6

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2024-25)

(EIGHTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT (DEPARTMENT OF EMPOWERMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES)

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (2025-26)

SIXTH REPORT

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

March, 2025/ Phalguna, 1946 (Saka)

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Presented to Lok Sabha on 17.3.2025.

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 17.3.2025.

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

March, 2025/ Phalguna, 1946 (Saka)

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COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2024-25)

SHRI P.C. MOHAN - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS
Lok Sabha

2. Shri E. T. Mohammed Basheer
3. Shri Bhaskar Murlidhar Bhagare
4. Smt. Vijaylakshmi Devi
5. Shri Chhatrapal Singh Gangwar
6. Km.Priyanka Satish Jarkiholi
7. Shri Ramesh Chandappa Jigajinagi
8. Shri Chintamani Maharaj
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17. Shri Sasikanth Senthil
18. Shri Anoop Pradhan Valmiki
19. Shri Mansukhbhai Dhanjibhai Vasava
20. Dr. Lata Wankhede
21. Shri Surendra Prasad Yadav

RajyaSabha

22. Smt. Sumitra Balmik
23. Smt. Geeta alias Chandraprabha
24. Shri Narayana Koragappa
25. Smt. Phulo Devi Netam
26. Shri Ramji
27. Shri Rameswar Teli
28. Smt. Mamata Thakur
29. Smt. P. T. Usha
30. Shri Abdul Wahab
31. Shri Niranjan Bishi

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

1.	Smt. Mamta Kemwal	-	Joint Secretary
2.	Smt. Banani Sarker Joshi	-	Under Secretary

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment (2024-25) having been authorized by the Committee do present on their behalf this Sixth Report on 'Demands for Grants for the year 2025-26' pertaining to the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities).

2. The Committee considered the 'Demands for Grants (2025-26)' of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities which were laid on the Table of the House on 11 February, 2025. After obtaining the Budget Documents, Explanatory Notes, etc., the Committee took evidence of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities on 20 February, 2025. The Committee considered and adopted the Report at the sitting held on 12.03.2025.

3. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the Officers of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities for tendering oral evidence and placing before them the detailed written notes and post evidence information as desired by the Committee in connection with the examination of the 'Demands for Grants (2025-26)'.

4. For ease of reference observations/ recommendations/ comments of the Committee have been printed in bold in the body of the Report.

New Delhi
12 March, 2025
21 Phalguna, 1946 (Saka)

SHRI P.C MOHAN
Chairperson
Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment

REPORT

CHAPTER I

The Department of Disability Affairs was carved out of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment on May 12, 2012 in order to give focused attention to policy issues and meaningful thrust to the activities aimed at welfare and empowerment of the Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). It was subsequently renamed as Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities on 8 December, 2014 and acts as a nodal agency for matters pertaining to disability and persons with disabilities including effecting closer coordination among different stakeholders.

1.2 Empowerment of persons with disabilities is an inter-disciplinary process, covering various aspects namely, prevention, early detection, intervention, education, health, vocational training, rehabilitation and social integration. Thus the vision of the Department is to build an inclusive society in which equal opportunities are provided for the growth and development of persons with disabilities so that they can lead productive, safe and dignified lives.

1.3 The Objectives of the Department are enumerated as under :

(i) Physical rehabilitation, which includes early detection and intervention, counseling and medical rehabilitation and assistance in procuring appropriate aids and appliances for reducing the effect of disabilities;
(ii) Educational rehabilitation including vocational education;
(iii) Economic empowerment;
(iv) Developing rehabilitation professionals/personnel;
(v) Improving internal efficiency/responsiveness/service delivery; and
(vi) Advocating empowerment of persons with disabilities through awareness generation among different sections of the society such as cultural, recreational and sports activities.

1.4 The scope of the Department is enumerated as under:-

(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 within 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.

1.5 The Department deals with the following Legislations governing different aspects of disability, welfare and empowerment of the Persons with Disabilities: -

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

1.6 The following Statutory Bodies/PSUs Autonomous Bodies come under The purview of the Department :-

(i) The Rehabilitation Council of India.
(ii) The Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities.
(iii) The National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities.

1.7 The CPSUs/Autonomous Bodies under the DEPwD are as under:-

(i) The National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDC).
(ii) Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO), Kanpur.

1.8 The Department also administers the following National Institutes which cater to different disabilities:-

(i) Ali Yavar Jung National Institute of Speech and Hearing Disabilities (Divyangjan), Mumbai (AYNISHD)

(ii) National Institute for The Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (Divyangjan) (NIEPID) Secunderabad.
(iii) National Institute for The Empowerment of Persons with Visual Disabilities (NIEPVD)
(iv) National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation (NIMHR) at Sehore, Madhya Pradesh
(v) Swami Vivekanand National Institute of Rehabilitation Training and Research (SVNIRTAR), Cuttack
(vi) National Institute for Locomotor Disabilities (NILD), Kolkata
(vii) Pt. DeendayalUpadhyaya National Institute for Persons with Physical Disabilities (PDUNIPPD).
(viii) National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities (Divyangjan) (NIEPMD), Chennai.
(ix) Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC), New Delhi.

Besides the above, the DEPwD also administers the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Center for Disability Sports, CDS Gwalior (Madhya Pradesh).

1.9 In India, the RPwD Act classifies various specified disabilities into five broad categories, as outlined below:

Category	Types of Disabilities
(i) Physical Disability	• Locomotor and Related Disabilities: Locomotor Disability, Leprosy cured person, Cerebral Palsy, Dwarfism, Muscular Dystrophy, Acid Attack Victims • Visual Impairment: Blindness, Low Vision • Hearing Impairment: Deaf, Hard of Hearing • Speech and Language Disability
(ii) Intellectual Disability	• Intellectual Disability • Specific Learning Disability • Autism Spectrum Disorder
(iii) Mental Behavior	• Mental Illness
(iv) Disability caused due to	• Chronic Neurological Conditions: Parkinson's Disease, Multiple Sclerosis • Blood Disorders: Hemophilia, Thalassemia, Sickle Cell Disease
(v) Multiple Disabilities	• More than one of the above specified disabilities

1.10 According to Census 2011, there are 2.68 crore persons with disabilities in India which constitute 2.21 percent of the total population. Out of the total population of persons with disabilities, approximately 1.50 crore are male and 1.18 crore, are female.

1.11 The details of number of persons with disabilities, state-wise, as per Census 2011, is at the table below:

STATE-WISE POPULATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AS PER CENSUS 2011

S.No	State	Total PwD population
1	Andhra Pradesh	12,19,785
2	Arunachal Pradesh	26,734
3	Assam	4,80,065
4	Bihar	23,31,009
5	Chhattisgarh	6,24,937
6	Delhi	2,34,882
7	Goa	33,012
8	Gujarat	10,92,302
9	Haryana	5,46,374
10	Himachal Pradesh	1,55,316
11	J&K	3,61,153
12	Jharkhand	7,69,980
13	Karnataka	13,24,205
14	Kerala	7,61,843
15	Madhya Pradesh	15,51,931
16	Maharashtra	29,63,392
17	Manipur	58,547
18	Mizoram	15,160
19	Meghalaya	44,317
20	Nagaland	29,631
21	Odisha	12,44,402
22	Punjab	6,54,063
23	Rajasthan	15,63,694
24	Sikkim	18,187
25	Tamil Nadu	11,79,963
26	Telangana	10,46,822
27	Tripura	64,346
28	Uttar Pradesh	41,57,514
29	Uttarakhand	1,85,272
30	West Bengal	20,17,406
31	A&N Islands	6,660
32	Chandigarh	14,796
33	Daman & Diu	2,196
34	D& N Haveli	3,294
35	Lakshadweep	1,615
36	Puducherry	30,189
	Total	**2,68,14,994**

1.12 This data is however more than 14 years old and with greater number of disabilities being brought under the ambit of the RPwD Act, 2016, this may not reflect the actual number of persons with disabilities in the country.

1.13 In order to get a fair assessment of the number of persons with disabilities, the Department has a comprehensive UDID database for persons with disabilities. The objective of Unique Disability Identification (UDID) project is to create a national database of PwDs and provide a uniform online platform for disability certification. So far more than 1.15 crore UDID cards have been generated. Online issuance of disability certificates by States/UTs through UDID portal has been made mandatory since 1st June 2021. With the simplification of UDID portal, notification of new Assessment Guidelines on 14.03.2024 and increased use of UDID/enrollment number in availing benefits of schemes meant for PwDs, the Department it is expected that UDID database over a period of time could give a fair idea of target population of PwDs. The table below gives an approximation of the number of persons with different disabilities:-

Sl No	**Disability Type**	**Count**
1	Locomotor Disability	64,12,367
2	Intellectual Disability	12,31,317
3	Hearing Impairment	11,66,800
4	Blindness	8,17,658
5	Low Vision	5,43,568
6	Mental Illness	5,22,816
7	Multiple Disabilities	3,45,643
8	Cerebral Palsy	2,54,938
9	Autism Spectrum Disorder	1,19,150
10	Muscular Dystrophy	90,706
11	Chronic Neurological Conditions	74,988
12	Speech and Language Disability	54,875
13	Leprosy Cured	44,755
14	Sickle Cell Disease	38,658
15	Dwarfism	24,500
16	Thalassemia	22,187
17	Specific Learning Disabilities	23,036
18	Hemophilia	16,060

19	Multiple Sclerosis	11,773
20	Parkinson's Disease	6,307
21	Acid Attack Victim	5,161
	TOTAL	**1,31,12,106**

1.14 During the course of evidence, the Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities also apprised the Committee of the new initiatives aimed at improving the lot of Persons with disabilities in India.

> "One is that a lot of State Governments are actually setting up independent departments. They are also appointing independent Ministers forDisability. Several States, such as Maharashtra, Odisha, Bihar, and Rajasthan, have increased their budgets from zero to approximately ₹1,000 crore or ₹1,500 crore. So, State Budgets are really starting to look very good".
>
> "The Karnataka Government is the only one that has village-level workers in disability, with about 7,000 workers serving approximately 30,000 villages for the past 10 to 15 years. We are retraining these workers and creating a new breed of community-based professionals, which we are also funding".
>
> "In terms of accessibility within the SIPDA scheme, our funding for building accessibility is decreasing. We are undergoing a paradigm shift. We have initiated a Sugamya Yatra across all States, where a team of 10 to 15 individuals, including people with various disabilities, visits collector offices, SP offices, district judges, main shopping malls, cinemas, colleges, and tourist attractions in their districts. They are raising awareness and requesting corrections for identified shortfalls. By including Divyang community, we will probably achieve what even ₹2,000 crore of funding would not achieve. We are making significant progress, and the response from the public has been very good. Everyone is welcoming them and providing free entry into their offices and shopping malls. Although they mention that it may take three to six months to construct the ramp".

1.15 The Committee appreciate the proactive initiatives taken by various State Governments in establishing dedicated Department for disability affairs and significantly increasing budgetary allocations. They also acknowledgethe innovative approach of community-based interventions, such as Karnataka's village-level disability workers and the nationwide *SugamyaYatra* initiative, which fosters grassroots

accessibility improvements. To build on this momentum, the Committee recommend that the Department actively collaborate with States to institutionalize similar models across the country, ensuring sustainable and community-driven disability inclusion. Additionally, a structured framework should be developed to document and monitor accessibility improvements under *SugamyaYatra*, enabling the replication of best practices nationwide.

CHAPTER II

OVERALL BUDGETARY ANALYSIS AND DEMANDS FOR GRANTS FOR 2025-26

Demand No. 94 covers the expenditure of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment). The detailed Demands for Grants of the Department were laid on the Table of the LokSabha on 11 February, 2025.

2.2 To a query on the proposed allocation of the Department, the Committee was informed as under:-

> "Department had submitted a projected BE requirement of ₹1704.87 crore for the financial year 2025-26 with the objective of maintaining momentum of the ongoing activities and also to initiate new activities. After assessment by Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, ₹1275.00 crore has been allocated to the Department in BE 2025-26".

2.3 The Committee further enquired as to how the Department would be managing their programs and ensure effective implementation of key schemes particularly when the projections for 2025-26 was much higher than allocation. In reply, the Department have stated as under:-

> "The Budget Estimates in respect of the Central Sector Schemes namely ADIP, SIPDA, DDRS and Scholarship were recommended by the EFC in its meeting held on 11.08.2021 for continuation for next five years. All the four schemes are appraised and approved with financial allocation and physical targets for the entire period of the 15th Finance Commission's recommendations. Therefore, the budget allocation of FY 2025-26 of the schemes will be utilized as per the approved activities to maintain the ongoing activities as approved in EFC outlay to meet out the desired targets".

2.4 They have also assured the Committee that in case of additional requirement of funds under any particular Schemes or Non Schemes, the additional demand for grants would be raised with the Ministry of Finance at the RE stage .

The Budgetary allocation and utilization for DEPwD for the last three years viz. 2022-23,2023-24, 2024-25 and BE 2025-26 are as under:-

(₹. in crore)

Year	Budget Estimates	Revised Estimates	Actual Expenditure
2022-23	1212.42	1015.98	989.35
2023-24	1225.15	1225.01	1143.89
2024-25	1225.27	1167.27	892.68*
2025-26	1275.00		

***(as on 03.03.2025)**

2.5 The Budget Allocation for FY 2025-26 in respect of schemes and non-schemes as approved by Ministry of Finance is tabulated as under:-

(₹. in crore)

		2022-23			2023-24			2024-25			2025-26
Sl No	**Schemes/ Non Schemes**	**BE**	**RE**	**AE**	**BE**	**RE**	**AE**	**BE**	**RE**	AE (as on 3.3.2025)	**BE**
1	ADIP	235.00	230.00	242.29	245.00	305.00	290.60	315.00	350.00	346.27	316.70
2	DDRS	125.00	105.00	114.69	130.00	130.00	129.98	165.00	139.00	87.95	165.00
3	SIPDA	240.39	100.00	65.59	150.00	67.00	76.79	135.33	111.00	43.90	115.10
4	Scholarship for Students with Disabilities	105.00	145.00-	142.00	155.00	155.00	130.07	142.68	80.00	58.38	145
5	National Institutes	365.00	310.00	325.84	385.00	408.75	408.85	370.00	391.97	286.52	430.19
6	Budgetary Support to National Trust	35.00	30.00	35.00	35.00	35.00	35.00	25.00	31.00	25	35.00
7	Rehabilitation Council of India	6.40	6.40	6.40	6.40	6.40	6.40	4.50	4.50	3.38	5.00
8	Centre for Disability Sports	60.00	56.00	25.91	76.00	76.00	35.34	25.00	23.30	12.18	25.00
9	National University for	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01

	Divyangjan										
10	Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities	5.50	5.50	5.37	5.50	5.50	4.12	5.50	5.50	4.39	5.50
11	Secretariat (Establishment)	35.00	28.08	26.26	37.22	36.36	26.74	37.25	31.00	24.71	32.50
12	NDFDC	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	Equity Support completed. Therefore, Corporation does not opt for equity			
13	Modernization of ALIMCO	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	Modernization of ALIMCO has been completed			
14	National Institute for Inclusive and Universal Design	0.01	0.00	1230	Project merged with National University.						
	Grand Total (Schemes+ Non Schemes)	1212.42	1015.98	989.35	1225.15	1225.01	1143.89	1225.27	1167.27	892.68	1275

2.6 It has been observed from the tables above that for the year 2025-26, an amount of ₹1,275.00 crore has been fixed for the Department at the BE stage, which is approximately 9.23 percent more than the BE of the previous financial year (2024-25) which was ₹1,225.27crore. The RE for the year 2024-25 was ₹1,167.27 crore and actual utilisation was ₹892.68crore (till 03.03.2025) which was 76.45 percent *w.r.t* RE allocation. Given this slow expenditure trend, the Department was requested to clarify the key factors behind this low utilization. In Reply the Department has stated as under:-

> "In 2024-25, the major reason for slow pace of expenditure is due to implementation of CNA Model-1(TSA)/1A (Hybrid TSA). Earlier the funds were being released from CNA Model-2. However, as per revised guidelines of Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance the Central Sector Schemes whose annual outlay is more than 100 Crore are now required to on-board on the Model- 1/1A/TSA Hybrid Model.
>
> Due to change in procedure of release of funds, no funds could be released in 3rd quarter of 2024-25 as the process had technical issues

such as return of CNA balances to CFI, opening of new RBI Account and Mapping of all the agencies in TSA Model."

2.7 Further, it can be observed from the table above that while BE has remained almost static over the past 3 years , a pattern of reduction at the Revised Estimate (RE) stage and under spending in actual expenditure is evident. In 2022-23, the BE was ₹1,212.42 crore, but the RE was reduced to ₹1,015.98 crore, whereas the actual expenditure stood at only ₹989.35 crore. This pattern has been repeated in 2023-24 where BE/RE has remained stable at ₹1,225.15/1,225.01 crore but actuals were to the tune of ₹1,143.89 crore only. Similarly, in 2024-25, the RE was lowered from BE of ₹1,225.27 crore to ₹1,167.27 crore, reflecting a downward adjustment.

2.8 On being asked to explain the underlying reasons for these reductions at the RE stage and the persistent shortfall in actual expenditure, the Department has submitted as under:-

"This Department is implementing various Central Sector schemes namely SIPDA, DDRS, ADIP, Scholarship which are demand driven and funds are released to implementing agencies based on the proposals received from States/UTs/Institutions/NGOs, individuals etc. The specific reasons for the slow trend/under-utilization of expenditure seen in preceding financial years are:

- Skill Training was undergoing a rigorous overhaul to enable streamlining of the process, check financial irregularities by Empanelled Training Partners (ETPs) and to ensure a robust and secure fund flow mechanism. This caused some delay in release of funds to ETPs.
- UCs from State Governments was not received on time under SIPDA Scheme.
- Non-receipt of adequate proposals under NER categories of various schemes".

2.9 The Secretary, DEPwD during the course of evidence admitted as under:-

"Sir, very broadly, you are right, every year we end up not spending the BE and even the RE. But in the last two years, we were also stuck with a lot of changes in the expenditure system, like the CNA and TSA were introduced. So that caused delays and a lot of bunching of expenditure in March. This

year, we will not have too much bunching. We have already spent 70 per cent. Hopefully, by February end, we should touch 80 percent. The bunching in March will not be 40 per cent; it will be just 20 or 22 percent"

2.10 The Committee were however assured by the Department that the Schemes of the Department had now been on-boarded on TSA Model and funds were being released to all the agencies and therefore, it is expected that they will be able to fully utilize the entire RE before the end of the current financial year.

