

SOCIAL INCLUSION

The details of the socially oriented insurance schemes which are currently being operated or partially sponsored by the Central Government targeted at vulnerable sections of the society are as follows:

- Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) were launched on 9th May, 2015. The cover period under these schemes is 1st June of each year to 31st May of subsequent year. These schemes are offered/ administered through both public and private sector insurance companies, in tie up with scheduled commercial banks, regional rural banks and cooperative banks.
- PMJJBY offers a renewable one year term life cover of Rupees Two Lakh to all subscribing bank account holders in the age group of 18 to 50 years, covering death due to any reason, for a premium of Rs. 330/- per annum per subscriber, to be auto debited from subscriber's bank account. Similarly, PMSBY offers a renewable one year accidental death cum disability cover to all subscribing bank account holders in the age group of 18 to 70 years for a premium of Rs. 12/-per annum per subscriber to be auto debited from subscriber's bank account. The scheme provides a cover of Rs. Two Lakh for accidental death or total permanent disability and Rs One Lakh in case of permanent partial disability.

The above schemes are on self-subscription basis and involves no Government contribution.

Government also launched the scheme namely 'Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana' (PMVVY) to protect elderly persons aged 60 years and above against a future fall in their interest income due to the uncertain market conditions, as also to provide social security during old age. The scheme provides an assured return of 8% per annum for 10 years. The differential return i.e. the difference between return generated by LIC and the assured return of 8% per annum is borne by Government of India as subsidy on annual basis. Mode of pension payment is monthly, quarterly, half-yearly and annually based on option exercised by the subscriber. The scheme was open initially for subscription for a period of one year i.e. from 4th May, 2017 to 3rd May, 2018. In pursuance to Budget Announcement 2018-19, the scheme has been extended up to 31st March, 2020. The minimum purchase price under the scheme is Rs. 1.5 lakh per family for a minimum pension of Rs. 1,000/- per month and the maximum purchase price has been enhanced from Rs. 7.5 lakh per family to Rs 15 lakh per senior citizen for a maximum pension of Rs. 10,000/- per month.

Ministry of Agriculture implements Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS) with a view to provide comprehensive crop insurance cover against non-preventable natural risks at an affordable rate to farmers. The scheme is compulsory for loanee farmers and voluntary for non-loanee farmers for notified crops in notified areas. Uniform maximum premium of only 2%, 1.5% and 5% of the sum insured to be paid by farmers for all Kharif crops, Rabi crops and commercial/horticultural crops respectively. The difference between premium and the rate of insurance charges payable by farmers is provided as subsidy and shared equally by the Centre and State.

The Government of India also implements Ayushman Bharat namely; Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) a centrally sponsored scheme. PMJAY provides health coverage upto Rs. 5 lakh per family, per year for secondary and tertiary hospitalization to over 10.74 crore poor and vulnerable families (approximately 50 crore beneficiaries). PMJAY is an entitlement based scheme. This scheme covers poor and vulnerable families based on deprivation and occupational criteria as per SECC data. PMJAY provides cashless and paperless access to services for the beneficiary at the point of service in any (both public and private) empanelled hospitals across India. There is no restriction on family size, ensuring all members of designated families specifically girl child and senior citizens get coverage. About 1393 packages are available for the beneficiaries under PMJAY. The ratio of premium under PMJAY is 60:40 between Centre and State except North Eastern States and 3 Himalayan States where the ratio is 90:10 with an upper limit for Centre. In the case of Union Territories, the Central contribution of premium is 100% for UTs without legislature, while it is 60:40 for those with legislature.

Ministry of Tribal Affairs

- Scheduled Tribes Component across all Ministries witnesses a substantial increase from Rs. 31,920.00 Cr. in the year 2017-18 to Rs. 37,802.94 Cr in 2018-19.
- Government announces important measures to revamp and expand scheme of setting up EMRSs; 462 new EMRSs to be set up.
- Launch of Van Dhan Yojana by Prime Minister to improve income and livelihood for about 5 crore tribal people.
- Two National level and four state level museums to celebrate contribution of tribal freedom fighters being set up.
- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs is the nodal Ministry for overall policy, planning and coordination of programmes for development of Scheduled Tribes. The Scheduled Tribes comprise about 8.6% of India's population (according to the 2011 census). In the year 2018, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs focused on education of tribal people, new initiatives to substantially step up economic empowerment of the tribal population as well as bring into spotlight the tribal culture by constructing museums to highlight the tribal freedom fighters. A very major thrust this year has been on revamping and overhauling the prominent scheme of setting up of Eklaya Model Residential Schools to expand the reach of good quality education among the tribal persons.

Andamans: Tribals And No-Go Areas

- The Allen Chau incident also symbolizes the surveillance challenges that continue to bedevil the Indian security establishment. Given India's long coastline and maritime expanse that includes the far-flung island territories (Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep and Minicoy Islands), ensuring 24/7 zero-error surveillance is a complex challenge.
- The Sentinelese are a pre-Neolithic people who have inhabited North Sentinel Island for an estimated 55,000 years without contact with the outside world. They are short statured, possibly due to the island effect that causes genetic limitation over time.

- They hunt and gather in the forest, fish in the coastal waters and are animistic in faith. Unlike the neighbouring Jarawa tribe, they make boats which can only be used in shallow waters.
- Their extreme isolation makes them very vulnerable to diseases to which they have no immunity. A large chunk of the population of the 10 Great Andamanese tribes was wiped out after the indigenous peoples caught syphilis, measles, and influenza on an epidemic scale following contact with the early settlers.

Legal Regulations

- Jawaharlal Nehru's Tribal Panchsheel were the guiding principles after Independence to formulate policies for the indigenous communities of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- International Conventions: International policy has changed over the decades. While the Indigenous and Tribal Populations Convention 1957, of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) insisted on an integrationist approach towards tribal communities, the 1989 Convention insisted on a policy of non-intervention, "recognizing the aspirations of these peoples to exercise control over their own institutions, ways of life and economic development." India ratified the 1957 convention, but has not ratified the 1989 convention. However, despite not signing it, India tried to tread the path of non-interference.
- **Protection Granted To Tribes:** The Sentinelese and other aboriginal tribes of the archipelago are protected under The Andaman and Nicobar (Protection of Aboriginal Tribes) Regulation, 1956. This Regulation protected the tribals from outside interference, specified the limits of reserved areas and said no land in a reserved area shall be allotted for agricultural purposes or sold or mortgaged to outsiders. Those violating the land rights of the tribals were to be imprisoned for one year, fined Rs. 1,000 or both. Despite this, there continued to be constant interactions between the tribals and settlers/ outsiders.
- **1963 Order:** Under the Foreigners (Restricted Areas) Order, 1963, the Andaman & Nicobar Islands are a "Restricted Area" in which foreigners with a restricted area permit (RAP) can stay on 13 islands and make day visits to another 11.
- **Buffer Zone:** The Sentinelese have remained hostile from the time efforts began to reach out to them in 1967. The government gave up in the mid-1990s, and in order to safeguard their health and sovereignty, decided that no one could enter a 5 km buffer zone around their island, which was already out of bounds.
- **Change of Policy:** In December 2014, the A&N administration announced a change of policy from "hands off" to "hands off but eyes on" to protect the Sentinelese.
- **Relaxation from RAP:** In recent years, the Andaman Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Andaman Association of Tour Operators have pressed to have the RAP restrictions relaxed. Therefore, in August 2018, the Home Ministry dropped the RAP requirement for visiting 29 inhabited islands until 2022, even though separate approval continue to be required for visiting Reserve Forests, Wildlife Sanctuaries and Tribal Reserves. Following criticism that the move compromised the safety of the tribes and ecology of the islands, the UT Administration clarified in October 2018 that Indian nationals would continue to require a pass issued by the Deputy Commissioner for entering a tribal reserve, and foreigners would need prior approval from the Principal Secretary (Tribal Welfare).

