

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO - 3809
ANSWERED ON – 25/03/2026

DIGITAL EXCLUSION AND ACCESS TO SOCIAL JUSTICE WELFARE SCHEMES

3809. SHRI RAGHAV CHADHA

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:-

- (a) whether the beneficiaries particularly SCs, OBCs and PwDs face challenges in accessing welfare schemes due to digital literacy and connectivity constraints and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) details of grievances received relating to Aadhaar authentication failures, digital application processes and access to online beneficiary portals under Government schemes in the last five years, year-wise;
- (c) what measures are being undertaken to provide alternative access mechanisms and assisted application support for digitally excluded populations; and
- (d) steps taken by Government to enhance digital literacy and improve accessibility of welfare platforms for beneficiaries residing in rural and remote areas?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

(SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE)

(a) The Centrally Sponsored Scholarship schemes for SCs and OBCs are implemented through the States and UTs. There is an institutionalized mechanism through Institutional Nodal Officers, Heads of Institutes, District Nodal Officers and State Nodal Officers who assist and do the requisite hand holding for the eligible applicants so that no deserving candidate is left out. Apart from that, administrative funds are released to the States and UTs so that necessary digital infrastructure may also be established. Moreover, awareness camps are organised through the banks and other financial institutions at the institute levels.

The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DePWD) is implementing the Scheme of 'Assistance to Persons with Disabilities for Purchase/Fitting of Aids /Appliances (ADIP)' under which funds are released to various Implementing Agencies for providing aids & assistive devices to the eligible persons with disabilities (PwDs) across the country. The Implementing agencies provide aids & assistive devices to Divyangjan through following modes:

- (i) Distribution through Headquarters activities of Implementing Agencies
- (ii) Through Camps
- (iii) Distribution through Pradhan Mantri Divyasha-Vayoshri Kendras (PMD-VKs)

(b) Aadhar based verification has been introduced to strengthen scholarship delivery systems by ensuring transparency, efficiency and timely disbursement of benefits to beneficiaries of various schemes run by the Department. In case where beneficiaries face issues related to Aadhar validation or biometric authentication, rectification of such errors is ensured so that no beneficiary is deprived of the benefits. Moreover, separate helplines are being run by the National Scholarship Portal team to handle the grievances. PFMS also addresses the concerns through its own grievance redressal mechanisms.

Under Assistance to Persons with Disabilities for Purchase/Fitting of Aids/Appliances (ADIP) scheme of DePWD, beneficiary identification and service delivery are primarily carried out through physical camps and institutional outreach. Further, the Government has developed the ARJUN Portal, through which beneficiaries can register themselves for availing aids and assistive devices under the Scheme. However, no grievances have been reported in respect of registration on the ARJUN Portal. Grievances related to procedural aspects of the Scheme are received on the CPGRAMS portal and are addressed accordingly. However, grievances specific to Aadhaar authentication failures, digital application processes and access to online beneficiary portals are not maintained separately.

(c) & (d) As per the scheme guidelines, provision has been made for adaptation of alternative identification mechanisms in cases where Aadhar based authentication is not feasible, and States/UTs have been mandated to establish facilitation centres and extend necessary assistance to applicants for submission of on-line applications. Further, the Department ensures effective implementation and accessibility of the schemes through on-boarding on the National Scholarship Portal, periodic review through third-party evaluation studies and regular monitoring through meetings at National, Regional and State levels, along with field visits by senior officers. In addition, awareness campaigns are conducted through electronic and print media, social media and short films to improve outreach, promote digital literacy and facilitate greater access for beneficiaries.
