

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND
EMPOWERMENT (2020-21)**

(SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA)

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

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS
(2021-22)**

TWENTY FIRST REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

March, 2021/Phalguna, 1942 (Saka)

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DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (2021-22)

Presented to Lok Sabha on 16.03.2021

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 16.03.2021



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

March, 2021/Phalguna, 1942 (Saka)

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**COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2020-21)**

SMT. RAMA DEVI - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Smt. Sangeeta Azad
3. Shri Bholanath 'B.P. Saroj'
4. Smt. Pramila Bisoyi
5. Shri Thomas Chazhikadan
6. Shri Chhatar Singh Darbar
7. Shri Y. Devendrappa
8. Smt. Maneka Sanjay Gandhi
9. Shri Hans Raj Hans
10. Shri Abdul Khaleque
11. Smt. Ranjeeta Koli
12. Smt. Geeta Kora
13. Shri Vijay Kumar
14. Shri Akshaibar Lal
15. Shri Pashupati Kumar Paras
16. Shri V. Srinivas Prasad
17. Shri Arjun Singh
18. Smt. Supriya Sule
19. Shri K. Shanmuga Sundaram
20. Smt. Rekha Arun Verma
21. Shri Tokheho Yeptthomi

Rajya Sabha

22. Smt. Jharna Das Baidya
23. Smt. Ramilaben Bara
24. Shri Abir Ranjan Biswas
25. Shri N.Chandrasegharan
26. Smt. Geeta *alias* Chandraprabha*
27. Smt. Mamata Mohanta
28. Shri Narayan Koragappa*
29. Shri Ram Nath Thakur
30. Shri Ramkumar Verma
31. Shri Ram Ji*

* Nominated to the Committee w.e.f. 23.12.2020

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. | Smt. Anita B. Panda | Joint Secretary |
| 2. | Smt. Mamta Kemwal | Director |
| 3. | Shri Krishendra Kumar | Deputy Secretary |
| 4. | Ms. Suvaiba Shaikh | Assistant Executive Officer |

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment (2020-21) having been authorized by the Committee to present on their behalf this Twenty First Report on 'Demands for Grants for the year 2021-22' pertaining to the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities).

2. The Committee considered the 'Demands for Grants (2021-22)' of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities) which were laid on the Table of the House on 13th February, 2021. After obtaining their Budget related Documents and Explanatory Notes, the Committee took evidence of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities) on 24th February, 2021. The Committee considered and adopted the Report at the sitting held on 15th March, 2021.

3. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the Officers of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities) for appearing before them and furnishing information in connection with the examination of the 'Demands for Grants (2021-22)'.

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

NEW DELHI;

15th March, 2021

24 Phalguna, 1942 (Saka)

RAMA DEVI

Chairperson,

*Standing Committee on Social
Justice and Empowerment*

REPORT
CHAPTER - I
INTRODUCTORY

1.1 Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities was carved out of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in May, 2012 to give focused attention to policy issues and meaningful thrust to the activities aimed at welfare and empowerment of the persons with disabilities. The Department acts as a nodal agency for matters pertaining to disability and persons with disabilities including effecting closer coordination among different stakeholders and related Central Ministries, States/UT Governments, NGOs etc. The Department deals with the following Legislations governing different aspects of disability, welfare and empowerment of the Persons with Disabilities:

- (i) The Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992 (34 of 1992).
- (ii) The National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999 (44 of 1999).
- (iii) The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (49 of 2016).

1.2 Some of the major activities of the Department are:-

- (i) Special Schemes aimed at rehabilitation and social, educational and economic empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, e.g. supply of aids and appliances, scholarships, residential schools, skill training, concessional loans and subsidy for self-employment etc.
- (ii) Education and Training of Rehabilitation Professionals.
- (iii) International Conventions and Agreements on matters, dealt with in the Department e.g. United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- (iv) Awareness generation, research, evaluation and training in regard to subjects allocated to the Department.

(v) Charitable and Religious Endowments and promotion and development of Voluntary Efforts pertaining to subjects, allocated to the Department.

1.3. As per Census 2011, there are 2.68 crore Persons with Disabilities in India *i.e.* 2.21 percent of the total population. Out of the total population of PwDs, about 1.50 crore are male and 1.18 crore female. These include persons with visual, hearing, speech and loco-motor disabilities; mental illness, mental retardation, multiple disabilities and other disabilities.

CHAPTER - II

Budgetary Provisions and Utilization

2.1 The Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities) for the year 2019-20 are given under Demand No. 93. The detailed Demands for Grants of the Department were laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha on 13th February, 2021.

2.2 The Budget Estimates (BE), Revised Estimates (RE) and the Actual Expenditure (AE) of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) for the last four years along with the BEs for the year 2020-21 and AE up to 19.02.2021 as furnished to the Committee are as follows:

(₹ in crore)			
Year	BE	RE	AE
2017-18	855.00	955.00	928.32
2018-19	1070.00	1070.00	1017.56
2019-20	1204.90	1100.00	1016.18
2020-21	1325.39	900.00	642.38 (as on 19.2.21)
2021-22	1171.77	-	-

2.3 The Department have also furnished the following statement showing BE, RE and AE on all the Schemes during the years 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 and BE for the year 2021-22:-

₹ in crores											
Sl.No.	Name of the Scheme	2018-19			2019-20			2020-21 (upto 28.01.2021)			2021-22
		BE	RE	AE	BE	RE	AE	BE	RE	AE	BE
1	National Institutes	215.00	256.70	256.69	215.00	235.55	233.25	360.00	260.75	210.84	319.00
2	Assistance to	220.00	223.42	216.19	230.00	222.50	213.83	230.00	195.00	174.03	220.00

	Disabled Persons for purchase of Fitting Devices (ADIP)										
3	Deen Dayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS)	70.00	70.00	69.98	75.00	105.00	101.61	130.00	85.00	52.67	125.00
4	Rehabilitation Council of India	7.20	5.22	4.72	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.50	5.50	5.16	5.50
5	Schemes Arising out of The Implementation of the Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 (SIPDA)	300.00	258.30	260.82	315.00	260.00	217.34	251.50	122.89	37.54	209.77
6	Incentive to Employers in the Private Sector for Providing Employment to Persons with Disabilities	0.10	0.10	0.00	Scheme has been merged under SIPDA Scheme		Scheme has been merged under SIPDA Scheme				
7	National Handicapped Finance & Development Corp. (NHFDC)	38.48	20.75	20.75	41.21	0.92	0.92	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01
8	Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation	5.00	9.58	9.58	60.00	60.00	60.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00
9	Indian Spinal Injury Centre	2.00	2.00	0.00	4.00	2.60	0.00	4.00	4.00	0.00	Merged under SIPDA
10	National Institute For Inclusive And Universal Design	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01
11	Establishment of Institute of Sign Language, Research & Training Centre (ISLRTC)	5.00	5.50	4.85	5.00	5.00	4.20	Merged with NIs.			
12	Support for	10.00	10.00	4.68	8.00	3.60	0.87	Merged under SIPDA.			

	Establishment/ Modernization of Braille Presses										
13	Establishment of College for Deaf in 5 Regions of the Country	3.00	3.00	1.50	3.00	0.00	0.00	Merged under SIPDA.			
14	Establishment of Centre for Disability Sports	2.50	0.00	0.00	17.00	17.00	15.07	100.00	19.50	18.93	53.41
15	Budgetary Support to National Trust	17.00	20.00	16.23	20.00	20.00	20.00	39.50	30.00	18.01	30.00
16	Setting up of State Spinal Injury Centres	5.00	5.00	2.82	5.00	0.00	0.00	Merged under SIPDA			
17	Establishment of National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation	14.05	10.00	0.55	20.00	20.00	17.26	Merged under NIs.			
18	Awareness Generation and Publicity	3.00	2.00	1.15	Scheme has been merged in SIPDA Scheme w.e.f 2019-20.			Scheme has been merged in SIPDA Scheme w.e.f 2019-20.			
19	Scholarship for Students with Disabilities	75.66	125.43	108.22	125.00	108.67	95.15	125.00	100.00	46.67	125.00
20	In Service Training and Sensitization of key functionaries of Central/State Govts, Local Bodies and other Service Providers	2.00	2.00	1.67	Scheme has been merged in SIPDA Scheme w.e.f 2019-20.		Scheme has been merged in SIPDA Scheme w.e.f 2019-20.				
21	Research on Disability related Technology	1.00	1.00	0.40	Scheme has been merged in SIPDA Scheme w.e.f 2019-20.		Scheme has been merged in SIPDA Scheme w.e.f 2019-20.				
22	Information and Mass Education Cell	35.00	15.00	14.81	28.00	7.00	6.63	Scheme is merged under SIPDA Scheme			
23	Grants -in-aid to National University of Rehabilitation Science and Disability Studies	13.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01
	Grand Total	1044.49	1045.00	995.61	1176.23	1072.84	991.13	1295.53	872.64	613.85	1137.71

2.4 As per the information furnished to the Committee, the following schemes have been merged together under Schemes Arising out of the implementation of the persons with Disabilities Act 2016, (SIPDA) in 2019-20 and 2020-21:-

- i. Incentive to Employers in the Private Sector for Providing Employment to Persons with Disabilities
- ii. In Service Training and Sensitization of key functionaries of Central/State Governments, Local Bodies and other Service Providers
- iii. Research on Disability related Technology
- iv. Awareness Generation and Publicity
- v. Support for Establishment/ Modernization of Braille Presses
- vi. Establishment of College for Deaf in 5 Regions of the Country
- vii. Setting up of State Spinal Injury Centres.
- viii. Information and Mass Education Cell

Further, following schemes were merged under National Institutes in 2020-21:-

- i. Establishment of Institute of Sign Language, Research & Training Centre (ISLRTC)
- ii. Establishment of National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation

2.5 On the scrutiny of the budgetary allocation it is observed that amount allocated under various Schemes has been reduced substantially, particularly Schemes Arising out of the implementation of the persons with Disabilities Act 2016, (SIPDA), National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDC), National Institutes, Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO), etc.