Need To Leave Them Alone /Cost Of Outside Exposure On Tribals

- **Reduced Immunity:** Many millennia of living in isolation and in far smaller numbers have denied them exposure and immunity to most infectious diseases that other human societies encountered. And it could be the collective memory of exploitation or epidemics after contact with outsiders that makes the Sentinelese hostile.
- **Negative Consequences:** From 2004 onward, the 400-odd surviving Jarawa began to retreat into the forest, closing the window of their willing interaction with the world. But the highway that passes through their inhabited land continues to bring the world and sexual exploitation, substance abuse and disease into their shrinking sanctuary.
- **Possible Land Encroachment:** The commercialization of tribal spaces could lead to encroachment of land, as we see in other parts of the country.
- **Dwindling Number And Loss Of Knowledge Of Local Customs:** Fewer than 50 Great Andamanese are alive today. In 2010, Boa, the last of the Bo, a Great Andamanese tribe, died taking with her the knowledge and language of her people. A few months earlier, another ancient language, Khora, had passed with Boa's neighbour Boro.
- **Rising Dependence:** In December 2008, at least 15 Onge men died after drinking from a plastic container that had washed up on Dugong Creek. The Onge, who now number fewer than 100 have abandoned hunting gathering and depend entirely on government help.
- **Home Ministry's Stand (counter-view):** While the Home ministry maintains that it's doing away with restricted area permits for foreigners to visit North Sentinel Island had nothing to do with the killing of Chau, as he had flouted stricter restrictions under the Protection of Aboriginal Tribes (Protection) Law and the Indian Forests Act and also failed to report his stay in Andamans to the local FRRO. So, it would have made no difference even if RAP had been in place. The Ministry also conveyed to National Commission for ST (NCST) that while 44 violations of rules and regulations by foreign visitors to Andaman & Nicobar were reported in the recent past, not one related to RAP regime. It also recalls that two people were killed in a similar way in 2016 when RAP restrictions were in place.

Road Forward

- Considering the significance of the indigenous tribes of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the government needs to reorient its priorities towards protecting them from outside influence. India needs to sign the 1989 convention of the ILO and implement its various policies to protect the rights of the indigenous population.
- The policies of "protection" demand strong surveillance infrastructures, empowered staff and coordination among police, forest and welfare agencies. It should also make efforts to sensitize settlers and outsiders about them. That Chau was helped in his journey shows a lack of understanding about the Sentinelese. Only concrete efforts can prevent such an incident from happening again.
- Moreover, the Home Ministry's recent decision to include North Sentinel Island among 29 islands that will not require a restricted area permit, purportedly to boost tourism, was uncalled for. And it must consider reimposing restrictions (on ground that it would endanger

primitive tribes occupying nearly 10 of the 29 islands) that require foreigners to obtain special permits to visit protected islands in Andaman & Nicobar housing, un-contacted, aboriginal tribes. (NCST has also demanded reimposition of RAP)

- Similarly, post 26/11, there have been attempts to enhance the capability of the Indian Coast Guard and the maritime police clusters among coastal states. While these initiatives are welcome, the larger and more intractable challenge is the reform of India's intelligence apparatus.

THE SALIENT ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE YEAR 2018

Ministry of Tribal Affairs has continued with its endeavours for socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes (STs) through specially tailored schemes for education, infrastructure and livelihood to fill in critical gaps. Allocation of Business Rules (ABR) of Government now mandates this Ministry to monitor 'Tribal Sub-Plan' (now re coined as 'Scheduled Tribe Component') funds of Central Ministries based on the framework and mechanism propounded by NITI Aayog. In order to consistently improve public service delivery, Ministry of Tribal Affairs constantly reviews various schematic initiatives, recent ones being rationalization of scholarship schemes besides on boarding of same on DBT platform and online portal for NGO Grants.

Budget allocation of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has gone up from Rs. 5329.32 Crore in the year 2017-18 to Rs. 5957.18 Cr in 2018-19. Ministry has already utilized 74.69% of its allocated outlay on various developmental initiatives for STs. An amount of Rs. 2385.90 Cr (as on 09th December, 2018) has been released under two Special Areas Programme of the Ministry viz. Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-Scheme and Grants under Article 275(1) of the Constitution for Education, Health, Livelihood/Income Generation Activities etc. Similarly, allocation for Scheduled Tribes Component across all Ministries has witnessed an increase from Rs. 31,920.00 Cr in the year 2017-18 to Rs. 37,802.94 Cr in 2018-19.

With implementation of Public Financial Management System (PFMS), efficiency in funds allocation and monitoring its release has been improved besides enhancing transparency and accountability. All agencies receiving funds from the Ministry have been on boarded in the system. This facilitates real-time tracking of fund utilization by implementing agencies.

MONITORING OF FUNDS FOR TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

Allocation of Business Rules (ABR) amended in January, 2017 has mandated the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) for monitoring of STC funds of Central Ministries. An online monitoring system has been put in place by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs with web address <http://stcmis.gov.in> for monitoring of Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP)/Schedule Tribe Component (STC) funds. The framework captures data directly from Public Finance Management System (PFMS) and provides inputs to see through expenditure vis-a-vis allocations. Monitoring of physical performance and outcome of initiatives has also been introduced in the system. A customized proforma has also been developed in MIS to capture location of ongoing projects and beneficiary details. Further, Nodal Officer have been designated in line Ministries/Departments for

coordination and monitoring. Required credentials are shared with nodal officers for uploading data regarding output and outcome. Review meetings are held regularly for effective monitoring.

There are 37 Central Ministries and Departments having STC funds catering to specific tribal development in various sectors through 299 different schemes, as reflected in the Statement 10B of the Expenditure Profile of the Budget, 2018-19. Allocation for welfare of Scheduled Tribes across all Ministries has witnessed an increase from Rs. 24,005.00 crore in financial year 2016-17 to Rs. 31,920.00 crore in financial year 2017-18 and Rs. 37,802.94 crore in 2018-19. With the efforts of Ministry of Tribal Affairs, the STC expenditure has gone up from 85% of total allocation at Revised Estimate stage in 2016-17 to 96% in 2017-18. During 2018-19, out of total allocation of Rs. 37,802.94 crore, an amount of Rs. 23,772.05 crore has already been released as on 09.12.2018, which is 62.88% of the total allocation.

As far as State TSP funds are concerned, vigorous efforts of MoTA has resulted in 98% increase in expenditure of State Tribal Sub-Plan funds by States during the years block of 2010-13 (wherein a total of Rs. 1,65,691.00 crore was expended) to 2014-17 (wherein a total of Rs. 3,27,574.00 crore were expended)."

As on 09.12.2018, 63% of the total allocated STC amount has been released by different Central Ministries / Departments against various development projects relating to education, health, agriculture, irrigation, roads, housing, electrification, employment generation, skill development etc.