2.11 The representative of the Department also expressed an optimistic outlook and stated as under before the Committee:-

"***the budget estimate over the last three years have remained constant at around ₹ 1225 crore But the good news is that we have got a slight enhancement in 2025-26. That is a reflection of the efforts being made by this Department. I will give a short background to this. The ADIP scheme, which is a flagship scheme of the Department, we were given a budget allocation of ₹315 crore in 2024-25. But because we made very good progress in this scheme, and we were running short of funds because we had a large number of proposals in the pipeline and we were ready to do so much more, we moved the Department of Expenditure, requesting for more funds. We wanted ₹ 500 crore enhancement over what had been approved by the Expenditure Finance Committee for five years. So, we made a very strong pitch to the Ministry of Finance, as a result of which we got an enhancement at the RE stage. It is a rare thing for a Department to get more money at RE stage. Normally, we see a cut. But because we did very good work, the enhancement was around ₹35 crores, and that was within the 20 percent which the DOE can do at its level. As a result of that, we have a higher allocation under this ADIP scheme. As far as the expenditure progress is concerned, as on date, we have spent ₹811 crore, which works out to around 68 percent. But we have proposals in the pipeline and we have finances already concurred. So, taking that into account, we are at 73 per cent as on date, which I think is not a very bad situation given that we have a little more than a month to go".

2.12 On being asked what corrective measures have been adopted to improve fund utilization, the Department has informed as under:-

> "The Department has taken up the matter with IAs/States/NGOs and conducts regular meetings for sensitizing them on the need for providing UCs and complete documents so that funds under various schemes are released on time".

2.13 To a query on the specific corrective measures or new initiatives undertaken by the Department in response to the challenges, inefficiencies, and bottlenecks observed in the previous year's performance, the Committee were informed as under :-

> **"**The Schemes of the Department are implemented through various portals namely ARJUN Portal, PM-DAKSH Portal, NSP Portal, E-anudaan Portal for NGOs and UDID Portal for proper implementation and monitoring the schemes so that benefits of the schemes reach the intended beneficiaries in a transparent manner.
>
> ARJUN Portal has been developed under ADIP Scheme. All ADIP beneficiaries data since, 2014 has been uploaded on the portal. It helps in checking duplicity of beneficiaries, online submission of beneficiaries data, and reduced time lag in providing devices and digitization of records of beneficiary data. It also facilitates beneficiaries to apply for aids and appliances through online mode.
>
> PM-DAKSH Portal- The Skill Training Scheme is being monitored through PM-DAKSH Portal. This portal is a one-stop digital destination for PwDs, who need skilling and employment, and for Training organizations and Employers/job aggregators of PwDs. Monitoring the bio-metric attendance of PwDs, getting skill training from NGOs are also being done through this portal.
>
> NSP Portal- The Scholarship Schemes are being monitored/implemented through NSP Portal.
>
> E-anudaan Portal for NGOs- The Department has developed centralized on-line application software with the assistance of National Informatics Centre (NIC). The Programme Implementing Agencies have to register on NGO-Darpan portal and apply on e-Anudaan for release of GIA. All requisite documents along with disability certificate/UDID cards of beneficiaries are uploaded on the e-Anudaan portal and financial assistance is provided to the Implementing agencies through Public Financial Management System (PFMS). UDID Portal- This is a national data base for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). PWDs can register on this portal for obtaining Unique Disability ID cards. UDID cards are issued through the UDID portal.

The implementation of the schemes of the Department through above said portals will lead to more effective utilization of funds and serve the purpose of Just in Time release".

2.14 Assuring the Committee about full utilisation of funds allocated for the year 2025-26, the Secretary, during evidence submitted as under:-

"If you look at the last two-three years' expenditure, in 2023-24, we actually spent ₹1,143 crore, which was the highest ever. This year, our RE is ₹1,167 crore, and I am hoping that we should touch at least ₹1,150 crore. We should be very confident that next year, we will be able to spend ₹1,275 crore".

2.15 From a thorough examination of the Demands for Grants (DFG) over the past three years, the Committee observe a persistent trend of underutilization of funds across key schemes such as ADIP, SIPDA, DDRS, and Scholarships, with actual expenditures consistently falling short of Revised Estimates (RE) and Budget Estimates (BE). The BE allocations were invariably reduced at the RE stage in 2022-23, 2023-24, and 2024-25, yet the Department was unable to fully utilize even the reduced funds. The Department utilized 97.38 percent of RE in 2022-23 and 93.39 percent in 2023-24. However, as of 03.03.2025, only ₹892.68 crore of ₹1167.27 crore (76.48 percent) has been spent. This shortfall was primarily due to disruptions from the introduction of the CNA and TSA models. Delays in receiving Utilization Certificates (UCs) from State Governments under SIPDA and a lack of adequate proposals from North-Eastern States further hindered funds utilization. While the Committee were assured by the Department's representatives that the remaining 2024-25 funds would be fully utilized by 31.03.2025, the Committee strongly urge the Department to adopt targeted remedial measures and strategic interventions to ensure efficient fund utilization in 2025-26. Proactive engagement with State Governments, NGOs, and implementing agencies is essential to streamline proposal submissions and disbursement process, particularly for skill training programs and capital expenditure. Furthermore, given the challenges in meeting fixed targets for schemes like SIPDA and DDRS, the Department should reassess target-setting methodologies to ensure that they are realistic, flexible, and aligned with performance trends. The Committee recommend decisive action to improve fund utilization and program execution in the remaining year of the 2024-26 financial cycle, ensuring that allocated resources effectively advance the welfare of persons with disabilities and that the Department successfully meets its commitments under various schemes.

CHAPTER-III

ASSISTANCE TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES FOR PURCHASE/FITTING OF AIDS/APPLIANCES (ADIP)

The main objective of the Scheme is to provide grants-in-aid to the various implementing agencies (National Institutes/ Composite Regional Centres /Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO)/District Disability Rehabilitation Centres/State Handicapped Development Corporations/other local bodies/ NGOs) to assist needy persons with disabilities in procuring durable, scientifically manufactured standard aids and appliances to promote physical, social and psychological rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities through reducing the effects of disabilities and at the same time enhancing their economic potential. Assistive devices are given to Persons with Disabilities with the aim of improving their independent functioning, and arresting the extent of disability and occurrence of secondary disability. The Scheme also envisages conduct of corrective surgeries, whenever required, before providing an assistive device. The Scheme has been revised/modified *w.e.f* 26.09.2024.

3.2 The Eligibility criteria under the ADIP Scheme is as below:

- Holding a UDID card issued by the Ministry with at least 40per cent disability.
- Monthly income from all sources not to exceed ₹22,500/ per month for 100per cent assistance ₹22,501/- to ₹30,000/- per month for 50 percent assistance.
- New assistive devices are provided after 3 years. However, for children below 18 years of age, the minimum time of assistance is one year for customized items.

3.3 To a query on the manner in which the allocations are disbursed, the Department has submitted as under

> "The allocations under the ADIP Scheme is spent through Grant-in-Aid released to various Implementing Agencies *viz*., ALIMCO, National Institutes, Composite Regional Centre/ Non-Government Organisation etc who undertakes Headquarter and Camp activity for distribution of aids and assistive devices. Apart from this, ADIP Scheme in convergence with Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) *i.e.* ADIP SSA ,aids and assistive devices are distributed to children with special needs (CWSN) in collaboration with Ministry of Education in 60:40 ratio of cost of aids and

assistive devices. Also, Cochlear Implantation is being conducted through Ali Yavar Jung National Institute of Speech and Hearing Disabilities, Mumbai that act as the nodal agency for implementation of Cochlear Implantation. Also, advertisements & publicity are also released in local newspapers where camps are organized and overall awareness of ADIP Scheme".

3.4 The following table shows the BE , RE and actual expenditure incurred under the ADIP Scheme for the years 2022-23 to 2024-25 and BE for 2025-26:-

₹ In crore

Year	Budget Estimates	Revised Estimates	Actual Expenditure
2022-23	235.00	230.00	242.29
2023-24	245.00	305.00	290.60
2024-25	315.00	350.00	346.27 (as on 3.3.2025)
2025-26	316.70		

From the table above it may be observed that the BE for 2022-23 was ₹235.00 crore, with a revised estimate of ₹230.00 crore, yet the actual expenditure exceeded both at ₹242.29 crore, suggesting increased demand or additional allocations. In 2023-24, the budget estimate was ₹245.00 crore, but the revised estimate surged to ₹305.00 crore, with actual spending at ₹290.60 crore significantly higher than the initial allocation but slightly lower than the revised figure. Similarly, for 2024-25 the BE was significantly enhanced by almost 29 percent from the BE of the previous year. RE also witnessed a substantial upward revision to ₹350 crore. As of 03.03.2025 around 98.93 percent of the allocation has been disbursed. The Committee wanted to know the reasons for the sharp increase in revised estimates for 2023-24 and 2024-25. The Department have submitted as under:-

"The persistent upward revision of revised and actual expenditure for the years 2023-24 and 2024-25 can be attributed to several factors. Primarily, there has been an increasing demand for high-end assistive devices such as motorized

tricycles, Artificial Limbs, smart phones, etc., for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). Additionally, requests from Members of Parliament and other dignitaries across the country to organize camps for the distribution of aids and assistive devices have further contributed to the rise in expenditure under the ADIP Scheme.

Furthermore, based on the trend observed from previous years, there has been significant increase in the demand of Motorized Tricycle. There has been 18.32per cent increase in number of beneficiaries distributed with Motorized Tricycle from year 2023-24 to 2024-25.

Apart from this, the distribution of aids and assistive devices through Prahan Mantri Divyasha Kendra (PMDK) has also increased that has significantly raised the requirement of funds under ADIP Scheme. Till date, 70 PMDKs are operational across the country and has benefitted 35,919 beneficiaries with an expenditure of ₹57.87 crores in FY 2024-25 till date."

3.5 Regarding the key factors behind the ₹35 crore increase in the revised estimate (from ₹315 crore to ₹350 crore) during 2024-25, the Department has submitted as under:-

"The key factors for increase in RE for 2024-25 is due to enhanced requirement of funds by Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO) for distribution of aids and appliances to beneficiaries including Motorised Tricycle. Till date 30,775 motorised Tricycle has been distributed by ALIMCO in year 2024-25 with an expenditure of ₹137.36 crores".

3.6 The Committee observed that the Budget Estimate (BE) for 2025-26 has been set at ₹316.70 crore, which is significantly lower than the Revised Estimate (RE) of ₹350 crore for 2024-25. The Committee sought to understand the reasons for this reduction and whether it reflects a reassessment of projected demand, challenges in fund utilization, or a shift in policy priorities. The Department submitted as under:

"The BE for 2025-26 under the ADIP Scheme is ₹316.70 crore, which is higher than the BE for 2024-25. The Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) had recommended ₹1176 crore for the 2021-22 to 2025-26 cycle under the ADIP Scheme, out of which ₹1040.64 crore has been utilized till date. Due to shortage of funds, the Department had sought an additional ₹500 crore, but after appraisal by the EFC in its meeting on 24.12.2024, an enhancement of ₹235

crore was approved for the 15th Finance Commission period. The BE for 2025-26 has been determined accordingly."

3.7 The Committee sought to understand the Department's strategy for ensuring full utilization of the ₹316.70 crore allocated for 2025-26 under the ADIP Scheme. The Department submitted as under:-

"Under the ADIP Scheme, Grant-in-Aid is released to Implementing Agencies for the distribution of aids and appliances to eligible Divyangjan. The allocation is based on the estimated number of beneficiaries. A major Implementing Agency, ALIMCO, has prepared the following action plan for 2025-26:

"Under the ADIP Scheme, Grant-in-Aid is released to Implementing Agencies for the distribution of aids and appliances to eligible Divyangjan. The allocation is based on the estimated number of beneficiaries. A major Implementing Agency, ALIMCO, has prepared the following action plan for 2025-26:

Particular	Expected spend in 2025-26(in Rs. Lakhs)
(Rest of country)	
ADIP-HQ-ROC	16000.00
ADIP-ROC	15700.00
SSA – ROC (60per cent)	4800.00
Sub Total ROC	***36500.00***
(North East)	
ADIP-HQ- (NE)	2500.00
ADIP- (NE)	700.00
NE/SSA	300.00
Sub Total NE	***3500.00***
Grand Total	**40000.00**

3.8 The Committee were also assured as under:-

"The Department will monitor the timely release of funds, conduct review meetings with Implementing Agencies, and ensure regular updates through the ARJUN Portal for efficient fund utilization."

The Committee observed that only 1.76 lakh beneficiaries had been assisted under ADIP in 2024-25, accounting for approximately 50 percent of the target.

The Committee sought clarification on whether the Department would be able to meet the goal of 3.15 lakh beneficiaries within the remaining timeframe and what measures were being taken to achieve this.

3.9 The information pertaining to physical target and achievement under the ADIP Scheme for the last three years is as follows:-

Year	Physical Target	Achievement
2022-23	2.05 lakhs beneficiaries	2.89 lakhs beneficiaries
2023-24	2.15 lakhs beneficiaries	3.15 lakhs beneficiaries
2024-25	3.15 lakhs beneficiaries	2.10 lakhs beneficiaries(As on 14.2.2025)
2025-26	2.05 lakhs beneficiaries	

An analysis of the physical targets and achievements under the ADIP Scheme over the past three financials indicates very positive performance trend in beneficiary coverage. In 2022-23, the Department exceeded its target of 2.05 lakh beneficiaries, achieving 2.89 lakh beneficiaries, which represents 140.98 percent of the set goal. Similarly, in 2023-24, the target of 2.15 lakh beneficiaries was significantly surpassed, with 3.15 lakh beneficiaries assisted (146.51 percent).

However, in 2024-25, despite a higher target of 3.15 lakh beneficiaries, only 2.10 lakh beneficiaries had been assisted as of 14.02.2025, accounting for around 67 per cent of the target. When asked about this shortfall, the Department submitted as under:-

"The target for 2024-25 under the ADIP Scheme is 3.15 lakh beneficiaries. However, due to the imposition of the Model Code of Conduct during the General Elections and the introduction of the TSA Model-I, the pace of expenditure was slow during the initial period of the financial year. Despite this, 88.3 percent of the allocated funds have been utilized as of date, and the number of beneficiaries is expected to increase accordingly."

3.10 Regarding the specific reasons for the reduction of physical target for 2025-26 by almost one-third, the Department submitted as under:

"The target of FY 2025-26 was fixed based on budget allocation as per EFC recommendation at that time which was ₹261.00 crores. The targets were fixed

after considering the factors like increasing demand of costlier items among beneficiaries such as Motorised Tricycle, Accessible Smart Phones and High-end Prosthesis. The targets fixed for distribution of Motorised Tricycle was fixed for 25,000 beneficiaries and remaining 1,80,000 beneficiaries was considered at an average cost of ₹10,000/-. Thus, total target of 2,05,000 beneficiaries was fixed at the total budget outlay of ₹316.00 crores".

3.11 It has been informed by the Department that major modifications/changes have been undertaken for ADIP *w.e.f.* 24.09.2024 as under:-

- Enhancement of Income Ceiling of beneficiaries from ₹15,000/- per month to ₹22,500/- per month for full subsidy of aids and assistive devices and from ₹20,000/- per month to ₹30,000/- per month for 50per cent subsidy.
- Raising the cost ceiling of aids and assistive devices from ₹10,000/- to ₹15,000/- .
- Enhancement of subsidy for Motorized Tricycle and Wheelchair from ₹25,000/- to ₹50,000/- to be provided once in 5 years in place of existing 10 years.
- Provision for high end prosthesis up to the maximum ceiling of ₹30,000/-.
- Raising the cost limit of corrective surgeries for orthopedically impaired from₹10,000/- to ₹15,000/- ; ₹2000/- to ₹3000/- for visually impaired and from ₹1,000/- to ₹1,500/- for hearing impaired.
- Enhancement of cost of Cochlear Implant Surgery from ₹6.00 Lakh to ₹7.00 Lakh in respect of Children with pre-lingual hearing loss between 1 to 5years of age and ₹6 lakhs in case of children acquired hearing loss between 05-18 years. The Financial support will cover the cost of implant surgery, therapy, mapping, travel cost and pre-implant assessment in both the cases.

3.12 It was further stated that as part of the modifications undertaken from 24.09.2024,in respect of ADIP which is a 100 percent central Sector Scheme, the requirement of State Government recommendations has been removed for receiving proposals. The Committee sought to understand how this was likely to impact the performance of the Scheme. In reply, the Department have stated as under

> "The department removed the requirement of State government recommendation in processing the proposals of NGOs keeping in view the timely release of Grant-in-Aid to Implementing Agencies and simplifying the process of application by Implementing Agencies".

3.13 Another initiative introduced by the Department is the opening Pradhan Mantri Divyasha Kendra (PMDK) of ALIMCO. These PMDKs are the walk-in centres where

eligible beneficiary can directly avail required aids and appliances free of cost by visiting these centers. The Committee sought details about the PMDK of ALIMCO and how have they benefitted the PwDs. In reply, the Department have furnished as under:-

> "As of now 70 PMDK has been established across the Country covering all state and UT's of the country. At these centers, beneficiaries are being assessed and provided with aids and assistive devices at walk-in to these centers as per eligibility criteria of the ADIP scheme by the RCI registered Rehab Professional of ALIMCO. From these PMDK's, 35919 beneficiaries under ADIP scheme have been distributed with aids and appliances during FY 2024-25 till date".

3.14 Another initiative under this scheme has been the reduction of eligibility of high-end Prosthesis from 80per cent disability to 40per cent disability. The Committee sought to know the eligibility criteria for availing of high-end Prosthesis and the mode of distribution. They also sought information on the number of beneficiaries that were to benefit as a result of this revision. In reply, the Department has furnished as under:-

> "As per the latest guidelines of ADIP Scheme, High-end Prosthesis are provided to Persons with Locomotor Disabilities with at least 40per cent disability with a maximum subsidy limit of ₹30,000/- after recommendation of P&O professional of ALIMCO, NIs, CRCs only. Fitment of High–end Prosthesis is also done in the Prosthetic Centers operated by ALIMCO/NIs/CRCs and Government Hospitals. As per data on Arjun Portal, a total of 2053 beneficiaries are fitted with High End Prosthesis during FY 2024-25 till date, Out of which total 1273 beneficiaries has been benefitted with High end Prosthesis till date after relaxing the eligibility criteria".