2.6 On being enquired the reasons due to which funds allocated during 2018-19, 2019-20 and also in 2020-21 could not be spent, the Department submitted in a written reply:-

- a) The scheme of National Action Plan (NAP) was reviewed so that the out go reaches the correct beneficiaries as per laid down guidelines.
- b) Skill Training has been undergoing a rigorous overhaul this year to enable streamlining of the process, to check financial irregularities by Empanelled Training Partners (ETPs) and to ensure a robust and secure fund flow mechanism. These initiatives have slowed down the process of release of funds.
- c) Implementation of Centre guidelines including Aadhar Enabled Bio-Metric Attendance System (AEBAS), Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), Video Conferencing (VC) facility, trained trainers and accessibility as mandatory features at training centres.
- d) Training is imparted through Empanelled Training Partners (ETPs). Validity of most of the ETPs has been expired.
- e) UCs from State Governments were not received under SIPDA Scheme.
- f) Due to non-receipt of adequate proposals under SC, ST and NER Heads.

2.7 In this context, the Secretary of the Department submitted during the oral evidence held on the subject that:

“In the case of last three years, where we have taken up institutional projects like the National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation and the Sports Disability Centre or our National Institutes where we are expanding the activities because of the fact that civil construction and projects execution takes at least two to three years, and because of the Pandemic, the activity of construction has been slowed down, due to which the capital expenditure has decreased. However, the

implementation, award of work and the assigning of the work to the contractor, and speeding up the contract has all been monitored”

2.8 The Department informed the Committee in their written reply on the steps taken by the Department to improve the implementation of schemes that:-

- a) Reviewed the Schemes to expand the outreach of the schemes running in the Department.
- b) Implementation of Centre guidelines including Aadhar Enabled Bio-Metric Attendance System (AEBAS), Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), Video Conferencing (VC) facility, trained trainers and accessibility as mandatory features at training centre.
- c) In the initial stage inspection of centres was carried out by the officers of the Department. However, in order to expedite the process the work of the centre validation has been assigned to a 3rd party agency Skill Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPwD).
- d) Adding Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) as Programme Implementation Agencies (PIAs).
- e) State/UT Governments letters have been written from Secretary, DEPwD to respective Chief Secretaries of the States to furnish Utilization Certificates for previous Grants released under SIPDA scheme.
- f) Regular inspections, before, during and after the project are carried out to measure the work done, before grant is released.
- g) Regular video conferences are held with States/UTs to review progress of work being made in the States.
- h) Screening Committee meetings are being held at short intervals to take up cases proposed by stakeholders for carrying out accessibility in Govt. buildings under the SIPDA scheme.

- i) Advertisements released by the Department across the Country in National and regional newspapers. In addition, an advertisement released in North East (NE) States in different regional languages.
- j) State Governments requested to popularize these Schemes through advertisements by their Social Welfare Departments.

2.9 With reference to reduced allocation in Budget 2021-22, from ₹ 1450.55 crore to ₹ 1171.77 crore the Secretary of the Department during the evidence deposited before the Committee:-

“Where there was a civil construction involved for a national project, where the gestation period is three years or two years and where the civil construction despite the award of the work could not be carried out, there is reduction in funds which is commensurate to the activities”

2.10 On being enquired about the strategy adopted by the Department to undertake the envisaged works during the financial year 2021-22 with reduced allocation and to fill up the gap between the allocated Budget and proposed Budget for the year 2021-22, the Department *inter-alia* stated vide written reply that if additional funds required during the year 2021-22, the Department will seek additional funds from Ministry of Finance at Revised Estimates (RE) stage. On the strategy adopted for implementing schemes for FY 2021-22 the Department *inter-alia* submitted that:

(a) ADIP Scheme: In view of the Covid-19, the Department has formulated a new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), the camps are now being held smoothly as per SOP by various implementing agencies and the funds allocated for distribution of aids and assistive devices will be fully utilized.

(b) Scholarship Schemes: Most of these are implemented through the National Scholarship Portal and the applications are being received after getting approval from the State Nodal officers. The last date for receipt of these applications from the States in the NSP is 20.2.2021.

(c) National Action Plan for Skill Training: The funds are disbursed directly from the umbrella scheme SIPDA.

2.11 In order to effectively utilize the Budgetary Estimates, the Department also informed that in addition to conducting Skill Training of PwDs via the conventional route of ETP driven training the Department intends to put the following in effect:

(a) Transfer VRCs: Transfer of Vocational Rehabilitation Centres from M/o Labour & Employment is also under consideration. On transfer, these Centres will be developed as model training Centres for PwDs.

(b) NHFDC model of training centre: NHFDC has conceptualized a “State of Art” portable micro skill training Centres which will be known as NHFDC Swavalamban Kendras (NSK). To ensure validity of NSKs and as part of hand holding initiative, NHFDC will run skill trainings in association with PwDs owners for 3-4 years with grant under NAP.

(c) MIS Portal: An MIS portal is being developed which will further ease the system of this empanelment as also help the Department to monitor the training programme in efficient manner

(d) E-Skill: To address the mobility of PwDs, a dedicated aggregated portal is being developed which will provide a platform to PwDs for on line training in accessible format as per their requirement

2.12 The Committee note that the Department of Empowerment of PwDs utilized 92.38% of their allocation in 2019-20, still the Budgetary allocation at RE stage in 2020-21 was reduced from ₹ 1325.39 crore to ₹ 900 crore only, which was quite drastic in comparison to the previous two years. The Committee further note the Department's stand that they could utilize only 73% of the allocated funds meant to cater to the requirements of the PwDs in 2020-21, as on 19.2.2021 due to review of NAP and skill training, non-receipt of adequate number of State proposals etc. It was also stated by the Department that they have to ensure the monitoring and utilization of funds due to the nature of schemes run by them, all of which are Centre Sector and not Centrally sponsored. The Department is statedly still working on strengthening the mechanism by developing robust and secure fund flow mechanism, empanelling of Training Partners, the validity of most of whom is expired, receipt of UCs from State Governments etc. so that the outgo reaches the genuine beneficiaries. The Committee acknowledge constraints in the implementation of schemes for which accessibility features are mandatory, still they are surprised to note that several proposals such as transfer of vocational rehabilitation centres from Ministry of Labour and Employment, Swavlamban Kendras, MIS Portal and E-Skill platform for PwDs are remain at a conceptual stage till now despite the existence of the separate Department for PwDs since 2014. This obviously has a negative impact on the overall performance, be it financial or physical, of the Department. The Committee also feel that perhaps the performance of the Department has a bearing on the reduction in budgetary allocation at RE stage not only in 2019-20 but also in 2020-21. The Committee

however compensate for the fact that due to COVID-19 pandemic, funds under various Schemes could not be utilized fully in 2020-21, which must have a profound impact on the welfare of PwDs. As the pandemic situation has somewhat eased now with advent of vaccines and offices are working in full capacity, the Committee urge that the Department should make all out efforts for streamlining the skill training overhaul, expediting the inspections and transfer of centres from Ministry of Labour and Employment at least this year, as well as for effective implementation of Schemes like ADIP and other low performing ones in first three to four months of the year 2021-22 so that the Department is able to justify their demand for more funds at RE stage for various schemes.

CHAPTER - III

DEEN DAYAL DISABLED REHABILITATION SCHEME (DDRS)

3.1 In Deen Dayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS) only financial assistance in the form of Grant-in-Aid (GIA) to Programme implementing agencies (PIAs) is provided for their projects relating to rehabilitation of persons with disabilities to enable them to reach and maintain their optimal, physical, sensory, intellectual, psychiatric or social functional levels. Deen Dayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS) has been revised w.e.f. 1.4.2018. The list of model projects under revised DDRS are as under:-

- i. Pre-School, Early Intervention and Training
- ii. Special Schools for:-
 - (a) Children with Intellectual Disabilities
 - (b) Children with Hearing & Speech Disabilities
 - (c) Children with Visual Disabilities
- iii. Project for Children with Cerebral Palsy
- iv. Project for Rehabilitation of Leprosy Cured Persons
- v. Half Way Home for Psycho-Social Rehabilitation of treated and controlled people with mental Illness
- vi. Home Based Rehabilitation Programme/Home Management Programme
- vii. Project for Community Based Rehabilitation
- viii. Project for Low Vision Centers
- ix. Projects for Human Resource Development

3.2 The Department has furnished the following statement showing BE, RE and AE incurred under DDRS Scheme for the years 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 and BE for 2021-22:

(₹ in crore)

Year	BE	RE	AE
2018-19	70.00	70.00	69.98
2019-20	75.00	105.00	101.61
2020-21	130.00	85.00	52.67
2021-22	125.00	-	-

A detailed statement regarding financial, physical targets and achievements under DDRS for 2019-20 as furnished by DEPwD is given in table below:

(₹ in crores)

Financial Targets and Achievements 2019-20				Physical Targets and Achievements 2019-20		
BE	RE	Actual Expenditure	% of short fall/ Excess exp w.r.t. financial target	Physical Targets	Achievement	% of short fall/ Excess exp w.r.t. Physical target
75.00	105.00	101.61	3.23 Shortfall	45000 beneficiaries	38004 beneficiaries	15.54 Shortfall

3.3 On being enquired about the reasons due to which Revised Estimates were substantially reduced in the financial year 2020-21 from ₹ 130 crore to ₹ 85.00 crore, the Department *inter-alia* submitted in a written reply that due to COVID-19 pandemic, the funds under DDRS were restricted as Department of Expenditure had directed to release 15% of funds in each quarter for scheme/projects being run in each Ministry/Department. Accordingly, by the end of third quarter, ₹51.00 crore (i.e. about 39.23%) were released under the DDRS against the provision of 45% as per Ministry of

Expenditure. There is slightly less expenditure than 45% provision due to delay in receipt of requisite documents from NGOs, mainly due to COVID-19 pandemic. Further, in view of pending proposals, request was made to provide ₹130.00 crore in revised estimates. However, funding has restricted to ₹85.00 crore under DDRS.