SCHEME FOR EKLAVYA MODEL RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL (EMRS)

- Eklavya Model Residential School is an excellent approach for imparting quality education to ST children. Apart from school building including hostels and staff quarters, provision for a playground, students' computer lab, teacher resource room etc. are also included in the EMRSs. The scheme aims to bridge the gap in literacy level between the general population and tribal population.
- A total of 284 EMRSs have been sanctioned as on date, out of which 219 have been reported functional, with about 65,231 students enrolled therein.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, in its meeting held on 17th December, 2018, has decided that by the year 2022, every block with more than 50% ST population and at least 20,000 tribal persons, will have an Eklavya Model Residential School. Eklavya schools will be on par with Navodaya Vidyalayas and will have special facilities for preserving local art and culture besides providing training in sports and skill development
- It has also been decided to set up an Autonomous Society under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs similar to Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti to run the EMRSs.
- The recurring cost has also been enhanced from the existing Rs. 61,500/- to Rs. 1,09,000/- per student per year from 2019-20.
- The CCEA decision also spells out reservation of 20% seats under sports quota and 10% for non-ST students.
- Rolling out the proposed scheme with a financial cost of Rs. 2238.47 Crores during 2018-19 and 2019-20.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

An outlay of Rs. 118.65 Crore has been made to various states under the scheme Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-Scheme (SCA to TSS) and Grants under Article 275(1) for skill development of more than 31,000 male and female tribal beneficiaries in a wide gamut of trades such as (i) Planning and Management including office management (ii) Solar Technician / Electrician (iii) Beautician (iv) Handicraft (v) Skills required for day to day construction works (such as Plumbing, Mason, Electrician, Fitter, Welder, Carpenter (vi) Refrigeration and A/C repairing (vii) Mobile repairing (viii) Nutrition (x) Ayurvedic & tribal medicines (xi) IT (xii) Data Entry (xiii) Fabrication (xiv) Paramedics and Home Nurse Training (xv) Automobile Driving and Mechanics (xvi) Electric & Motor Winding (xvii) Security Guard (xviii) Housekeeping & Management (xix) Retail Management (xx) Hospitality (xxi) Eco-tourism (xxii) Adventure Tourism.

CONSTRUCTION OF MUSEUMS FOR TRIBAL FREEDOM FIGHTERS

Government has conceptualized and planned setting up of permanent museums in States where Tribals lived, struggled against the Britishers, refused to bow down to alien rule and were far ahead in making sacrifices. Ministry has decided to construct a state-of-the-art Museums for Tribal Freedom fighters of national importance in Gujarat with a total outlay of Rs. 102.55 crore and MoTA's contribution of Rs. 50.00 crore. The second national level museum is to come-up in Jharkhand with an outlay of Rs. 36.66 crore and MoTA's contribution of Rs. 25.00 crore. The Ministry has also shortlisted four other states i.e. Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Kerala and Madhya Pradesh for construction of State level museums.

INITIATIVES FOR PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TRIBAL GROUPS (PVTGS)

1. Ministry has enhanced the allocation of funds for the development of PVTGs from Rs. 240.00 crores in 2017-18 to Rs. 260.00 crores in 2018-19.
2. State Government have been given the flexibility of utilizing the funds using the gaps identified through Base Line Surveys.
3. In order to ensure the overall development of PVTGs, emphasis is being given on Micro planning using GIS mapping of tribes.
4. Emphasis in the Comprehensive cum Development (CCD) approach for preserving traditional architecture, traditional health practices, cuisine besides maintaining the heritage and culture of PVTGs.

SCHOLARSHIPS SCHEMES**I. Pre Matric Scholarship**

- Inviting applications Online - States are either using their own portal or National Scholarship Portal (NSP) for obtaining online applications from students.
- Financial assistance enhanced from Rs. 265.00 crores in 2017-18 to Rs. 350.00 crore in 2018-19 out of which Rs. 294.58 crore is released to states as on 06.12.2018.

II. Post Matric Scholarship

- Inviting applications Online - States are either using their own portal or NSP portal for obtaining online applications from students.
- Financial assistance enhanced from Rs. 1347.07 crores to Rs. 1586.00 crores for 2018-19 out of which Rs. 1308.77 crore is released to states as on 06.12.2018.

III. National fellowship and Scholarship Scheme for higher education of ST students.

Financial assistance in the scheme for 2018-19 is Rs. 100.00 crores.

(a) Top Class Scholarship scheme

- Inviting applications Online - NSP being used for inviting application from students studying in identified top class institutions.
 - Tuition fees are being disbursed directly to the Institutes while maintenance allowance to student's individual accounts directly through PFMS
- 87 new institutes added to the scheme during the year 2018.

(b) Fellowship Scheme

- Ministry took over implementation of scheme from UGC since 2017-18.
- Inviting applications Online - Operationalized NFST portal for inviting fresh applications online and 2302 applications for the year 2018-19 have been received.
- Student queries are resolved through coordination with PFMS and Banks.
- High priority accorded to persons with Disabilities, PVTGs, BPL and females.

(c) National Overseas Scholarship for ST students.

- Portal has been operationalized by the Ministry and hosted on Ministry's NIC Server.
- Flexibility introduced for courses of study to be undertaken by Students.
- 138 applications have been received for the year 2018-19, which are under process.

(d) DBT

- Data is being collected every month and uploaded on DBT Bharat Portal.

VAN DHAN YOJANA

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has launched a game-changing initiative for tribal people - The Van Dhan Yojana, with the launch of the first Van Dhan Vikas Kendra at Bijapur by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi on 14th April, 2018. It aims to provide skill upgradation and capacity building training and setting up of primary processing and value addition facility.

As per the plan, TRIFED will facilitate establishment of MFP-led multi-purpose Van Dhan Vikas Kendras, a cluster of 10 SHGs comprising of 30 tribal MFP gatherers each, in the tribal areas. This initiative is aimed at mainstreaming the tribal community by promoting primary level value addition to MFP at grassroots level. Through this initiative, the share of tribals in the value chain of Non-Timber Forest Produce is expected to rise from the present 20% to around 60%. About 3000 such Van Dhan Kendras are proposed to be set up in two years in the forested Tribal Districts of the country. To begin with, this initiative is proposed to be taken up on priority in the 39 Districts with more than 50% tribal population and to then gradually be

expanded to other Tribal Districts in India. The initiative aims to promote MFPs-centric livelihood development of tribal gatherers and artisans. MFP or what may be more aptly referred to as Non Timber Forest Produces (NTFPs) are the primary source of income and livelihood for about 5 crore tribal people in the country.

AADI MAHOTSAV

Ministry of Tribal Affairs organized a National Tribal Festival named as 'Aadi Mahotsava' from 16th November, 2018 to 30th November, 2018 with the help of TRIFED to celebrate, cherish and promote the spirit of tribal craft, culture, cuisine and commerce at Delhi Haat, INA. This festival was inaugurated by Sh. Jual Oram, Hon'ble Minister of Tribal Affairs.

More than 1000 Artisans from 20 States, 80 Tribal Chefs and 14 Dance Troupes comprising more than 250 Artists participated in the Mahotsav. Highlights of the Mahotsav were – Live demos for traditional tribal food and drink; Lac bangles; demo for 4 different schools of painting i.e. Warli, Pithora, Gond and Saura; Fashion show for tribal textiles, fashion accessories etc. Tribal products displayed at Mahotsav included heritage collection of Sarees, Men's collection including cotton, woollen and silk Jackets, Kurtas from MP, Rajasthan and Jharkhand; Bell Metal from Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh; Paintings from Gujarat, Maharashtra, Odisha and MP; Woollens from HP, Uttaranchal and J&K; Honey, spices dry fruits etc. from different States; Tribal Jewellery from Himachal, Odisha, North-East, MP, Telangana; Pottery from Manipur, Rajasthan; Home Furnishing from Rajasthan, North East, MP, UP; Bags collection from Gujrat, Telangana, Jharkhand; and Grass Mat and Coir collection from West Bengal, Jharkhand and Kerala.