3.15 The Department have also made the following significant changes as part of the modifications undertaken from 24.09.2024, in respect of ADIP,

- Inclusion of Motorized Tricycle with Li-Iron-Phosphate batteries in ADIP scheme with subsidy up to ₹ 50,000.00 in line with recent advancement and towards green environment.
- Inclusion of Folding Joystick wheelchair in ADIP scheme with subsidy up to ₹50,000/-

3.16 When asked how these changes would impact PwDs, the Committee have been informed as under:-

> "Inclusion of Motorized Tricycle with Li-Iron-Phosphate batteries in ADIP scheme with subsidy up to ₹50,000.00 in line with recent advancement and towards

green environment and Folding Joystick wheelchair in ADIP scheme with subsidy up to ₹50,000/- marks a significant step towards the empowerment and inclusion of persons with disabilities (PwDs) in the mainstream. These changes are expected to positively impact PwDs in several ways:

a. The inclusion of the Motorized Tricycle will provide enhanced mobility options. This will help them navigate their environment more independently, fostering greater self-sufficiency and reducing dependency on caregivers.
b. With the introduction of more advanced technologies like the Li-Iron-Phosphate battery in the Motorized Tricycle, the maintenance requirements for these devices will be significantly reduced. These modern solutions are designed to be more durable, with fewer service needs and a longer lifespan. This will minimize the hassle and cost of regular maintenance, making these devices more accessible and sustainable for PwDs in the long run.
c. The inclusion of the Folding Joystick wheelchair will cater to a wider range of needs, offering greater comfort and usability. This advancement ensures that PwDs, particularly those with limited mobility or coordination, have access to devices that suit their specific requirements.
d. With the above provisions, more individuals with disabilities, particularly those who have previously lacked access to these kinds of technologies, will now be able to benefit. The ADIP scheme will reach a larger number of PwDs, empowering them to lead more inclusive, independent lives.

The Department have assured the Committee that as part of the revision and assessment of the ADIP Scheme, these provisions are expected to contribute significantly to the social inclusion of PwDs, providing them with the tools to engage more actively in educational, social, and professional environments. The subsidy of up to ₹50,000 will reduce the financial burden on PwDs and their families, ensuring that a greater number of individuals can access essential assistive technologies.

3.17 Another initiative taken by the Department was the distribution of aids and appliance during the just concluded Kumbh Mela at Prayagraj. The Secretary informed the Committee regarding this as under:-

"Sir, I would like to add that in Kumbh Mela also, ALIMCO has set up a stall. They have distributed more than 18,000 devices, especially to old people".

3.18 To a query on the types of devices distributed, the Committee was informed as under

"Sir, they are wheelchair, knee brace, and LS belt needed for the elderly persons. There are 17-18 types of devices under Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY). Out of that, whatever is suited for that person, we accordingly distribute that."

3.19 Regarding the role of CSR Initiatives for 2025-26, the Secretary during the course of oral evidence deposed as under

"…… to our target of at least ₹100 crore in CSR next year. We are very confident that we will be able to get ₹100 crore from CSR next year. We are very proactively reaching out to State Governments. For example, Bihar and Rajasthan have given nomination-based order to ALIMCO, and we hope that at least five to six more states will come on board next year. So ALIMCO will be able to produce and sell more, though Central Government budgeting is limited to 325".

3.20 The Committee recognize that the Assistance to Persons with Disabilities for Purchase/Fitting of Aids/Appliances (ADIP) Scheme is an important initiative aimed at enhancing mobility, independence, and economic empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). The Committee note that fund allocation and utilization under ADIP have shown a steady increase, with actual expenditure surpassing initial Budget Estimates (BE) in multiple years. In 2022-23, the BE was ₹235.00 crore, which was revised to ₹230.00 crore, yet actual expenditure exceeded expectations at ₹242.29 crore. Similarly, in 2023-24, the BE of ₹245.00 crore was significantly revised to ₹305.00 crore, with actual spending at ₹290.60 crore. In 2024-25, the BE was further enhanced to ₹315.00 crore, and the Revised Estimate (RE) increased to ₹350.00 crore, with ₹346.27 crore utilized as of 03.03.2025. The Committee also note that increased financial allocations has been ably matched by the physical performance/targets set under the Scheme. In 2022-23 and 2023-24, the target was exceeded, benefiting 2.89 lakh and

3.15 lakh beneficiaries, respectively. However, in 2024-25, only 2.10 lakh beneficiaries were assisted as of 14.02.2025, accounting for 67 percent of the target of 3.15 lakh beneficiaries. While the Department has cited the imposition of the Model Code of Conduct during General Elections and the transition to the TSA Model-I as reasons for the slower pace of the expenditure, the Committee urge the Department to learn from these experiences and establish contingency plans to ensure uninterrupted service delivery in the future. The Committee however express concern over the reduction of the physical targets for 2025-26 to 2.05 lakh beneficiaries and recommend that the Department continuously assess demand trends and explore possibilities for expanding beneficiary coverage.

3.21 The Committee appreciate the revisions in the ADIP Scheme, effective 26.09.2024, which aim to enhance inclusivity and provide greater financial relief to Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). The modifications include higher income eligibility ceilings, increased financial support for assistive devices, and expanded coverage for advanced mobility aids and corrective surgeries. The enhancements in subsidies for motorized tricycles, wheelchairs, and high-end prostheses, along with greater financial assistance for cochlear implants and corrective surgeries, are expected to significantly improve accessibility and independence for PwDs. By reducing the financial burden on beneficiaries and ensuring access to better-quality assistive devices, these changes will promote greater social and economic inclusion. The Committee, however, emphasize the need for periodic impact assessments to evaluate whether these modifications are effectively improving the quality of life for PwDs, ensuring that the intended benefits reach the maximum number of eligible individuals.

3.22 The Committee appreciate the establishment of Pradhan Mantri Divyasha Kendras (PMDKs), which provide walk-in access to assistive aids and have benefitted 35,919 PwDs as of 2024-25. These centers play a crucial role in ensuring last-mile service delivery, and the Committee recommend their expansion to underserved regions, particularly in remote and tribal

areas. The removal of the requirement for State Government recommendations in NGO proposals is also a welcome step toward reducing bureaucratic delays and ensuring the timely release of funds. However, the Committee stress the importance of strict monitoring mechanisms to prevent misuse of funds and maintain transparency in implementation.

3.23 The Committee commend the inclusion of Motorized Tricycles with Li-Iron-Phosphate batteries and Folding Joystick Wheelchairs in the ADIP Scheme, with a subsidy of up to ₹50,000, as a significant step towards improving mobility and independence for PwDs. These modern assistive devices, along with enhanced financial support for high-end prostheses and cochlear implants, will broaden accessibility, lower maintenance costs, and provide financial relief to beneficiaries and their families. The Committee strongly recommend that the Department undertake extensive outreach efforts to ensure that maximum eligible PwDs can avail these benefits and urge collaboration with research institutions and industry partners to continuously enhance and upgrade assistive devices, making them more cost-effective, durable, and efficient.

3.24 The Committee appreciate the Department's efforts in enhancing accessibility and mobility for the elderly by distributing over 18,000 assistive devices during the Kumbh Mela at Prayagraj under the Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY). Such initiatives play a vital role in reaching vulnerable populations in large public gatherings and ensuring their comfort and dignity. To further strengthen these efforts, the Committee recommend that similar outreach programs be integrated into other major national and regional events. Additionally, a structured mechanism for pre-event assessment and beneficiary registration should be developed to ensure the distribution of need-specific assistive devices, maximizing the impact of such initiatives.

CHAPTER IV

DEENDAYAL DIVYANGJAN REHABILITATION SCHEME (DDRS)

Deendayal Divyangjan Rehabilitation Scheme is a Central Sector scheme of the Department to provide grant-in-aid to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for projects relating to rehabilitation of persons with disabilities aimed at enabling them to reach and maintain their optimal, physical, sensory, intellectual, psychiatric or socio-functional levels. The Scheme is being implemented since 1999 with the objective of ensuring effective implementation of the Right of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016. Activities/components admissible for grant under the scheme to the organisations include honorarium to staff, transportation of beneficiaries, stipend for beneficiaries/hostel maintenance, cost of raw materials and contingencies to meet office expenses, electricity, water charges and rent.

4.2 The Grant-in-aid is provided to Implementing agencies (IAs) which are registered with NGO- Darpan Portal of NITI Aayog and have obtained unique ID of NITI Aayog. The Grant-in-Aid (GIA) is provided through e-Anudaan portal of the Department. All financial assistance is provided to the Implementing agencies through Public Financial Management System (PFMS).

4.3 The eligibility conditions for Grants under DDRS are as under:-

Organizations registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 (XXI of 1860), or any relevant Act of the State/Union Territory; or a Trust registered under the Indian Trust Act, 1882 or any other similar Act for the time being in force; or a Not-for-Profit company registered under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013 or any relevant Act for the time being in force.

a. Registration should have been in force for at least 2 years at the time of applying for grant under this scheme.

b. Must be registered in the NITI Aayog portal (NGO-Darpan) portal and obtain Unique ID of NGO-Darpan before applying for Grant under the scheme.

c. Must be registered either under erstwhile Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 or Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

d. An organization as specified above should have the following characteristics:

(i) It should have a managing body with its powers, duties and responsibilities clearly defined and laid down in Memorandum of Association.

(ii) It should have resources, facilities and experience for undertaking the programme.

(iii) It should not be run for profit to any individual or a body of individuals.

4.4 The Scheme has been revised *w.e.f.* 1st October, 2024. It envisages Grants-in-Aid on advance-cum-reimbursement basis, additional grants from any sources like state governments, CSR etc. as supplementary to the GoI funding to provide basic minimum wages or additional services/activities or additional equipment, to ascertain smooth rehabilitation services to PwDs. Similarly, now projects being run by institutions/Autonomous bodies of the Government or Armed forcescan be submitted by the concerned Head of the Institution directly to the DEPwD.

4.5 The Department furnished the following information regarding Model projects under DDRS:-

i. Project for Cross Disability Pre-School and Early Intervention with Provision for Home-Based Rehabilitation & Community-Based Rehabilitation Project

ii. Special School for the Children with Hearing Disability with option for Home-Based Rehabilitation/ Community-Based Rehabilitation

iii. Special Schools for the Children with Visual Disability (Including Deaf blindness) with Option for Home-Based Rehabilitation/Community-Based Rehabilitation & Center For Low Vision

iv. Special School for the Children with Other Disabilities (Intellectual Disability, Cerebral Palsy, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Multiple Disabilities, Muscular Dystrophy, Deaf blindness, etc.) with Option for Home-Based Rehabilitation/Community-Based Rehabilitation.

v. Rehabilitation of Leprosy Cured Persons (Lcps) with Option for Home-Based Rehabilitation & Community-Based Rehabilitation Project).

vi. Half Way Home for Psycho-Social Rehabilitation of Treated & Controlled persons with Mental Illness with option for Home-Based Rehabilitation & Community-Based Rehabilitation Project.

vii. Preparatory/Remediation Centre for Children with Specific Learning Disabilities to continue Inclusive Education Project.

viii. Cross-Disability Therapy and Counselling Center.

4.6 Activities/components admissible for grant under DDRS include:

a. Recurring: Honorarium to staff, Transportation of beneficiaries, Stipend for beneficiaries/hostel maintenance, Cost of raw materials, and Contingencies to meet office expenses, electricity & water charges, rent.

b. Honorarium is provided to teaching staff, part time rehabilitation professionals, non-teaching staff etc.

c. Transport allowance is provided for transportation of beneficiaries from ₹625 to ₹1000 per month as per A, B, and C cities.

d. Stipend of ₹500 per month is provided to beneficiaries

e. Hostel maintenance of ₹2125/- per month per beneficiary is provided towards residential beneficiaries.

f. Contingency of ₹4000 per beneficiary per annum is provided for office expenses, electricity & water charges etc.

g. Non Recurring: Furniture, Equipments, Books etc.

4.7 The Budgetary allocation under the Scheme alongwith target/achievements for the last 3 years are as follows:-

Year	BE (₹ in Crores)	RE (₹ in Crore)	Actuals (₹ in Crores)
2022-23	125.00	105.00	114.69
2023-24	130.00	130.00	129.98
2024-25	165.00	139.00	87.95 (As on 03.03.2025)
2025-26	165.00		

An analysis of the budget allocation and expenditure trends over the past four years indicates variability in fund utilization. In 2022-23, the Budget Estimate (BE) was ₹125.00 crore, which was reduced to ₹105.00 crore at the Revised Estimate (RE) stage, yet actual expenditure exceeded the RE at ₹114.69 crore. In 2023-24, both the BE and RE were maintained at ₹130.00 crore, and expenditure closely matched the allocation at ₹129.98 crore. However, in 2024-25, the BE was substantially increased to ₹165.00

crore, but the RE was lowered to ₹139.00 crore, with actual expenditure at ₹87.95 crore as of 03.03.2025. The allocation for 2025-26 remains at ₹165.00 crore.

4.8 When asked the reasons for mismatch between allocations and actual expenditure, the Department have submitted as below :-

> "GIA is considered based on the audited accounts and all the requisite documents as per scheme norms. As per GFR provisions, voluntary organizations are required to furnish their audited accounts by 30th June of the next financial year. Therefore, no reimbursement proposals can be considered in the first quarter for the previous Grant-in-aid year. Another reason for the delay is that the funding procedure of DDRS scheme has shifted from CNA Model to TSA Hybrid Model 1-A. This shift took some procedural time. Now, TSA Hybrid Model 1-A is fully functional under the DDRS scheme.
>
> The number of beneficiaries under the scheme depends on the number of projects being assisted. The number of projects supported under the scheme in previous years has remained almost the same. However, the screening committee of the Department has recommended new proposals. The beneficiaries of these new proposals will be considered only after the release of funds to these organizations. Therefore, when compared to the achieved target of the previous year (i.e., 2023-24), the current financial year's physical target is justified and will be achieved before the end of the current financial year".

4.9 Asked to enumerate the ameliorative steps being taken for realisation of the objectives of the scheme by the Department, the following information has been submitted:-

> "To ensure the effective utilization of the remaining funds under the DDRS (Deendayal Divyangjan Rehabilitation Scheme) in 2025-26, the Department is implementing the following concrete measures:

a. **Timely Disbursement of Funds:** The Department will ensure that funds are disbursed promptly to the respective organizations and projects as per the approved timelines as soon as audited reports are received.

b. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Regular monitoring and evaluation of ongoing projects will be conducted to track progress and address any delays or issues in a timely manner.

c. **Streamlined Processes:** Efforts will be made to streamline the approval and release process to avoid any bottlenecks. This will include improved coordination

between various agencies such as National Divyangjan Finance and Development Corporation (NDFDC), National Informatics Centre (NIC), Public Financial Management System (PFMS) and stakeholders involved in the fund allocation process.

d. **Video Inspections of the NGOs:** CPMU consultants and young professionals of the Department are conducting video inspections from 9 AM to 11 AM to monitor the smooth functioning of the organizations and the timely submission of grant-in-aid proposals.

e. It has also been decided that organizations running both schemes, i.e., the National Trust and DDRS, will choose only one scheme either the scheme under the National Trust or the DDRS scheme of the Department to avoid duplication in the services provided to persons with disabilities.

f. As per revised DDRS scheme effective form 01.10.2024, if the proposal submitted by the PIAs/NGOs on e-anudaan portal is pending at District level for more than one month without any action, then it will automatically be forwarded to the State Government. Further, if the same proposal is pending with the State Government for more than one month without any action, then it will automatically be forwarded (without recommendation of State Government) to the Department. However, this is not applicable in case of supplementary grant being given by the State Government to the PIAs/NGOs

It has also been decided that organizations running both schemes, i.e., the National Trust and DDRS, will choose only one scheme either the scheme under the National Trust or the DDRS scheme of the Department to avoid duplication in the services provided to persons with disabilities.

Through these measures, the Department aims to ensure that the full BE for 2025-26 is effectively utilized and all projects are completed successfully within the allocated time frame".

4.10 The Physical performance of the scheme is enumerated as under:

Year	**Physical Target**	**Achievement**
2022-23	40000	35349
2023-24	40000	30589
2024-25	32000	22826(As on 16.01.2025)
2025-26	32000	

4.11 When asked to enumerate the reasons for downward revision of physical targets under the scheme since 2024-25, the Department has replies as below:-

> "The number of beneficiaries under the scheme depends on the number of projects being assisted. The number of projects supported under the scheme in previous years has remained almost the same. However, the screening committee of the Department has recommended new proposals. The beneficiaries of these new proposals will be considered only after the release of funds to these organizations. Therefore, when compared to the achieved target of the previous year (i.e., 2023-24), the current financial year's physical target is justified and will be achieved before the end of the current financial year."

4.12 In this regard, the Department have further stated that:-

> "Under DDRS scheme, proposals are considered based on Inspection report and State Government recommendations. The said inspection report is prepared at District Social welfare officer. However, it was seen in many cases that the proposals in e-anudaan have been pending long time (some cases 1.5-2 years) at District authorities as well as State authorities".

4.13 To reform the situation, the Department has listed out the following ameliorative steps being taken for realisation of the objectives of the scheme:-

- Model projects have been conceptualized to cover all 21 disabilities as per RPwD, Act, 2016 and the no. of model project reduced from 9 to 8.
- Maximum age limit of the ID beneficiaries has been increased from 18 to 23 years.
- Grant-in-aid to the Implementing Agencies is being released on Advance-cum-reimbursement basis.
- In order to provide advance GIA to the Implementing agencies to ensure the smooth implementation of projects, the scheme has been placed under CNA (Central Nodal Agency) mechanism.
- The implementing agencies are required to submit UDID cards form the year 2023-24 of all the beneficiaries. The data regarding UDID cards is being directly fetched through API from UDID Portal (Swavlamban Portal) *w.e.f* the year 2023-24.
- As per revised DDRS scheme effective form 01.10.2024, If the proposal submitted by the PIAs/NGOs on e-anudaan portal is pending at District level for more than one month without any action, then it will automatically be forwarded to the State Government. Further, if the same proposal is pending with the State Government for more than one month without any action, then it will automatically be forwarded (without recommendation of State Government) to

the Department. However, this will not be applicable in case of supplementary grant being given by the State Government to the PIAs/NGOs

- Since the year 2024-25, DDRC proposals for GIA to DDRCs are now being submitted online through the e-Anudaan portal for the smooth functioning of the DDRCs.
- CPMU consultants and young professionals of the Department are conducting video inspections from 9 AM to 11 AM to monitor the smooth functioning of the organizations and the timely submission of grant-in-aid proposals.

District Disability Rehabilitation Centre (DDRC):

4.14 DDRC Scheme is a sub component under the DDRS scheme from year 2019-20. Before that it was under SIPDA. DDRC is being implemented since 1999-2000. DDRCs are established for providing comprehensive rehabilitation services to Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). 325 districts were initially identified for establishing DDRCs, out of which, DDRCs were set up in 269 districts. Presently all districts of the country are authorized to establish DDRC. At present, there are total 74 DDRCs are functional.

4.15 The Main functions of DDRCs are as under:-

Early Identification and Intervention, awareness generation, assessment of need/provision/fitment of assistive devices, therapeutic services e.g. Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, etc., referral and arrangement of surgical correction, assistance in providing scholarships, skill training, arrangement of loans for self-employment, survey & identification of persons with disabilities through camp approach, assisting in the issue of UDID Cards, and to act as outreach centres for the services provided by the National Institutes and for promoting barrier free environment. The scheme has been revised with effect from 01.04.2023.