3.4 On being asked about their plans to meet the requirement of funds particularly when the Budgetary Estimates for the year 2021-22 have been reduced vis-à-vis 2020-21, the Department stated:

“As per scheme guidelines, State Government has to play more pro-active role in the establishment/effective working of DDRCs. In this regard, State Authorities are also sensitized by the Department and encouraged to establish DDRC in their districts to cater all the needs of rehabilitation of PwDs (Divyangjan). Proposals for setting up of DDRCs are allowed once they are received from States/UTs and found as per the norms of the scheme. Budgetary support is sought/revised keeping in view the funds required in the light of the eligible proposal received/likely to be received.”

3.5 As per the information furnished by the Department, one District Disability Rehabilitation Centres (DDRCs) has been approved to be set up in each district in the country under the DDRS from year 2020-21. As on date, 268 DDRC has been set up in the country, however, 55-60 are functioning and getting regular grants.

3.6 Since only 55-60 DDRCs are functional and getting regular grants out of 268 set up so far, the Committee asked whether the Department has fixed any deadline to set up one functional DDRCs in every district of the country. In this regard, the Department *inter-alia* submitted:

“The decision to establish DDRCs in each district of the country has been recently taken by the Department in September, 2020. Setting up of DDRCs in each district of the country requires a number of steps to be taken by the concerned State Governments and District administrations. On completion of these steps, the proposal for setting up of DDRC is submitted to this Department

by the State Authorities which are further examined by the Department in pursuance of the guidelines of the scheme in order to ascertain to establish DDRC fulfilling all the eligibility criteria.

In this regard, the Hon'ble Minister (SJ&E) has also written letters to Chief Ministers of States/UTs to expedite proposals for setting up of DDRCs in remaining districts of their States/UTs. Department will take prompt action to release funds for setting up of DDRCs once requisite documents are received from State Governments."

3.7 The District Disability Rehabilitation Centres (DDRCs) are to be set up by the Programme Implementing Agencies with the financial assistance under the Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme on the recommendation of the respective State Governments for the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities in each District of the Country. The Committee are surprised to note that out of 268 DDRCs envisaged in April, 2018, only 55 to 60 have become functional. From the foregoing, the Committee cannot fathom as to why and how DDRCs are being envisaged to be set up in every district of the Country, as this seems to be an unrealistic target. The Committee also strongly feel that any Scheme of the Government, without fixing actionable and time-bound targets, is likely to be delayed. They, therefore, desire that based on the practical situation so far, a realistic timeline needs to be specified for making the DDRCs functional and that such timelines must be adhered to, once fixed. The Committee recommend that the Department now needs to re-examine the constraints that have been delaying the setting up of DDRCs and address those suitably so that the objective of the Government to set up DDRCs is achieved at the earliest, the DDRCs start functioning properly and their intended purpose is served.

CHAPTER - IV

SCHEME FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 2016 (SIPDA)

4.1 The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, (RPwD) endorses the rights of Persons with Disabilities for access to education, vocational training, employment, public transport, built-up environment, information and communication eco-systems and upholds their independence and dignity. The Department have been implementing a Central Sector Scheme, the Scheme for Implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (SIPDA) for providing financial assistance for undertaking various activities outlined in the RPwD Act, 2016. SIPDA is an umbrella scheme of the Department comprising of several sub-schemes. Currently, the following 12 sub-schemes are part of SIPDA Scheme:

- I. Creation of barrier free environment other than Accessible India Campaign (AIC)
- II. Creation of barrier free environment under the Accessible India Campaign
- III. National Action Plan for Skill Development for PwDs
- IV. Unique Disability Identification (UDID) Project
- V. Awareness Generation and Publicity (AGP)
- VI. Research on Disability Related Technology, Product and Issues Scheme
- VII. In-service Training and Sensitization of key functionaries of Central & State Governments, Local Bodies and other Providers
- VIII. Incentive Scheme for providing Employment to Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) in the Private Sector
- IX. Deaf colleges

X. Media

XI. State Spinal Injury Centre and

XII. Braille Press

4.2 The BE, RE and AE incurred under SIPDA Scheme for the year 2018-19 to 2020-21 and BE for 2021-22 is as under:-

(₹ in crore)

Year	BE	RE	AE
2018-19	300.00	258.30	260.82
2019-20	315.00	260.00	217.34
2020-21	251.50	122.89	37.54
2021-22	209.77		

4.3 On being asked the reasons for downsizing the budgetary allocation at RE stage the Department in their written reply submitted that in the beginning of F.Y. 2019-20, the SIPDA Budget was ₹315.00 crore and it was scaled down in RE ₹260.00 crore after anticipating that major component of SIPDA schemes have not received adequate proposals to meet the expenditure upto the level of Budget Estimates of SIPDA scheme. However, at the end of F.Y. 2019-20, an amount of ₹ 217.34 crore of the RE could be utilized under the Scheme. SIPDA being an umbrella Scheme with ten components had to be downsized by ₹ 55.00 crore. The Department submitted that funds could not be primarily spent due to COVID-19 pandemic and also due to less receipt of proposals. Since September, 2020 the proposals have started coming and funds are likely to be spent by 31st March, 2021.

4.4 When asked whether the funds available under each scheme are sufficient to meet the demands, the Department stated that the funds were sufficient to meet out the demand of each sub-schemes during each of the last three years and current year. However, some shortfall/underutilization of funds were reported in sub-schemes of the SIPDA Scheme.

4.5 As regards to the monitoring mechanism available in the Department to ensure the funds are promptly and efficiently utilized for overall well being of PwDs, the Department *inter-alia* submitted that DEPwD have initiated several steps for monitoring implementation under the Campaign including launch of MIS portal to create a centralised data source related to accessibility in built-up environment, transport and ICT eco system. Strict monitoring of the progress of the Campaign and development of accessibility standards in a time bound manner in order to make all government buildings accessible within stipulated timeframe.

Further, The Nodal Agency i.e. National Institute Braille Press of Empowerment of Persons of Visual Disability (NIEPVD) monitors and controls the Scheme through inspection and surprise visits of the organisations. The Third Party Evaluation of the Scheme is underway through National Institute of Labour Economics Research and Development (NILERD), an Autonomous Institute under NITI Aayog.

4.6 On being enquired about the steps taken to reach out to more number of people during the pandemic the Department *inter-alia* submitted in their written reply that the COVID-19 pandemic has severely affected the skill training of persons with disabilities as training activities were not allowed till September 21, 2020. Thereafter, though training activities have been allowed, it is permitted in Non-containment zones only and that also as per Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) requiring maintenance of proper social and physical distancing. This has reduced the overall capacity of training centres by almost half of the normal capacity. Therefore, the Department has allowed ETPs to conduct training in blended mode and is also developing a dedicated Online Portal for providing online skill training to PwDs. Department is developing Management Information System (MIS) to enable the organization to submit the proposals for empanelment and training in online mode. Training partners whose validity of empanelment with the Department has expired are also being considered for extension of validity for one year.

4.7 On being asked whether the targets have been achieved for the three components; the Built Up Environment, the Transportation Systems and the Information and Communication Technology Ecosystem under Accessible India Campaign for the

year 2019 have been met, the Department *inter-alia* replied that the timely completion of these targets of AIC are dependent on the response received from concerned departments of States/UTs which need to implement the targets with respect to submission of proposals, utilization certificates and various approvals in case of making websites accessible. The Department have been setting yearly targets from 2019–20 onwards only. The timeline for completion of the targets of AIC were reviewed by the Central Advisory Board held on 26.11.2020, headed by the Hon'ble Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment and revised. The current timeline for completing all targets of Accessible India Campaign is June, 2022.

4.8 Based on the Output-Outcome Monitoring Framework, proposed targets for 2021-22 are as follows:-

Indicators	FY	Target	Achievement
Output			
No of buildings for which 1st installment will be released in FY	2021-22	300	NA
No. of buildings made accessible to DIVYANGJAN for easing access to services in the FY	2021-22	500	NA
No of States/UTs made accessible by DEPwD through ERNET for easing access to services during the year.	2021-22	200	NA
Outcome			
Percentage of Buildings to be made accessible (out of total buildings)	2021-22	70%	NA
Percentage of websites to be made accessible through ERNET (out of total 917 websites)	2021-22	100%	NA

4.9 On being enquired about the status of notifications of the accessibility guidelines by Ministry of Railways the Department submitted in a written reply:

“The accessibility guidelines are prepared by Ministry of Railways have not yet been notified. In this regard, the Department took steps and coordinated a meeting on 07.01.2021 with the Ministry of Railways and CCPD office wherein issues raised by stakeholders including NGOs working in the disability sector and accessibility experts were discussed and suggestions were provided to Ministry of Railways to make the guidelines more comprehensive helpful for PwDs. The detailed observations have been shared with Railways to incorporate the same. Once, the revised guidelines incorporating suggestions given by CCPD office are submitted by Railways, the process of notification of the guidelines will be initiated. Further, the Final report on the verification audit of selected 70 Railways Stations conducted by School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi has been shared with Railways to take necessary action. However, the Action Taken Report on the findings of verification is still awaited from Railways despite of several reminders sent to them (latest letter 19.02.2021). The matter of making Railway Stations and services accessible has also been taken with the Railways.”

4.10 On being asked about the monitoring mechanism in the Department for overseeing the progress of work under AIC, the Department *inter-alia* stated that for real time monitoring of the progress of work being made under AIC, DEPwD had launched the Management Information System (MIS) Portal in September 2019 and all stakeholder Central Government Ministries/Departments and States/UTs have been brought on board for monthly reporting of the on-ground situation of work.

4.11 On being asked if the Department conducts regular physical inspections of various sites to ensure corrections and compliance, the Department in their written reply have informed:

“As a special drive by the Department, an initiative of conducting verification audit was carried out by engaging the students of architecture of Chandigarh College of Architecture for 39 buildings of Chandigarh retrofitted under AIC to assess the accessibility features being provided. The report has been shared with the Chandigarh Administration for taking appropriate action. All States/UTs are asked to take up similar exercises for their buildings being retrofitted under AIC.”

4.12 With regard to the details of the conferences that were held for sensitizing employees of various transport system during the last three years along with expenditure incurred thereon, the Department stated in a written reply:

“The proposals for conducting awareness, sensitization programmes are received in the Department from the Government/Non Govt. Organizations. During last 3 years w.e.f. 2017-18, no proposal for holding conferences for sensitizing employees of various transport system has been received.”