At the closing ceremony of the National Tribal Festival, Hon'ble Tribal Affairs Minister Shri Jual Oram felicitated tribal sportswoman - Ms. Mary Kom, for her extraordinary achievement of 6th time Women's World Boxing Champion at Dilli Haat on 30th November, 2018, who is also Brand Ambassador for TRIBES India (Punchtantra range of products) .

It has also been proposed that National Tribal Festivals shall be conducted in 17 States/ Union territories up to March, 2019 to provide a broad platform to highlight tribal culture across India.

NGO GRANTS

Implementation of Online application system “NGO Grants Online Application & Tracking System” (www.ngograntsmota.gov.in) activated for processing NGO proposals under the scheme of “Grant-in-aid to Voluntary Organizations working for welfare of Scheduled Tribes” has resulted in quicker information flow and smoother implementation of the scheme besides increasing the number of applications.

MINIMUM SUPPORT PRICE FOR MINOR FOREST PRODUCE

The scheme for ‘Mechanism for Marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) through Minimum Support Price (MSP) and development of Value Chain for MFP’ (known as MSP for MFP in short) was launched in the year 2013-14 and it then covered only ten MFP items and was applicable to the Schedule V States only. Subsequently, in October 2016 the extent and coverage of the scheme was increased by adding more MFP items and also rendering the scheme

applicable country wide. The MSP of ten items that were originally incorporated into the scheme were further revised in November 2017. The issues of further expanding the list of MFP items as also further revising the MSP of the existing MFP items are being considered by the Ministry.

Government Initiatives in North Eastern region

- NITI Forum for North East set up, National Bamboo Mission announced, Sikkim arrives on India's air link map.
- Digital North East Vision 2022 released.
- PM lays foundation stone of India's first National Sports University
- Posted On: 18 DEC 2018 6:47 PM by PIB Delhi
- Following are the highlights of the initiatives taken by Government for the development of North Eastern Region during the year 2018:

NITI Forum for North East: Focused attention for development of NER

- On February 21st, the Government issued orders to create an exclusive forum at the NITI AAYOG to prepare plans for the development of the North East Region, co-chaired by the Vice-Chairman of the Niti Aayog and Secretary of DoNER. The forum examines various proposals both at the Central and the State levels and prepare plans for the speedy development of the North Eastern Region.
- The first meeting of the newly constituted 'NITI Forum for North East' was held in Agartala, Tripura on 10th April. The meeting was organized by the NITI Aayog, Ministry of DoNER and the NEC. The Forum proposed that the development projects in the NER would be based on the concept of "HIRA" (Highways, Inland Waterways, Railways and Airways) as spelled out by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. The emphasis would also be made on Education, Health and Skill Development in the region.
- Addressing another meeting of "NITI Forum for Northeast" in Guwahati on 4th December, Dr. Jitendra Singh said that with the assistance of Centre, Northeast will focus on bamboo industry in a big way, since this is a sector which has not received the deserved attention in spite of the fact that over 60% of India's bamboo is grown in this region.

National Bamboo Mission

- Union Finance Ministry in February this year announced the "National Bamboo Mission" in the Annual Budget presented with an allocation of Rs. 1,290 crore for it. Speaking to media persons, Dr Jitendra Singh said the Bamboo Mission has a special significance for Northeast and the announcement made by the Finance Minister is a vindication of the Union Government's continued commitment to the development of the region.

Sikkim arrives on India's air link map

- The Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the Pakyong Airport in Sikkim on 24th September. This is the first airport in the Himalayan State, and the 100th airport in the country. In order to ensure that Pakyong Airport is affordable to the common man, this airport is part of the UDAN scheme.

Digital North East Vision 2022 released

- Union Minister for Electronics & IT, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad released the 'Digital North East Vision 2022' in Guwahati on 11th August. The Vision Document emphasizes leveraging digital technologies to transform lives of people of the north east and enhance the ease of living. The Vision Document identifies eight digital thrust areas - Digital Infrastructure, Digital services, Digital empowerment, Promotion of Electronics Manufacturing, Promotion of IT and ITes including BPOs, Digital Payments, Innovation & Startups and Cyber security. As part of the Digital North East Vision 2022, a cloud hub for North East will be set up in Guwahati. Capacity building for 50 thousand state government employees will be taken up in use of digital technologies. It also assured to provide mobile connectivity in all uncovered villages in the North East. Speaking on the occasion Shri Prasad urged North Eastern states to promote BPOs at small cities. He said, e-class rooms would be set up at six medical colleges in North East. Several other projects were also launched for the North East including a BPO centre at river island Majuli district.

New train 'Arunachal Express' flagged off

- A new train between Naharlagun in Arunachal Pradesh and Anand Vihar Terminal in the national capital was flagged off by Union MoS Shri Kiren Rijiju and Shri Rajen Gohain on 1st March from Naharlagun railway station. The new train, known as 'Arunachal Express' covers the 2,013 kilometre distance between Naharlagun and Anand Vihar Terminal in little over 38 hours and would have 14 stoppages en-route. This is the second direct train for Arunachal Pradesh and 14th for North East to connect with the national capital. Speaking on the occasion Shri Rijiju said Arunachal Pradesh is poised for a giant leap in the developmental front with survey of 11 railway projects in the state going on, which will change the face of the state soon.

PM lays foundation stone of India's first National Sports University

- On 16th March, the Prime Minister launched development projects worth Rs. 750 crore in Manipur. He laid the foundation stone of the National Sports University, 1,000 Anganwadi Centres and several other important development projects. Speaking on the occasion, Shri Narendra Modi said the Union Government's vision for the North East has been 'Transformation by Transportation.' The Prime Minister said that the North-East can be the New Engine of India's growth. He said the Government is addressing the special needs of the North East to enable growth parity with the rest of the country. He remarked that he has himself visited the North East more than 25 times in the last four years.

Development of North East: Priority of the Government

- The Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, at the inaugural session of Advantage Assam - Global Investors Summit 2018, held on February 03-04, 2018 in Guwahati, said that the North-East is at the heart of the Union Government's Act East Policy. The Act East Policy envisions increased people to people contact, trade ties and other relations with ASEAN countries. He said all the schemes of the Union Government are oriented towards bringing about a qualitative change in the lives of the people. He said the aim is to improve "Ease of Living."
- On 13th June, the Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved the proposal of DoNER Ministry for the nomination of the Union Home Minister as ex-

officio Chairman of North Eastern Council (NEC) - a statutory body with Governors and Chief Ministers of all the eight North Eastern States as its Member. The Cabinet also approved that Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of DoNER would serve as Vice Chairman of the Council. Under the new arrangement, NEC can now perform the tasks undertaken by the various Zonal Councils to discuss such inter-State issues as drug trafficking, smuggling of arms and ammunition, boundary disputes etc. This repositioning of NEC will help it to become a more effective body for the North Eastern Region.

