kept on record]

**The Committee then adjourned.**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR**  
**(2019-20)**

**Minutes of the Thirty First Sitting of the Committee**

The Committee sat on Friday, the 17<sup>th</sup> August, 2020 from 1100 hrs. to 1430 hrs. in Main Committee Room No.2, Parliament House Annexe- Extension Building, New Delhi.

**PRESENT**

**Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab – CHAIRPERSON**

**MEMBERS**

**LOK SABHA**

2. Shri Subhash Chandra Baheria
3. Shri Raju Bista
4. Shri Satish Kumar Gautam
5. Dr. Umesh G. Jadhav
6. Shri Dharmendra Kumar Kashyap
7. Dr. Virendra Kumar
8. Shri Bhola Singh

**RAJYA SABHA**

9. Shri Rajaram
10. Shri M. Shanmugam
11. Shri Dushyant Gautam
12. Shri Vivek Thakur

**SECRETARIAT**

1. Shri T.G. Chandrasekhar - Joint Secretary
2. Shri P.C. Choulda - Director
3. Shri D.R. Mohanty - Additional Director
4. Ms. Miranda Ingudam - Deputy Secretary
5. Shri Kulvinder Singh - Deputy Secretary

## Witnesses

### **Representatives of the Ministry Of Consumer Affairs, Food And Public Distribution**

Sl.No	Name	Designation
1.	Shri Sudhanshu Pandey	Secretary
2.	Shri Edwin Kulbhushan Majhi	Addl. Secretary
3.	Shri S. Jagannathan	Joint Secretary
4.	Ms. Manisha Sensarma	Economic Advisor

### **Representatives of the Ministry Of Housing & Urban Affairs**

Sl.No	Name	Designation
1.	Shri Durga Shanker Mishra	Secretary, MoHUA
2.	Shri Amrit Abhijat	Joint Secretary & Mission Director (HFA)
3.	Shri Sanjay Kumar	Joint Secretary (NULM)
4.	Shri Raj Kumar Gautam	Director

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee and the representatives of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution (Department of Food and Public Distribution) to the sitting of the Committee, convened to have a briefing on the Subject 'Social Security and Welfare Measures for Inter-State Migrant, Unorganised and Informal Sector Workers'. Drawing the attention of the witnesses to Direction 58 of the 'Directions by the Speaker' regarding confidentiality of the proceedings during deposition before the Parliamentary Committees, the Chairperson asked the Secretary, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution (Department of Food and Public Distribution) to give an overview on the issues pertaining to social security of the migrant and unorganised workers.

3. The Secretary, accordingly, gave an overview of various issues pertaining to the food security response of the Government to the Covid-19 crisis with focus on the

Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PM-GKAY); Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme (ANBS) and implementation of One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC). The representatives of the Department of Food and Public Distribution further gave a detailed power-point presentation on the supply and distribution of free food grains to Migrants/ Stranded migrants for two months under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme fully funded by the Government of India wherein about 8 crore migrants were expected to be benefitted who are non ration card holders *i.e* neither covered under the National Food Security Act nor any State PDS Scheme. The representatives further highlighted the distribution status under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme (ANBS) as on 5.8.2020; the status and implementation of the Government's 'One Nation One Ration Card' Plan; a technology driven reform for empowering migrants to access PDS foodgrains from any fair price shop (FPS) in the Country through Nation-wide portability of NFSA Ration Cards through Biometric / Aadhar authentication on an electronic Point of Sales (ePOS) device installed at the FPS; etc.

4. The Members then raised certain specific queries on various issues and the representatives of the Ministry responded to them. As some points required detailed and statistical data, the Chairperson asked the Secretary to furnish written replies thereon within 10 days. The Secretary assured to comply.

5. The Chairperson thanked the Secretary and other representatives of the Ministry for furnishing the available information on the subject matter and responding to the queries of the Members.

(The witnesses then withdrew)

6. The representatives of the Ministry of Urban Development were then called in and the Chairperson welcomed them to the sitting. Drawing the attention of the witnesses to Direction 58 of the 'Directions by the Speaker' regarding confidentiality of the proceedings during deposition before Parliamentary Committees, the Chairperson asked the Secretary, Urban Development to give an overview of the issues pertaining to affordable Rental Housing Complexes (ARHCs) for ease of living for Urban Migrants/ Poor which was recently launched as a sub-scheme under the Pradhan Mantri Awas

Yojna- Urban to provide dignified living to urban migrants/ poor near their workplace, at affordable rent.

7. The representatives of the Ministry accordingly highlighted the progress made and the estimated number of various types of houses which were to be constructed/ released. While dwelling on the background and objectives of the ARHCs to address the vision of 'Aatma Nirbhar Bharat' by creating affordable rental housing not only to provide a dignified living for urban migrants/ poor but also to create conducive ecosystem for public/ private entities to leverage investment in rental housing, the representatives also apprised the Committee that the projects were to be implemented in all Statutory Towns, Notified, Planning areas and areas under Special Area/ Development Authorities/ Industrial Development Authorities by March, 2022 under a two- pronged strategy for implementation *viz*, converting existing Government funded vacant houses into ARHCs under PPP mode or by Public agencies and construction, operation and maintenance of ARHCs by Private / Public Entities on their own available vacant land. The Committee were also apprised of the funding pattern under two models *viz*, Investment by Concessionaire and also by Entities

8. The Members then raised certain specific queries to which the representatives responded to. The Chairperson asked the Secretary to furnish written replies within 10 days on various details sought by the Members and also on those where statistical data were to be furnished. The Secretary assured to comply.

9. The Chairperson thanked the Secretary and other representatives of the Ministry for furnishing the available information on the subject matter and responding to the queries of the Members.

(The witnesses then withdrew)

[A copy of the audio-recorded verbatim proceedings was kept on record]

**The Committee then adjourned.**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR**

**(2019-20)**

**Minutes of the Thirty Second Sitting of the Committee**

The Committee sat on Monday, the 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2020 from 1100 hrs. to 1400 hrs. in Main Committee Room C, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

**PRESENT**

**Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab – CHAIRPERSON**

**MEMBERS**

**LOK SABHA**

2. Shri Subhash Chandra Baheria
3. Shri Raju Bista
4. Shri Dayakar Pasunoori
5. Shri Dharmendra Kumar Kashyap
6. Dr. Virendra Kumar
7. Adv. Dean Kuriakose
8. Shri Nayab Singh Saini
9. Shri Bhola Singh

**RAJYA SABHA**

10. Shri Rajaram
11. Shri Dushyant Gautam
12. Shri Vivek Thakur

**SECRETARIAT**

1. Shri T.G. Chandrasekhar - Joint Secretary
2. Shri P.C. Choulda - Director
3. Shri D.R. Mohanty - Additional Director
4. Ms. Miranda Ingudam - Deputy Secretary
5. Shri Kulvinder Singh - Deputy Secretary

## Witnesses

### **Representatives of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**

Sl.No	Name	Designation
1.	Dr. Indu Bhushan	CEO, NHA
2.	Smt. Aarti Ahuja	Addl. Secretary
3.	Dr. Sunil Kumar	DGHS
4.	Shri Lav Agarwal	Joint Secretary
5.	Shri Vikas Sheel	Joint Secretary

### **Representatives of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution (Department of Consumer Affairs)**

Sl.No	Name	Designation
1.	Ms. Leena Landan	Secretary
2.	Ms. Nidhi Khare	Addl. Secretary
3.	Shri S.K. Chadha	Managing Director, NAFED
4.	Shri Vineet Mathur	Joint Secretary (CA)
5.	Shri Anupam Mishra	Joint Secretary (CA)
6.	Shri Kamkhenthang Guite	Economic Advisor (CA)

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee and the representatives of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to the sitting of the Committee, convened to have a briefing on the Subject 'Social Security and Welfare Measures for Inter-State Migrant Workers'. Drawing the attention of the witnesses to Direction 58 of the 'Directions by the Speaker' regarding confidentiality of the proceedings during deposition before the Parliamentary Committees, the Chairperson asked the Addl. Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to give an overview on the issues pertaining to social security of the migrant workers.