4.16 Regarding the proposal for GIA of DDRC, it has been informed as under:-

"Proposals for Grant-in-aid for DDRCs under Deendayal Divyangjan Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS) were accepted through offline mode till the FY 2023-24. The Ministry now aims at making the application process smoother and more efficient by embracing the convenience of online application of proposals for Grant-in-aid for DDRCs through the e-Anudaan Portal from the year 2024-25. Now some of the DDRCs have also submitted their online proposals for the year 2024-25 on e-Anudaan Portal".

4.17 The Committee recognize the crucial role of DDRS in providing rehabilitation services to Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) through NGOs and implementing agencies. An analysis of fund utilization trends over the past three years reveals significant fluctuations, with 2022-23 and 2023-24 recording high fund utilization, while in 2024-25, actual expenditure stood at ₹87.95 crore as of 03.03.2025, despite a Budget Estimate (BE) of ₹165 crore. The Committee note that the transition from the CNA Model to TSA Hybrid Model 1-A led to procedural delays in fund disbursement, impacting the pace of implementation. Additionally, as grants were previously processed on a reimbursement basis, NGOs were required to submit audited accounts by June 30 of the next financial year, further slowing down fund releases. However, with the revised DDRS guidelines effective from 01.10.2024, which allow Grant-in-Aid on an advance-cum-reimbursement basis, the Committee expect that fund flow will improve and implementation delays will be minimized. The Committee recommend that the Department ensure timely release of advances, particularly to NGOs with strong compliance records, while also strengthening the capacity of implementing agencies to meet documentation requirements on time, ensuring efficient utilization of allocated funds. The Committee also urge the Department to ensure a smoother transition in funding mechanisms by streamlining financial procedures and proactively addressing administrative bottlenecks to avoid such shortfalls in future fiscal years.

4.18 The Committee note that physical targets under DDRS have witnessed a downward revision since 2024-25, with the target reduced from 40,000 in 2023-24 to 32,000 in 2024-25 and 2025-26. The Department has attributed this to the number of projects supported remaining largely the same over the years, with new proposals being considered only after the release of funds to organizations. The Committee emphasize that rehabilitation services for PwDs should not be constrained due to procedural delays in fund disbursaland recommend that the Department take proactive steps to expedite approvals for new projects. The Committee urge the Department to

explore expanding the scope of DDRS to cover more PwDs by identifying underserved areas where rehabilitation services are limited or absent.

4.19 The Committee appreciate the Department's efforts in introducing monitoring mechanisms, including video inspections of NGOs and time-bound forwarding of proposals under the revised DDRS. The provision for automatic transmission of pending proposals from the district levels to the State Government and further to the DEPwD if no action is taken within a month of submission is a commendable measure aimed to streamline the approval process and minimize administrative delays. However, the Committee recommend strict enforcement of these provisions to ensure that no proposal remains pending for an unreasonable duration. Further, the Committee support the decision that organizations running both DDRS and National Trust schemes should choose only one to avoid duplication of services, ensuring that funds reach the maximum number of beneficiaries.

4.20 The Committee note that DDRCs function as decentralized rehabilitation units, providing early identification and intervention, assistive device distribution, therapy services, and skill development for PwDs. While DDRCs were initially planned for 325 districts, only 269 DDRCs were set up, and currently, only 74 are functional. The Committee express concern over the low operational count of DDRCs and recommend that the Department prioritize the revival and expansion of DDRCs in districts lacking rehabilitation facilities. The Committee also welcome the shift to online applications for Grant-in-Aid (GIA) for DDRCs through the e-Anudaan Portal from 2024-25, which is expected to simplify and expedite the application process.

CHAPTER V

SCHEMES ARISING OUT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ACT 2016 (SIPDA)

The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities has 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 Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (RPwD Act). The RPwD Act, 2016 endorses the rights of Persons with Disabilities for access to education, vocational training, employment, public transport, built-up environment, and information and communication ecosystems and upholds their independence and dignity.

5.2 SIPDA is an umbrella scheme of the Department comprising of following 10 sub-schemes:

(i) Creation of Barrier Free Environment for Persons with Disabilities

(ii) Accessible India Campaign (AIC)

(iii) Divyang Samarth Yojana [National Action Plan (NAP) for Skill Training of Persons with Disabilities and Incentive to Private Employer].

(iv) Unique Disability ID (UDID) Project

(v) Awareness Generation and Publicity (AGP) with In-service Training and Sensitization of key functionaries of Central & State Governments, Local Bodies and Other Provider.

(vi) Financial support to Study and Research on priority areas of disability sector and to Research & Development of suitable product, aids & appliances for empowerment of Persons with Disabilities

(vii) Assistance to Spinal Injury Centres (State Spinal Injury Centre (SSIC) and Indian Spinal Injury Centre (ISIC))

(viii) Cross-Disability Early Intervention Centre

(ix) Projects under SIPDA: Financial Support for Development of Accessible Learning Materials and Financial Assistance for the existing Deaf Colleges in five regions of the Country

(x) Central Project Management Unit (CPMU) cum Data Strategy Unit

5.3 The Budget allocation, Revised allocation and actual expenditure incurred under SIPDA Scheme for the years 2022-23 to 2024-25 and BE 2025-26 are as under:-

Year	BE (₹ in Crore)	RE (₹ in Crore)	Actuals (₹ in Crore)
2022-23	240.39	100.00	65.59
2023-24	150.00	67.00	76.79
2024-25	135.33	111.00	43.90(As on 03.03.2025)
2025-26	115.10		

5.4 SIPDA is the flagship scheme administered by the Department, yet its performance has been inconsistent, with frequent revisions in allocation and utilization over the past three years. Given that it operates as an umbrella programme, the Department was asked to state whether the multiplicity of components were creating bottlenecks in the effective implementation of the Scheme and whether separate allocations and defined targets for each component would lead to better planning, execution, and overall outcomes. In reply, the Department have furnished as under:-

> The multiplicity of the components under the SIPDA Scheme enables more effective fund utilization and enhanced the scope of projects, including research on innovative assistive devices and products for PwDs. Further, it has also brought greater flexibility and responsiveness in addressing the needs of PwDs as per demand".

5.5 An analysis of the budget allocation and expenditure trends over the past four years under the scheme indicates significant variations in fund allocation and utilization. In 2022-23, the Budget Estimate (BE) was ₹240.39 crore, which was reduced by 58.4per cent at the Revised Estimate (RE) stage to ₹100.00 crore, with actual expenditure at ₹65.59 crore, accounting for 65.6 percent of the RE. In 2023-24, the BE

was ₹150.00 crore, later reduced by 55.3 percent to ₹67.00 crore, while actual expenditure stood at ₹76.79 crore, exceeding the RE by 14.6 percent. In 2024-25, the BE was ₹135.33 crore, and the RE was revised downward by 17.9per cent to ₹111.00 crore, with actual expenditure at ₹43.90 crore as of 03.03.2025, accounting for 39.5 per cent of the RE at that point in the financial year. The BE for 2025-26 has been set at ₹115.10 crore, reflecting a gradual reduction in budgetary allocations over the years.

5.6 When asked about the reasons for the downward revision in allocations and its impact on scheme performance, the Department stated as under:

> "SIPDA is a demand-driven scheme, and grants are released based on proposals received with complete documentary requirements. In addition to documentary requirements, it is also imperative for the proposals to be fully compliant with GFR provisions, such as submission of Utilization Certificates for previous years' releases, achievement-cum-performance reports, etc. In order to expedite proposals, the Department is actively pursuing with the concerned State Governments for proposals complete in all respects, including documentary requirements such as UCs of the previous years.
>
> Further to ensure full utilization of allocation made under the Umbrella Scheme and its implementation, the Department actively pursues various measures such as regular reviews/meeting with the implementing agencies and stakeholders, including Central Advisory Board(CAB) on Disability, conducting regular follow ups particularly with regards to documentary reconciliations and regular compliances , etc".

5.7 It has been stated by the Department that in 2022-23, only ₹65.59 crores were spent out of ₹100 crore (RE) due to the revised procedure of fund flow under the CNA Model-2, the nominated CNAs have not fulfilled necessary requirements, such as opening bank accounts and refunding unspent balances, causing delays in fund disbursement. Additionally, SIPDA consists of 10 sub-schemes, each monitored by a different program division, leading to administrative complexities. Delays in submission of required documents and pending utilization of previously released Grant-in-Aid have further hindered the release of funds under SIPDA, impacting its overall implementation. The Committee desired to know whether these issues been resolved or

are similar fund disbursement problems recurring and the steps being taken in this regard. In reply, the Department have stated that:-

> "Following the issuance of the revised procedure for fund flow for the Central Sector Schemes having Annual Financial Outlay of more than ₹100 crores by the Department of Expenditure (DoE), Ministry of Finance (MoF), the SIPDA Scheme has been on boarded on Hybrid TSA Model from the previous CNA Model. Following which, the concerned CNAs have also been directed to refund the unspent balance. Furthermore, the Department is actively pursuing with the State Governments/UTs for receipt of UCs, and regular follow-ups and meetings are being conducted to reconcile the matter."

5.8 Despite these measures, it may be seen that only ₹43.90 crore out of ₹111 crore had been utilized as of 03.03.2025, reflecting slow fund disbursement. When asked about the factors contributing to this, the Department reiterated:

> "In order to ensure full utilization of allocation made under the Umbrella Scheme and its implementation, the Department actively pursues various measures such as regular reviews/meetings with the implementing agencies and stakeholders, including the Central Advisory Board (CAB) on Disability, conducting regular follow-ups, particularly with regards to documentary reconciliations and regular compliances, etc."

5.9 The Committee sought clarification on whether the ₹115.10 crore allocated for 2025-26 would be sufficient to meet program objectives. The Department responded as under:

> "The budget allocated for 2025-26 has been determined based on an in-depth assessment of both previous expenditure patterns and future project requirements. The allocation is deemed sufficient to meet the projected expenditures for the year. Any emerging shortfalls will be addressed through reallocation mechanisms and adjustments during the RE stage, ensuring that no critical areas of the scheme are underfunded. The Department is also focused on optimizing fund utilization by enhancing state coordination and ensuring timely project execution."

5.10 Regarding the roadmap for implementation of the 2025-26 allocation, the Department have stated in a reply as under:

"The core objectives of SIPDA continue to revolve around creating an accessible and inclusive environment for PwDs, enhancing their independence and participation in societal activities. For 2025-26, the roadmap includes:

(i) Accelerating infrastructure projects, particularly in accessibility initiatives.
(ii) Expanding skill development and employment opportunities for PwDs through vocational training programs.
(iii) Strengthening digital accessibility and assistive technology.
(iv) Innovation to meet the evolving needs of PwDs.
(v) Collaborating with states and local bodies to ensure effective implementation of the RPwD Act provisions at the grassroots level.

Regular monitoring and periodic reviews will be conducted to ensure the achievement of these goals."

5.11 Noting SIPDA's inconsistent performance over the past three years, marked by frequent revisions in allocation and utilization, the Committee sought to understand whether the scheme's umbrella structure, with multiple sub-components, were contributing to bottlenecks in its effective implementation. The Department have stated as under :-

"The multiplicity of the components under the SIPDA Scheme enables more effective fund utilization and enhances the scope of projects, including research on innovative assistive devices and products for PwDs. Further, it has also brought greater flexibility and responsiveness in addressing the needs of PwDs as per demand."

5.12 The Committee wanted to know about the measures being undertaken to ensure that the allocated budget for 2025-26 is fully utilized and benefits reach all eligible beneficiaries. The Department have stated as under:-

"As SIPDA is a demand-driven scheme, the grants are being released based on the proposals received with complete documentary requirements. In addition to documentary requirements, it is also imperative for the proposals to be fully compliant with GFR provisions, such as submission of Utilization Certificates for previous years' releases, achievement-cum-performance reports, etc. In order to expedite proposals, the Department is actively pursuing with the concerned State Governments for proposals complete in all respects, including documentary requirements such as UCs of the previous years, etc.

Further, to ensure full utilization of allocation made under the Umbrella Scheme and its implementation, the Department actively pursues various measures such as regular reviews/meetings with the implementing agencies and stakeholders, including the Central Advisory Board (CAB) on Disability, conducting regular follow-ups, particularly with regards to documentary reconciliations and regular compliances, etc."

5.13 The Committee observe significant inconsistencies in the Budget Estimates (BE), Revised Estimates (RE), and actual fund utilization under SIPDA over the past three years. Frequent downward revisions at the RE stage and low actual expenditure despite available allocations indicate systemic inefficiencies in fund absorption. In 2022-23, the BE was ₹240.39 crore, which was reduced by 58.4 per cent at the RE stage to ₹100 crore, with actual expenditure at just ₹65.59 crore. Similarly, in 2023-24, the BE of ₹150 crore was cut to ₹67 crore, yet actual expenditure exceeded the RE at ₹76.79 crore (114.7 percent of RE). In 2024-25, despite an RE of ₹111 crore, only ₹43.90 crore (39.5 percent of RE) had been utilized as of 03.03.2025. These fluctuations indicate inconsistent fund planning and delays in fund utilization, leading to missed opportunities for enhancing accessibility and disability-related initiatives. The Committee strongly recommend that the Department strengthen its financial planning mechanisms by ensuring that BE allocations are realistic, demand-driven, and reflective of actual implementation capacity.

5.14 In addition to financial inconsistencies, the Committee note a significant shortfall in meeting physical targets under SIPDA. In 2022-23, against a target of 44,520 beneficiaries, 44,162 were assisted, reflecting 99.2 percent achievement. However, in 2023-24, the achievement dropped to 29,374 beneficiaries against the same target (65.9 percent), and as of 16.01.2025, only 11,933 beneficiaries (27.4per cent) had been covered out of the 43,520 target for 2024-25. This indicates delays in execution and ineffective implementation strategies. The Committee recommend that the Department enhance coordination with State Governments and

implementing agencies to ensure faster approval and processing of applications, preventing recurring lapses in achieving physical targets. Furthermore, a robust monitoring framework should be instituted to track real-time progress, ensuring better alignment between financial allocations and physical achievements. The Department must identify and address systemic bottlenecks to ensure that SIPDA meets its intended goals of accessibility, empowerment, and inclusion of Persons with Disabilities.

5.15 The Committee also find that persistent challenges such as delays in fund disbursement, pending utilization certificates, and incomplete proposals have impacted the effective implementation of SIPDA. Given that SIPDA is the flagship scheme for PwDs, the Committee strongly recommend that the Department strengthen its monitoring and coordination mechanisms by ensuring regular follow-ups with State Governments and implementing agencies. The Central Project Monitoring Unit (CPMU) should be further empowered to enable real-time tracking of fund utilization, proposal approvals, and physical progress under various sub-schemes .Furthermore, timely clearance of compliance documents such as Utilization Certificates (UCs) and pending proposals should be ensured to prevent underutilization and last-minute fund surrender.

Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan)

5.16 Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan) was launched on 03rd December, 2015 as a nation-wide flagship campaign for achieving universal accessibility to enable Divyangjan (Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) to gain access for equal opportunity, independent living and full participation in all aspects of life in an inclusive society. The campaign was kick-started with three verticals - enhancing accessibility of already built environment/buildings and infrastructure, making all transport systems like buses, trains, etc. Divyangjan friendly; and Information & Communication eco-system accessible to all Divyangjans. The Campaign was scheduled to continue upto 31st March, 2024, nonetheless, it has now been subsumed under the Sub-Scheme –

"Creation of Barrier Free Environment Scheme (CBFE)" under the umbrella Scheme for Implementation of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (SIPDA) as accessibility is a continuous and on-going process.

5.17 In view of this the Department was asked to clarify how accessibility efforts will be sustained after the Accessible India Campaign is subsumed under the Sub-Scheme – "Creation of Barrier Free Environment Scheme (CBFE)" under the umbrella Scheme for Implementation of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (SIPDA) and how would funds be allocated for its continuation. In reply, the Department has furnished as under

> "It is noteworthy that the Accessible India Campaign has, subsequent to 31.03.2024, been subsumed under the "Creation of Barrier Free Environment (CBFE) Scheme". Furthermore, there is no separate budgetary allocation under the CBFE Scheme and funds are disbursed directly under the Budgetary Allocation in the umbrella Scheme – SIPDA.
>
> Regarding the sustenance of accessibility efforts after subsumption of AIC into CBFE, the Department is promoting the same by providing for barrier free environment for persons with disabilities, which includes access to built environment in schools, colleges, educational and training institutions, offices and public buildings, recreational areas, health centres/hospitals etc. This will include ramps, rails, lifts, accessible toilets for wheelchair users, Braille signage and auditory signals, tactile flooring, slopes in pavements for easy access of wheelchair users, engraving on the surface of zebra crossings for persons with blind or low vision, engraving on the edges of railway platforms for persons with blind or low vision and appropriate symbols of disability etc. Under this sub-scheme, since the subsumption of AIC into CBFE Sub scheme, Rs. 9.96 Cr has been released to State/UT Governments, autonomous organizations/NIs and statutory bodies for provisioning of Barrier Free Environment in public establishments and accessibility trainings".

5.18 The Department have furnished the information on the components of the Scheme and targets fixed sector-wise year on year as under:-

> Out of the targets set under the Accessible India Campaign (AIC), the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) has provided financial assistance for the retrofitting of the State/UT Government owned buildings and making State/Govt. UT websites accessible under the Accessible India Campaign Sub-scheme under SIPDA. Under the campaign, the targets and achievements are as follows:

a) **Built up Environment:**-The Department set a target to conduct Accessibility Audit of 25-50 buildings in 50 cities across the country. Due to these efforts the Department was able to complete the Accessibility Audit of 1671 buildings (Central and State Government) across India, out of which 1341 buildings have been funded to install Accessibility features. A total of 1723 Central and State/UT Government Buildings have been provided with features of accessibility, which include 648 buildings of State/UT Governments and 1100 Central Government buildings retrofitted by CPWD.

b) Information and Communication Technology (ICT):- 724 websites have been offered for development by States/UTs. Out of these, 672 (92.8per cent of 724) have been made accessible and 476 made live. 95 out of 100 identified Central Govt websites have been made accessible by MeitY.