4.13 The Committee note that the Scheme for implementation of Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016 (SIPDA), one of the most prominent schemes enacted to provide financial assistance to undertake the activities outlined in the Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016, has subsumed various stand-alone Schemes in 2019-20 onwards, yet the allocation has been reduced from ₹ 300 crore in 2018-19 to ₹ 209.77 crore in 2021-22. The Committee further find that out of the much reduced RE allocation of ₹122.89 crore in 2020-21, the Department could only spend ₹37.54 crore. While acknowledging the reasons stated by the Department for less utilization in 2020-21, the Committee notice that even in 2019-20, the AE was nearly ₹ 43 crore less than the RE under SIPDA. The Committee now hope that at least the remaining amount of unspent balance out of the allocation for 2020-21 should be utilized by the end of that financial year. The Committee cannot comprehend reduction in the Budgetary allocation particularly when several other stand-alone Schemes have been incorporated under SIPDA. They further feel that the justification for slow progress given by the Department due to paucity of proposals, does not hold good as it is the responsibility of the Department to make the Scheme perform once all financial and other planning is done after detailed deliberations. They feel that the Department should have sensitized all the implementing Agencies towards completing the necessary formalities under the Scheme on time. Also, the Department cannot absolve themselves from their responsibility of making the buildings, railway stations, etc. accessible by simply stating that they fall under the purview of State Governments, other Central Ministries/Departments, etc. The Committee are

aware that there has been a verification audit of the 70 railway stations selected for being disabled friendly, which has not projected a very positive picture too and desire to be apprised as to whether Railways have submitted action taken report on the same, and further action taken on the same by the Department of PwDs. Overall, the Department is required to take suitable steps so that the objectives of the Schemes are timely achieved. The Committee desire that in case of non-cooperation from other concerned Ministries/Departments or State Governments, the matter may be taken up at the next higher level so that the delay as reported in case of Ministry of Railways as well as others is avoided. The Committee are of the view that the merger of several Schemes under SIPDA may defeat the very purpose of the Act, if those are not monitored/followed up effectively.

Unique Disability ID Project (UDID)

4.14 The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities is implementing the Unique Disability Identification UDID Project as a component under the Scheme for Implementation of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (SIPDA) with a view to create a national data base for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and also to issue unique ID cards to them. Software for this project has already been developed and hosted on NIC cloud since May 2016. UDID project aims to provide an online platform for issuance of disability certificates. The disability certificates issued by any authority can be authenticated through the web portal. The UDID project ensures that Disability Certificates would be issued to all PwDs. It will subsequently help in tracking of physical and financial progress of benefit delivery at all levels of hierarchy of implementation – from Village, Block, District, State level and National level. It will also encourage transparency, efficiency and ease of delivering Government benefits to persons with disabilities. As per the States/UTs details on e-UDID cards generated/issued to PwDs till 31.12.2020 furnished by the Department 51,32,493 e-UDID cards have been generated against 1,65,99,752 disability certificates issued by State/UT Governments in 710 out of 734 Districts and expenditure of ₹ 1793.92 lakh have been incurred since its inception.

4.15 On being enquired about the detailed procedure for issuance of UDID and the role of the Department in the entire process, the Secretary, DEPwD informed that:

“The UDID portal has been for online application for certification by a Divyangjan anywhere in India but he has to get his certification from his concerned District. When we got 21 categories of disabilities, we had to sit with the Health Ministry and experts to make an assessment for the medical board as to how they will assess different disabilities – whether it is a learning disability or mental illness or autism or cerebral palsy. We also know that there would be a shortage of doctors in the State Governments because of which we have given the flexibility that for such members of the constituted board if they don't have Government Doctors, they could take higher or even empanelled private qualified Doctors. If a clinical psychologist is not there in the Government Hospital, they could empanel a Clinical Psychologist who has the qualification and within 15 days they should actually call the person and give the certificate.

As far as the UDID portal is concerned, we have 52 lakh people who have already onboard with us, except for the fact that when we give them the

certificate and the medical board or the Chief Medical Officer certifies it, they send it back to the central server; we send to our Chennai agency who would laminate it and posts it to the concerned disabled person. There are only eight lakh such cases that have been down. As far as on boarding of certificates and registration is concerned, we have 52 lakh. As far as newer disabilities are concerned, I am told that 20 per cent are new disabilities and all 710 Districts are involved with us, except for some Districts in West Bengal.”

4.16 With regard to the huge gap between the total population of Divyangjan according to 2011 Census *i.e.* 2,68,14,994 and disability certificates issued *i.e.* 1,65,99,752 , the Department in written reply stated:

“As per Section 2(t) of the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 person with disability was defined as a person having disability of 40 percent or more. Therefore, the certificate of disability was issued to those who had disability of 40 percent or more. At the time of census 2011, PwD Act, 1995 was in force. However, census figures were based on the household survey which may have included persons having disability of less than 40 percent also and not restricted to the actual number of certificate holder. Therefore, this is one of the main reasons for difference in census figures and number of certificate holders. Further, it may be noted that one has to apply for certificate of disability. If one does not apply for the certificate, then in that case also his data will not be available in the certificate holders list even though he may be included in the Census.”

4.17 The Secretary submitted during the deliberations that:-

“a lot of State Governments said that they need to revalidate the certificates.... the medical officer there was not revalidating because of which we were not able to take them on board. Now, with this entire online process, application of certificate, issue of certificate and assessment has fallen into some kind of congruity.”

4.18 On being enquired about the reasons during the evidence with regard to the huge gap in the UDID cards generated in 2019-20 (29.20 lakh) and 2020-21 (8.57 lakh) the representative of the Department informed that:

“it was 9.96 lakh yesterday; and it should be 10 lakh today. The total number is 53.42 lakh as of today. Therefore, the same CMO, who is also struggling with COVID-19, they have actually prioritized and given UDIDs to 10 lakh. It is actually an advancement; it is a contribution that I think should be appreciated at the district level. Sir, 710 out of the 734 districts of the country are already on board and in this, 22 districts of the remaining 24 are of West Bengal. I had even mentioned it last time that पश्चिम बंगाल ने अभी शुरू नहीं किया है। नागालैंड के दो डिस्ट्रिक्ट्स रह गए हैं, क्योंकि वे इंटीरियर में हैं।“

4.19 When asked about the efficiency of service/delivery for UDID card holders, the Department submitted in written reply that as on date, Department have not linked the benefits of Schemes with the UDID cards. However, some States like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Punjab had made UDID card mandatory for travel Concession in State Transport Buses.

4.20 On being asked about the special camps held/organized by the Department for issuing UDID at school level as the Department envisages creation of a National data base, the Department stated in a written reply:

“For taking up a drive at school level, the Department through its Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS) under which grant-in-aid is provided to Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) running projects, including special schools for the welfare of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). This Department have requested NGO to make UDID cards for beneficiary students vide letter written on 22nd April 2020. Many NGOs have already complied the instructions and informed regarding UDID cards. Reminders letters have been issued to NGOs to assist PwDs to get UDID cards for beneficiaries those who are yet to respond. Further Department have issued instructions to States/UTs to organise special camps for issuing UDID cards. Further, States/UTs are regularly organising special camps for issuing UDID at Village/Taluka/Block level for ensuring maximum inclusion of PwDs.”

4.21 With regard to usefulness of e-UDID cards during the national lockdown in providing to the needs of PwDs the Department stated:

“UDID cards and Certificates of Disability are the recognised documents for identification of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). Benefits linked to PwDs are given on the basis of these documents. However, since UDID cards are yet to be granted to all the existing Disability Certificate holders by the States/UTs, as such, making UDID card mandatory for any benefits has not been envisaged yet. Since UDID database contains the details of population of disability District/Taluka wise and States/UTs have access to this database, it has the potential to help States/UTs to plan their relief work to cover such PwDs. Department of Food and Public Distribution have asked the data of UDID database regarding the possibility of integration of UDID data relating to Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) with that of Public Distribution System (PDS) for ensuring coverage of all eligible PwDs under NFSA, 2013. Department have shared the data base with the Department of Food and Public Distribution.”

4.22 With regard to the steps taken to monitor the progress of the States lagging in UDID the Department *inter-alia* submitted that:

- (i) Initiated a colour coded daily performance report and indicated level of performance of States/UTs. This report is followed-up daily with the States/UTs/ District on calls, Whatsapp Group at Joint Secretary level.
- (ii) The progress of implementation of UDID project is being continuously monitored through regular video conferencing with the State authorities/District authorities and periodic letters to States/UTs at the level of Joint Secretary and Director.

4.23 The Committee note that the UDID project is envisaged to be the national database for the PwDs, for issuance of UDID Cards/Disability Certificates in order to enable PwDs to avail various concessions under schemes meant for their welfare. The Department have issued 51,32,493 UDID cards against the 1,65,99,752 disability certificates across the country. The Committee feel that the progress of issuing UDID cards is slow as a large numbers of disabled persons have not been able to get the disability certificates. Such delay in the attainment of the objective of UDID due to reasons like lack of online system till recently or absence of a guideline to allow private medical doctors to certify disability in case of unavailability of Government doctors, is unjustified. The Committee is further surprised that the State of West Bengal is yet to come on board and Nagaland has shown very tardy progress in this regard and they have no information on whether any efforts have been made by the Department to ensure that the said State Governments complete this task in a time bound manner. The Committee feel that the sooner all States/UTs come on board, the better for the Divyangjan. The ultimate objective of the Scheme for tracking of physical and financial progress of delivery of benefits/services to the Divyangjan can only be achieved thereafter. Hence, the Committee desire that the Department should pursue with all the State Governments/UTs, particularly those States who are lagging, and fix State wise annual targets for issuing of UDID cards so that more and more PwDs get their due.