3. The Secretary, accordingly, gave an overview of various issues pertaining to the strategic intervention for Covid-19 Management *i.e* testing, surveillance, logistic support, hospital preparedness, capacity building etc. The representatives of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare further gave a detailed power-point presentation *inter-alia* highlighting the initiatives taken on the multilevel institutional response, formulation of strategy and its review, integrity response, Centre- State coordination, community surveillance and containment measures, mapping of patients to care centres and hospital infrastructure upgradation. On the issue specific to migrant labour, the representatives briefed the Committee about access to medical care, screening and quarantine measures, mental health and physical safety of migrant labourers.

4. The Members then raised certain specific queries on various issues and the representatives of the Ministry responded to them. As some points required detailed and statistical data, the Chairperson asked the Secretary to furnish written replies thereon within 10 days. The Secretary assured to comply.

5. The Chairperson thanked the Secretary and other representatives of the Ministry for furnishing the available information on the subject matter and responding to the queries of the Members.

(The witnesses then withdrew)

6. The representatives of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution (Department of Consumer Affairs) were then called in and the Chairperson welcomed them to the sitting. Drawing the attention of the witnesses to Direction 58 of the 'Directions by the Speaker' regarding confidentiality of the proceedings during deposition before Parliamentary Committees, the Chairperson asked the Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs to give an overview of the issues pertaining to Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojna (PMGKAY) and Aatmanibhar Bharat Yojna (ANBY).

7. The representatives of the Ministry accordingly highlighted the salient features of the above mentioned two schemes, progress and challenges encountered during implementation of the Schemes, status of buffer stock in various States, pulses milling/ upgrading infrastructure across States, supply chain issues related to variety of pulses,

combination and deployment of all possible modes of transport for distribution of stocks etc. The representatives of the Ministry also attended to various queries on the subject matter, as posed by the Members.

8. The Chairperson thanked the Secretary and other representatives of the Ministry for furnishing the available information on the subject matter and responding to the queries of the Members.

(The witnesses then withdrew)

[A copy of the audio-recorded verbatim proceedings was kept on record]

**The Committee then adjourned.**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR**  
**(2020-21)**

**Minutes of the Ninth Sitting of the Committee**

The Committee sat on Tuesday, the 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 from 1430 hrs. to 1530 hrs. in Committee Room 'B', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

**PRESENT**

**Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab, Chairperson**

**Members**

**Lok Sabha**

2. Shri Subhash Chandra Baheria
3. Shri Dayakar Pasunoori
4. Shri Dharmendra Kumar Kashyap
5. Dr. Virendra Kumar
6. Shri Sanjay Sadashivrao Mandlik
7. Shri D. Ravikumar
8. Shri Nayab Singh Saini
9. Shri Ganesh Singh

**Rajya Sabha**

10. Shri Elamaram Kareem
11. Dr. Banda Prakash
12. Shri M. Shanmugam
13. Shri Neeraj Dangi
14. Shri Dushyant Gautam
15. Shri Vivek Thakur
16. Shri Naresh Bansal

**SECRETARIAT**

1. Shri T.G. Chandrasekhar - Joint Secretary
2. Shri D.R. Mohanty - Director
3. Ms. Miranda Ingudam - Deputy Secretary
4. Shri Kulvinder Singh - Deputy Secretary

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee, convened for consideration and adoption of the Draft Report on the Subject 'Social Security and Welfare Measures for Inter-State Migrant Workers'.

3. Giving an overview of the important Observations/Recommendations contained in the draft Report, the Chairperson, solicited the views/suggestions of the Members. Accordingly, the Members gave some suggestions/inputs to the draft Report. After some discussions the draft Report was adopted by the Committee with some modification/amendments.

4. The Committee then authorized the Chairperson to finalise the draft Report in light of the factual verification, if any, and present the same to both the Houses on 11<sup>th</sup> February, 2021.

**The Committee then adjourned.**

**OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE AND THE MINISTRIES/DEPARTMENTS RESPONSIBLE FOR TAKING ACTION**

S.No.	Rec. Para No.	Text of Observation/Recommendation	Ministry/ Department Responsible
1.	2.30	<p>The Committee note that the definition of 'Inter-State Migrant Worker' has since been modified to include migrant workers moving to a Destination State for employment on their own volition, besides Migrant Workers employed through contractors. The Committee have been apprised that, in line with the recommendations made by the Labour Committee, steps taken to alleviate the hardship faced by Migrant Labourers include, inter-alia, setting up a portal to create a database for Migrant Workers with the facility of voluntary submission of data by self-employed persons moving to a 'Destination State', for which Aadhar would be a basic requirement; incorporation of a separate Chapter on Inter-State Migrant Workers in the Social Security Code; addition of an enabling provision in the laws for making rules for setting up toll free helpline numbers; carrying out a study on 'Safety and Health of Migrant Workers'; providing for the Central Government to specify the wages applicable to Inter-State Migrant Workers; providing for payment of a lumpsum allowance for to and fro journey to the native place of Migrant Workers; formulation of Schemes by the appropriate Government for portability of benefits of Public Distribution Scheme (PDS) and other benefits as are available to BOC Workers in their native States; extension of benefits to migrant workers as are available to Workers in establishments covered under ESIC, EPFO, etc. Further, portability of benefits of PDS for Inter-State Migrant Workers either in his native State or the destination State where he is employed has been enabled for in terms of Section 62 of the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions, Code, 2020. The Committee note that there are no reliable or authentic figures on the total number of Inter-State Migrant Workers. The figures on the number of migrant workers who returned to their home States following the outbreak of the Pandemic as furnished to the Committee are based on the information received by the Ministry from the States concerned. Further, as per the data furnished by the Ministry, an estimated 2.58 crore workers are reportedly registered as Building and Other Construction Workers with various State Governments, a majority of them being Migrant Workers. In addition to providing food relief packages to around 30 lakh workers, the Committee have been apprised that an amount of Rs.5,000/- crore has been transferred to aid 1.83 crore Building and Other Construction Workers. Also, under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, the relief provided following the outbreak of the Covid Pandemic included, remitting 24% of wages directly to the EPF Accounts of low wage earning members drawing less than Rs.15,000 in the beneficiary establishments; providing for extending a special Covid- Advance from the EPF accounts whereby an amount equivalent to 75% of EPF balance or three months wages, whichever is lower could be drawn - on this count,</p>	Ministry of Labour & Employment