Also, 19 news channels have telecasted 2447 accessible news bulletin and in General Entertainment Category (GEC), 17 channels have telecast 3686 accessible scheduled programs/movies.

c) **Transportation:-**

Civil Aviation - Conducting accessibility audit of all the international and domestic airports and converting them into fully accessible international airports. All 35 International Airports and 55 out of 69 Domestic Airports have have now been provided with accessibilityfeatures (ramps, accessible toilets, helpdesks and lifts with Braille and auditory information systems), Further, all international/customs airport are reported to have been provided with aerobridges

Public Transport - Ensuring 10per cent of Government owned Public Transport are converted into fully accessible carriers. Out of 1,45,747 buses, 42,348 (29.05per cent) buses are partially accessible, and 8,695 (5.96per cent) buses are fully accessible. Out of 3533 bus stations, 3120 are made accessible in respected of 24 States/UTs. The remaining buses and bus stations shall be made accessible by States/ UT Governments.

Railway Stations - Under the target of accessible transportation, the Ministry of Railways has reported that all 709 A1, A and B category of railway stations have been made fully accessibleand 4068 railway stations have been made partially accessible so far.

5.19 Regarding the initiatives takenby the Department towards better implementation of the Sub-scheme, the Department have outlined as under:-

"Out of total number of 20 Central Government Ministries/ Departments, 13 have notified their sector specific accessibility guidelines/ standards and have been included in the Rule 15 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Rules, 2017 as various amendments. 3 out of 20 Ministries/ Departments have adopted the guidelines already notified by other Ministries/ Departments. 4 identified Sectors i.e. Ministry of Road transport and Highways, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Department of Financial Services, have not yet notified the guidelines and regular follow up with them is on-going to make the process swifter.

(i) 500 more Government of India websites will be made accessible and the Department is regularly following up with the concerned Departments regarding the same. The Department in collaboration with the National Informatics Center (NIC) shall impart training on web accessibility to nominated officers of the Central Government Ministries/ Departments to help make important government websites more accessible.

(ii) The Department along with Council of Architecture (CoA) has conducted the second phase of training of master trainers on 4th and 5th July, 2024 with a vision to increase the skilled workforce in accessibility audit sector. The trainees have been empanelled as access auditors in built up environment with the Department thereby, increasing the number of access auditors in built up environment to 59.

(iii) Specialized courses on accessibility in B.Tech, B.Plan, and B.Arch programs at universities and technical institutions. The Department along with IIT Kharagpur is in the process to develop the said courses, IIT Kharagpur conducted the stakeholder's meeting on 08.07.2024 as the second step towards the ongoing process to develop the said courses, after incorporating comments from domain experts.

(iv) Basic ISL training to 1013 airline staff and in many other corporate houses with public interface has been conducted."

5.20 Regarding the performance of the scheme with reference to its components over the last 3 years along with its sector-wise coverage , the Committee have been informed as under :-

(i) Under the sub-scheme, a total of ₹79.58 Crores has been released to the State/UT Govts. for retrofitting of the buildings during 2021-24. The details regarding the same are tabulated as under:

Fund released details			
2021-22			
Sl. No.	**Name of States/UTs**	**Purpose**	**Total Amount Released (in ₹)**
1	Government of Meghalaya	2nd and final installment for 18 State Govt. buildings in Shillong	124,261,280
2	Government of Tamil Nadu	Part of 2 installment for creation of barrier free environment in 10 State Govt. buildings in Chennai and Coimbature	64,869,000
3	Government of West Bengal	1st installment for creation of barrier free environment in 07 State Govt. buildings at Kolkata	29,750,059
4	Government of Meghalaya	1st installment for creation of barrier free environment in 01State Govt. building at Shillong	7,820,845
5	Government of Madhya Pradesh	1st installment for Creation of barrier free environment in 69 State Govt. buildings (Bhopal and Indore)	207,405,652
6	Government of Gujarat	1st installment for creation of barrier free environment in 20 State Govt. of Buildings (Gandhinagar -04, Ahmedabad -15 and Vodadara -01)	47,794,865
7	Government of Arunchal Pradesh	1st installment for creation of barrier free environment in 17 State Govt. buildings	73,442,048
8	Government of Manipur	1st installment for creation of barrier free environment in 28	137,915,100
		Total	**693,258,849**
2022-23			
S. No.	**Name of States/UTs**	**Purpose**	**Total Amount Release**
1	Government of Goa	2nd installment for creation of barrier free environment in 22 State Government buildings at Panaji	9,920,508
2	Government of Assam	2nd installment for creation of barrier free environment in 24 State Government buildings at Guwahati	54,233,501

3	Government of Manipur	2nd and final Installment for 28 State Govt. buildings in Imphal	20,860,531
		Total	**85,014,540**
2023-24			
S. No.	**Name of States/Uts**	**Purpose**	**Total Amount Release**
1	Government of Assam	Balance part of 2nd installment for creation of barrier free environment 02 State Govt. of buildings at Guwahati	8,016,443
2	Government of Nagaland	Part of 2nd installment for creation of barrier free environment in 08 State Govt. buildings in Kohima	9,565,283
		Total	**17,581,726**
2024-25			
S. No.	**Name of States/Uts**	**Purpose**	**Total Amount Release**
NIL			

(ii) To a query on State/UT-wise details of buildings retrofitted, buildings audited and buildings funded for retrofitting as on date , the Department has furnished the following information :-

S. No.	State	No. of Buildings Audited	No. of Buildings funded	No of buildings completed
1	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	25	25	23
2	Andhra Pradesh	41	38	25
3	Arunachal Pradesh	24	6	0
4	Assam	25	24	12
5	Bihar	28	21	21
6	Chhattisgarh	58	47	21
7	Chandigarh	44	43	39
8	Delhi	23	18	12

9	Goa	31	30	0
10	Gujarat	52	26	24
11	Haryana	89	64	3
12	Himachal Pradesh	22	11	0
13	Jammu and Kashmir	41	32	7
14	Jharkhand	50	14	0
15	Karnataka	50	47	0
16	Kerala	51	28	0
17	Lakshadweep	57	0	0
18	Madhya Pradesh	100	31	0
19	Maharashtra	180	142	135
20	Manipur	50		0
21	Meghalaya	24	24	17
22	Mizoram	33	33	22
23	Nagaland	29	29	10
24	Odisha	50	40	26
25	Puducherry	30	29	0
26	Punjab	21	20	2
27	Rajasthan	88	88	78
28	Sikkim	36	35	30
29	Tamil Nadu	49	30	15
30	Telangana	19	16	7
31	Tripura	14	14	0
32	Uttarakhand	26	16	9
33	Uttar Pradesh	141	137	89
34	West Bengal	37	33	21

5.21 The Committee also sought to know whether there exists a structured mechanism to monitor the modified structures and prevent lapses in accessibility standards. The Committee also wanted clarification on how the Department ensures that these adaptations remain functional and beneficial over time. The Committee were informed as under

> "To prevent slippages and ensure overall monitoring of the scheme, the Department has launched the Sugamya Bharat Application. Sugamya Bharat App, a Crowdsourcing Mobile Application is a means for sensitizing and enhancing

accessibility in the built environment, transportation sector and ICT ecosystem in India.

The vision and purpose of this crowd sourcing App based on Jan-Bhagidari is improving accessibility in our country with an objective of enabling Divyangjan and general public to bring to notice accessibility-related issues that require redressal.

The Department has also conducted, Accessibility Audit of various Central and State Government buildings to assess their status of accessibility. Also, to ensure end to end accessibility in built up environment proposals are invited for making such buildings accessible by installing various accessibility features such as ramps, lifts, toilet blocks etc. Further, before the release of Grant-in-Aid clarification is sought regarding the compliance of proposals with Harmonized Guidelines and Space Standards, 2021 which are already included in RPwD Rules, 2016 vide amendment to the said rules. If found compliant Grant-in-Aid is released for installing various accessibility features in these buildings to make them accessible as a whole".

5.22 Since this scheme is implemented by multiple agencies/stakeholders, the Committee wanted to know about the details of the coordination mechanism with the Department. In a written reply, the Department has stated as under :-

"In order to facilitate and coordinate the efforts of the Department in implementation of AIC, various measures are undertaken by the Department such as regular reviews/meeting with the implementing agencies and stakeholders, regular follow ups particularly with regards to documentary reconciliations and regular compliances and coordination with the concerned State/Govts for soliciting proposals complete in all respect, including documentary requirements such as UCs of the previous years etc".

5.23 The Committee note with appreciation the initiatives undertaken under the Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan) to enhance accessibility in built environments, transportation, and information & communication technology (ICT). However, with the campaign now subsumed under the "Creation of Barrier-Free Environment (CBFE)" sub-scheme under SIPDA, the Committee express concern over the absence of a dedicated budgetary allocation for CBFE and the continued financial support

required for sustained accessibility initiatives. The Committee strongly recommend that the Department create a structured financial framework within SIPDA, ensuring that accessibility projects receive adequate funding without dependence on overall SIPDA allocations. Additionally, a long-term accessibility roadmap should be developed to maintain momentum and expand initiatives to underserved regions.

5.24 National Action Plan for Skill Training under SIPDA

The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities launched the National Action Plan for Skill Development of Persons with Disabilities (NAP-SDP) in March 2015 with the objective to enhance skills of Persons with Disabilities, enable them to have gainful employment/ become self-employed and to make them self-reliant and independent members of society. Training under the NAP-SDP scheme is being provided through various Government and Non-Government Organizations. The scheme is being implemented on the common norms prescribed by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE). PwDs with at least 40per cent disability in the age group between the age of 15-59 years are eligible to avail skill training programme. This is being implemented through PM-DAKSH-DEPwD Portal which is providing opportunity to PwDs to apply for the skill training as per their choice of training partner, place of training centre and desired job roles. Any of PwDs can register himself on the basis of valid UDID Number. Thereafter, PwD is eligible to check the course and training centers as per his disability and locality. PwD also can enroll in area of interest on PM-DAKSH-DEPwD portal.

NAP-SDP Scheme is a Central Sector Scheme, it is a demand driven scheme. Funds under the scheme are released to empanelled organizations from across the Country on the basis of their demands/proposals. Since 2022, an amount of Rs.23.54 crore has been released for conducting skill training under NAP-SDP as till date.

5.25 There are two modules on PM DAKSH-DEPwD portal to provide skill training and employment to PwDs:-

a. DivyangjanKaushalVikas: The National Action Plan for Skill Development of PwDs (NAP-SDP) is being fully implemented through the PM DAKSH- DEPwD portal. The portal provides end-to-end facilities for PwDs interested in skill training. The facilities include Unique Disability Identity (UDID) based seamless registration, enrolling in skill training out of a list of 300+ courses, e-learning

digital resources, exploring ETPs in their state/District providing skill training, access to study materials, as well as detailed information on the trainers/ETPs.

b. DivyangjanRozgarSetu: For employment of PwDs, the Department has developed Divyagnjan Rogar Setu, which is a unique digital platform dedicated to providing information about the vacancies for PwDs in various private organizations. The platform is a bridge between PwDs and employers hiring PwDs. The platform provides geo-tagged-based information on employment/earning opportunities within private companies as well as details about PwDs from all over India. Further, the Department has also signed 20 MoUs with various private sector companies like Amazon, Youth4Jobs, Atypical Advantage, Volvo, Zomato among others that employ PwDs.

5.26 The Physical performance vis-à-vis targets for the last 3 years is as under:-

Year	Target (PwDs)	Achievement (PwDs)	per cent Achievement
2022-23	16,000	2,019	12.62per cent
2023-24	17,000	9,333	54.90per cent
2024-25*	15,000	4837	32.25 per cent
2025-26	20,000		

(*As of January 2025)

From the table above we find that , during 2022-23 while the targets under this sub-scheme was fixed at 16,000,actuals were only 2,019 which is only 12.62 percent of the intended beneficiaries. Similarly, for 2023-24, target of 17,000 PwDs was set and the achievement was roughly half at 9,333 PwDs (54.9 percent). For 2024-25 (as of Jan 2025) against the target of 15000 PwDs only 4837 (32.25 per cent) PwDs have been assisted so far.

5.27 When asked to enumerate the reasons for the poor performance of the scheme for the last 3 years and the measures are being taken to address the severe underperformance of the Scheme, the Department has furnished as under:

Year	Physical Target	Achievement	**Remarks for shortfall**
2022-23	16000 beneficiaries	2019 beneficiaries	During Financial Year 2022-23, a new requirement was mandated, which is to release the Grants-in-Aid to the various empanelled ETPs through Central Nodal Agency (CNA). For this purpose, the earlier practice of release of payments directly to ETPs through Pay and Account Office, DEPWD, has been done away with and NDFDC was nominated as CNA. However, in the initial stages, due to some difficulties, such as non-linking of CNA Account with various ETP accounts, release of payments could not be made as per anticipation of the Department. Under Skill Training: Mobilization of PwDs for training, availability of suitable courses/curriculum linked to job demand in the market, tracking of placed candidates, non-availability of sector specific certified trainers, non-availability of accessible training centres for all types of disabilities have been some of the major challenges in implementation of the scheme. NAP-SDP Scheme is a demand driven scheme and funds are released to implementing agency based on the proposals received from States/UTs/Institutions/NGOs etc. Hence pace of expenditure is dependent on the number of proposals received. In order to address these issues, the Department has taken various initiatives like, preparing courses/curriculum based on the contemporary job demand in coordination with Sector Skill Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPwD),
2023-24	17000 beneficiaries	9333	
2024-25	15000 Beneficiaries	**4837 (complete)**	

			signing of MOUs with E-Commerce Companies like Amazon for placement of PwDs on Recruit-Train-Deploy (RTD) model, and Non-Government Organization like Youth4jobs, Saarthak, and Swaraj Ability to increase the placement opportunities of trained PwDs. This Department is also conducting skill training through its own institutions, namely, National Institutes/ Composite Regional Centres/Regional Centres, Special Schools. This Department has made mandatory 70 hours employability Skills course for PwDs, Training of Trainer on Employability Skills etc.

5.28 To a query on the number of beneficiaries who have got employment after getting training under the 'Skill Development Programme for PwDs, the Department have stated that Till date, 28000 PwDs have been employed (both under wage and self-employment) after successful completion of skill training under National Action Plan for skill development of PwDs.

5.29 Asked whether the Department was collaborating with private firms/MNCs etc for providing gainful employment to those who have been trained, the Committee have been informed as below :-

> "In order to provide sufficient employment opportunities to the PwDs, this Department has signed 22 MoUs with various companies/job aggregators like Amazon, Youth4Jobs, A typical Advantage among others that work for employment of PwDs".

5.30 With regard to the measures taken/contemplated by the Department for achievement of targets fixed for 2025-26, the Committee have been informed as under :-

"There were various challenges in implementation of Skill Development Programme for PwDs as a result; the funds earmarked during the past financial years could not be fully utilized. The challenges are being addressed to through various measures and it is expected that in FY-2025-26, the NAP-SDP scheme will be implemented properly and budget earmarked will be fully utilized.

To address the identified issues, the Department is striving to take various initiatives like, preparation of courses/curriculum based on contemporary job demand in coordination with Sector Skill Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPwD), signing of MOUs with Non-Government Organization like Youth4jobs, Saarthak, Volvo, Zomato to increase the placement opportunities of trained PwDs. The process of mobilization of PwDs for skill training, proper monitoring of training programme and tracking of the placement data is a challenging task. To overcome the situation, this Department has launched PM-DAKSH-DEPwD Portal for proper implementation monitoring of NAP-SDP Scheme. This portal is providing a vast pool of empanelled training partners and the PwDs have the opportunity to apply for skill training as per their choice of training partner, place of training centre and desired job role. Complete training data right from the registration of PwD for the training up to their placement will be available on the portal".

5.31 The Committee observe that the National Action Plan for Skill Development of PwDs (NAP-SDP) has consistently underperformed in meeting its physical targets, with achievements ranging from only 12.62 per cent in 2022-23 to 32.25 percent in 2024-25 (as of January 2025). Given the demand-driven nature of the scheme, the Committee recommend that the Department strengthen its mobilization efforts, improve coordination with training partners, and ensure timely disbursal of funds. Further, efforts should be made to optimize the utilization of the budget allocation by addressing administrative bottlenecks, improving the training infrastructure, and ensuring a greater alignment of courses with market demand to enhance employment prospects for PwDs.

5.32 The Committee however appreciate the Department's efforts in signing MoUs with private firms and job aggregators like Amazon, Youth4Jobs, and Zomato to facilitate employment opportunities for trained PwDs. However, with only 28,000 PwDs employed till date, the Committee recommend a

robust strategy to strengthen employment linkages, including expanding industry partnerships, promoting entrepreneurship support programs, and ensuring sector-specific skill training tailored to high-demand job markets. A structured tracking mechanism should also be put in place to monitor the employment status of trained PwDs.

5.33 Noting the challenges in data tracking and monitoring of training and placements, the Committee welcome the introduction of the PM-DAKSH-DEPwD Portal. However, the Committee recommend that the Department ensure its full operationalization with real-time data tracking, performance audits of training partners, and impact assessments of training programs. Further, a feedback mechanism should be established where trained PwDs can report challenges faced in employment, enabling timely interventions and policy adjustments to enhance the scheme's effectiveness.

5.34 Unique Disability ID Project (UDID)

The UDID Card or Unique Disability Identity card is an initiative by Government of India with a view of creating a National Database for PwDs and to issue a Unique Disability Identity Card to each person with disabilities. The Department has instituted and online portal (www.swavalambancard.gov.in) where the medical authorities notified by the respective State Government have been on-boarded for issuance of disability certificate/Unique Disability Identity Card (UDID) to Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). The disability certificate/UDID card is issued by the notified medical authority of State/UT.

The main objectives of UDID are :

a. To create a National Database for PwDs by identifying and issuing a Unique Disability ID Card to every Person with Disability through the web-portal.
b. Uniformity in the form of disability certificate and UDID card across the country.
c. Issue Disability Certificates not only to those who are still uncovered but also to persons with new types of disabilities under the RPwD Act 2016
d. Encourage transparency, efficiency and ease of delivering government benefits to PwDs pertaining to several Schemes, include Scholarship, Skill training, Inclusive Education, Rehabilitation, Pension,

e. Tracking of physical and financial progress of benefit delivery at all levels of hierarchy of implementation – from Village, Block, District, State and National levels.

5.35 When asked about the benefits of UDID, the Committee have been informed as under:

"Access to government schemes and benefits: The UDID card is recognized as a proof of disability by the government of India. This means that PwDs can use their UDID card to access various government schemes and benefits such as financial assistance, healthcare services, education, and employment.

Easy identification: The UDID card provides a unique identification number to each PwD. This helps in easy identification of the person with disability and ensures that they receive the right kind of assistance and support.

Accessibility: The UDID card contains information about the type and level of disability of the person. This information can be used to make public places and transportation more accessible for PwDs".

5.36 Asked to explain the mechanism of this scheme, the Department has submitted as under:-

"The Department has instituted an online portal (www.swavalambancard.gov.in) where the medical authorities notified by the respective State Government have been on-boarded for issuance of disability certificate/Unique Disability Identity Card (UDID) to Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). Under Unique Disability Id project, disability certificates and UDID cards are issued to persons with disabilities mentioned in the RPwD Act, 2016. The persons in rural and far flung areas who don't have internet coverage, may visit any CSC Centre for applying for Disability Certificate and UDID Card.