- The Union Cabinet on 21st March approved the North East Industrial Development Scheme (NEIDS), 2017 with financial outlay of Rs. 3,000 crores upto March, 2020. Government will provide necessary allocations for remaining period of scheme after assessment before March 2020. NEIDS is a combination of the incentives covered under the earlier two schemes with a much larger outlay. The overall cap for benefits under all components of incentives will be of Rs. 200 crores per unit. The newly introduced scheme shall promote industrialization in the States of the North Eastern Region and will boost employment and income generation.
- On 8th February, a meeting was held to discuss the roadmap for 14 Northeast districts under the 'Transformation of Aspirational Districts' programme. Major infrastructure projects taken up in the NER inter alia include Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for the NER at an estimated cost of Rs. 5,336.18 crore; Broad Gauging & Capital Connectivity Rail Projects; Comprehensive Scheme for Strengthening of Transmission & Distribution Systems (CSST&DS) in Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim at an estimated cost of Rs. 4754.42 crore; Bharatmala Pariyojana; North East Road Sector Development Scheme (NERSDS) etc.
- The Government has given a big push to a diverse range of infrastructure projects in the North Eastern Region. The Government has laid emphasis on improving rail, road, air and inland waterways connectivity in the NER and with a host of power projects, the region is already on course to turning power surplus.
- Ministry of Road, Transport and Highways is implementing the Special Accelerated Road Development programme for North East (SARDP-NE) under Bharatmala Pariyojana Phase-I, spanning over a period of five years (2017-18 to 2021-22), wherein roads of NER, aggregating to 3,528 kms have been included for improvement.
- On 22nd February, an Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs) was set up for the NER. This was decided after a meeting between Secretaries of DoNER and AYUSH. The IMC will create synergy in various programmes of the Union Government to enable medicinal and aromatic plants sector become vibrant and develop the resources to its potential.
- On February 18, Dr Jitendra Singh invited young Start-ups from all over India to come to Northeast and try their fortune through unexplored potentials of the region. Addressing a gathering of participants at the "Skill India" exhibition in Delhi, he said while all the avenues of livelihood and new ventures are gradually getting exhausted in other parts of the country and states, the immense unexplored avenues and potentials of North Eastern region are still available and beckoning the young entrepreneurs to come to North East.
- MoS Dr Jitendra Singh on June 04, 2018 mooted for "Make in Northeast" initiative, as a follow-up to the "Make in India" initiative inspired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

He also offered to collaborate with all the stakeholders to give each of the eight states of the region an exclusive identity of its own, based on the unique product identified with each of these States.

- On 29th May, Government announced the approval of setting up of an exclusive "Brahmaputra Study Centre" at Guwahati University, Guwahati, for which a fund of about Rs. 28 crore has been provided by the Ministry of DoNER.
- The newly appointed North-East member of the National Commission for Women, Smt. Soso Shaiza, in a meeting with MoS Shri Jitendra Singh on 3rd December, said that the National Commission for Women (NCW) will support Northeast livelihood programmes for women, particularly for those in younger age group, through Skill development and Specialized training, which can enable them to earn their living and also empower them as individuals
- In another landmark initiative for the Northeast, MoS Dr Jitendra Singh laid the foundation stone of new Science Centre, the "Technology Facility Centre" (TFC), in the premises of the CSIR-North East Institute of Science & Technology (NEIST) in Jorhat, Assam on 29th October.
- On 23rd April 23, Dr Jitendra Singh said that India's "Act East" policy is crucial to the entire South East Asia. Speaking at a conference on "India-Myanmar Trade and Connectivity" organized by the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations in New Delhi, he said Myanmar is one of the key pillars of India's "Act East" policy, since through the land borders it connects India via the North Eastern States with the South East Asian countries.

Tourism in NE states

- To enhance tourism sector in North East, the DoNER Ministry has recommended to the Finance Ministry for higher fund allocation and special package for such projects in the NE region. In a meeting held on May 11, 2018 with Union Minister of State for Tourism (I/C), Shri K.J. Alphons, MoS Dr Jitendra Singh said that under the 'North East Special Infrastructure Scheme (NESIDS), the DoNER Ministry is providing financial assistance for projects of physical infrastructure relating to water supply, power, connectivity for promoting tourism in the region. He said that this will be over and above the existing schemes of the Central and State governments of the NE region. Dr. Jitendra Singh said that under the North Eastern Council (NEC), work is underway for promotion of theme-based regional tourism circuits.
- On 19th March, four MoUs were signed under aegis of Ministry of DoNER for promotion of tourism in the North-East, aimed at doubling tourist arrivals to the North East in the next three years. Another MoU was signed for leveraging of community resources and appropriate local resources based technology for development. After the signing of the agreements, Dr. Jitendra Singh said that the development of the North East Region is of prime importance for the overall inclusive growth of India, and tourism development has always been one of our key focus areas, keeping in mind the North East's natural beauty and cultural heritage.
- MoS Dr. Jitendra Singh on 14th October said the Northeast tourism has reached new heights in the last four years and this has been possible because of special thrust and impetus given

by the Union government, with the direct indulgence of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. The fast-track progress in providing connectivity to distant areas in the region has inspired tourists from far and wide to look forward to Northeast as a favourite holiday destination.

- To further boost the tourism in North-East, the festival ‘Experiencing North East’ depicting the uniqueness of North Eastern culture was held in New Delhi from 27th-31st October. The festival, a part of Destination North East series, was organized by North Eastern Council (NEC), Ministry of DoNER in collaboration with India International Centre. The festival showcased the vibrant strengths of North East India and display its art, handicraft, handlooms, tourism, food, culture etc.

Other Achievements

- On 31st May, DoNER Ministry announced that Northeast students' hostels in Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi and Bangalore University were being built by the North East Council (NEC) and the DoNER Ministry. Another piece of land has been acquired at Rohini, Delhi where the construction of another hostel for students from Northeast will be undertaken, which will cater primarily to the students from Delhi University. At the same time a land spread over more than three acres has also been acquired at Dwarka in Delhi where a Northeast Convention-cum-Cultural Centre is proposed to be brought up.
- In a review meeting of the “roadmap for implementation of Cabinet Approval of Schemes for North East Council” held on 3rd March, it was decided that North Eastern Cultural and Information Centre will come up in Delhi soon. The meeting reviewed the progress of various ongoing projects in the North East. As the Central government has been giving priority to the NE region, Dr Jitendra Singh said that this will be a new gift to the people of North East India. He said, the centre will act as a cultural convention and information hub of the northeastern region in Delhi.
- A two-day international seminar on "The Age of Multilateralism and Connecting India's North East: Opportunities and Challenges" was jointly organized by the DoNER Ministry, the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and Asian Confluence in Shillong, Meghalaya on March 19-20, 2018. Addressing the seminar, MoS, Dr Jitendra Singh said that psychological outreach towards development of North East region is as important as physical outreach. The fast-track thrust by the Union Government, Dr Jitendra Singh said, has resulted in a sea-change by improving the connectivity scenario, both in air, rail and road connectivity, and this is bound to overcome many of the earlier constraints faced by the potential entrepreneurs.
- MoS Dr Jitendra Singh addressed the Plenary Session of the International Conference on "Inclusive Tribal Congregation", on 22nd February. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's dream of "New India" is inspired by equitable growth of each section of society, regardless of the socio-economic background. The government has envisaged for itself the objective of empowering the poor to enable them to eradicate their own poverty.

The vision of the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment is to build an inclusive society wherein members of the target group can lead productive, safe and dignified lives with adequate support for their growth and development. It aims to support and empower its target groups through programmes of educational, economic and social development and rehabilitation wherever necessary.

The mandate of the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment (SJ&E) is empowerment of the socially, educationally and economically marginalized section of the society including (i) Scheduled Castes (ii) Other Backward Classes (iii) Senior Citizens (iv) Victims of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (v) Transgender Persons (vi) Beggars (vii) Denotified and Nomadic Tribes (DNTs) and (viii) Economically Backwards Classes (EBCs).

The Department through its programs and schemes strives to build an inclusive society wherein members of the target groups are provided adequate support for their growth and development. The policies and programmes of the Department aims towards:-

- (a) Educational, economic and social empowerment of Scheduled Castes (SCs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Economically Backwards Classes (EBCs) and Denotified and Nomadic Tribes (DNTs).
- (b) Supporting Senior Citizens by way of their maintenance, welfare, security, health care, productive and independent living.
- (c) Prevention and Treatment of Alcoholism and Substance (Drugs) Abuse.