		<p>as on 10.07.2020, an amount of Rs.6,987 crore was reportedly disbursed to 25.40 lakh members; reducing the statutory contribution from 12% to 10% of wages and Dearness Allowance under Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme thereby benefitting 4.3 crore employers across 6.5 lakhs establishments etc. Also, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs launched the SVA Nidhi Scheme for the benefit of 50 lakh street vendors by way of providing collateral free working capital loan upto Rs.10,000/- for compensating lost livelihood due to the Pandemic and the lockdown. The Committee have also been apprised that in order to boost employment and livelihood opportunities for migrant workers returning to the villages in the wake of Covid outbreak, the Government launched the Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan on 20.06.2020 focussing on durable rural infrastructure and providing modern facilities like internet; skill mapping of rural migrant labour; extended Anganwadi Services to Children of Migrant labours; sanctioned 700 Food Processing/Presentation and infrastructure projects for employment generation for Migrant Labourers; identified ongoing / new works of road construction for Migrant Labours; and Set up of 30 Biotech-Kisan hubs in the Country to help Migrant Workers to earn livelihood through farming. The Committee note that a number of appreciable initiatives have been launched by the Government, which are aimed at benefitting the Migrant Labour. The Committee, however, note in this regard that neither any guidelines were issued nor enforced for distribution of relief material to stranded Migrant Labourers. Also, there has been no element of Social Audit prescribed. The absence of reliable and authentic data/information on the numbers of migrant workforce and their movement back to their home States following the outbreak of the Pandemic has apparently impacted the relief and rehabilitation measures. There has also been a need for enhanced transparency in the modalities and procedures involved in the distribution of Relief material to Migrant Labour and prescription of an element of audit both at the Department level and Social Audit by the Stakeholders. In short, since without identification and collation of data of the inter-State migrant workers no social security Scheme can be effectively extended to them, the Committee exhort the Ministry to persuade the native as well as the destination States to identify, collect and periodically update the record of such workers.</p>	
2.	2.31	<p>The Committee note with satisfaction that the existing unemployment insurance Schemes viz. Rajiv Gandhi Shramik Kalyan Yojana (RGSKY) and Atal Beemit Vyakti Kalyan Yojana (ABVKY) covers employees who are under the ambit of the ESI Scheme. The Committee, however, note with concern that a large number of migrant labourers especially in the unorganised sector are still left out of the ambit of the ESI Scheme thereby depriving them out of any unemployment insurance or allowances when they needed the most during the pandemic. Though concerted efforts have been made by the Government by way of extension of the ABVKY for one year till 30.06.2021 in order to provide benefit to insured persons who lost employment due to Covid-19 Pandemic alongwith relaxation and increase in quantum of relief, etc., the Committee observe that the benefits would be accessible to only a handful of Migrants labourers who are fortunate enough to be covered under the ESI Scheme. The Committee are,</p>	-do-

		therefore, of the considered opinion that the steps envisaged in the Social Security Code, 2020 to extend coverage of the Code to hitherto unorganised workers who are still left out of the ambit of ESI Scheme is a welcome step and needs speedy implementation and enforcement.	
3.	2.32	The Committee have, time and again reiterated the need for a credible real time database of all workers including unorganised workers as well as Inter-State Migrant Workers. While the initiative taken for creating an online Portal on Inter-State Migrant Workers with real time data updates is laudable, the Committee nevertheless, wish to point out that without a credible database, efforts to give relief in such unprecedented times of a Global Pandemic like the current one, may not be completely successful. The Committee also note that the information on the online portal on Migrant Workers also proposes to include aspects relating to trends of migration of workers and the Labour Bureau and NITI Aayog are involved in studying the issues. The Committee desire that the initiative be given the needed impetus, thrust and support so that the Nation can have a credible real time database of Inter-State Migrant Workers.	-do-
4.	2.33	The Committee are pleased to take note of the Government's proposal, as contained in the Finance Minister's 2021 Budget Speech, to launch a portal that will collect relevant information on gig, building and construction workers among others in order to further extend the Government's efforts towards the unorganised labour force, particularly the migrant workers. The Committee desire that the process of launching the portal be expedited in the right earnest so as to facilitate the formulation of Health, Food, Skill, Insurance and Credit Schemes for the migrant workers including those working in strategic sectors and difficult areas.	-do-
5.	2.34	The Committee note that Advisories were issued to States/UTs pertaining to welfare of Migrant Workers returning to destination States in the backdrop of Covid-19 Pandemic. The mechanisms that were put in place have apparently aided in providing a synergy in discharging the obligations cast on both the home States as well as States where the Migrant Workers are engaged/employed. In the light of the shortcomings or lacunae that may have come to light in undertaking relief and rehabilitation measures following the large-scale reverse migration, the Committee expect that the administrative mechanisms/systems available both at the Central and the State levels for tackling serious crises of the kind witnessed are addressed by taking appropriate measures.	-do-
6.	3.28	The Committee note that as part of the Economic Response of the Government to Covid-19 Pandemic, the Department of Consumer Affairs have been entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining, provisioning and distribution of pulses to beneficiaries including the stranded migrant labours under the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) through two welfare schemes viz. Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKAY) and Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme (ANBS) aimed at ameliorating the hardships faced by the poor due to livelihood disruptions caused by the Pandemic. The Committee further note that under the PMGKAY Scheme, five varieties of pulses viz. Tur, Urad, Moong, Masoor and Chana were to be provisioned at the rate of one kg per household per month to 19.4 crore beneficiary households for three continuous months	Department of Consumer Affairs (Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution)

		<p>from April 2020 till June 2020 which was further extended for another five months i.e. from July to November 2020 for provision of only 1 kg chana per household per month through NAFED which is the Central nodal agency for this programme. The constraints/challenges faced by the Department in accomplishing the targets set under the Scheme include <i>inter-alia</i> task of distribution of pulses being handled by the Department for the first time; allocation of five varieties of pulses in different forms as per choice of States; processing of raw pulses and delivery to designated points as decided by States; unprecedented volume of milling for distribution; restricted movements due to Nationwide lockdown affecting availability of labour and milling services, arrangements of transport facility viz. Trucks, Rakes, Ships, Airlifting, etc; and syncing pulse distribution with rice/wheat distribution cycle in States/UTs. The Committee also find that the work of distribution entailed a complex seven step process viz. collection of choice of pulses with identification of State receiving points; tender and finalisation of Agency for milling; shifting of raw pulses from NAFED godowns by Dal Mills; Milling, cleaning and packing by Dal Mills; transfer of pulses to State receiving points; transport of pulses to Districts/fair price shops; and distribution to final beneficiaries. The Committee appreciate that despite the above constraints and complex process due to nationwide lockdown and resultant restriction in movements affecting the availability of labour and transport facilities for lifting and distribution of the pulses in time to the needy persons, as on 17.08.2020, against the three months allocation of 5.82 LMT, entire quantity has been made available to State/UTs out of which 5.34 LMT (91.65%) had already been distributed. It is equally encouraging to note that under the extended PMGKAY i.e. from July to November, 2020, 89000 MT of Chana has already been distributed by the States as part of free distribution of one kg Chana to 19.4 crore households by November, 2020. The Committee trust that with the progressive phasing out of the lockdown process which might have eased the initial problems/limitations to a considerable extent, the target of provisioning /distribution of pulses to the intended beneficiaries must have been achieved by the end of November, 2020. The Committee also desire that the Department of Consumer Affairs draw suitable lessons and remain adequately prepared for any such future unforeseen eventualities and assignments.</p>	
7.	3.29	<p>According to the Department, since pulses were not provided under the regular PDS system unlike foodgrains and wheat which are drawn from available FCI godowns, the pulses had to be supplied from NAFED Headhold Warehouses with processing and milling as required by truck or rake or other available means of transport making it a delivery based system wherein NAFED supplies to the identified delivery points which in turn released the same to fair price shops. As regards the monitoring mechanism, the Committee note that five officers of the Ministry were allocated zones of group of States/UTs where mid-term course correction and interventions were made as per feedback received so as to sync the availability of pulses with the PDS cycle. The Committee hope that with the much needed mid-term course corrections, monitoring and interventions made by the Central Government from time to time, the States/UTs are adequately enabled and</p>	-do-