CHAPTER-V

National Action Plan (NAP) for Skill Development of PwDs

5.1 A Central Sector Scheme, National Action Plan for Skill Development of Persons with Disabilities under SIPDA was launched by the Department in collaboration with the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) on March 21st, 2015. The funds are released in respect of Skill Training of PwDs under scheme from the year 2016-17 as the initial year was dedicated towards empanelment of Training Partner. The skill training is provided through training partners empanelled by this Department to the PwDs with not less than 40% disability and having a disability certificate to this effect issued by a competent medical authority and 30% of the total intake of each training program has been earmarked for women candidates. There is no separate budgetary allocation of funds under NAP and funds are released from the umbrella scheme SIPDA. The plan was launched with provision of a Project Monitoring Unit (PMU) in the Department with the following components:

- (a) Training need assessment unit
- (b) Content Generation unit
- (c) Training Monitoring and Certification unit
- (d) Employer Connect unit
- (e) IT Unit to provide support for creation of E-learning modules, monitoring of training, E-certification and training centres/creation and maintenance of a job portal.

5.2 On being enquired during the deliberation, with regard to the number of PwDs so far trained and gainfully employed under the National Action Plan for Skill Development, the Secretary, DEPwD informed the Committee that:-

“डेढ़ लाख दिव्यांगजनों को हमने कौशल विकास के माध्यम से ट्रेनिंग दी है”

5.3 During the course of deliberations, the Secretary, DEPwD elaborately explained that:

“When we started the National Skill Action Plan for the disabled, we thought it would be outside the purview of the Skill Ministry. But the Skill Ministry said that the National Skill Council for which National Skill Qualification packs are prepared in different trades, out of some 700 trades, only twelve and fifteen were suitable for us. So, when the entire overhauling process took place of empanelled partners introducing biometric systems, Aadhaar enabled Biometric Attendance System and also proper infrastructure, we took advantage of that to overhaul and we visited some of our skill partners and we found that some of them actually wanted to return the last tranche of funds because they were not able to show the placement. There was a mismatch between the training component and the actual implementation component. Now, other than just one dedicated Skill Council which is looking at all disability training, we are now associated with all the Skill Councils. So, many more trades are there. I think there is a general awareness required where their inclusion has to be made deeper and wider.”

5.4 Thereupon, with reference to actions taken to warrant job certainty to PwDs post-training, the representative of the Department replied as below:

“हमने 4 जनवरी, 2021 को एक नोटिफिकेशन जारी किया है, जिस के अंतर्गत 3,566 प्रकार की, डिफरेंट कैटेगरीज ऑफ पोस्ट्स को दिव्यांगजनों के लिए अधि सूचित किया है। जैसा सचिव महोदया ने बताया, इस में लाखों इस तरह के पद होंगे, जिन्हें दिव्यांगजनों के लिए अनुकूल पाया गया है और दिव्यांगजन इन पदों के लिए क्वालिफाइड रहेंगे। उस के बाद उनके लिए चार प्रतिशत आरक्षण की सुविधा लागू होगी।”

5.5 On being enquired during deliberations regarding measures taken to encourage private sector to give jobs to PwDs, the representative of the Department deposed that:-

“एनजीओ (गैर-सरकारी संगठन) या राष्ट्रीय संस्थान को जो ग्रांट देते हैं, अनुदान राशि देते हैं, उसका एक पार्ट होता है, वह 20 प्रतिशत है, जो कि उनको तभी मिलेगा जब कि उन्होंने उन बच्चों को, उन युवक-युवतियों को प्लेस कर दिया हो, उनको रोजगार प्रदान कर दिया हो। वे तब इंसेंटिवाइज होंगे, जिन लोगों को उन्होंने कौशल प्रशिक्षण दिया है, उन्होंने उनको रोजगार की सुविधा भी उपलब्ध कराई हो। इसके अलावा इंसेंटिव टू प्राइवेट इम्प्लॉयर हमारी एक और स्कीम है। जो पहले स्कीम थी, उसे हमने थोड़ा रिवाइज्ड भी किया है। उस स्कीम के अंतर्गत अगर कोई भी प्राइवेट कंपनी है, अगर वह दिव्यांगों को रोजगार प्रदान करेगी, तो इम्प्लॉयर का जो योगदान ईएसआईसी और ईपीएफ का होता है, वह दिव्यांगजन सशक्तिकरण विभाग द्वारा दिया जाएगा। इसके अलावा इसमें एक और प्रावधान है कि अगर किसी दिव्यांग को अप्रेंटिस लिया जाता है, ट्रेनी लिया जाता है और अगर उसका प्रशिक्षण समाप्त होने के बाद उसको स्थायी रोजगार दे दिया जाता है तो एक साल में इम्प्लॉयर ने जितना भी खर्चा वहन किया होगा, उसकी अप्रेंटिसशिप, जो फीस दी होगी, भारत

सरकार द्वारा उसको वह फीस रीडम्बर्स कर दी जाएगी। इस तरह की कई स्कीम्स हैं, जिनसे दिव्यांगजन को रोजगार की सुविधाएं उपलब्ध कराई जाती हैं।“

5.6 The Committee note that the National Action Plan (NAP) is meant for imparting Skill Training to PwDs under SIPDA, which was launched by the Department in collaboration with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) in 2015, with an objective to empower PwDs with skills to earn their livelihood independently. The Committee appreciate that the Department have so far trained approx. 1.5 lakh Divyangjan. But to their utter dismay, in the financial year 2019-20, the NAP has not been able to meet the set physical target of 20,000 beneficiaries as it served only 1434 beneficiaries which meant that there was a huge shortfall of 92.83 percent. The Department, acknowledging the shortfall, attributed it to rigorous overhauling in monitoring mechanisms and fund process. The Committee note that many ETPs were found to indulge in financial irregularities and it is now thought to have those assessed again by a Third Party agency namely Skill Council for Persons with Disabilities. The Committee hope that this year atleast there won't be a shortfall on these accounts. They further are of the view that Department should not only aim at training PwDs in various skills but should also take steps to assure job warranty on completion of their training. This will give a sense of financial and social security to Divyangjan. In this regard, the Committee applaud the Government's efforts to encourage private sector employers to give employment to Divyangjan by giving them concessions/relaxation at various levels, but, at the same time, feel that there is a need to popularize this Scheme with private sector employers more. The Committee find that the Department have issued a notification on 04.01.2021 in which 3,566 different types of categories of posts suitable for PwDs

have been notified. The Committee desire that above posts should be widely publicized so that the eligible PwDs are made aware of available job opportunities and at the same time probable employers also get to know about the types of jobs which PwDs are found to be capable of. The Committee urge the Department to strive harder to achieve targets set under NAP and to strengthen the employability of the beneficiaries on completion of their skill training. The Committee, would further urge the Department to meticulously maintain data of beneficiaries who got employed after getting skill training under the programme. The Committee, at the same time, reiterate that no ETP should be allowed to indulge in any financial irregularity and all suggestions received, post their assessment by Third Party, must be implemented.

CHAPTER - VI

CENTRE FOR DISABILITY SPORTS (CDS)

6.1 The Centre for Disability Sports (CDS) was announced in the Budget Speech of 2014-15. The Centres are to be established in different zones of the country to *inter-alia* provide Persons with Disabilities the training facilities at par with the latest in the world so as to enable them to effectively compete and win medals in Paralympics, Deaflympics, Special Olympics and other International events for Sportspersons with Disabilities. Two such Centers at Gwalior and Shillong were recommended by the 11th Finance Commission in 2018.

6.2 One centre at Gwalior was approved by the Cabinet in 2019. The work order for the project was issued to CPWD on 6th May 2019 and the funds to the tune of ₹15.07 crore was released to CPWD during 2019-20 and ₹ 18.93 crore during 2020-21. The foundation stone of the Centre was laid on 25th September, 2020 and the construction work is being commencing soon. The Centre is likely to be completed in June, 2022. The DPR for the Shillong Centre has been prepared. As per the DPR, the estimated non-recurring cost of one project is ₹189.81 crore. The CEE/PIB Memorandum has been circulated and comments from concerned Ministries/Department are being obtained for further processing of this proposal.

6.3 BE, RE and Actual expenditure for 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21 along with BE for 2021-22 is as follows:

(₹ in crore)			
Year	BE	RE	AE
2018-19	2.50	0.00	0.00
2019-20	17.00	17.00	15.07
2020-21	100.00	19.50	18.93
2021-22	53.41		

6.4 On being enquired the reasons for downsizing budget allocation for financial year 2021-22 from ₹100 crore to ₹53.41 crore *vis-à-vis* 2020-21, the Department stated in a written reply that an amount of ₹ 53.41 crore has been provided for Centre for Disability Sports in 2021-22 keeping in view the overall fund allocation for the year to this Department. Having considered that an amount of ₹ 34 crore is already released to CPWD, it is felt that the budget allocation of ₹ 53.41 crore for the year 2021-22 would be adequate.

6.5 Similarly, when enquired about reduction in financial year 2020-21, from ₹ 100 crore to ₹ 19.50 crore at RE stage, the Department submitted that reduction in the allocation of fund at RE stage was not due to the pandemic. Taking into consideration the release of ₹ 15.07 crore to CPWD during 2019-20 and further release of ₹ 18.93 crore during current financial year, total available funds with CPWD are ₹ 34 crore which is adequate to meet their requirement for the current year. It is also clarified that the target for completing the project has not been revised.

6.6 The Committee are happy that the Department, taking cognizance of Divyangjan sportspersons, have decided to establish Sports Centres with international level of facilities in different zones of the Country. Surprisingly, the two CDS proposed by the Department in Madhya Pradesh and Meghalaya are yet to see the light of the day. The Committee find no reasons for the delay in laying of foundation stone for Centre at Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh in September, 2020 after a gap of 16 months, when the project was approved in February 2019. The Committee can only hope that the work of the Centre will be completed by the target date of June, 2022. They also recommend that the decision with regard to setting up of the Centre at Shillong, Meghalaya may be followed up and timelines may be drawn so that the work of the Centre is not delayed and there is no cost overrun either. In view of the above, the Committee recommend that the Department should make sincere efforts in accomplishing the tasks undertaken by them and must draw the timelines for completion of the work. The Committee also recommend that suitable action may also be initiated for setting up more Centres across the Country after due assessment as conceived, once the two Centres start functioning satisfactorily.

