

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF FINANCE
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 864
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.02.2025

PROTECTION FROM AUSTERITY MEASURES

864. **Shri Sanjay Raut:**

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) the steps Government is taking to ensure that the most vulnerable sections of society are protected from the negative effects of austerity measures, particularly in terms of access to basic needs like food, healthcare and housing;
- (b) the manner in which Government plans to balance austerity measures with the need to protect the economic and social rights of citizens, especially those who are already economically disadvantaged; and
- (c) the manner in which Government plans to address potential job losses resulting from austerity measures and what programs are in place to support those affected?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE
(SHRI PANKAJ CHAUDHARY)

(a) & (b): The Government of India is not implementing any 'austerity measures' at present. The expenditure of the Government of India was ₹ 37.9 lakh crore in 2021-22, ₹ 41.9 lakh crore in 2022-23, ₹ 44.4 lakh crore in 2023-24 and ₹ 47.2 lakh crore in 2024-25 (RE). The budget estimate for 2025-26 stands at ₹ 50.7 lakh crore.

The general government's spending (Centre plus States) on social services has shown a rising trend since 2016-17. The social services expenditure (SSE) was ₹ 10.4 lakh crore in 2016-17 and has increased to ₹ 25.7 lakh crore in 2024-25 (BE). The SSE as a percentage of total expenditure has increased from 23.3 per cent in 2020-21 to 26.2 per cent in 2024-25 (BE). During the five years from 2020-21 (pandemic year) to 2024-25 (BE), the SSE grew at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 15 per cent. Expenditure on health grew at CAGR 18 per cent from ₹ 3.2 lakh crore in 2020-21 to ₹ 6.1 lakh crore in 2024-25 (BE).

The government implements many welfare schemes to protect the economic and social rights of citizens, especially for those who are already economically disadvantaged. These, inter-alia, include various Central Sector and Centrally Sponsored Schemes for:

- i. welfare of the tribal population;
- ii. welfare of the Scheduled Castes, Backward Castes, Senior Citizens, and Manual Scavengers;
- iii. welfare of persons with disabilities;
- iv. health related schemes such as National Health Mission, PM-JAY, etc.;
- v. women and child development, such as Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0, Mission Vatsalya, and Mission Shakti;
- vi. welfare of the minorities;
- vii. School education and literacy, such as Samagra Siksha, PM POSHAN, and
- viii. Schemes for artisans and small entrepreneurs.

(c) Employment generation coupled with improving employability is a priority of Government. Various steps to expand job opportunities through various employment generation schemes/programmes have been taken, such as: Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), Aatmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY), Rural Self Employment and Training Institutes (RSETIs), Standup India, Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM), Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY), Production Linked Incentive (PLI), Make in India, Startup India etc., which, along with increase in capital expenditure, seeks to boost employment creation, increase production and productivity. The details of various employment generation schemes/programmes being implemented by the Government of India may be seen at https://dge.gov.in/dge/schemes_programmes.

Government is implementing Skill India Mission (SIM) to deliver skill, re-skill and up-skill training through an extensive network of skill development centres/ schools/ colleges /institutes etc. under various schemes, viz. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS), National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) and Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS) through Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs). The SIM aims at enabling youth of India to get future ready, equipped with industry relevant skills.

Further, Government announced in the Budget 2024-25, Prime Minister's package of 5 schemes and initiatives to facilitate employment, skilling and other opportunities for 4.1 crore youth over a 5-year period with a central outlay of ₹ 2 lakh crores.