		empowered for faster and targeted distribution of pulses to all the poor and migrant beneficiaries so as to mitigate the hardships caused during the Pandemic. The Committee also desire that both the quality and quantity of the pulses have to be assured while delivering them to the beneficiaries.	
8.	3.30	The Committee note that under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme (ANBS) for Migrant Labours who are not covered under NFSA, 2013 or are without ration card in the State/UT in which they were stranded, whole chana was provided at the rate of 1 kg per household per month for two months i.e. May-June, 2020, free of cost. The Committee find that as on 17.08.2020, against a total allocation of 33,699.31 MT whole chana for the two months, 15,963.63 MT had already been distributed by States/UTs to the stranded migrant labourers benefitting about 1.02 crore house hold families of migrant labours. Some of the challenges faced by the Department during the implementation of ANB Scheme included <i>inter-alia</i> dependence on States for identification of migrant workers; migrant workers stranded on the way from place of work to place of domicile; etc. It is a matter of serious concern to note the Department's affirmation that the distinction between beneficiaries as per the NFSA criteria per se and Migrant labours who were the intended beneficiaries of the ANB Scheme got blurred at some point of time. The Committee are deeply perturbed that due to lack of a credible database, the intended relief might not have reached migrant labourers in time resulting in utter chaos and confusion. The Committee hope that the Covid-19 Pandemic and the resultant challenges and lacunae observed in the system in the distribution of instant and immediate relief to the needy migrant labours are duly taken note of and appropriate lessons learned to iron out the systemic flaws and inadequacies so as to strengthen the preparedness to effectively deal with any such emergent situations. The Committee further urge that a credible database of unorganised workers especially that of migrant labourers be put in place with a sense of urgency so as to ensure seamless delivery of relief packages to them at the time of distress.	-do-
9.	4.51	The Committee note that the Department of Food and Public Distribution, are primarily mandated with the policy objective to ensure food security for the Country through timely and efficient procurement and distribution of food grains. Pursuant to that the Department have ventured to ensure food security for the poor and vulnerable beneficiaries/households and migrants/stranded migrants in the backdrop of COVID-19 Global Pandemic causing economic disruptions worldwide through implementation of three Schemes viz. (i) Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PM-GKAY) with additional free-of-cost 5kg per person per month foodgrain for all beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) over and above their monthly entitlements; (ii) Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme (ANBS) with the provision of 5 kg per month per person free of cost foodgrains to Migrants/Stranded Migrants; and (iii) One Nation One Ration Card Scheme (ONORC) with the intention to empower migrant beneficiaries to access subsidized foodgrains under NFSA through nationwide portability of ration cards. The Committee appreciate that the Department have, through their responsive and timely intervention made concerted efforts during the most difficult time of nationwide	Department of Food and Public Distribution (Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution)

		<p>Lockdown to ensure food security to the most needy people of the Country. The Committee, however, find that despite the best efforts made by the Department, complaints poured in regarding inaccessibility of basic foodgrains especially by Migrant Labours who were stranded in many States without access to work or food. It was heart rending to observe the movement of thousands of Migrant Labours all across the Country trying to go back to their home States on foot during the national lockdown period in dire desperation due to lack of any guarantee of work/food security at the places where they were stranded. While taking note of the noble intent of the Government to formulate the three Schemes to ensure food security to all vulnerable sections of people especially the migrant workers to ameliorate the hardships caused to them due to economic disruptions caused by COVID-19 pandemic, the Committee are however, of the considered opinion that the impact and efficacy of the efforts made would have been much productive had there been better coordination and organised monitoring.</p>	
10.	4.52	<p>The Committee note that under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojna (Phase-I), the Department had initially allocated a total of about 120 Lakh Metric Tons (LMT) foodgrain (Rice/Wheat) to all States/Union Territories for additional free-of-cost food grain distribution to more than 80 crore beneficiaries covered under the National Food Security Act, 2013 at the scale of 5 kg per person per month for a period of three months (April-June, 2020) over and above regular monthly NFSA food grain entitlements. The package was further extended for a period of 5 more months (July-November, 2020) as PM-GKAY (Phase-II) with allocation of another 201 Lakh MT of foodgrains keeping in view the need for continuous food security support to the poor and the needy. The Committee find that as on 10.10.2020, in Phase-I of PM-GKAY i.e. April to June 2020, all States/UTs combined have lifted about 118 LMT (99%) of three months foodgrains from the FCI/Central Pool with reported distribution of over 111.52 LMT (93.5%) foodgrains and in Phase-II, all States/UTs combined have distributed 90.9% (36.62 LMT), 91.5% (36.87 LMT), 79% (31.64 LMT), 10% (4.04 LMT) foodgrains quota for the months of July, August, September and October, 2020 respectively. According to the Department, except for a few States viz. Puducherry, Chandigarh; Punjab; West Bengal; Bihar and Sikkim where distribution of foodgrains under PM-GKAY has been delayed due to adjustment of distribution cycles/calendar of regular NFSA foodgrains and PM-GKAY foodgrains and other logistical constraints, the overall progress of lifting and distribution of foodgrains in most States/UTs has been satisfactory. The Committee are, however, concerned to note that in some States, the distribution in Phase-2 of PM-GKAY was low. For instance, in the State of Punjab as well as the UTs of Puducherry and Chandigarh, the total distribution of grains was low, which is ostensibly on account of the plan to distribute five months grains in one go. The Committee are of the considered view that the very purpose and intent of the Scheme/ to provide timely food to the targeted beneficiaries especially the migrant labours are defeated when foodgrains are not periodically and continuously made available to vulnerable sections of the society. In this context, the Committee are of the firm opinion that if due to genuine constraints, monthly distribution as scheduled could not be done, then, at least efforts should have been made for bi-</p>	-do-

		monthly distribution as was done by the State of Sikkim where 62% of Phase-II distribution has been achieved for July-Sept, 2020. The Committee desire the Department to draw lessons and act in unison with the State Governments to ensure in future that food grains are not allowed to be piled up for months together depriving the needy people of regular supply.	
11.	4.53	The Committee note that as on 16.10.2020, 1140 complaints from various sources were forwarded to States concerned for further appropriate action at their end at the earliest. The Committee further note that the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) envisages operation under the joint responsibility of the Central and State/UT Governments with the Central Government responsible for procurement, allocations and transportation of foodgrains upto the designated depots of FCI whereas operational responsibilities for allocation and distribution of food grains within the States/UTs, identification of eligible beneficiaries/families, issuance of ration cards to them and supervision and monitoring of functioning of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) remain with the State/UT Government concerned. The Committee observe that even though the primary responsibility of timely distribution of food grains to ensure uninterrupted access to foodgrains by the needy during the Pandemic rests with the States/UTs, the overall responsibility vested in the Central Government cannot be undermined. The Committee, therefore, desire that a status report on the action taken by the State Governments/UTs concerned on the 1140 complaints received on the foodgrain distribution be prepared and corrective measures initiated to plug the loopholes.	-do-
12.	4.54	The Committee are deeply concerned to note that though Social audit has been provisioned under the National Food Security Act and States/UTs are required to conduct social audit on regular basis, no specific/additional provision was made for social audit under the PM-GKAY Scheme on the ground that the Scheme was initially launched for three months only and later it was extended for five more months. The Committee are not satisfied with the reasoning adduced by the Department as the intent of the Scheme was to ensure that no poor/ vulnerable beneficiary/household suffer on account of non-availability of food grains which can be vindicated only through social audit. Moreover, keeping in view the fact that the provision of social audit exists under the National Food Security Act and PMGKAY foodgrains are being issued to the same beneficiaries covered under NFSA, the Committee urge that social audit on the distribution of foodgrain under the Scheme for eight months period i.e. April-November be carried out so that accountability is fixed and corrective measures taken. The Committee further desire that the findings of such social audits be placed in the public domain so as to ensure transparency of the whole Scheme.	-do-
13.	4.55	The Committee note that about 4.88 lakh (Approximately 90 percent) of the total 5.4 lakh Fair Price Shops (FPSs) are being automated by installing electronic Points of Sale (ePOS) devices. However, it is a matter of serious concern that though automation of FPSs in Delhi was commenced from January, 2019, the use of ePOS devices has been suspended for which the Department of Food and Public Distribution through the Minister and the Secretary has taken up the matter with the Delhi Government to restart usage of ePOS devices. In view of the significance of the	-do-