CHAPTER - VII

MODERNIZATION OF ARTIFICIAL LIMBS MANUFACTURING CORPORATION OF INDIA (ALIMCO)

7.1 Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO) is a Schedule 'C' Miniratna Category II Central Public Sector Enterprises, registered under Section 8 (Not for Profit motive) of the Companies Act 2013, (corresponding to Section 25 of the Companies Act, 1956) is functioning under the administrative control of Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities. The Corporation started manufacturing artificial aids in 1976. At present, it has five Auxiliary Production Centres (AAPCs) situated at Bhubaneswar (Orissa), Jabalpur (M.P.), Bengaluru (Karnataka), Mohali (Punjab) and Ujjain (MP). The Corporation also has five Marketing Centres at New Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Hyderabad and Guwahati.

7.2 The main aim of the Corporation is to benefit the persons with disabilities to the maximum extent possible by promoting, encouraging and developing and manufacturing rehabilitation aids and supply them for distribution to the persons with disabilities of the country. Profitability not being the motive, the Corporation endeavors to provide better quality of aids & appliances to larger number of persons with disabilities at a reasonable price.

7.3 The project of modernization of ALIMCO was initiated with a target of serving higher number of beneficiaries with better and technologically advanced assistive devices. With a purpose of replacing old, obsolete and defunct machineries and equipments in ALIMCO, Kanpur a Scheme for modernization was approved on 12.08.2015 with a total cost of ₹ 286.00 crore out of which ₹ 200 crore was to be provided by the Department and the remaining amount of ₹ 86.39 crore was to be met by ALIMCO from its internal accruals. The project cost was re-evaluated in 2018 to ₹ 338.04 crore with the contribution from the Government staying static at ₹ 200.00 crore. It is expected that on completion of the proposed project, the Corporation will be serving around six lakh beneficiaries across the country as against around 1.56 lakh (as

on date) number of beneficiaries currently being served by the Corporation. The Budget Allocation is as under:-

(₹ in crore)

Year	BE	RE	AE
2018-19	5.00	9.58	9.58
2019-20	60.00	60.00	60.00
2020-21	50.00	50.00	50.00
2021-22	50.00		

7.4 The Department have been allocated BE ₹50 crore for 2021-22, when Committee desired to know whether this was sufficient to meet the needs of ALIMCO and if not, how do the Department propose to meet the requirement. The Department in written reply stated that under the Scheme of Modernization of ALIMCO, out the Government's share of ₹200.00 crore, grant-in-aid to the tune of ₹ 134.58 crore has already been released, leaving a balance of ₹ 64.52 crore. Allocation of BE 2021-22 is ₹ 50.00 crore. The balance amount of ₹ 14.52 crore, will be met at the RE stage.

7.5 On being asked about the specific plan of modernization of ALIMCO and if any time frame is stipulated for completion of the modernization of ALIMCO, the Department in their written reply stated that the project was to be completed within 37 months from date of release of 1st installment of grant-in-aid by the Department. However, the pace of release of grants was slow as initial spade work took time. The Scheme was evaluated by SFC in 2018 resulting in enhancement of its financial envelop to ₹ 338.04 crore of which the share of the Government remained at ₹ 200.00 crore. The project was to be completed by 2020-21. However, the project got further delayed on account of outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic because of which necessary machinery could not be procured and construction work could not progress at the desired pace. It is expected that the project would be completed by March, 2022.

7.6 When it was asked whether Department has conducted any exercise to identify the issues and assess the problems so that the work of modernization is not further delayed, the Department *inter-alia* submitted that the project is reviewed regularly by the Board of Directors of ALIMCO in its various Board Meetings.

7.7 The Committee note that the project of modernization of ALIMCO, a public sector enterprise set up way back in 1976, was initiated with a view to benefit higher number of PwDs, in the year 2015, with the initial budget allocation of ₹ 286 crore out of which ₹ 200 Crore was to be provided by the Department. However, on re-evaluation of the project in 2018, the cost escalated to ₹ 338.04 crore with the contribution from Government remaining static at ₹ 200 crore and rest to be accrued from internal resources. The Committee is saddened to note that even afterwards the project of modernization of ALIMCO turned out to be never-ending. Initially, the project was to be completed in 37 months from date of release of 1st installment of grant-in-aid in 2015 but after re-evaluation, the deadline was extended to 2020-21, unfortunately, which was COVID-19 pandemic year. Subsequently, the Department has extended the deadline to March, 2022 and there is every possibility of a revision in the cost of the same again, which the Committee fear, is again to be borne by internal resources, as the expected Government contribution has not changed since 2018 and perhaps the ALIMCO will ultimately have to bear a very large sum from their internal accruals, which would definitely impact their financial position adversely. The Committee find the delay to be unjustified as the pandemic struck in 2019-20 only. Hence, the Committee are of the view that the Department need to fix specific responsibility on their officers to expedite the modernization of ALIMCO to avoid any further delay. The Committee strongly recommend that the Department should do continuous monitoring also of the established timelines for various steps so that

work of the modernization of ALIMCO project progresses within the revised time frame.

CHAPTER - VIII

SCHOLARSHIP SCHEMES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

8.1 The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities is implementing Umbrella Scheme 'Scholarships for Students with Disabilities' since 1 April, 2018 to fulfill the mandate of Section 31 (1) & (2) of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 wherein, every child with benchmark disability between the age of six to eighteen years shall have the right to free education in a neighborhoods school, or in a special school, of his choice. The Scheme comprises of six components, namely, Pre-matric Scholarship, Post-matric Scholarship, Top Class Education, National Overseas Scholarship, National Fellowship for PwDs and Free Coaching. Until 2017-18, six components of the Scheme were implemented as standalone Schemes having separate budgets until 2017-18. From April, 2018, all the six scholarship schemes have been merged into an Umbrella Scheme titled "Scholarship for Students with Disabilities". The Scheme has been registered in Public Finance Management System (PFMS) with the unique code for Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT). The merger/unification of the Schemes with effect from 2018-19 has been done to remove the demand-supply imbalance of budget allocation and streamline the implementation process. In the Umbrella Scheme, if there is surplus fund available in one segment, that surplus can be utilized in the other one. The main objective of the Scheme is to empower students with disabilities to study further in order to earn their livelihood and to find a dignified place in the society, as they face several barriers - physical, financial, and psychological in pursuing studies and living with dignity.

8.2 The budgetary allocation under the Umbrella Scheme along with the number of beneficiaries is as follows:

(₹ in crore)

Year	Funds allocation			Number of beneficiaries
	BE	RE	AE	
2018-19	75.66	125.43	108.22	30369
2019-20	125.00	108.67	95.15	42972
2020-21	125.00	100.00	46.67	5119
2021-22	125.00	-	-	-

8.3 On being enquired the criteria adopted for determining scholarship amount and the proposal to revise the scholarship amount under the Schemes, the Department in a written reply stated that the Scholarship amount given under various Schemes has a number of Components. This includes reimbursement of tuition fee, maintenance allowances, disability allowances etc. These amounts have been mentioned in various Scholarship Schemes and are considered for revision when the Umbrella Scheme is revised. Last time the Scheme was revised with effect from 1.4.2018. At present, considering the final position, there is no proposal to revise the amount further.

8.4 On being enquired about scholarship amount awarded under Top-Class scholarship every year and number of beneficiaries of this scholarship, the representative of the Department informed the Committee during the deliberations that:

“टॉप-क्लास स्कॉलरशिप में प्रत्येक छात्र को एक साल में औसतन 2,00,000 रुपये प्रदान करते हैं। इसमें एक लाख से ढाई लाख रुपये तक की राशि है। टॉप-क्लास स्कॉलरशिप आईआईटीज़ और आईआईएम्स और मेडिकल कॉलेजों के लिए होते हैं। एक लाख से ढाई लाख रुपये में उनके हॉस्टल फी, ट्यूशन फी, उनकी किताबों का खर्चा और स्पोर्ट्स आदि का खर्चा इसमें शामिल होता है। टॉप-क्लास में हमारे सेंटर ऑफ एक्सीलेंस की संख्या 200 से अधिक है और जो भी उसके लिए क्वालिफाई करते हैं, उन्हें रिलैक्स्ड रूल्स के तहत स्कॉलरशिप मिलता है।”

8.5 It was further added that:-

“पिछले वर्ष 2019-20 में हमारे पास 300 स्लॉट्स थे, जिसमें 240 स्लॉट्स भर गए थे। यह 80 प्रतिशत है। उससे पिछले वर्ष की तुलना में कई गुना अधिक हो गया था। इससे पता चलता है कि दिव्यांगजनों को शीर्ष संस्थानों में भी एडमिशन प्राप्त हो रहा है और वे टॉप-क्लास एजुकेशन भी पा रहे हैं।”

8.6 On being enquired about the expenses that are covered under the scholarship schemes, the representatives of the DEPwD deposed before the Committee that :

“विद्यार्थियों की पढ़ाई में कुलमिलाकर जितना खर्चा होता है और जो डिमांड आती है, हम उसका 80 प्रतिशत छात्रवृत्ति योजना के माध्यम से पूर्ति करने में सफल होते हैं। उन्हें ज्यादा से ज्यादा 20 प्रतिशत राशि की अन्य सोर्सस से जुटानी पड़ती है।”

8.7 On being enquired whether the Department have been able to meet the demands of States with regard to scholarship applications from across the country, the Department submitted in a written reply:

“The number of slots in Pre-matric, Post-matric and Top Class Education have been distributed among all the States and Union Territories on the basis of percentage of population of PwDs of that State/in comparison to the total PwD population of India as per the 2011 Census. If there are inadequate applications in a particular State based on this formula, the Scholarship amount is disbursed to students from other States which have applications in excess of the distributed number of applicants. The purpose of this exercise is to give Scholarship to maximum possible number of students. However, in case of SC, ST and NE, this provision is not applicable.”