At central level, the UDID Project is managed by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in the country. At state level, UDID project is managed by the State Social Welfare Departments in consultation with the State Health Departments. Also there is provision to appoint one state coordinator in each State/UT for smooth implementation of the UDID project in the country. The Grant is Aid for remuneration of these state coordinators is provided by the DEPwD".

While no targets are set for this project, about 1.18 crore UDID has been generated so far through Swavalamban portal.

5.37 Regarding the major challenges being faced in the administration of the scheme and the remedial actions being taken by the Department in this regard, the Department have informed as below :-

Challenges:

Shortage of medical professionals in the hospitals.

Shortage of adequate equipped hospitals

Large Pendency at the level of hospitals

Remedies:

The latest simplified guidelines have been published in consultation with stakeholders.

To cope up with the shortage of medical professionals, provision of including private medical professionals has been made.

Simplified version of disability certificate is being notified.

Time to Time review meeting with respective State/UT governments for timely disposal of pendency for UDID card generation.

5.38 To a specific query on the measures are being taken to ensure that the allocated budget for 2025-26 is fully utilized and benefits reach all eligible beneficiaries, the Committee were apprised as below :-

"Regular monitoring of the UDID sub scheme with all the State/UT Government. Issuance of time to time instructions to all Health Department to ensure disposal of pending applications for issuance of disability certificates and UDID cards in due time".

5.39 The Committee note that while the UDID project has successfully generated approximately 1.18 crore cards, its implementation continues to face challenges due to a shortage of medical professionals, inadequate hospital infrastructure, and a large backlog of pending applications at

hospitals. To address these issues, the Committee recommend that the Department work in close coordination with State Governments to strengthen medical infrastructure, expedite the inclusion of private medical professionals in the certification process, and ensure the availability of well-equipped facilities for disability assessment. Additionally, the Department should facilitate specialized training programs for medical authorities to improve efficiency in issuing disability certificates and reduce delays.

5.40 Recognizing the UDID's critical role in enabling PwDs to access various government benefits and services, the Committee underscore the importance of ensuring full utilization of the allocated budget for 2025-26. This requires robust monitoring of fund disbursement, proactive engagement with State and UT authorities, and the timely clearance of pending UDID applications. A structured and time-bound approach should be adopted to enhance accessibility and ensure that all eligible PwDs receive their UDID cards without unnecessary delays.

5.41 The Committee further observe that PwDs in rural and remote areas face difficulties in accessing the UDID system due to limited internet coverage and therefore urge the Department to strengthen the role of Common Service Centres (CSCs) and explore the deployment of mobile service units for on-site registration and certification. The Committee would also like to recommend that awareness campaigns be conducted in collaboration with State Governments to ensure that all eligible PwDs are aware of the benefits of UDID and the process for obtaining it.

5.42 Scheme for financial assistance to spinal injuries centres (ASIC scheme)

The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MSJE), Government of India (GoI) implements the scheme for Assistance for Spinal Injury Centers is the result of merger of two erstwhile Schemes, namely Scheme for Financial Assistance to Indian Spinal Injury Centers, New

Delhi and Scheme for Financial Assistance for Setting up of State Spinal Injury Centers. Accordingly, the Scheme has two components:

A. Assistance to Indian Spinal Injury Centre, New Delhi
B. Setting up of State Spinal Injury Centers (pg 9 BG)

5.43 The Department was asked to spell out the key objectives and eligibility criteria for receiving assistance under the two components of the scheme—Indian Spinal Injury Centre, New Delhi, and State Spinal Injury Center. In reply, the Committee have been informed as under:-

> **"**The objective of the scheme is to provide financial assistance to the already identified Spinal Injury Centres across India so as to enable the patients with Spinal Injuries lead their life to their fullest abilities.

5.44 The Scheme has two components:-

Component 1: Assistance to Indian Spinal Injury Centre (ISIC), New Delhi

a) Indian Citizen with spinal cord injury having a family income not more than ₹3,00,000/- (Rupees Three Lakh) per annum
b) Department provides financial support to ISIC to provide 25 free-beds daily for treatment of SCI poor patients @₹7,000/bed/day
c) In addition, the ISIC Centre to provide 5 free-beds to poor SCI patients
d) The disbursal of funds are confined only to ISIC, Delhi under the scheme component.

Component 2: Scheme for setting up of State Spinal Injury Center (SSIC)

a) It is a Central Sector Scheme established for Setting up of State Spinal Injury Center (SSIC) and implemented since 2015-16.
b) It envisages setting up of comprehensive rehabilitation centers attached to the government hospitals of all the state capitals/Union territories

c) It provides dedicated 12 beds for treatment, rehabilitation and management of spinal injuries in respect of persons belonging to economically weaker sections

Non-recurring Support:

a) Grant in Aid upto ₹2.33 crore directly to Implementing Agencies towards expenditure on medical equipment, medical/surgical instruments (OT), rehabilitation equipment - (a) OT & PT (b) Orthotics and Prosthetics & assistive technology.
b) GIA uptoRs. 56.00 Lakh for setting up of 12 bed dedicated wards.

Recurring support:

a) Reimbursement of maintenance cost of 10 beds on annual basis @ ₹1000/- per bed per day (maximum 36,00,000).
b) Recurring expenditure liability in respect of 2 beds to be borne by State Government/Implementing Hospital, subject to fulfillment of conditions".

5.45 To a query as to the number of State Spinal Injury Centers that have been established so far under this scheme, the Department have provided the following information :-

"The details regarding the State Spinal Injury Centres established/supported under the SSIC Component of the ASIC scheme is detailed as under:

S. No.	States/UTs	Name of the Hospital	Year	Amount released (₹in lakh)
1	Jammu and Kashmir	(i) Government Medical College, Jammu	2016-17	2.00
		(ii) Bone and Joint Hospital, Srinagar		1.17
2	Meghalaya	(iii) Civil Hospital Shillong,	2017-18	2.33
3	Puducherry	(iv) Indira Gandhi Government Hospital & Post Graduate Institute		2.43
4	Madhya Pradesh	(v) Gandhi Medical College and Hamidia Hospital, Bhopal	2018-19	2.82
		(vi) State Spinal Injury Centre at District Hospital, Sagar	2023-24	2.87
5	Rajasthan	(vii) SMS Medical College, Jaipur	2015-16	2.82

		(viii) State Spinal Injury Centre at J.L.N. Medical College, Ajmer	2023-24	2.33
		Total		18.77

It has been further informed that ASIC is a sub-scheme under the umbrella scheme SIPDA. As such, no separate allocation is being made under this component of the umbrella Scheme, SIPDA."

5.46 The Committee enquired about the measures in place to ensure full utilization of the allocated budget for 2025-26, ensuring that benefits effectively reach all eligible beneficiaries. The response of the Department is as below :-

> "The Department actively pursues various measures such as regular reviews/meeting with the implementing agencies and stakeholders, conducting regular follow ups particularly with regards to documentary reconciliations and regular compliances, etc.
>
> Furthermore, ASIC being demand driven scheme, the grants are being released based on the proposals received with complete documentary requirements. In addition to documentary requirements, it is also imperative for the proposals to be fully compliant with GFR provisions, such as submission of Utilization certificates for previous years' releases, achievement-cum-performance reports, etc. In order to expedite proposals, the Department is actively pursuing with the concerned stakeholders for proposals complete in all respect, including documentary requirements such as UCs of the previous years, etc".

5.47 The Committee observe that the Scheme for Financial Assistance to Spinal Injury Centers (ASIC) is vital for providing treatment and rehabilitation to individuals with spinal cord injuries, especially those from economically weaker sections. However, with only eight State Spinal Injury Centers (SSICs) supported so far, the scheme's reach remains limited. To address this, the Committee recommend proactive engagement with State governments to expand SSICs in government hospitals and ensure better accessibility to specialized care. Given that ASIC operates under SIPDA without a separate budgetary allocation, the Department must prioritize its

funding needs and streamline proposal approvals to ensure timely disbursal of grants. Strengthening monitoring mechanisms, expediting clearances, and raising awareness among stakeholders will be key to ensuring full utilization of funds and maximizing the scheme's impact.

CHAPTER VI

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Section 31 (1) & (2) of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 mandates that every child with benchmark disability between the age of six to eighteen years shall have the right to free education in a neighborhood school, or in a special school, of his choice and the appropriate Government and local authorities shall ensure their access to free education in an appropriate environment till he attains the age of eighteen years.

To fulfill this mandate, the DEPwD is implementing Umbrella Scheme 'Scholarships for Students with Disabilities' comprising following six components with the objective to empower students with disabilities to study further to earn their livelihood and to find a dignified place in the society -

(i) Pre-matric Scholarship (For Classes IX and X)
(ii) Post-matric Scholarship (For Class XI to Post-Graduate Degree/Diploma
(iii) Top Class Education (For Graduate and Post-Graduate Degree/Diploma in notified institutes of excellence in education)
(iv) National Overseas Scholarship (For Master's Degree/Ph.D. in Institutions/Colleges/Universities abroad)
(v) National Fellowship for PwDs (For M. Phil and Ph.D. in Indian Universities)
(vi) Free Coaching schemes (For recruitment examinations for Group A, B and C posts and entrance examinations for admission to various technical and professional courses)

6.2 The Salient Features of various Scholarship schemes are as below:-

(i) 50per cent of the total scholarship slots available each year in Pre-matric, Post-matric and Top Class Education and 30 percent slots in National Overseas Scholarship and Free Coaching Scholarship Scheme are reserved for girl candidates.
(ii) Various assistance under the Scholarship Schemes include Maintenance Allowance, Tuition fees, Book allowance, Disability allowance among other financial assistance as applicable under various components.

(iii) Top Class Education also provides for Reimbursement of expenses for purchase of a computer/ laptop and requisite aids and assistive devices.

(iv) National Overseas Scholarship also provides contingency and equipment allowance. Disbursement of scholarship and reimbursement of miscellaneous expenses is done by M/o External Affairs (MEA) through Indian Mission abroad.

(v) National Fellowship scheme provides for award of fellowships to 200 Fellows each year; 75per cent scholars based on National Eligibility Test-Junior Research Fellowship (NET-JRF) of UGC and remaining 25per cent scholars based on UGC-Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (UGC-CSIR) NET-JRF joint test.

(vi) Free Coaching Scheme is implemented by the Department through National Institutes/ Composite Regional Centers and also through Central Universities/Institutes, State Universities under the purview of Central Government and State Governments and any other government institutes working in the field of education/special education.

6.3 The General Conditions of Eligibility for Scholarship Scheme are as under:

(i) The scholarships are open only to Indian nationals.

(ii) All the components of scholarships are open to students with benchmark disability i.e. 40per cent or more disability as defined in 'Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

6.4 Further, the applicants should have/possess:

a) Aadhaar based biometric authentication.

b) UDID/UDID enrolment with valid certificate of disability issued by the competent authority

c) Not more than two children with disabilities of the same parents will be entitled to receive benefits of the scheme. In case the second child is a twin, the scholarship under the schemes will be admissible to the twin.

d) Scholarship for studying in any class will be available for only one year. If a student has to repeat a class, she/he would not get scholarship for that class for a second (or a subsequent) year.

e) A scholarship holder under this scheme will not avail any other scholarship/stipend. No scholarship will be paid to the students under this scheme from the date he/she accepts any other scholarship/stipend.

6.5 Regarding the criteria for determining various scholarship schemes, the Committee were informed as under:-

Sl.No	Scheme	Admissible allowances
1	Pre-matric Scholarship (For Classes IX and X)	• Maintenance Allowance of ₹500 to ₹800 p.m. • Book grant @ ₹1000/-p.a. and • Disability allowance from ₹2000/- to ₹4000/- p.a.
2	Post-matric Scholarship (For Class XI to Post-Graduate Degree/Diploma)	• ₹.1,200/- per month for hostellers, ₹650/- per month for day-scholars • Tuition fees Up to ₹ 1.40 lakh – per annum (subject to actual amount). • Miscellaneous fee Up to ₹10,000/- per annum (subject to actual amount). • Book allowance @ ₹1500/- p.a. and • ₹4,000/- per annum for Visual Impairment/Intellectual Disabilities • ₹2000/- per annum for All other types of disabilities
3	Top Class Education (For Graduate and Post-Graduate Degree/Diploma in notified institutes of excellence in education)	• Maintenance Allowance ₹3,000/- per month for hostellers, ₹1,500/- per month for day-scholars • Tuition fees Up to ₹1.90 lakh – per annum (subject to actual amount) • Miscellaneous Allowances Up to ₹10,000/- per annum (subject to actual amount) • Reimbursement of expenses for purchase of a computer/ laptop with accessories upto ₹ 45,000/- as a one time grant in the first year of the course. • Reimbursement of expenses for purchase of *Aids and Assistive devices relating to the particular disability of the selected candidates upto ₹30,000/- as a one time grant in the first year of the course • Special Allowances/Disability ₹2000/- per month

		• Book allowance ₹5,000/- per annum
4.	National Overseas Scholarship (For Master's Degree/Ph.D. in Institutions/Colleges/Universities abroad)	• Tuition fee As per actual • Maintenance allowanceUS$15400 p.a for For US & Other and GBP 9900 p.a for For U.K • Contingency allowance US$1500 p.a For US & Other countries and GBP 1100 p.a for For U.K • Incidental Journey Allowance US $ 20/-(US dollar twenty only) or its equivalent in Indian Rupees-One time • Equipment Allowance US $20/-(US dollar twenty only)-One time • Visa Fees , Medical insurance premium Poll Tax, Mandatory travel expenditure on medical tests etc as per actual • Examination fee for appearing in English language/other tests • Local travel Second Class railway fare from the port of disembarkation to the place of study and back • The awardees are permitted to supplement their admissible allowance by Earning from research/teaching assistance-ship up to US$ 2400/- (US dollars two thousand four hundred) per annum and for awardees in United Kingdom, GBP 1560/- (Great Britain Pound One Thousand Five Hundred Sixty only) per annum
5	National Fellowship (For *M. Phil and Ph.D. in Indian Universities)	• Fellowship @ ₹37,000/- per month on the pattern/norm of JRF for in2 years And @ ₹42,000/- per month on the pattern/norm of SRF for

		subsequent period of maximum 3 years. • Contingency @ ₹10,000/- p.a. for initial two years and @ ₹20,500/- p.a. for remaining tenure. • Escort/Reader assistance @ ₹2,000/- per month • House Rent Allowances (HRA) @ 9per cent, 18per cent and 27per cent to those students who are not provided with hostel accommodation, in accordance with Govt. of India norms as applicable in the research fellows are working.
6	Free Coaching (For recruitment examinations for Group A, B and C posts and entrance examinations for admission to various technical and professional courses	• Course fee from 40000/- upto 75000/- • Stipend/ Maintenance allowance : ₹4000/- per month • Disability Allowances : ₹2000/- per month • Book Allowance: ₹5000 per course (One Time)

6.6 As regards the Budget Estimate (BE) & Revised Estimate (RE) the Actual utilization thereof and physical targets and achievements from 2022-23, the following information was furnished to the Committee:-

Year	BE (₹ in Crore)	RE (₹ in Crore)	Actuals (₹ in Crore)
2022-23	105.00	145.00-	142.00
2023-24	155.00	155.00	130.07
2024-25	142.68	80.00	58.38(As on 03.03.2025)
2025-26	145.00		

Year	**Physical Target**	**Achievement**
2022-23	44520	44162
2023-24	44520	29374
2024-25	43520	11933(As on 16.01.2025)
2025-26	43520	

6.7 Component wise details of both financial and physical performance of this scheme are as under:-

(₹In Crore)

Sr.No.	Scheme		2024-25
1	Pre-Matric	Amount	4.08
		Beneficiaries	3880
2	Post-Matric	Amount	21.63
		Beneficiaries	7223
3	Top Class Education	Amount	8.71
		Beneficiaries	533
4	National Overseas	Amount	2.73
		Beneficiaries	10
5	National Fellowships	Amount	17.18
		Beneficiaries	406
6	Free Coaching	Amount	0.20
		Beneficiaries	70

An analysis of the budgetary allocation and utilization trends over the past four years indicates fluctuations in fund allocation and expenditure. In 2022-23, the Budget Estimate (BE) was ₹105.00 crore, which was increased by 38.1 per cent to ₹145.00 crore at the Revised Estimate (RE) stage, with actual utilization reaching ₹142.00 crore (97.9per cent of RE). In 2023-24, the BE and RE remained constant at ₹155.00 crore, while actual expenditure stood at ₹130.07 crore, reflecting 83.9 per cent utilization of RE.

6.8 In 2024-25, the BE was set at ₹142.68 crore, but the RE was reduced by 43.9per cent to ₹80.00 crore, with actual expenditure at ₹58.38 crore as of 03.03.2025, accounting for 72.9 per cent of the RE. The BE for 2025-26 has been set at ₹145.00 crore.

6.9 An assessment of the physical targets and achievements over the past three years reveals fluctuations in beneficiary coverage. In 2022-23, the target was set at 44,520, with actual achievement at 44,162, reflecting 99.2 per cent coverage. In 2023-24, the target remained at 44,520, but actual achievement dropped to 29,374, covering

65.9 percent of the target. In 2024-25, the target was slightly reduced to 43,520, but only 11,933 beneficiaries (27.4 percent) had been assisted as of 16.01.2025.

6.10 The representative of the DEPwD, however stated as below expressing that targets would be met by the end of the financial year :-

> "So far as Scholarship scheme is concerned, the portal has opened now in the month of January. We are expecting a lot of proposals to come under the Scholarship scheme. We are confident of touching the RE mark definitely. This is the situation as of now".

6.11 The Committee sought to understand the strategic measures the Department plans to implement to ensure the successful achievement of physical targets set for 2025-26. Given the fluctuations in past performance, the Committee enquired about the specific steps being taken to enhance implementation efficiency, improve fund utilization, and ensure that benefits reach the intended beneficiaries within the stipulated timeframe. In reply, the Department has submitted as under:-

> "The introduction of e-KYC (bio-authentication) in last quarter of 2023-24 and the subsequent adoption of face authentication, OTR procedure and mandate of UDID in 2024-25, has resulted in weeding out of duplicate applications which reduced the number of applications and hence the shortfall of expenditure. Additionally, some of the payment files remain pending at State Nodal Officer Level for deficiency verification, revalidation and clearance contributing to a reduction of expenditure in certain years in which such pendency are relatively high though such payments are finally processed during the succeeding years after revalidation at SNO level".