		installation of ePOS devices in the process of automation of Fair Price Shops, the Committee exhort the Department to prevail upon all the State Governments, including the Government of Delhi to install and use such devices with a view to validate fair and transparent distribution of foodgrains from the FPSs.	
14.	4.56	The Committee note that under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Package (ANBP), the Department of Food and Public Distribution allocated a total quantity of about 8 lakh MT of foodgrain (7 LMT Rice and 1 LMT wheat) to all States/UTs for free of cost distribution to all migrants/stranded migrants and other needy persons across the Country who are neither covered under NFSA or under any other States PDS Scheme or not able to access their NFSA foodgrains to help them mitigate their food security plight during the unprecedented Covid-19 situation. As per the request made by many States/UTs, the Central Government extended the distribution period upto 31 August, 2020. Under the package, States/UTs have lifted 6.38 LMT foodgrains against the total allocation of 8 LMT foodgrains. According to the Department, on the basis of the reports received from the States/UTs, a total quantity of about 2.62 LMT foodgrains have been distributed upto 31.08.2020 covering around 2.35 crore persons in May, 2020, 2.48 crore persons in June, 2020, about 30.50 lakh persons in July, 2020 and 11.31 lakh migrants in August 2020 amounting to an overall success rate of distribution of foodgrains to more than 90 percent of the total target group of migrants/stranded migrants. The Department have clarified that many States/UTs informed that a majority of targeted migrants already moved back to their house States/UTs where they may have access to foodgrains under NFSA/State Schemes as a result of which the liberally allocated quantity of 8 LMT foodgrains and ANBS may not have been utilised/distributed completely. The moot point is that whether the foodgrains were actually delivered to the poor and migrant labours as depicted by the States/UTs. In this context, the Committee are of the considered opinion that the integration of the implementation of One Nation One Ration Card Plan with the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan is an appropriate and appreciable initiative towards establishing a fool-proof mechanism to ensure a hassle free distribution and actual delivery of foodgrains to the targetted beneficiaries. The Committee desire that the proposed integration be intensified so that it yields the intended outcomes in similar situations in future.	-do-
15.	4.57	The Committee observe that since no data on actual or estimated number of migrants/ stranded migrant persons across the Country was available with any Department or Organisation, the Department of Food and Public Distribution had liberally estimated a figure of around 8 crore such persons (roughly 10 percent of total 80 core NFSA population in the Country) and allocated 8 LMT foodgrains to cover maximum migrants/ stranded migrants. While taking into cognisance the deliberately liberal and situational estimates of the Department with the well intended objective to cover maximum number of migrant laborers during the unprecedented crisis of Covid-19 Pandemic, the Committee are, however, of the firm opinion that it is high time the data on actual number of migrants/ stranded migrants across the Country be captured and periodically updated as exponentially liberal and unrealistic estimates may turn out counterproductive, especially in	-do-

		the areas of food distribution, housing facilities and skill training to migrant labour.	
16.	4.58	The Committee appreciate that as part of the efforts of the Department for bringing in technology-driven reforms in the functioning of the Public Distribution System, the implementation of One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) Programme is an endeavour to empower the migrant NFSA beneficiaries to access their food security entitlements (under NFSA) anywhere in the Country through Nation-wide portability of NFSA Ration Cards. The Committee further note that the facility is being implemented in collaboration with States/UTs to ensure delivery of subsidized foodgrains to all migrant NFSA beneficiaries/households who will get an option to lift their entitled food grains from any Fair Price Shops (FPS) of their choice anywhere in the Country by using their existing/same Ration Card issued in their home State/UT, after going through biometric/Aadhaar authentication on an electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) device installed at the FPS. The main enablers of this initiative, primarily meant for migratory beneficiaries both in the organised and the un-organised sectors, are installation of ePoS Devices at the FPS, with Biometric/Aadhaar authentication facilities and Aadhaar seeding of all beneficiaries with their Ration Cards. It, therefore, becomes imperative that Aadhaar seeding of all beneficiaries Ration Cards need to be completed so that they are able to avail the facility without any hassles/ glitches. Further, being a technological driven mission, the technology backup needs to be made easily accessible and adequate support provisions be made in terms of both technical manpower and infrastructure so that no beneficiary is deprived of this facility for failure or breakdown of ePoS Machines.	-do-
17.	4.59	As regards the outreach and coverage of the One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) Plan, the Committee find that already 20 States/UTs have seamlessly enabled the facility by July 2020 and eight more States have been boarded as on October, 2020 taking the number of States/UTs covered under ONORC to 28 covering about 85% of total NFSA population (68 crore). According to the Department, all out efforts are being made to integrate the remaining States/UTs with a target to achieve 100% National Portability by March, 2021. While taking note of the assurance of the Department, the Committee desire that the efforts initiated be strengthened and accelerated so as to integrate all the States/UTs into the ONORC plan and ensure cent percent National Portability by the targetted time line for the welfare of around 80 crore NFSA beneficiaries.	-do-
18.	4.60	The Committee appreciate that the Department have also made concerted efforts to create awareness about the ONORC Schemes besides making efforts to register all migrant beneficiaries. Since biometric/Aadhaar authentication on an e-PoS has been made mandatory for availing the facility, the Department have issued guidelines/best practices for increasing Aadhaar seeding and validating Aadhaar numbers with all the States/UTs by 31 December, 2020. Until then no denial of entitlements to eligible beneficiaries has been strictly advised in case of non-possession of Aadhaar and in the event of failure of Aadhaar authentication due to technical/ network/connectivity/linking issues or poor biometrics of beneficiary. In this context, the Committee	-do-

		find that the progress of Aadhaar seeding was lagging mainly due to poor/negligible Aadhaar generation in States of Assam and Meghalaya and slow progress in the States of West Bengal and Bihar. The Committee desire that the constraints faced by certain States which is impeding the progress of Aadhaar seeding with Ration Cards of beneficiaries under the NFS Act be looked into seriously and sorted out appropriately within the timeframe so that the intended benefits of the Portability are reaped by all the beneficiaries. The Committee also hope that with the completion of registration and Aadhaar seeding, the oft-repeated complaints of absence of an accurate data on Migrant Labour coming in the way of implementation of many welfare Schemes targeted for them, will cease to exist to a greater extent.	
19.	4.61	One foremost novel feature of the ONORC plan that has engaged the attention of the Committee is that under the ONORC, any member of a family migrated to another State may avail the required quantity of foodgrains, within the entitled quota from any FPS of his choice after biometric/ Aadhar authentication while the remaining quantity of the entitled foodgrains may be lifted by other family members stayed back at the home State. The Committee believe that this unique feature of full as well as partial portability under ONORC would go a long way in mitigating the hardships faced by migrant labours who leave their family members at their home State. Therefore, robust implementation of the provision in tandem with the States/UTs demands paramount importance.	-do-
20.	5.13	Public Health being a State Subject, the role of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has been centered mainly on overall monitoring and co-ordination. This task has been undertaken by the Ministry by way of issue of detailed guidance notes to States on maintaining essential health services following the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic and advising the States to put-in place adequate measures for facing the public health challenges posed, inclusive of the health care requirements of the unorganised sector workers and migrant labourers. Specific measures initiated and taken for providing health care services to the migrant workers' who were returning to their home States include issuing advisories on providing access to health care facilities for migrant workers, screening and Health check-up of migrant workers/returnee migrants at the Quarantine Centres; providing access to free testing and treatment if found 'Covid positive' at Public Healthcare Facilities; treatment at the empanelled Covid-19 Dedicated Hospitals through Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY); provision of universal coverage of free of charge services in all Public Healthcare Facilities; etc. Also, measures have been taken for coordinating with States/UTs for extending non-Covid health care services to migrant workers who returned to their home States viz. Video Conferencing for reviewing the preparedness towards provision of essential health services; augmenting Blood Banks by facilitating voluntary donors through door step collection; issue of detailed Guidelines on provision of essential health services; access for basic services at AB-HWCs and Sub-Health Centres and Primary Health Centres for the migrant population for easy access to essential drugs and diagnostics etc. An amount of Rs.15,000 crore was announced for Covid Management, components of which included, providing care for workers in the unorganised sector and migrant labourers. The Committee are	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