8.8 On being enquired about the reasons for persistent under-utilization of funds sanctioned for scholarship to PwDs in each of the last three years, the Department stated:

“Under the Umbrella Scheme funds could not be released/utilized due to non-receipt of sufficient applications in SC, ST category and from North East Region in proportion to the allocated funds under these categories. Further, due to lock down during March, 2020, some of the State Nodal Officers could not digitally

sign the payment files for release of funds which also resulted in less utilization of funds during the financial year.”

8.9 On being enquired about the mechanism adopted to popularize the scholarship Scheme, the representatives of the Department submitted before the Committee during the deliberations that:-

“The number which was only 300 in 2014-15 went up to 30,000 students with disabilities in 2018-19 and up to 43,000 students in 2019-20. Now, this year, we are expecting the number to go up substantially. The number of SC/ST students is also going up and we want that the entire quota which has been reserved for SC/ST and North-East students is actually utilized. And for that, we have written to all Chief Secretaries to popularize these scholarships schemes, particularly, the pre-matric scholarship, the post-matric scholarship, top-class scholarship, and also the benefits which are available to students in terms of the disability allowance, the maintenance allowance, and the reimbursement of tuition fee so that more and more SC/ST students are incentivized to apply for scholarships. Through awareness programmes and also through State Governments, we are trying to make these Schemes popular. We are also trying to raise awareness of people about the benefits which are available in the scholarship Schemes so that more and more students can come forward.”

8.10 During the course of the evidence, the Committee also raised concerns about the education of Divyangjan students and enquired about the steps taken by the Department to ensure that students are not deprived of educational opportunities during the national lockdown in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic. The representative of the Department in this regard submitted before the Committee that :

“स्कूल्स नहीं चल रहे हैं क्योंकि नॉर्मल स्कूल्स भी नहीं चल रहे थे। बच्चे भी स्कूल नहीं जा रहे थे। लेकिन इन ऑर्गेनाइजेशंस को हमारी सपोर्ट जाती रही है क्योंकि किसी तरह से वे उन बच्चों तक रीच कर रहे थे। टीचर उनको घर में पढ़ा रहे थे। इसलिए हमारी तरफ से उनको ग्रांट दी जाती रही है। बीते साल में फाइनली हम उनको सपोर्ट दे पाए हैं, उसमें हमारी तरफ से सपोर्ट में कहीं भी रुकावट नहीं आई। माननीय मंत्री जी के स्तर से भी पत्र दिलवाया गया है। डीडीआरएस की स्कीम है, जिसके माध्यम से हम एनजीओज को सपोर्ट करते हैं। डिफरेंट डिसेबिलिटीज के लिए, जहाँ पर स्पेशल स्कूल्स चलते हैं, चाहे वह श्रवणबाधित, दृष्टिबाधित या इंटेलैक्चुअल डिसेबिलिटी के लिए हो, जिसे पहले मेंटल रिटारडेशन कहते थे, ऐसे सभी स्कूल्स को हमने लिखा है कि आप उनकी तरफ सहानुभूति से पहले की तरह ही कार्य करते रहें।”

8.11 The Committee note that while the year 2020-21 did witness severe constraints in utilization of funds, there is a trend of persistent underutilization of funds in the four scholarship Schemes run by the Department for students with disabilities viz. National Fellowship Scholarship, Pre-Matric Scholarship, Post-Matric Scholarship and Top-class Scholarship during the last three years. The submission of the Department that the funds remained unutilized mainly due to non-receipt of sufficient number of scholarship applications from students belonging to SC/ST categories and North-East region is very disheartening as this must have led to many Divyang students missing out on opportunity for educational upliftment. The Committee are of the strong view that in such circumstances, the Department needs to focus on these categories and the North Eastern States for creating awareness among students. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry, instead of justifying paucity of applications, should publicize their scholarship Schemes among various State Departments as the financial package under those schemes are much better. Moreover, as this is a vast Country with huge population of students with disabilities, the Committee desire them to avail such benefits and become a self-reliant community.

NEW DELHI;

15th March, 2021

24 Phalguna, 1942 (Saka)

RAMA DEVI
Chairperson,

Standing Committee on
Social Justice and Empowerment

MINUTES OF THE FOURTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2020-21) HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 24TH FEBRUARY, 2021

The Committee met from 1030 hrs. to 1230 hrs. in Committee Room 'D', PHA, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SMT. RAMA DEVI - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

32. Shri Sangeeta Azad
33. Smt. Pramila Bisoyi
34. Shri Thomas Chazhikadan
35. Shri Chhatar Singh Darbar
36. Shri Y. Devendrappa
37. Smt. Ranjeeta Koli
38. Shri Vijay Kumar
39. Shri Akshaibar Lal
40. Shri K. Shanmuga Sundaram
41. Smt. Rekha Arun Verma

RAJYA SABHA

42. Shri Abir Ranjan Biswas
43. Smt. Geeta *alias* Chandraprabha
44. Shri Ram Nath Thakur
45. Shri Ramkumar Verma

SECRETARIAT

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|----|-----------------------|------------------|
| 1. | Smt. Anita B. Panda | Joint Secretary |
| 2. | Smt. Mamta Kemwal | Director |
| 3. | Shri Krishendra Kumar | Deputy Secretary |

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

Sl. No.	Name	Designation
1.	Ms. Shakuntala Doley Gamlin	Secretary
2.	Shri Prabodh Seth	Joint Secretary
3.	Shri Sanjay Pandey	Joint Secretary & Financial Adviser
4.	Ms. Tarika Roy	Joint Secretary

Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India

	Name	Designation
5.	Shri D.R. Sarin	CMD

National Handicapped Finance Development Corporation

	Name	Designation
6.	Shri Rajan Sehgal	CMD

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee and the representatives of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities) to the sitting of the Committee convened to take evidence by the representatives of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of PWDs) on Demands for Grants (2021-22) pertaining to their Department. In her address the chairperson *inter-alia* drew the attention of the Department towards downsizing of budgetary allocation for 2021-22, efforts of the Ministry during COVID-19 Pandemic, progress in SIPDA, frauds in Scholarship Scheme.

3. The Chairperson, thereafter, referring to Direction 55(1) of Directions by the Speaker, Lok Sabha to keep the proceedings of the Committee 'Confidential' till a Report on

the subject is presented to the House, asked the Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities to introduce his team and give an overview of the subject matter.

4. The Secretary in her Power Point Presentation briefed the Committee about overall performance of the Department, budgetary allocations and actual expenditure incurred/physical targets achieved under various schemes/programmes. The following issues were broadly discussed at the sitting relating to Demands for Grants (2021-22) of the Department:-

- I. Utilization of funds allocated to the Department for the year 2020-21 and downsizing of the budget for the Department for financial year 2021-22; particularly when there is increase in the population of PwDs across the country;
- II. Measures taken for the implementation of the various schemes so that the welfare of PwDs and also for their safety during Covid-19 pandemic is not compromised.
- III. Strategy adopted to meet the requirements of PwDs with the reduced allocation for 2021-22.
- IV. Current status of schools for children with disabilities and the methods adopted during the ongoing Pandemic for the education of PwDs.
- V. Utilization of funds in the disbursement of Scholarships.
- VI. Progress made under SIPDA and its various components during last financial year.
- VII. Delay in implementation of the Schemes announced in previous year's Budget.
- VIII. Status of hearing aid being manufactured by DRDO.
- IX. Need to empower PwDs with skills so that they can earn their own livelihood.

5. The Secretary responded to the queries raised by the Members to the extent possible on the above mentioned issues.

6. The Chairperson also desired that the Members of Parliament may be kept informed of the various camps etc. organized in their constituencies. She also desired that a local visit of the

school for disabled may be organized in Delhi for the Committee to understand the functioning of the School.

7. Before concluding the meeting the Chairperson directed the Ministry to furnish written replies to all the queries raised by Members for early finalization of the Report.

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

The witnesses then withdrew.

(The Committee then adjourned)

MINUTES OF THE NINTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE
AND EMPOWERMENT (2020-21) HELD ON MONDAY,
15TH MARCH, 2021

The Committee met from 1500 hrs. to 1530 hrs. in Chairpersons Chamber, Room No. 113, PHA Extension Building, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SMT. RAMA DEVI - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

46. Shri Bholanath 'B.P. Saroj'
47. Smt. Pramila Bisoyi
48. Shri Y. Devendrappa
49. Smt. Ranjeeta Koli
50. Shri Pashupati Kumar Paras
51. Smt. Supriya Sule

RAJYA SABHA

52. Smt. Ramilaben Bara
53. Smt. Geeta *alias* Chandraprabha
54. Shri Narayan Koragappa
55. Shri Ram Nath Thakur
56. Shri Ramkumar Verma

SECRETARIAT

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|--------------------------|------------------|
| 4. Smt. Anita B. Panda | Joint Secretary |
| 5. Smt. Mamta Kemwal | Director |
| 6. Shri Krishendra Kumar | Deputy Secretary |

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee.
3. The Committee then took up for consideration the draft Reports of the Committee on 'Demands for Grants (2021-22) of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (I. Department Social Justice and Empowerment and II. Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities) and Ministry of Minority Affairs.
4. The Chairperson then requested the Members to give their suggestions, if any, on the draft Reports. The Reports were adopted by the Committee without any modifications. The Committee then authorized the Chairperson to finalize the draft Reports in the light of consequential changes that might arise out of factual verification of the draft Reports and to present the same to both the Houses.