6.12 The Committee enquired about the reasons behind the sharp decrease in the Revised Estimate (RE) for 2024-25 and whether the allocated amount will be fully spent before March 31, 2025 and the steps being taken to ensure full utilization of the allocation. The reply of the Department is as under:-

> **"**In this regard, it may be mentioned that the budget allocation has been fixed by EFC for the period 2021-22 to 2025-26 is ₹560 cr. The number of slots is fixed as per EFC and the Department has utilized the funds under the Scholarship scheme as per the proposal/applications received in each year as per recommendation and

within the allocation of fund by the EFC. Since the scheme is demand driven and during the initial stage of EFC cycle, the amount spent was in excess of the amount earmarked for each year due to a greater number of applications. Therefore, for utilizing the remaining funds as per the EFC allocation till 2025-26, the RE has been maintained accordingly. Scholarship Division regularly conducts review meetings with State Nodal Officers of the States/UTs, through VCs and monitors the progress. The amount allocated during 2024-25 will be fully utilized.

6.13 The Department attributed the target shortfall in 2023-24 and slow fund utilization in the current financial year to the low number of applications received and pending payment files at the State Nodal Officer level for verification and clearance. The Committee sought details on the measures taken to expedite application processing, improve coordination with State Nodal Officers, and streamline verification procedures for timely fund disbursement and better utilization. The Department's reply is as follows:

> **"**The Department has published advertisements in leading Newspapers across the country twice to increase awareness of these schemes amongst students and other stakeholders. All other types of media and social media platforms are also used for spreading awareness. The Chief Secretaries/Principal Secretaries of the States are also addressed to spread awareness of the schemes through various mediums of communication in their respective States/UTs.
>
> The department is actively organizing meetings with State Nodal Officers (SNOs) to ensure effective implementation of the schemes. The department has also taken necessary steps to sensitize the States/UTs to clear the pendency at various levels of the State Nodal Officers and other Stakeholders. The amount allocated will be completely utilized for the current year".

6.14 To a query on the low achievement of physical targets for 2024-25, with less than 25per cent of the target met, the Committee sought clarification on the reasons behind the shortfall andoutlinethe specific measures adopted to enhance performance, improve fund utilization, and ensure timely execution of the scheme. The reply of the Department is as follows:

> **"**It is submitted that the NSP portal has been closed on 31.01.2025 and a total of 30000 applications have been received till last date and the amount will be spent

on the payment of the verified applications as per the budget allocated for 2024-25.

The department is actively organizing meetings with State Nodal Officers (SNOs) to ensure effective implementation of the schemes. The department has also taken necessary steps to sensitize the States/UTs to clear the pendency at various levels of the State Nodal Officers and other Stakeholders. The amount allocated will be completely utilized for the current year".

6.15 The Department has submitted that these rates were fixed by EFC in 2021-22 for the period 2021-22 to 2025-26. There is no any proposal in the Department to revise the scholarship amount.

6.16 To a query on the measures being taken to ensure that the allocated budget for 2025-26 is fully utilized and benefits reach all eligible beneficiaries, the Committee have been informed as under :-

"The Department will publish advertisements in leading Newspapers across the country to increase awareness of these schemes amongst students and other stakeholders. All other types of media and social media platforms will be used for spreading awareness. The Chief Secretaries/Principal Secretaries of the States will also be addressed to spread awareness of the schemes through various mediums of communication in their respective States/UTs.

The department also organizes meetings with State Nodal Officers (SNOs) to ensure effective implementation of the schemes. The department has also taken necessary steps to sensitize the States/UTs to clear the pendency at various levels of the State Nodal Officers and other Stakeholders".

6.17 The Committee observe significant fluctuations in fund allocation, utilization, and target achievement under the Scholarship Scheme for Students with Disabilities. In 2022-23, the Revised Estimate (RE) was increased to ₹145.00 crore, with 97.9 percent utilization (₹142.00 crore). However, in 2024-25, the RE was sharply reduced by 43.9 percent to ₹80.00 crore, and as of 03.03.2025, only ₹58.38 crore (72.9 percent of RE) had been utilized. Similarly, physical target achievement dropped from 99.2 percent in 2022-23 to just 27.4 percent in 2024-25(as of Jan, 2025). This underutilization, despite high demand in previous years, indicates the need

for better forecasting and planning. The Committee recommend that the Department adopt a more structured approach to fund allocation, ensuring that budgetary provisions align with actual demand. Additionally, efforts should be made to streamline the verification and disbursement process at the State Nodal Officer level to avoid delays and ensure timely financial assistance to beneficiaries.

6.18 Given the low application numbers in certain years, the Committee emphasize the need for a more robust awareness campaign. While steps have been taken, such as newspaper advertisements and communication with State Governments, a more proactive strategy is required. The Department should leverage digital platforms, collaborate with educational institutions, and engage disability rights organizations to maximize outreach. Special efforts must be made to target students in remote and rural areas who may be unaware of their eligibility for these scholarships.

6.19 To prevent recurring issues of low fund utilization, the Committee urges the Department to implement a real-time monitoring mechanism for tracking application processing and fund disbursement. Regular review meetings with State Nodal Officers should be mandated, and timelines should be fixed for application verification and fund release. Additionally, simplifying application procedures and integrating AI-based verification tools can significantly improve efficiency. The Committee stress that every effort must be made to ensure full utilization of the ₹145 crore allocated for 2025-26, benefiting the maximum number of eligible students with disabilities.

CHAPTER VII

Centre for Disability Sports

Centre for Disability Sports now known as Atal Bihari Vajpayee Training Centre for Disability Sports (ABV-TCDS), Gwalior is an Autonomous body established by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Govt. of India. It is a premier facility dedicated to the development and promotion of para-sports in India and aims to provide world-class training, rehabilitation, and competition opportunities for athletes with disabilities. The main objectives of the centre are as under

(i) To establish a state-of-the-art international level Centre of Excellence for sports for Divyang sports persons (PwDs) with full accessibility as per norms.

(ii) To create specialized sports infrastructure so that the para-sports persons can undergo rigorous and specialized training in the Centre.

(iii) To ensure the participation of Divyangjan in sports activities in greater numbers and enable them to effectively compete in international events.

(iv) To help build confidence and develop a sense of belonging in Divyangjan to facilitate their integration into Society.

7.2 The institute provides sports training with the latest facilities at par with the world to persons with disabilities to enable them to effectively compete and win medals in Paralympics, Deaflympics, Special Olympics and other International events for Sports persons with Disabilities. Sports facilities are available including outdoor activities like Archery, Athletics, Football and Tennis, and Indoor activities like Badminton, Wheelchair Basketball, Table Tennis, Sitting Volleyball, Judo, Taekwondo, Wheelchair Fencing, Wheelchair rugby, Boccia, Goalball, Football 5-a-Side, Para Dance Sport and Para Powerlifting as well as a hostel.

7.3 Built at a cost of ₹150.67 crore by CPWD, a budget of ₹19.83 crore was allotted to the Centre for incurring recurring costs for a period of 03 years from the date of

completion of project. The financial performance of the Centre is given in the table below :-

Year	BE (₹ in Crore)	RE (₹ in Crore)	Actuals (₹ in Crore)
2022-23	60.00	56.00	25.91
2023-24	76.00	76.00	35.34
2024-25	25.00	23.30	6.48
2025-26	25.00		

7.4 The Committee sought clarification on the disparity between the Budget Estimate (BE), Revised Estimate (RE), and actual expenditure for the years 2023-24 and 2024-25. The Department, in this regard, has furnished the following information:-

(₹ in Crore)

Year	BE	RE	Actual	Information on Mismatch
2022-23	60	56.00	0.0432	The staff position at CDS was only 02 and work-in-progress during the FY 2022-23
2023-24	76	76.00	45.01	Inaugurated on 02.10.2023 and started functioning, Yet, not fully operational as the facility has not been handed over by the CPWD.
2024-25	25	23.30	6.87*	Projected manpower has not been engaged till date as the facility has not been handed over by the CPWD. Still project is ongoing.
2025-26				

7.5 The Committee enquired about the key events planned by the Training Centre and the strategic roadmap for promoting awareness about the facilities and services available, the following information was furnished by the DEPwD.

"Several major events are already being conducted are planned to enhance the visibility and outreach of ABV-TCDS, including:

a. Conduction of National and State Level Para-Sports Championships like national level Wheel Chair Rugby tournament in the month of March, National level Purple Sports Fest (date to be finalised soon), Blind Football Nationals in Last week of March, Wheelchair Basketball

Tournaments are to name a few for which the approval has already been sought from the competent authority.

b. National and International Coaching Camps & Talent Identification Programs and regular
c. Workshops and Seminars on Para sports, classifications & Rehabilitation etc.
d. Public Awareness & Outreach Initiatives through participating in DivyakalaMela, Purple Fest etc.
e. Further To enhance publicity, the Centre is leveraging on Collaborations with Sports Federations & Institutions of National Repute and NGO's, MoU with 02 such Institutes has already been signed and dedicated office space to 03 major sports federations PCI, SOB and AISCD has been allotted to smoothly conduct sports events at the centre".

7.6 The Committee express satisfaction with the establishment and progress of the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Training Centre for Disability Sports (ABV-TCDS), Gwalior, recognizing its vital role in promoting para-sports in India. The Centre's state-of-the-art facilities, extensive sports infrastructure, and commitment to training Divyangjan athletes at par with international standards are commendable. The Committeeare pleased to note the Centre's efforts in organizing national and State-level championships, talent identification programs, and collaborations with reputed institutions and sports federations. While acknowledging the challenges in operationalizing the facility, the Committee are optimistic that with sustained efforts, ABV-TCDS will emerge as a premier institution, significantly enhancing India's representation and success in international para-sporting events.

CHAPTER VIII

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY FOR DIVYANGJAN

In the budget announcement of Hon'ble Finance Minister in FY-2015-16, upgradation of National Institute of Speech and Hearing (NISH) into a National University of Disability Studies and Rehabilitation Sciences was included. The EFC in its meeting held on 30th March 2016 recommended the proposal for setting up of University at cost of ₹382 crore. Subsequently, a Cabinet Note was circulated on 30.06.2017, which was returned by the Cabinet Secretariat in July 2018 for review. The proposal was reviewed and it was decided in the Ministry to set up the University in Kamrup district, Assam.

8.2 Regarding the present statusof the University, it has been informed that:-

"The Department engaged EdCIL (India) Limited, NOIDA, to prepare a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for establishing the National University of Disability Studies and Rehabilitation Sciences in Kamrup, Assam. The final DPR has been submitted in March 2023, and a Public Investment Board (PIB) note was prepared and circulated to stakeholder ministries/departments for comments in June 2023. The Department of Expenditure (DoE), vide OM dated 01.11.2023, 11.12.2023 & 10.07.2024, had made some comments/observations regarding the establishment of NUDSRS and given the project cost it was advised to obtain Delegated Investment Board (DIB) approval for the project This Department is in process of compliance of DoE comments regarding the NUDSRS and the proposal is currently under process for appraisal of DIB note.

A three-member team comprising officials from DEPwD and CRC Guwahati , along with the Kamrup District Administration, conducted a site visit in Novemb er 2024 to identify the allocated land. In this regard, a joint survey report from t he District Commissioner, Kamrup, has been received.

Upon receipt of the Joint Survey Report from the District Commissioner, Kamrup, it was confirmed that the initially allocated 150 Bighas of land at Bondapara, BekeliMouza, included 126 Bighas within the Khatajuli Reserve Forest and only 24 Bighas as Government Khas land. Given the non-availability of alternative land under Boko Revenue Circle, a D.O. letter dated 31.12.2024 was issued by the Hon'ble Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment (HMSJE) to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam, seeking intervention either for forest land clearance or allocation of an alternate 50-acre land suitable for the university.

In response, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam through a D.O. letter dated 03.02.2025 conveyed that an alternate land under Chaygaon Revenue Circle, Kamrup District, has been identified for the purpose. Accordingly, the Department is in the process of deputing a team of officials to visit Kamrup, Assam, to evaluate the suitability of the proposed site before proceeding with the necessary land allotment formalities. Further action will be initiated based on the findings of the site visit".

8.3 The Committee emphasize the urgent need to expedite the establishment of the National University of Disability Studies and Rehabilitation Sciences in Kamrup, Assam, given the prolonged delays since its announcement in 2015-16. Recognizing the critical role of the university in advancing education, research, and rehabilitation for Persons with Disabilities, the Committee urge the Department to swiftly resolve land allocation issues, ensure timely compliance with the Department of Expenditure's observations, and secure necessary approvals without further delay. The Committee recommend that a clear implementation roadmap with defined timelines be formulated to ensure the project progress efficiently, enabling the university to become operational at the earliest.

New Delhi
12 March, 2025
21 Phalguna, 1946 (Saka)

SHRI P.C MOHAN
Chairperson
Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment

ANNEXURE-I

MINUTES OF THE NINTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2024-25) HELD WITH DEPARTMENT OF EMPOWERMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (DIVYANGJAN) ON WEDNESDAY, THE 20TH FEBRUARY, 2025 WITH REGARD TO DFG 2025-26

The Committee met from 1500 hrs. to 1620 hrs. in Committee Room No. '2', Parliament House Annexe Extension Building, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SHRI P.C. MOHAN - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS
Lok Sabha

2. Shri Bhaskar Murlidhar Bhagare
3. Smt. Vijaylakshmi Devi
4. Shri Chhatrapal Singh Gangwar
5. Smt. Bag Mitali
6. Shri Rajkumar Roat
7. Shri Matheswaran V.S
8. Shri Sasikanth Senthil
9. Shri Anoop Pradhan Valmiki
10. Shri Mansukhbhai Dhanjibhai Vasava

Rajya Sabha

11. Smt. Sumitra Balmik
12. Shri Narayan Koragappa
13. Smt. Phulo Devi Netam
14. Shri Rameswar Teli
15. Smt. P.T. Usha

SECRETARIAT

1.	Smt. Mamta Kemwal	-	Joint Secretary
2.	Shri Krishendra Kumar	-	Deputy Secretary

WITNESSES

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EMPOWERMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (DIVYANGJAN)

1.	Shri Rajesh Aggarwal	Secretary
2.	Ms. Debolina Thakur	Joint Secretary & FA
3.	Shri Rajeev Sharma	Joint Secretary
4.	Ms. Manmeet Kaur Nanda	Joint Secretary

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Secretary and other officers representing the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), (Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment) to the sitting of the Committee convened to discuss 'Demands for Grants for 2025-26' of the Department. In his opening remarks, the Chairperson emphasized the need for effective fund utilization and the impactful implementation of welfare schemes aimed at empowering persons with disabilities (PwDs). He highlighted the importance of ensuring measurable progress in key areas of inclusion and advancement of PwDs. The Chairperson then drew attention of the representatives of the Department to Direction 55 (1) of the 'Directions by the Speaker of Lok Sabha' about maintaining confidentiality of the proceedings of the Committee until the report is presented to the House. Thereupon, Chairperson requested the Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) to introduce Officers of the Department and to brief the Committee on the performance of the Department and the targets fixed to complete the proposals for financial year 2025-26.

3. Accordingly, the Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), briefed the Committee through power point presentation on the performance of the Department during the financial year 2024-25 and the roadmap for financial year 2025-26.

4. The Committee, thereafter, *inter alia* deliberated on the following issues:

i. Budgetary allocation, expenditure and shortfall in expenditure etc. for the financial year 2024-25 and budgetary allocation regarding financial year 2025-26.
ii. Performance of the schemes Assistance to Persons with Disabilities for Purchase/Fitting of Aids/Appliances (ADIP)
iii. Review of the performance of the Deendayal Divyangjan Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS)
iv. Implementations of the Schemes Arising out of the Implementation of the Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 (SIPDA)
v. Disbursement of Scholarship amounts to students with disabilities under various schemes
vi. Establishment of Sports Centres for persons with disabilities;
vii. Expediting the establishment of the National University for Divyangjan

5. The Chairperson then thanked the Secretary and other representatives of the Department for providing valuable information on the subject and also asked the Secretary to furnish written replies on the issues that remained unanswered during the sitting.

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

The witnesses then withdrew.

(The Committee then adjourned)

ANNEXURE-II

MINUTES OF THE TWELFTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (2024-25) HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 12TH MARCH, 2025.

The Committee met from 1030 hrs. to 1100 hrs. in Chairperson's Chamber, Room No. 113, E-PHA, Block 'B', Extension Building, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SHRI P.C. MOHAN - CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Bhaskar Murlidhar Bhagare
3. Smt. Vijaylakshmi Devi
4. Shri Chhatrapal Singh Gangwar
5. Km.Priyanka Satish Jarkiholi
6. Shri Chintamani Maharaj
7. Shri Murari Lal Meena
8. Shri Godam Nagesh
9. Shri Gajendra Singh Patel
10. Shri Rajkumar Roat
11. Adv. Priya Saroj
12. Shri Anoop Pradhan Valmiki
13. Dr. Lata Wankhede

Rajya Sabha

14. Smt. Sumitra Balmik
15. Shri Narayana Koragappa
16. Smt. Phulo Devi Netam
17. Shri Ramji
18. Shri Rameswar Teli
19. Smt. P. T. Usha
20. Shri Abdul Wahab
21. Shri Niranjan Bishi

SECRETARIAT

1. Smt. Mamta Kemwal - Joint Secretary
2. Shri Krishendra Kumar - Deputy Secretary

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee convened to consider and adopt the following draft Reports:

(i) xx xx xx xx

(ii) Draft Report on 'Demands for Grants for the year 2025-26' pertaining to the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities).

3. 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.

4. The Committee then authorized the Chairperson to finalize the draft Reports and to present the same to both the Houses during the ensuing session.

The Committee then adjourned.