		appreciative of the work done by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare as also the Health Departments in States/UTs towards providing specific healthcare and easy access to diagnostics and medicines for Migrant Workers. The Committee hope that the initiatives taken are earnestly carried forward with fervour in the coming times so as to strengthen the health care system available for the unorganized sector workers and migrant labourers, who are from the weaker sections.	
21.	5.14	The Committee, nevertheless, are concerned to note that the Ministry could not provide data on Migrant Labourers who may have sought, needed or availed health care attention/facilities on account of being afflicted by Covid-19 infection as well as other ailments. There is no authentic or reliable data on the health status or requirements of Inter-State migrant labourers, or their numbers, that is maintained centrally. The Committee desire that a suitable mechanism be evolved for creating and maintaining such a data base, specifically covering aspects relating to the health status and requirements of Migrant Labourers. To this end, the Central Health Ministry, as the nodal Ministry needs to put in place a coordinating mechanism with the States/UTs for maintenance of real-time data on various parameters pertaining to the health of Migrant Labourers. Ideally this data needs to be linked with the online portal on data of Inter-State Migrant labourers, which the Ministry of Labour & Employment is proposing to put in place. The Committee desire that this possibility be explored by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.	-do-
22.	5.15	On the extent of access to healthcare services provided to Migrant Workers under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) or Ayushman Bharat, the Committee note that the Schemes, being entitlement based, the beneficiaries thereof are identified on the basis of Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) of 2011. In the urban areas, the census list is based on occupational categories viz. construction workers, transport workers etc., which would include most migrant workers. However, the database being very old, that is, of 2011, in actual practice, many of the migrant workers or people who should otherwise be eligible for benefits under Ayushman Bharat at the ground level do not find place in the list. As for rural areas, the SECC list is based on 'deprivation categories' which should also ideally cover all migrant workers but in actuality, does not. The Committee, therefore, note that determining the entitled beneficiaries on the basis of SECC data of 2011, which is outdated is flawed and not ideal. Building a credible real time database is the 'sine-qua non' for undertaking any relief measures specific to Inter-State Migrant Labour, particularly in view of the high mobility rate of migrant labour. The Committee, therefore, recommend that appropriate steps be taken in the right earnest and in collaboration with the Departments concerned for drawing up a more accurate, reliable and credible database on Migrant Labourers.	-do-
23.	5.16	A noteworthy as well as useful feature of the Ayushman Bharat Scheme is 'portability', whereby the beneficiaries can avail medical facilities anywhere in the Country. As per the data furnished to the Committee, the total number of hospitals empanelled under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme is 23,000 with a total of 1.5 lakh Covid tests and 26,000 treatments done in a period of four months. Further, cumulatively, a total of 12.6 crore e-cards have been said	-do-

		to be issued from the time of inception of the Scheme w.e.f. 23 <sup>rd</sup> September,2018 with the number of cumulative hospital admissions amounting to 1.2 crores. The Committee also find that total authorised claims for this fiscal year 2020-21 amounted to Rs.2,351 crore for 24 lakhs hospital admissions. The Committee desire that the monitoring and coordination mechanism be further strengthened so as to maximise the intended benefits of portability under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme.	
24.	5.17	The Committee were apprised that constraints faced in the implementation of Ayushman Bharat Scheme include <i>inter-alia</i> poor quality of the database, with the SECC 2011 information, which is old and outdated forming the basis for determining the eligible persons; some States not having joined the Scheme thereby leading to problems in portability and support to the Migrant Labourers in these States; lack of good hospitals in some States leading to inability to provide services; low level of awareness about the Scheme, etc. The Committee, however, find that despite these serious constraints, as on 5.11.2020, a total of 1,39,996 hospitalisations involving an expenditure of Rs.31.1 crore have been authorised under the portability feature of Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY). The Committee are of the considered opinion that the vicious circle of the constraints faced in the implementation of the Ayushman Bharat Scheme needs to be broken through concerted efforts and in coordination with State Authorities so that the intended benefits of the Scheme reach to each and every Migrant Worker in every nook and corner of the Country. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare alongwith the National Health Authority (NHA) should make more concerted efforts to optimise the benefits of the Scheme in favour of the really needy Inter-State Migrant Workers.	-do-
25.	6.26	The Committee note that launching of the Scheme for Affordable Rental Housing Complexes (ARHCs) in July, 2020, as a sub-scheme under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U) for providing accommodation at affordable rent to the urban migrant/poor near their workplace was necessitated due to large scale reverse migration of urban migrants/poor that was witnessed following the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic. Problems pertaining to housing with proper civic amenities for the migrant workforce were brought to the forefront with the large scale 'reverse migration' that was witnessed. Both by way of utilising existing Government funded vacant houses by converting them into ARHCs and also by incentivising Private/Public entities to construct, operate and maintain ARHCs on their own vacant land, the Scheme aims to provide affordable rental housing for urban migrants/poor, and thereby add to their productivity level as well. The scheme, currently being in the preparatory phase with the States/Union Territories in the process of signing the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with the Ministry, it is apparent that ARHC complexes may not be provided to the migrant labourers immediately. However, once scheme is implemented in right earnest and spirit, the migrant labour would be provided with the much-needed housing facility at their work place. The Committee further note in this regard that the scheme is a first-time effort in the country in addressing the problem of housing, which is a part of the myriad problems confronting the migrant	Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

		labour in urban areas. They also note that non-availability of proper housing near the 'work place' has been a major contributory factor for the reverse migration of urban migrants/poor that was witnessed. The Committee, therefore, recommend that signing of the MoA with all the States be expedited, if not completed by now, and the ARHC scheme be implemented at the earliest. The Committee hope that in the near future, when the Scheme would be finally rolled out, affordable houses with proper civic facilities would be provided to the migrant laborers.	
26.	6.27	The Committee note that for making ARHCs a reality, certain incentives are being given under both the models envisaged for implementing the scheme viz. usage of existing vacant Government houses; and undertaking the construction, operation and maintenance of ARHCs by private entities. The incentives to be provided include, exemption from Income Tax and GST on any profits and gains derived from operation of ARHCs, providing project finance/loans at lower interest rate through concessional window under Affordable Housing Fund, single window system for approval of design/drawings and other statutory approvals within 30 days, municipal services such as water and electricity etc. The proposal of the Government to allow tax holiday till March, 2022 and tax exemption for notified Affordable Rental Housing Projects, as contained in the Finance Minister's 2021 Budget Speech is a matter of consolation and in sync with the Government's commitment to promote supply of ARH for migrant workers. The Committee trust that these incentives are actually made available without hindrance so that the housing complexes come up at an early date and thereby go a long way in addressing the hardships faced by the migrant labour.	-do-
27.	6.28	The Committee note that under the scheme for providing ARHCs in urban areas, the migrant workers are not categorized as a distinct category or a 'sub-set' and are covered under the larger ambit of Economically Weaker Section (EWS)/Low Income Group (LIG) Segment. The Committee are of the view that there is a need to ensure that including the migrant/poor as a part of the EWS/LIG category does not, in any way, go against the interest of the migrants. The Committee desire that the Ministry should accord priority to the migrant workers/labourers in the ARHC Scheme. The Committee wish to be apprised of the measures taken in this direction.	-do-
28.	6.29	As informed, the scheme for building ARHCs has been included under the Category "Social and Commercial Infrastructure" in the "Harmonized Master List of Infrastructure" sub-sectors issued by Ministry of Finance. This would make the Public/Private Entities eligible to secure project finance/ loans at relatively lower interest rate through concessional window from Housing Finance Companies (AHF) and by way of Priority Sector Lending (PSL) from Commercial Banks. The Harmonised Master List (HML) of infrastructure sub-sectors under which ARHC has been included covers areas such as transport and logistics. The Committee hope that, as planned, the public/private entities evince interest in availing the concession, and thereby contribute in meeting the housing requirement of the poor.	-do-
29.	6.30	In regard to the norms for allotment of houses in ARHCs, the Ministry has apprised the Committee that the concessionaire/entity may tie up with the local industry/manufacturers/service	-do-