POST MATRIC SCHOLARSHIP FOR SCS

It has been decided to continue Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for SC students for three years, i.e., from 2017-18 to 2019-20 and additional allocation of funds for clearing the arrears under this Scheme. Under the Scheme, an amount of Rs. 3000 Cr. has been earmarked under BE for the year 2018-19.

NATIONAL OVERSEAS SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME

Proposal for Revision and Continuation of National Fellowship Scheme for Scheduled Caste students for 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 has been approved by the Government. Under the Scheme, an amount of Rs. 15.00 Cr. has been earmarked under BE for the year 2018-19.

SCHEME FOR TOP CLASS EDUCATION

- Central Sector Scholarship Scheme of Top Class Education for Scheduled Caste Students has been revised in October, 2018 to cover more Institutions with increased number of slots (scholarships), and the revised Scheme is applicable from the academic session 2018-19. Now 220 Institutes including IITs, NITs, IIITs, IIMs, NIFTs, NLUs, AIIMS, Hotel Management Institutes, Aviation Training Institutes and Flying Training Institutes are empanelled under the Scheme
- Total of 1500 fresh scholarships will be provided under the Scheme. Provision for 30% reservation has also been made for Girl Students.

- The eligibility criteria has also been changed by increasing the total family income to Rs. 6.00 lakh per year from 4.50 lakh per year previously.

Under the Scheme, an amount of Rs. 35.00 Cr. has been earmarked under BE for the year 2018-19.

PRADHAN MANTRI ADARSH GRAM YOJANA

The Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana which was launched during 2009-10 (pilot phase) and expanded during 2014-15 (Phase-I) has now been further expanded and will cover 4484 SC majority villages (Phase-II). The salient features of the modified Scheme under the Phase-II are as under:

1. Those districts are considered which have villages having total population ≥ 500 and with more than 50% persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes.
2. Up to 10 such villages in descending order of SC population are proposed to be selected from each such district for implementation of the Scheme in this new Phase.
3. For every new village selected, the Scheme provides for a total of Rs. 21 lakh of which Rs. 20.00 lakh is for the 'Gap-filling' component and Rs. 1.00 lakh is meant for 'administrative expenses' at the Centre, State, District and Village level in the ratio of 1:1:1:2.
4. Additional funding of Rs. 10 lakh per village will be provided to Phase-I villages for bringing them at par with the Phase-II villages.
5. There will be 50 discrete Monitorable Indicators covering 10 domains for intervention under the Scheme.
6. The 'Village Development Plan' (VDP) will be based on the data collected as part of the Need Assessment exercise and it will have listing of both the cost based and costless efforts required for improvement in the village.
7. For better project monitoring and implementation of the Scheme there will be convergence committees at State, District and Village Level in addition to Advisory and Monitoring Committees at Central and State Level.
8. Funds allocated under the Scheme in 2018-19 are Rs. 70 crore.

MINISTRY OF LABOUR & EMPLOYMENT

The Ministry of Labour and Employment is committed towards job security, wage security and social security for each and every worker. Along with bringing transparency and accountability in enforcement of Labour Laws, the Ministry has taken important initiatives during the year, to realize and establish the dignity of every worker through provision of social security, enhancing the avenues and quality of employment.

I. Major Achievements in Labour Welfare:

- **Labour Codes:** In line with recommendations of Second National Commission on Labour, the Ministry has taken steps for formulating of four Labour Codes on (i) Wages; (ii) Industrial Relations; (iii) Social Security & Welfare; and (iv) Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions by amalgamating, simplifying, and rationalizing the relevant provisions of the existing Central Labour Laws.

- **Code on Wages Bill:** The Draft Code on Wages Bill, 2017 has been introduced in the Lok Sabha on 10.08.2017 and is being examined by Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labour. The report of the Standing Committee is being awaited.
- **Code on Industrial Relations:** To introduce the proposal of Labour Code on Industrial Relations Bill, 2018 in the Parliament, draft Note for the Cabinet along with the Labour Code on Industrial Relations Bill, 2018 was circulated on 08.02.2018 for Inter-Ministerial consultation for seeking views/comments thereon. After examining the received comments of Ministries/Departments, the draft Code on Industrial Relations has been suitably modified. After vetting the Code by Legislative Department, Ministry of Law & Justice, the draft Cabinet Note along with the Code on Industrial Relations Bill, 2018 has been sent to Cabinet Secretariat on 05.11.2018 for consideration.
- **Code on Social Security & Welfare:** A preliminary draft of the Code on Social Security & Welfare was placed on the website of the Ministry on 16.03.2017, inviting comments of the stakeholders / public. After considering the comments of various stakeholders, a revised draft namely draft Code on Social Security and Welfare, 2018 was uploaded on the website of this Ministry on 01.03.2018 seeking suggestions/comments from stakeholders/public. A Tripartite Consultation Meeting to discuss the Labour Code on Social Security & Welfare Bill, 2018 has been held on 27.11.2018 with Central Trade Union Organizations, the Employer' Associations and the State Governments/UTs under Chairmanship of Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Labour and Employment. The draft Note for the Cabinet along with the Labour Code on Social Security & Welfare Bill, 2018 has also been circulated recently for Inter-Ministerial consultation.
- **Code on Occupational Safety Health & Working Conditions:** Preliminary draft of the Code on Occupational Safety Health & Working Conditions was prepared and placed on the website of the Ministry on 23.03.2018 for inviting comments/suggestions of the stakeholders including general public. A Tripartite Consultation Meeting was held on 22.11.2018 with Central Trade Union Organizations, the Employer' Associations and the State Governments/UTs under Chairmanship of Minister of State (Independent Charge), Labour and Employment to discuss the draft Occupational Safety, Health & Working Conditions Bill, 2018. The draft Cabinet Note along with the draft Occupational Safety, Health & Working Conditions Bill, 2018 has been circulated for Inter-Ministerial consultation recently.
- **Shram Suvidha Portal:** The Ministry of Labour & Employment has developed a unified Web Portal 'Shram Suvidha Portal', to bring transparency and accountability in enforcement of labour laws and ease complexity of compliance. The facilities available to establishments on Shram Suvidha Portal as on today include:
 - (a) Transparent Labour Inspection Scheme through computerized system based on risk based criteria and uploading the inspection reports within 72 hours by the Labour inspectors. The time period for uploading the reports has been reduced to 48 hrs since 05.11.2018.
 - (b) Common Registration for ESIC and EPFO,
 - (c) Common ECR for ESIC & EPFO,
 - (d) Single Annual online return for 8 Central laws and 3 returns under the Mines Act, 1952.