(The Committee then adjourned)

APPENDIX
STATEMENT OF OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Sl. No.	Para	Observations/Recommendations
1	2	3
1.	2.12	<p>The Committee note that the Department of Empowerment of PwDs utilized 92.38% of their allocation in 2019-20, still the Budgetary allocation at RE stage in 2020-21 was reduced from ₹ 1325.39 crore to ₹ 900 crore only, which was quite drastic in comparison to the previous two years. The Committee further note the Department's stand that they could utilize only 73% of the allocated funds meant to cater to the requirements of the PwDs in 2020-21, as on 19.2.2021 due to review of NAP and skill training, non-receipt of adequate number of State proposals etc. It was also stated by the Department that they have to ensure the monitoring and utilization of funds due to the nature of schemes run by them, all of which are Centre Sector and not Centrally sponsored. The Department is statedly still working on strengthening the mechanism by developing robust and secure fund flow mechanism, empanelling of Training Partners, the validity of most of whom is expired, receipt of UCs from State Governments etc. so that the outgo reaches the genuine beneficiaries. The Committee acknowledge constraints in the implementation of schemes for which accessibility features are mandatory, still they are surprised to note that several proposals such as transfer of vocational rehabilitation centres from Ministry of Labour and Employment, Swavlamban Kendras, MIS Portal and E-Skill platform for PwDs are remain at a conceptual stage till now despite the existence of the separate Department for PwDs since 2014. This obviously has a negative impact on the overall performance, be it financial or physical, of the Department. The Committee also feel that perhaps the performance of the Department has a bearing on the reduction in budgetary allocation at RE stage not only in 2019-20 but also in 2020-21. The Committee however compensate for the fact that due to COVID-19 pandemic, funds under various Schemes could not be utilized fully in 2020-21, which must have a profound impact on the welfare of PwDs. As the pandemic situation has somewhat eased now with advent of vaccines and offices are working in full capacity, the Committee urge that the Department should make all out efforts for streamlining the skill training overhaul, expediting the</p>

		inspections and transfer of centres from Ministry of Labour and Employment at least this year, as well as for effective implementation of Schemes like ADIP and other low performing ones in first three to four months of the year 2021-22 so that the Department is able to justify their demand for more funds at RE stage for various schemes.
2.	3.7	The District Disability Rehabilitation Centres (DDRCs) are to be set up by the Programme Implementing Agencies with the financial assistance under the Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme on the recommendation of the respective State Governments for the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities in each District of the Country. The Committee are surprised to note that out of 268 DDRCs envisaged in April, 2018, only 55 to 60 have become functional. From the foregoing, the Committee cannot fathom as to why and how DDRCs are being envisaged to be set up in every district of the Country, as this seems to be an unrealistic target. The Committee also strongly feel that any Scheme of the Government, without fixing actionable and time-bound targets, is likely to be delayed. They, therefore, desire that based on the practical situation so far, a realistic timeline needs to be specified for making the DDRCs functional and that such timelines must be adhered to, once fixed. The Committee recommend that the Department now needs to re-examine the constraints that have been delaying the setting up of DDRCs and address those suitably so that the objective of the Government to set up DDRCs is achieved at the earliest, the DDRCs start functioning properly and their intended purpose is served.
3.	4.13	The Committee note that the Scheme for implementation of Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016 (SIPDA), one of the most prominent schemes enacted to provide financial assistance to undertake the activities outlined in the Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016, has subsumed various stand-alone Schemes in 2019-20 onwards, yet the allocation has been reduced from ₹ 300 crore in 2018-19 to ₹ 209.77 crore in 2021-22. The Committee further find that out of the much reduced RE allocation of ₹122.89 crore in 2020-21, the Department could only spend ₹37.54 crore. While acknowledging the reasons stated by the Department for less utilization in 2020-21, the Committee notice that even in 2019-20, the AE was nearly ₹ 43 crore less than the RE under SIPDA.

		<p>The Committee now hope that at least the remaining amount of unspent balance out of the allocation for 2020-21 should be utilized by the end of that financial year. The Committee cannot comprehend reduction in the Budgetary allocation particularly when several other stand-alone Schemes have been incorporated under SIPDA. They further feel that the justification for slow progress given by the Department due to paucity of proposals, does not hold good as it is the responsibility of the Department to make the Scheme perform once all financial and other planning is done after detailed deliberations. They feel that the Department should have sensitized all the implementing Agencies towards completing the necessary formalities under the Scheme on time. Also, the Department cannot absolve themselves from their responsibility of making the buildings, railway stations, etc. accessible by simply stating that they fall under the purview of State Governments, other Central Ministries/Departments, etc. The Committee are aware that there has been a verification audit of the 70 railway stations selected for being disabled friendly, which has not projected a very positive picture too and desire to be apprised as to whether Railways have submitted action taken report on the same, and further action taken on the same by the Department of PwDs. Overall, the Department is required to take suitable steps so that the objectives of the Schemes are timely achieved. The Committee desire that in case of non-cooperation from other concerned Ministries/Departments or State Governments, the matter may be taken up at the next higher level so that the delay as reported in case of Ministry of Railways as well as others is avoided. The Committee are of the view that the merger of several Schemes under SIPDA may defeat the very purpose of the Act, if those are not monitored/followed up effectively.</p>
4	4.23	<p>The Committee note that the Scheme for implementation of Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016 (SIPDA), one of the most prominent schemes enacted to provide financial assistance to undertake the activities outlined in the Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016, has subsumed various stand-alone Schemes in 2019-20 onwards, yet the allocation has been reduced from ₹ 300 crore in 2018-19 to ₹ 209.77 crore in 2021-22. The Committee further find that out of the much reduced RE allocation of ₹122.89 crore in 2020-21, the Department</p>

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5	5.6	<p>The Committee note that the National Action Plan (NAP) is meant for imparting Skill Training to PwDs under SIPDA, which was launched by the Department in collaboration with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) in 2015, with an objective to</p>

		<p>empower PwDs with skills to earn their livelihood independently. The Committee appreciate that the Department have so far trained approx. 1.5 lakh Divyangjan. But to their utter dismay, in the financial year 2019-20, the NAP has not been able to meet the set physical target of 20,000 beneficiaries as it served only 1434 beneficiaries which meant that there was a huge shortfall of 92.83 percent. The Department, acknowledging the shortfall, attributed it to rigorous overhauling in monitoring mechanisms and fund process. The Committee note that many ETPs were found to indulge in financial irregularities and it is now thought to have those assessed again by a Third Party agency namely Skill Council for Persons with Disabilities. The Committee hope that this year atleast there won't be a shortfall on these accounts. They further are of the view that Department should not only aim at training PwDs in various skills but should also take steps to assure job warranty on completion of their training. This will give a sense of financial and social security to Divyangjan. In this regard, the Committee applaud the Government's efforts to encourage private sector employers to give employment to Divyangjan by giving them concessions/relaxation at various levels, but, at the same time, feel that there is a need to popularize this Scheme with private sector employers more. The Committee find that the Department have issued a notification on 04.01.2021 in which 3,566 different types of categories of posts suitable for PwDs have been notified. The Committee desire that above posts should be widely publicized so that the eligible PwDs are made aware of available job opportunities and at the same time probable employers also get to know about the types of jobs which PwDs are found to be capable of. The Committee urge the Department to strive harder to achieve targets set under NAP and to strengthen the employability of the beneficiaries on completion of their skill training. The Committee, would further urge the Department to meticulously maintain data of beneficiaries who got employed after getting skill training under the programme. The Committee, at the same time, reiterate that no ETP should be allowed to indulge in any financial irregularity and all suggestions received, post their assessment by Third Party, must be implemented.</p>
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6	6.6	<p>The Committee are happy that the Department, taking cognizance of Divyangjan sportspersons, have decided to establish Sports Centres with international level of facilities in different zones of the Country. Surprisingly, the two CDS proposed by the Department in Madhya Pradesh and Meghalaya are yet to see the light of the day. The Committee find no reasons for the delay in laying of foundation stone for Centre at Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh in September, 2020 after a gap of 16 months, when the project was approved in February 2019. The Committee can only hope that the work of the Centre will be completed by the target date of June, 2022. They also recommend that the decision with regard to setting up of the Centre at Shillong, Meghalaya may be followed up and timelines may be drawn so that the work of the Centre is not delayed and there is no cost overrun either. In view of the above, the Committee recommend that the Department should make sincere efforts in accomplishing the tasks undertaken by them and must draw the timelines for completion of the work. The Committee also recommend that suitable action may also be initiated for setting up more Centres across the Country after due assessment as conceived, once the two Centres start functioning satisfactorily.</p>
7	7.7	<p>The Committee note that the project of modernization of ALIMCO, a public sector enterprise set up way back in 1976, was initiated with a view to benefit higher number of PwDs, in the year 2015, with the initial budget allocation of ₹ 286 crore out of which ₹ 200 Crore was to be provided by the Department. However, on re-evaluation of the project in 2018, the cost escalated to ₹ 338.04 crore with the contribution from Government remaining static at ₹ 200 crore and rest to be accrued from internal resources. The Committee is saddened to note that even afterwards the project of modernization of ALIMCO turned out to be never-ending. Initially, the project was to be completed in 37 months from date of release of 1st installment of grant-in-aid in 2015 but after re-evaluation, the deadline was extended to 2020-21, unfortunately, which was COVID-19 pandemic year. Subsequently, the Department has extended the deadline to March, 2022 and there is every possibility of a revision in the cost of the same again, which the Committee fear, is again to be borne by internal resources, as the expected Government contribution has not changed since 2018 and perhaps</p>

		<p>the ALIMCO will ultimately have to bear a very large sum from their internal accruals, which would definitely impact their financial position adversely. The Committee find the delay to be unjustified as the pandemic struck in 2019-20 only. Hence, the Committee are of the view that the Department need to fix specific responsibility on their officers to expedite the modernization of ALIMCO to avoid any further delay. The Committee strongly recommend that the Department should do continuous monitoring also of the established timelines for various steps so that work of the modernization of ALIMCO project progresses within the revised time frame.</p>
8	8.11	<p>The Committee note that while the year 2020-21 did witness severe constraints in utilization of funds, there is a trend of persistent underutilization of funds in the four scholarship Schemes run by the Department for students with disabilities viz. National Fellowship Scholarship, Pre-Matric Scholarship, Post-Matric Scholarship and Top-class Scholarship during the last three years. The submission of the Department that the funds remained unutilized mainly due to non-receipt of sufficient number of scholarship applications from students belonging to SC/ST categories and North-East region is very disheartening as this must have led to many Divyang students missing out on opportunity for educational upliftment. The Committee are of the strong view that in such circumstances, the Department needs to focus on these categories and the North Eastern States for creating awareness among students. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry, instead of justifying paucity of applications, should publicize their scholarship Schemes among various State Departments as the financial package under those schemes are much better. Moreover, as this is a vast Country with huge population of students with disabilities, the Committee desire them to avail such benefits and become a self-reliant community.</p>