		providers/educational health institutions etc. to provide accommodation en-block and remit the rent by deducting directly from their salary/fees. The Committee would, in this regard emphasize on ensuring that the concessionaire/entity etc. concerned follows a transparent process in the matter of allotment of accommodation in the housing complexes to the migrant labourers; and fair dealing to all the deserving migrant labourers. Steps also need to be taken to ensure that all eligible migrant labourers secure accommodation in the housing complexes. Further, there may also be a need for setting up a grievance redressal system exclusively for ARHCs for enabling expeditious redressal of the grievances of the migrants on matters relating to allotment.	
30.	6.31	As for the number of issues and complaints received in regard to Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, the Ministry has submitted that through a dedicated complaint redressal system set up by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Government of India, grievances of all nature pertaining to PMAY-U at different National/State/UT level are comprehensively addressed. Further, MoHUA has also set up a dedicated Public Grievance Cell at HFA Directorate to address the grievances on a day- to- day basis on PMAY(U). Further, all States/ UTs implementing PMAY-U have reportedly set up grievance cells at State/ULB level so that grievances are adequately addressed. Additionally, Government of India is also providing call centre support through MoHUA/NHB/ HUDCO/SBI to address their queries/ complaints/clarifications. However, the Ministry has not furnished details of the number and nature of grievances/ complaints received under PMAY, which was called for. The Committee, while desiring that the requisite information is furnished also emphasize on ensuring that system of redressal of grievances is robust and considerate in resolving the genuine concerns and difficulties.	-do-
31.	6.32	While the ARHC Scheme was conceived and launched during the lockdown imposed due to Covid-19 pandemic in July, 2020, and is in its preparatory phase, with a view to making the scheme operational by the targeted date of March, 2022, the Ministry have initiated a slew of measures. These include, circulation of the operational guidelines of ARHCs alongwith the implementation framework to all States/UTs for planning and implementation, signing the Memorandum of Agreement with all the States etc. The Committee would, in this regard, emphasise on ensuring that the timeline of March, 2022 is adhered to strictly. The Committee also recommend that the review of the progress in implementing the ARHCs scheme be made from time to time. The Committee would also like to be kept apprised of the progress of the implementation of the scheme.	-do-
32.	6.33	The Committee note that the Ministry has proposed a Model Tenancy Act (MTA) to replace the existing tenancy laws. The Law proposes to strike a balance in protecting the rights of tenants as well as the landlords in equal measure. As per the proposed law, as per the information furnished, rentals would be based only on agreements entered into. The Committee further note that the draft MTA alongwith a background note has been sent to all the States/UTs for translation into respective local/vernacular languages to seek the comments of public and stakeholders and	-do-

		return to the Ministry with the comments of the State Governments. The Committee note that the proposed law is aimed at promoting rental housing on a large scale <i>inter-alia</i> by striking a balance between the interest of the landlords and the tenants. The Committee would like to be kept apprised of the progress made in implementing the Model Tenancy Act.	
33.	6.34	Under PMAY-U, the Committee have been informed that construction of 67 lakh houses had commenced and houses to about 35 lakh people have been handed over, out of which 26,58,075 houses have been allotted to the Economically Weaker Section (EWS), 4,99,686 houses to Lower Income Group (LIG) and 3,60,467 houses to Middle Income Group (MIG). Though it is a matter of consolation that out of the 35 lakh houses, as many as 31 lakh houses have been allotted/delivered to EWS & LIG categories of people, the Committee desire that while allotting such houses, the interest of migrant workers be accorded utmost importance and therefore the proportion of migrant workers among the EWS category be clearly reflected in the allotment of houses.	-do-
34.	7.24	The Committee note that the focus of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is to provide Public works relating to Natural Resources Management; Community Assets or Individual Assets for the vulnerable Sections; Common Infrastructure including NRLM Compliant Self-Help Groups; and Rural Infrastructure. The Committee also find that there are 262 works <i>viz.</i> Agriculture, Agri-allied, water related etc. which are permissible under the Scheme falling under the above cited four categories and meant to provide opportunity for wage employment for the unskilled workers including the migrant workers. The Committee are of the firm opinion that there is no better Scheme than the MGNREGS to provide sustainable livelihood to the unskilled workers including the inter-state migrant labours. In fact, by enacting the MGNREGA Law in 2005, the Indian Parliament had set in motion a process that provides for a specific and significant welfare provision, constitutive of the very idea of citizenship. As socio-economic rights, including the right to work, have long been part of the Directive Principles of State Policy, the Committee trust that the Ministry must have provided adequate opportunity for wage employment for the unskilled workers, especially the migrant workers in the 262 permissible works under MGNREGA. The Committee also desire that the Ministry should unfailingly continue with their endeavour in the provision of wage employment to the unskilled/migrant workers not only during Pandemics but for all times, to meet any contingency and cater to the basic needs of the poorer sections of the Society.	Ministry of Rural Development
35.	7.25	The Committee note that during the years 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21, about 39.61 lakh, 39.60 lakh, 31.86 lakh and 77.63 lakh job cards have been issued by various State Governments. Since the MGNREG Scheme is a demand driven wage employment programme and Job Cards are essential for any adult individual including the returnee migrant workers to demand for work, the Committee would like the Ministry to impress upon the State Governments to ensure that the process of issuing Job Cards be made more transparent and robust so that no needy adult person, more so the migrant and women labours are deprived of employment and livelihood.	-do-

36.	7.26	The Committee note that the Scheme has a ready shelf of Projects from which new works could be drawn and started. In this context, the Committee find that against the total approved Labour Budget of about 282 crore persondays employment approximately 165 crore persondays have already been generated. As regards the budgetary allocation and utilisation, the Committee observe that against an allocation of Rs. 61,500 crore, the Ministry have already utilised Rs. 53,000 crore. An additional allocation of Rs. 40,000 crore is on the anvil . The Committee recommend that efforts be intensified to generate the targeted persondays so as to ensure optimum utilisation of the allocated funds.	-do-
37.	7.27	The Committee appreciate that the Ministry of Rural Development are engaged in the promotion of lot of activities in the rural areas. Such activities <i>inter-alia</i> include promotion of Nutri-Garden for individual beneficiaries and community in convergence with State Schemes and NRLM; water conservation and water management in convergence with Department of Water Resources and River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation; construction of Gram Panchayat Building in a mission mode in convergence with Finance Commission Funds; fodder farms in convergence with Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying etc. In view of the fact that such works are having ample employment opportunities in the rural areas, the Committee would like the MoRD to persist with such works in collaboration with other Ministries/Departments and the State Governments, besides exploring more such avenues, so as to consistently enhance employment opportunities for the MGNREGS workers including the returnee migrant labours, thereby mitigating the hardships faced by them during unforeseen situations like Covid-19 Pandemic.	-do-
38.	7.28	The Committee note that the Indira Awas Yojana has been restructured into Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana - Gramin (PMAY-G) w.e.f. 1st April, 2016 to address some gaps, as pointed out by the C&AG of India, in the rural housing programme as well as to provide "Housing for All" by 2022. The immediate objective of PMAY-G is to cover one crore households living in kutcha/dilapidated houses within a period of three years i.e. from 2016-17 to 2018-19. The Committee find that out of the total target of one crore houses, around 89.50 lakh houses have been completed during the said three years which is a commendable performance. However, the Committee are deeply concerned with the below par performance on the matter during the years 2019-20 and 2020-21. To illustrate, during 2019-20 out of the sanctioned target of around 52.89 lakh houses only 22.68 lakh houses, including around 63,000 IAY houses could be completed. Similarly during the year 2020-21 out of the sanctioned target of 9.34 lakh houses only around 14,000 houses including 11,839 IAY houses could be completed. While expressing their displeasure at the tardy progress of construction of houses under the PMAY-G during the years 2019-20 and 2020-21, the Committee exhort the Ministry to take all requisite measures and effectively address the bottlenecks so that the Government's appreciable commitment to provide "Housing for All" by 2022 is indeed honoured.	-do-
39.	7.29	The Committee appreciate that PMAY-G, instead of selecting a beneficiary from among the BPL households, selects the beneficiary using housing deprivation parameters as per the Socio Economic and Caste Census (SECC), 2011 data which is to be	-do-