- (e) Online licensing under the Contract Labour Regulation and Abolition Act, 1970 and the Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979 besides the Labour Inspection Scheme for enforcement agencies.
- (f) Online Registration by Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) under three Acts i.e. the Contract Labour Regulation and Abolition Act, 1970, the Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979 and The Building and Other Construction Workers' (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996.
- **Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017 which came into force from 1st April 2017:** Increased paid maternity leave from 12 weeks to 26 weeks and has benefited 18 Lakh women employees. Recently Government proposed to bear 7 weeks of salary to motivate employers. This policy will be finalized after approval by the competent forum.
 - **The Payment of Gratuity (Amendment) Bill, 2018** passed by Lok Sabha on 15th March, 2018 and by the Rajya Sabha on 22nd March, 2018, has been brought in force on 29th March, 2018. The present upper ceiling on gratuity amount under the Act has been raised from Rs. 10 Lakh, to Rs. 20 Lakhs.
 - **MoU for Ship Recycling Industry:** The Directorate General Factory Advice Service & Labour Institutes (DGFASLI) and Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Alang on 11-7-2018. The MOU will bring positive changes in working of ship recycling industry and will improve safety and health of the workers and supervisors who are employed in large number in Alang.
 - **MoU signed for international cooperation in the social and labour sphere:**
 - The Union Cabinet has approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) among Brazil, Russian Federation, India, China, South Africa, regarding Cooperation in the Social and Labour Sphere. The MoU was signed on 3rd August, 2018 during BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers (LEM) Meeting.
 - The MoU provides a mechanism for cooperation, collaboration and maximum synergy amongst BRICS member countries with the common objective of inclusive growth and shared prosperity in the new industrial revolution. This would facilitate member countries to share knowledge and also implement joint programmes on matter of Labour and Employment, Social Security and Social dialogue. Another Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between India and Italy for training and education in the fields of Labour and Employment.
 - Worker's Education Programme: Dattopant Thengadi National Board For Workers Education and Development organized 899 training programmes for organized sector workers, 2733 training programmes for unorganized sector workers and 670 training programmes for rural workers including MGNAREGA.
 - Public Grievances Redressal: 33,680 Grievances were received in the Ministry of Labour and Employment during 01.01.2018 to 30.11.2018. Out of these, 32,837 grievances were disposed through CPGRAMS (Centralized Public Grievances Redress and Monitoring System) Portal.

Step Taken for improved Safety of Mine workers:

- Under the provisions of the Mines Act 1952, Permissions, exemptions, relaxations and approvals etc.; were earlier being issued on submission of offline applications by the stakeholders. In view of the Digital India initiative, three software modules namely “Approval System”, “Permission/ Exemption/Relaxation System” and “National Safety Award (Mines) System” have been developed and made live. Two more softwares namely “Accidents & Statistics System” and “Accounts & Budget System” have been developed as a part of “Digital DGMS”. They are under testing. The software modules will bring in more transparency & accountability and speedy disposal of works.
- The modalities for “Risk-based Inspection System” for coal mines have been developed. The software for the purpose has been developed by NIC and implemented by incorporating it in Shram Suvidha Portal. Risk-based inspection system for metalliferous mines is under progress and shall be developed during 2018-19. The inspections will be generated for online assignment through shram suvidha portal prioritizing on the actual risk rating of the mines of all categories.
- Directorate General of Mines Safety (DGMS) has facilitated Risk Assessment Study & preparation of Safety Management Plan in 110 Mines. The system has resulted in more proactive system of safety management.
- Under a joint project with National Institute of Miners’ Health (NIMH) Nagpur on “Multi-Centric Study of Dust Related Disease in Stone Mines and Development of Sustainable Preventive Programme”, field studies were successfully conducted in Nalgonda district of Telengana and Karauli, Dholpur, Jodhpur, Nagaur and Bharatpur districts of Rajasthan, Vidisha district in MP and Birbhum district in WB. 2539 workers have been medically examined and 136 cases of silicosis affected persons were identified.
- Occupational health survey of 9863 persons employed in unorganized sector stone mines were conducted by DGMS in various regions of different states with the help of respective state administration. 211 cases of silicosis affected persons were identified.

Fixed Term Employment:

Ministry of Labour & Employment has included the category of 'Fixed Term Employment Workman' for all sectors in the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946 and rules made there under vide Notification No. G.S.R. 235(E) issued on 16.3.2018. The objective of Fixed Term Employment on one hand is to provide flexibility to the employers in order to meet the challenges of globalization, new practices and methods of doing businesses while on the other, this would be beneficial for workers as it gives the 'FTE Workman' the same statutory benefits as that of regular workers in a proportionate manner. This would also substantially decrease exploitation of contract workers as the employer would directly hire the worker without any mediator in the form of contract for a fixed term.

II. Major Steps Taken by EPFO:

- In February 2018, an online functionality for filing nomination (Form 2) to the members at Member interface of Unified Portal was provided. In online nomination, Aadhaar based

eSign is being used to authenticate the nomination submitted by member. Hence, there is no need for employer's undertaking that nomination has been signed before him/her. As on 10.10.2018, 26,885 online e-nominations have been approved.

- A pensioners' portal was launched in March 2018 through which all EPFO pensioners can get details of pension related information like pension payment order number, pensioner's payment order details, pensioner's passbook information and pension credited date and details of pensioner's life certificate submission including Jeevan Pramaan Digital Life Certification information.
- At the time of registration of an establishment, employer has to upload digitally signed copy of PAN card. To eliminate the requirement of submitting scanned copy of PAN card at the time of registration, an online system has been put in place for verifying details of PAN directly from the Income Tax Department. 80,706 employers have used this facility as on 10.10.2018.
- For facilitating Ease of Doing Business, an online functionality for calculation and payment of damages under Section 14 B and interest under Section 7Q of Employees' Provident Fund & Miscellaneous Provision Act for the belated remittances has been launched. Earlier, the notices were sent to the employers for payment under these Sections. Under the new functionality, the employer himself can select the cases of belated remittances to make payment immediately where auto challans showing the dues will be generated for payment without requiring the employer to visit EPFO field offices.
- In order to facilitate the employers, the requirement of submission of hard copy of Form 5A has been replaced by online submission of Form 5A by establishments with digital/e-signatures by employers. As on 10.10.2018, 5,873 employers have used this facility.
- Under Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana (PMRPY), the Government of India is now paying full employer's contribution (EPF and EPS both) with effect from 1st April, 2018 for a period of three years to the new employees as well as to the existing beneficiaries for their remaining period of three years. Before 1st April, 2018, the Government was paying under PMRPY only the EPS share (8.33% of the wages) out of the total employer's share of contribution (12% of the wages).
- In order to ensure that the employers, especially contractors, pay contribution towards provident fund for the full working period of an employee and not on very low unrealistic wages, a tool for monitoring the above issues, namely, wage analysis report, has been provided in Central Analysis & Intelligence Unit (CAIU) dashboard. Through this tool, field functionaries can see the analysis of wages for establishments in respect of their Zones / Regional Offices and ensure that, wherever required, the verification of details furnished by employers in monthly returns (ECR) is done so that there is correct reporting and full compliance in respect of individual employees.
- The rate of administrative charges were reduced from 0.65% to 0.50% of the pay towards EPF Scheme 1952 subject to minimum sum of seventy –five rupees per month for every non-functional establishment having no contributory member and five hundred rupees per month per establishment for other establishments.

- A new functionality has been introduced to rectify cases of rejection of Digital Life Certificates (DLCs) due to incorrect Aadhaar number seeded against PPOs. This functionality is aimed to reduce grievances of pensioners and provide hassle free services to them.
- A new functionality for rejection of erroneously processed intra - office transfer claims and reprocessing the claims with correct details was started on 05.10.2018 to streamline the process of claim settlement and ensure better delivery of services to subscribers.
- Online Nomination (e-Nomination), linking of UAN with AADHAAR through UMANG APP and online linking of UAN with AADHAAR in EKYC PORTAL using Bio-metric credentials was introduced.
- EPFO presently covers 190 industries (mentioned in the schedule 1 of the EPF Act) with over 20 crore accounts in over 11.3 lakh covered establishments.
- For EPFO's 63.2 lakh pensioners, 55.3 lakh Jeevan Praman have been received as on 29 October 2018 and 49.4 lakh have been approved.
- As on 11.10.2018, 47,50,315 claims (Form 19, 10C and 31) were received online from members having Aadhaar seeded activated UAN out of which 34,24,063 were settled.
- As on 10.10.2018, 23,75,369 members have used 'Track UAN functionality' to find the status of Aadhaar linked to their UAN.
- As on 11.10.2018, 2,92,970 Aadhaar based e-signs have been used by the employers. E-sign is a user-friendly online electronic signature service whereby authorized signatory of the establishment whose DSC is already registered can directly activate their e-sign by provided Aadhaar number at Unified Portal to sign documents.
- As on 11.10.2018, 1,52,272 claims have been field through UMANG App.