XX Does not pertain to this Report

APPENDIX

STATEMENT OF OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Sl.No	Para No.	Observations/ Recommendations
1.	1.15	The Committee appreciate the proactive initiatives taken by various State Governments in establishing dedicated Department for disability affairs and significantly increasing budgetary allocations. They also acknowledge the innovative approach of community-based interventions, such as Karnataka's village-level disability workers and the nationwide *SugamyaYatra* initiative, which fosters grassroots accessibility improvements. To build on this momentum, the Committee recommend that the Department actively collaborate with States to institutionalize similar models across the country, ensuring sustainable and community-driven disability inclusion. Additionally, a structured framework should be developed to document and monitor accessibility improvements under *SugamyaYatra*, enabling the replication of best practices nationwide.
2.	2.15	From a thorough examination of the Demands for Grants (DFG) over the past three years, the Committee observe a persistent trend of underutilization of funds across key schemes such as ADIP, SIPDA, DDRS, and Scholarships, with actual expenditures consistently falling short of Revised Estimates (RE) and Budget Estimates (BE). The BE allocations were invariably reduced at the RE stage in 2022-23, 2023-24, and 2024-25, yet the Department was unable to fully utilize even the reduced funds. The Department utilized 97.38per cent of RE in 2022-23 and 93.39per cent in 2023-24. However, as of 03.03.2025, only ₹892.68 crore of ₹ 1167.27 crore (76.48per cent) has been spent. This shortfall was primarily due to disruptions from the introduction of the CNA and TSA models. Delays in receiving Utilization Certificates (UCs) from State Governments under SIPDA and a lack of adequate proposals from North-Eastern States further hindered funds utilization. While the Committee were assured by the Department's representatives that the remaining 2024-25 funds would be fully utilized by 31.03.2025, the Committee strongly urge the Department to adopt targeted remedial measures and strategic interventions to ensure efficient fund utilization in 2025-26. Proactive engagement with State Governments, NGOs, and implementing agencies is

		essential to streamline proposal submissions and disbursement process, particularly for skill training programs and capital expenditure. Furthermore, given the challenges in meeting fixed targets for schemes like SIPDA and DDRS, the Department should reassess target-setting methodologies to ensure that they are realistic, flexible, and aligned with performance trends. The Committee recommend decisive action to improve fund utilization and program execution in the remaining year of the 2024-26 financial cycle, ensuring that allocated resources effectively advance the welfare of persons with disabilities and that the Department successfully meets its commitments under various schemes.
3.	**3.20**	**The Committee recognize that the Assistance to Persons with Disabilities for Purchase/Fitting of Aids/Appliances (ADIP) Scheme is an important initiative aimed at enhancing mobility, independence, and economic empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). The Committee note that fund allocation and utilization under ADIP have shown a steady increase, with actual expenditure surpassing initial Budget Estimates (BE) in multiple years. In 2022-23, the BE was ₹235.00 crore, which was revised to ₹230.00 crore, yet actual expenditure exceeded expectations at ₹242.29 crore. Similarly, in 2023-24, the BE of ₹245.00 crore was significantly revised to ₹305.00 crore, with actual spending at ₹290.60 crore. In 2024-25, the BE was further enhanced to ₹315.00 crore, and the Revised Estimate (RE) increased to ₹350.00 crore, with ₹346.27 crore utilized as of 03.03.2025. The Committee also note that increased financial allocations has been ably matched by the physical performance/targets set under the Scheme. In 2022-23 and 2023-24, the target was exceeded, benefiting 2.89 lakh and 3.15 lakh beneficiaries, respectively. However, in 2024-25, only 2.10 lakh beneficiaries were assisted as of 14.02.2025, accounting for 67per cent of the target of 3.15 lakh beneficiaries. While the Department has cited the imposition of the Model Code of Conduct during General Elections and the transition to the TSA Model-I as reasons for the slower pace of the expenditure, the Committee urge the Department to learn from these experiences and establish contingency plans to ensure uninterrupted service delivery in the future. The Committee however express concern over the reduction of the physical targets for**

		2025-26 to 2.05 lakh beneficiaries and recommend that the Department continuously assess demand trends and explore possibilities for expanding beneficiary coverage.
4.	**3.21**	**The Committee appreciate the revisions in the ADIP Scheme, effective 26.09.2024, which aim to enhance inclusivity and provide greater financial relief to Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). The modifications include higher income eligibility ceilings, increased financial support for assistive devices, and expanded coverage for advanced mobility aids and corrective surgeries. The enhancements in subsidies for motorized tricycles, wheelchairs, and high-end prostheses, along with greater financial assistance for cochlear implants and corrective surgeries, are expected to significantly improve accessibility and independence for PwDs. By reducing the financial burden on beneficiaries and ensuring access to better-quality assistive devices, these changes will promote greater social and economic inclusion. The Committee, however, emphasize the need for periodic impact assessments to evaluate whether these modifications are effectively improving the quality of life for PwDs, ensuring that the intended benefits reach the maximum number of eligible individuals.**
5.	**3.22**	**The Committee appreciate the establishment of Pradhan Mantri Divyasha Kendras (PMDKs), which provide walk-in access to assistive aids and have benefitted 35,919 PwDs as of 2024-25. These centers play a crucial role in ensuring last-mile service delivery, and the Committee recommend their expansion to underserved regions, particularly in remote and tribal areas. The removal of the requirement for State Government recommendations in NGO proposals is also a welcome step toward reducing bureaucratic delays and ensuring the timely release of funds. However, the Committee stress the importance of strict monitoring mechanisms to prevent misuse of funds and maintain transparency in implementation.**
6.	**3.23**	**The Committee commend the inclusion of Motorized Tricycles with Li-Iron-Phosphate batteries and Folding Joystick Wheelchairs in the ADIP Scheme, with a subsidy of up to ₹50,000, as a significant step towards improving mobility and independence for PwDs. These modern assistive devices, along with enhanced financial support for high-end prostheses and cochlear implants, will broaden accessibility, lower maintenance costs, and provide financial relief to beneficiaries**

		and their families. The Committee strongly recommend that the Department undertake extensive outreach efforts to ensure that maximum eligible PwDs can avail these benefits and urge collaboration with research institutions and industry partners to continuously enhance and upgrade assistive devices, making them more cost-effective, durable, and efficient.
7.	**3.24**	**The Committee appreciate the Department's efforts in enhancing accessibility and mobility for the elderly by distributing over 18,000 assistive devices during the Kumbh Mela at Prayagraj under the Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY). Such initiatives play a vital role in reaching vulnerable populations in large public gatherings and ensuring their comfort and dignity. To further strengthen these efforts, the Committee recommend that similar outreach programs be integrated into other major national and regional events. Additionally, a structured mechanism for pre-event assessment and beneficiary registration should be developed to ensure the distribution of need-specific assistive devices, maximizing the impact of such initiatives.**
8.	**4.17**	**The Committee recognize the crucial role of DDRS in providing rehabilitation services to Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) through NGOs and implementing agencies. An analysis of fund utilization trends over the past three years reveals significant fluctuations, with 2022-23 and 2023-24 recording high fund utilization, while in 2024-25, actual expenditure stood at ₹87.95 crore as of 03.03.2025, despite a Budget Estimate (BE) of ₹165 crore. The Committee note that the transition from the CNA Model to TSA Hybrid Model 1-A led to procedural delays in fund disbursement, impacting the pace of implementation. Additionally, as grants were previously processed on a reimbursement basis, NGOs were required to submit audited accounts by June 30 of the next financial year, further slowing down fund releases. However, with the revised DDRS guidelines effective from 01.10.2024, which allow Grant-in-Aid on an advance-cum-reimbursement basis, the Committee expect that fund flow will improve and implementation delays will be minimized. The Committee recommend that the Department ensure timely release of advances, particularly to NGOs with strong compliance records, while also strengthening the capacity of implementing agencies to meet documentation requirements on time, ensuring efficient utilization of**

		allocated funds. The Committee also urge the Department to ensure a smoother transition in funding mechanisms by streamlining financial procedures and proactively addressing administrative bottlenecks to avoid such shortfalls in future fiscal years.
9.	**4.18**	**The Committee note that physical targets under DDRS have witnessed a downward revision since 2024-25, with the target reduced from 40,000 in 2023-24 to 32,000 in 2024-25 and 2025-26. The Department has attributed this to the number of projects supported remaining largely the same over the years, with new proposals being considered only after the release of funds to organizations. The Committee emphasize that rehabilitation services for PwDs should not be constrained due to procedural delays in fund disbursal and recommend that the Department take proactive steps to expedite approvals for new projects. The Committee urge the Department to explore expanding the scope of DDRS to cover more PwDs by identifying underserved areas where rehabilitation services are limited or absent.**
10.	**4.19**	**The Committee appreciate the Department's efforts in introducing monitoring mechanisms, including video inspections of NGOs and time-bound forwarding of proposals under the revised DDRS. The provision for automatic transmission of pending proposals from the district levels to the State Government and further to the DEPwD if no action is taken within a month of submission is a commendable measure aimed to streamline the approval process and minimize administrative delays. However, the Committee recommend strict enforcement of these provisions to ensure that no proposal remains pending for an unreasonable duration. Further, the Committee support the decision that organizations running both DDRS and National Trust schemes should choose only one to avoid duplication of services, ensuring that funds reach the maximum number of beneficiaries.**
11.	**4.20**	**The Committee note that DDRCs function as decentralized rehabilitation units, providing early identification and intervention, assistive device distribution, therapy services, and skill development for PwDs. While DDRCs were initially planned for 325 districts, only 269 DDRCs were set up, and currently, only 74 are functional. The Committee express concern over the low operational count of DDRCs and recommend that the Department prioritize the revival and**

		expansion of DDRCs in districts lacking rehabilitation facilities. The Committee also welcome the shift to online applications for Grant-in-Aid (GIA) for DDRCs through the e-Anudaan Portal from 2024-25, which is expected to simplify and expedite the application process.
12.	**5.13**	**The Committee observe significant inconsistencies in the Budget Estimates (BE), Revised Estimates (RE), and actual fund utilization under SIPDA over the past three years. Frequent downward revisions at the RE stage and low actual expenditure despite available allocations indicate systemic inefficiencies in fund absorption. In 2022-23, the BE was ₹240.39 crore, which was reduced by 58.4 per cent at the RE stage to ₹100 crore, with actual expenditure at just ₹65.59 crore. Similarly, in 2023-24, the BE of ₹150 crore was cut to ₹67 crore, yet actual expenditure exceeded the RE at ₹76.79 crore (114.7 percent of RE). In 2024-25, despite an RE of ₹111 crore, only ₹43.90 crore (39.5 percent of RE) had been utilized as of 03.03.2025. These fluctuations indicate inconsistent fund planning and delays in fund utilization, leading to missed opportunities for enhancing accessibility and disability-related initiatives. The Committee strongly recommend that the Department strengthen its financial planning mechanisms by ensuring that BE allocations are realistic, demand-driven, and reflective of actual implementation capacity.**
13.	**5.14**	**In addition to financial inconsistencies, the Committee note a significant shortfall in meeting physical targets under SIPDA. In 2022-23, against a target of 44,520 beneficiaries, 44,162 were assisted, reflecting 99.2per cent achievement. However, in 2023-24, the achievement dropped to 29,374 beneficiaries against the same target (65.9per cent), and as of 16.01.2025, only 11,933 beneficiaries (27.4per cent) had been covered out of the 43,520 target for 2024-25. This indicates delays in execution and ineffective implementation strategies. The Committee recommend that the Department enhance coordination with State Governments and implementing agencies to ensure faster approval and processing of applications, preventing recurring lapses in achieving physical targets. Furthermore, a robust monitoring framework should be instituted to track real-time progress, ensuring better alignment between financial allocations and physical achievements. The Department must identify and address systemic bottlenecks to ensure that SIPDA meets its intended goals of**

		accessibility, empowerment and inclusion of Persons with Disabilities.
14.	**5.15**	**The Committee also find that persistent challenges such as delays in fund disbursement, pending utilization certificates, and incomplete proposals have impacted the effective implementation of SIPDA. Given that SIPDA is the flagship scheme for PwDs, the Committee strongly recommend that the Department strengthen its monitoring and coordination mechanisms by ensuring regular follow-ups with State Governments and implementing agencies. The Central Project Monitoring Unit (CPMU) should be further empowered to enable real-time tracking of fund utilization, proposal approvals, and physical progress under various sub-schemes .Furthermore, timely clearance of compliance documents such as Utilization Certificates (UCs) and pending proposals should be ensured to prevent underutilization and last-minute fund surrender.**
15.	**5.23**	**The Committee note with appreciation the initiatives undertaken under the Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan) to enhance accessibility in built environments, transportation, and information & communication technology (ICT).However, with the campaign now subsumed under the "Creation of Barrier-Free Environment (CBFE)" sub-scheme under SIPDA, the Committee express concern over the absence of a dedicated budgetary allocation for CBFE and the continued financial support required for sustained accessibility initiatives. The Committee strongly recommend that the Department create a structured financial framework within SIPDA, ensuring that accessibility projects receive adequate funding without dependence on overall SIPDA allocations. Additionally, a long-term accessibility roadmap should be developed to maintain momentum and expand initiatives to underserved regions.**
16.	**5.31**	**The Committee observe that the National Action Plan for Skill Development of PwDs (NAP-SDP) has consistently underperformed in meeting its physical targets, with achievements ranging from only 12.62 per cent in 2022-23 to 32.25 per cent in 2024-25 (as of January 2025). Given the demand-driven nature of the scheme, the Committee recommend that the Department strengthen its mobilization efforts, improve coordination with training partners, and ensure timely disbursal of funds. Further, efforts should be made to optimize the utilization of the budget allocation by addressing administrative**

		bottlenecks, improving the training infrastructure, and ensuring a greater alignment of courses with market demand to enhance employment prospects for PwDs.
17.	**5.32**	**The Committee however appreciate the Department's efforts in signing MoUs with private firms and job aggregators like Amazon, Youth4Jobs, and Zomato to facilitate employment opportunities for trained PwDs. However, with only 28,000 PwDs employed till date, the Committee recommend a robust strategy to strengthen employment linkages, including expanding industry partnerships, promoting entrepreneurship support programs, and ensuring sector-specific skill training tailored to high-demand job markets. A structured tracking mechanism should also be put in place to monitor the employment status of trained PwDs.**
18.	**5.33**	**Noting the challenges in data tracking and monitoring of training and placements, the Committee welcome the introduction of the PM-DAKSH-DEPwD Portal. However, the Committee recommend that the Department ensure its full operationalization with real-time data tracking, performance audits of training partners, and impact assessments of training programs. Further, a feedback mechanism should be established where trained PwDs can report challenges faced in employment, enabling timely interventions and policy adjustments to enhance the scheme's effectiveness.**
19.	**5.39**	**The Committee note that while the UDID project has successfully generated approximately 1.18 crore cards, its implementation continues to face challenges due to a shortage of medical professionals, inadequate hospital infrastructure, and a large backlog of pending applications at hospitals. To address these issues, the Committee recommend that the Department work in close coordination with State Governments to strengthen medical infrastructure, expedite the inclusion of private medical professionals in the certification process, and ensure the availability of well-equipped facilities for disability assessment. Additionally, the Department should facilitate specialized training programs for medical authorities to improve efficiency in issuing disability certificates and reduce delays.**
20.	**5.40**	**Recognizing the UDID's critical role in enabling PwDs to access**

		various government benefits and services, the Committee underscore the importance of ensuring full utilization of the allocated budget for 2025-26. This requires robust monitoring of fund disbursement, proactive engagement with State and UT authorities, and the timely clearance of pending UDID applications. A structured and time-bound approach should be adopted to enhance accessibility and ensure that all eligible PwDs receive their UDID cards without unnecessary delays.
21.	**5.41**	**The Committee further observe that PwDs in rural and remote areas face difficulties in accessing the UDID system due to limited internet coverage and therefore urge the Department to strengthen the role of Common Service Centres (CSCs) and explore the deployment of mobile service units for on-site registration and certification. The Committee would also like to recommend that awareness campaigns be conducted in collaboration with State Governments to ensure that all eligible PwDs are aware of the benefits of UDID and the process for obtaining it.**
22.	**5.47**	**The Committee observe that the Scheme for Financial Assistance to Spinal Injury Centers (ASIC) is vital for providing treatment and rehabilitation to individuals with spinal cord injuries, especially those from economically weaker sections. However, with only eight State Spinal Injury Centers (SSICs) supported so far, the scheme's reach remains limited. To address this, the Committee recommend proactive engagement with State governments to expand SSICs in government hospitals and ensure better accessibility to specialized care. Given that ASIC operates under SIPDA without a separate budgetary allocation, the Department must prioritize its funding needs and streamline proposal approvals to ensure timely disbursal of grants. Strengthening monitoring mechanisms, expediting clearances, and raising awareness among stakeholders will be key to ensuring full utilization of funds and maximizing the scheme's impact.**
23.	**6.17**	**The Committee observe significant fluctuations in fund allocation, utilization, and target achievement under the Scholarship Scheme for Students with Disabilities. In 2022-23, the Revised Estimate (RE) was increased to ₹145.00 crore, with 97.9 per cent utilization (₹142.00 crore). However, in 2024-25, the RE was sharply reduced by 43.9 per cent to ₹80.00 crore, and as of 03.03.2025, only ₹58.38 crore (72.9 per cent of RE) had been utilized. Similarly, physical target**

		achievement dropped from 99.2per cent in 2022-23 to just 27.4 per cent in 2024-25(as of Jan,2025). This underutilization, despite high demand in previous years, indicates the need for better forecasting and planning. The Committee recommend that the Department adopt a more structured approach to fund allocation, ensuring that budgetary provisions align with actual demand. Additionally, efforts should be made to streamline the verification and disbursement process at the State Nodal Officer level to avoid delays and ensure timely financial assistance to beneficiaries.
24.	**6.18**	**Given the low application numbers in certain years, the Committee emphasize the need for a more robust awareness campaign. While steps have been taken, such as newspaper advertisements and communication with State Governments, a more proactive strategy is required. The Department should leverage digital platforms, collaborate with educational institutions, and engage disability rights organizations to maximize outreach. Special efforts must be made to target students in remote and rural areas who may be unaware of their eligibility for these scholarships.**
25.	**6.19**	**To prevent recurring issues of low fund utilization, the Committee urges the Department to implement a real-time monitoring mechanism for tracking application processing and fund disbursement. Regular review meetings with State Nodal Officers should be mandated, and timelines should be fixed for application verification and fund release. Additionally, simplifying application procedures and integrating AI-based verification tools can significantly improve efficiency. The Committee stress that every effort must be made to ensure full utilization of the ₹145 crore allocated for 2025-26, benefiting the maximum number of eligible students with disabilities.**
26.	**7.6**	**The Committee express satisfaction with the establishment and progress of the AtalBihari Vajpayee Training Centre for Disability Sports (ABV-TCDS), Gwalior, recognizing its vital role in promoting para-sports in India. The Centre's state-of-the-art facilities, extensive sports infrastructure, and commitment to training Divyangjan athletes at par with international standards are commendable. The Committeeare pleased to note the Centre's efforts in organizing national and State-level championships, talent identification**

		programs, and collaborations with reputed institutions and sports federations. While acknowledging the challenges in operationalizing the facility, the Committee are optimistic that with sustained efforts, ABV-TCDS will emerge as a premier institution, significantly enhancing India's representation and success in international para-sporting events.
27.	**8.3**	**The Committee emphasize the urgent need to expedite the establishment of the National University of Disability Studies and Rehabilitation Sciences in Kamrup, Assam, given the prolonged delays since its announcement in 2015-16. Recognizing the critical role of the university in advancing education, research, and rehabilitation for Persons with Disabilities, the Committee urge the Department to swiftly resolve land allocation issues, ensure timely compliance with the Department of Expenditure's observations, and secure necessary approvals without further delay. The Committee recommend that a clear implementation roadmap with defined timelines be formulated to ensure the project progress efficiently, enabling the university to become operational at the earliest.**