		verified by the Gram Sabhas. The Committee are of the considered opinion that it is an appropriate method to ensure that the selection is objective and verifiable. The Committee desire that the process be made more robust so that assistance is given to those who are genuinely deprived of a house.	
40.	7.30	The Committee are pleased to note that the Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyan Yojana (GKRAY) is a 125 day Abhiyan launched on 20th June, 2020 with a mission to address the problems of returnee migrant workers and similarly affected rural population by Covid-19 pandemic through a multipronged strategy of providing immediate employment and livelihood opportunities to the distressed masses. What is more encouraging is the fact that under the GKRAY, the Government of India have decided to include works under the MGNREGS among the selected 25 works covering 12 Ministries/Departments of the Central Government. The Committee feel that it is a step in right direction as all such works have huge potentials to provide mass employment and also help in saturation of public infrastructure. The Committee recommend that the convergence of works under GKRAY and MGNREGS be further strengthened so as to ensure creation of long term livelihood assets for the poor rural masses including the migrant workers.	-do-
41.	8.21	The Committee note that the Government of India have launched Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyan (GKRA) to address the issues of returnee migrant workers and similarly affected rural population by Covid-19 pandemic in order to provide them immediate employment and livelihood opportunities by giving focus on 25 works in 116 selected districts across six States namely Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. In order to support GKRA, the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship have decided to impart skill development training to the migrants in the 116 selected districts in these six States. The Ministry are assisting GKRA by implementing PMKVY Scheme only for the reverse migrants in GKRA Districts and targets for the same have been allocated under the Centrally Sponsored Centrally Managed (CSCM) component of the PMKVY in light of the migrant crisis caused due to the Covid-19. It may be pertinent to mention here that the PMKVY (2016-20) has two components known as Centrally Sponsored Centrally Managed (CSCM) being implemented by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and Centrally Sponsored State Managed (CSSM) being implemented by State Skill Development Missions of the States/UTs popularly known as State Engagement Component of PMKVY. In this context, the Committee find that the Ministry have decided to skill/reskill/upskill the returnee migrants in job roles which are in demand in the said 116 Districts with focus being on those migrants who are likely to stay back in their home districts. Accordingly, a target of 3 lakh candidates (1.5 lakh each for Short Term Training and Recognition of Prior Learning) for skill development training under CSSM component of PMKVY has been allocated for the 116 Districts. As regards the actual progress made, the Committee find that data for 60 lakh migrant workers collected from the 116 Districts have been uploaded and 2.64 lakh such workers have been shortlisted by 93 Districts for training. It is also encouraging to find that the Ministry, besides holding virtual meetings with the Principal Secretaries and	Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship

		District Collectors, have also appointed six nodal Officers to handhold and monitor the District Administration. While taking note of the various appreciable efforts made by the Ministry to impart skill training to the returnee migrants under the CSCM and CSSM components of the PMKVY, the Committee believe that substantial number of migrants out of the 2.64 lakh identified migrants must have been imparted skill development training by now and able to get employment and livelihood opportunities in the Districts. The Committee desire that since the focus is on District specific demand driven skill training, the Ministry should impress upon the remaining 23 District Administrations to identify and shortlist the returnee migrants in their respective Districts so as to skill/reskill/upskill them for getting sustainable livelihood opportunities.	
42.	8.22	The Committee note that in their endeavour to impart skill trainings to the poorer sections of the society including the migrant workers, the Ministry are facing a number of challenges which <i>inter-alia</i> include low demand for skilled workers, increasing employment of contractual workers with no incentive for employers in skilling them, difficulty in mapping skill requirement, labour market mismatches, economic stress, etc. The Committee call upon the Ministry to minutely look into the issues that impede the smooth skill training of the needy sections of the society and take requisite corrective measures accordingly in tandem with other Ministries/Departments concerned so that the noble intent of skilling the poor people is truly achieved.	-do-
43.	8.23	The Committee observe that the Ministry have proposed to launch PMKVY 3.0 for five years from 2020-21 to 2025-26. However, the Ministry of Finance have agreed to examine only a limited PMKVY proposal for the year 2020-21 and accordingly draft EFC Memorandum for the said year has been submitted for inter-ministerial consultation. The Committee further note that as per the direction of the Ministry of Finance, a separate scheme would be implemented during 2021-26 which would be co-terminus with the 15th Finance Commission period. Since there is a fundamental change in the approach of training under PMKVY 3.0 and the basic orientation of the Scheme is being changed from being supply driven to demand driven, the Committee exhort the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship to constantly pursue the matter with the Ministry of Finance so that PMKVY 3.0 and the proposed separate Scheme are launched at an early data for the benefit of the poorer sections of the society, especially the inter-State migrant workers.	-do-
44.	8.24	The Committee are pleased to note that an integrated skill management information system namely ASEEM (Aatmanirbhar Skilled Employee Mapping) has been launched on 10 <sup>th</sup> July, 2020 in order to have a directory of the entire skilled workforce in the Country, including the migrant workers. As a result as on 11 <sup>th</sup> September, 2020 a total of 97.73 lakh skilled candidates' profiles have been uploaded, the number of candidates looking for jobs has been 5,50,808 out of which 3,19,772 candidates have been offered jobs. The Committee are concerned to note the wide gap between the number of skilled candidates seeking job <i>vis-a-vis</i> the candidates actually offered jobs. As the objective of the ASEEM Portal is to make available to the industry the skilled workforce according to their need anywhere in the Country thereby also	-do-

		facilitating better livelihood opportunities to the skilled manpower, the Committee impress upon the Ministry to look into the issues that impede maximum placement of the interested skilled candidates registered on the Portal and take suitable corrective measures accordingly so that the gap is bridged and the objective truly achieved.	
45.	8.25	The Committee note that under the Jan Shikshan Sansthan Scheme the Ministry have issued instructions to such Sansthans to impart training to the Migrant workers if they are interested in training in operational areas. As a result, 31 Districts of Uttar Pradesh have been identified for imparting vocational training to the migrant workers who had returned to their native place during Covid-19. Out of these 31 Districts, 24 JSSs have been functional in 22 Districts and some of the JSSs have already conducted survey of the returnee migrant workers and the mapping of the skill training has been going on. As the Scheme aims to impart vocational training to the interested returnee migrant workers, the Committee impress upon the Ministry to accelerate the process of identification and training to such migrant workers not only in Uttar Pradesh but elsewhere too so as to enable them to earn sustainable livelihood.	-do-
46.	8.26	The Committee appreciate that the Jan Shikshan Sanshtans have taken proactive role during the Covid-19 Pandemic through community based awareness programmes including health modules, production and distribution of masks, distribution of free dry ration and food packets etc. However, the Committee are deeply concerned to find that Grants-in-aid to 27 JSSs across the Country has been withheld on account of either poor performance or irregularities noticed in their functioning. Though the Ministry have reportedly taken corrective actions to ensure effective implementation of the Scheme as per the Guidelines, the Committee desire that the monitoring mechanism evolved for the purpose be further strengthened and fortified, especially by associating the Public Representatives, so as to have a proper impact evaluation of the Scheme as well as to deter fraudulent activities resorted to by some JSSs.	-do-