III. Major Steps Taken by ESIC

- **Dispensary-cum-Branch Office (DCBO):** To strength its services delivery mechanism, ESIC has started establishing at least one contact point in every district of the country in phased manner in the form of Dispensary-cum-Branch Office (DCBO) to provide the primary medical services and cash benefits delivery.
- **Modified Employer's Utilization Dispensary (Modified EUD):** The decision for establishing Modified Employer's Utilization Dispensary (Modified EUD) on pilot basis has also been taken, with the objective of strengthening of stake holder's participation in the expansion of primary care services of ESIC. Premises will be hired suitably for setting up of dispensary, preferably in the vicinity of clusters of residential area of IPs. ESIC will provide furniture, equipments and medicines. Employer will appoint manpower and supervise the functioning of dispensary.
- **ATAL BIMIT VYAKTI KALYAN YOJANA:** Considering the change in employment pattern and the current scenario of employment in India which has transformed from a long term employment to short term engagement in form of contract and temping, the ESI Corporation has approved a Scheme named "ATAL BIMIT VYAKTI KALYAN YOJANA" for Insured Persons (IPs) covered under the Employees' State Insurance Act,

1948. This scheme is a relief payable in cash directly to their Bank Account in case of unemployment and while they search for new engagement.

- **Modified Insurance Medical Practitioner (IMP) Scheme, 2018:** ESI Corporation has also given in principal approval to Modified Insurance Medical Practitioner (IMP) Scheme, 2018 to make IMP Scheme more attractive on pilot basis. The Scheme may further be expanded in the new areas as well as existing areas as per need. In area, where ESI does not have its medical establishment, or in newly implemented area, Primary Medical Care is provided cash less through tie up arrangement, with Insurance Medical Practitioner (IMP). Earlier IMPs used to be normally appointed by the Director Insurance Medical Scheme (DIMS), ESI Scheme and were paid Rs. 500/- per Insured Person per year which included consultation, basic lab investigation and cost of medicines.
 1. Under Modified Scheme, IMP will prescribe medicines as per available medical list (drawn from national essential list of medicine and basic investigations) in the health passbook with signature and upload image of prescription in the app.
 2. In addition through Mobile App, the IMP may recommend sickness benefit of
 3. 7 days in a spell up to maximum period of 30 days in a year, subject to remote verification of such recommendation by medical referee/DCBO doctor, the benefit would be remitted in the bank account of IP.
- **“UMANG: ESIC – Chinta Se Mukti” Mobile App:**
 - IP centric information services are now made available through ‘ESIC – Chinta Se Mukti’ mobile app launched through UMANG (Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance) platform. The IP, who has registered his mobile number in ESIC database, can access variety of information through this app downloaded free of cost from Google Play Store on multiple channels like mobile application, web, etc., and can be accessed through smartphones, tablets and desktops, etc.
 - With a simple mobile based authentication system, the IP can know about his personal and enrolled family demographic details, Contribution details, Insurance & eligibility details, information on entitled Benefits, Claim Status, Dispensary and Branch Office to which he is associated, etc. He can submit his feedback and avail services through this app. In addition, there is a knowledge bank pertaining to various benefits of ESI scheme. In due course, the App shall be made available in 13 different Indian languages including Hindi and English.
- **Extending coverage of social Security net of ESI Scheme (under ESIC 2.0)**
 - As per of its 2nd Generation Reforms ESIC-2.0, the ESI Corporation has decided to implement the ESI Scheme all over India. Accordingly, the ESI Scheme has already been implemented fully in 325 districts and partially in 178.
 - As part of extending the social security benefits of ESI Scheme in the entire country, the scheme has been notified in all states and Union Territories except Arunachal Pradesh & Lakshadweep Islands. ESI Scheme is now in 36 States/Union Territories.
 - The number of Insured Persons covered under the ESI Schemes on 31.03.18 has increased to 3.43 crores. The number of beneficiaries covered under Scheme has gone up to 13.32 crores.

- The number of factories and establishments covered by the end of the year had gone up to about 10.34 lakh.

IV. MAJOR STEPS TO FACILITATE EMPLOYMENT GENERATION:

1. National Career Service (NCS): National Career Service Project brings employers, trainers and unemployed on single platform. As many as 98,92,350 active job seekers and 9,822 active employers are on the portal as on 30.11.2018. NCS has partnered with Department of Posts to extend registration of job seekers through the Post Offices. To enhance the reach and enrich the employment opportunities available to youth, strategic MOUs have been signed with leading job portals, placement organizations and institutions of repute. Government of India has recently made it mandatory for government vacancies to be posted on the NCS Portal.

The NCS provides a variety of employment related services like job matching, career counselling, information on skill development courses, apprenticeship, internships etc. The NCS makes available a rich repository of career content on over 3600 occupations across 52 sectors. The NCS Portal also facilitates organization of job fairs where both employers and job seekers can interact.

2. Model Career Centres: 107 Model Career Centres have been established and being operationalized in collaboration with states and other institutions. These Centres will have adequate facilities and infrastructure for delivery of various services to the stakeholders and can be subsequently replicated by states at other locations. In addition, all the 1.5 lakh plus Common Service Centres are strategic partners for extending the reach of NCS to remote locations.
3. Quarterly Employment surveys (New Series):
 - Labour Bureau initiated QES (New series) by extending scope and coverage with the objective to measure relative change in employment situation over successive quarters in sizeable segment of Non-farm Industrial economy covering 8 major sectors viz. Manufacturing, Construction, Trade, Transport, Education, Health, Accommodation & Restaurants and IT/BPO having 10 or more workers.
 - So far, seven reports pertaining to QES (NS) have been released.
4. Occupational Wage Survey (OWS):
 - Labour Bureau has been conducting Occupational Wage Surveys at periodic intervals to facilitate generation of data on different components of pay roll earnings for different occupations for scientific studies of inter-industry and intra-industry differentials in earnings in Plantation, Mining, Manufacturing and Service sector Industries.
 - The field work under the 7th round of OWS covering 56 industries has been completed. So far, four reports of 7th round of OWS in respect of Mining sector, Plantation Sector Industries, Five Textile Industries and Textile Garments Industry have been released.
5. Area Frame Survey:
 - Considering the importance of Quarterly Employment Survey (QES) due to its periodicity, results and coverage, it was decided by the Ministry of Labour and

Employment to conduct Area Frame Survey (AFS) on a large scale across all the states/UTs by covering enterprises employing less than 10 workers so that findings of the survey are reflective of the trends in employment for the non-farm sectors of the economy.

- The preliminary work for conducting the Area Frame Survey has been completed. Pilot survey (pretesting of schedules) has also been completed in Odisha and the Pilot Survey in the states of Haryana and Gujarat is currently in progress.

6. Survey on Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojna:

- Labour Bureau has been entrusted by the Ministry of Labour & Employment to conduct the survey to estimate the employment generated under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojna (PMMY).
- After finalization of technical details pertaining to the PMMY Survey, the preliminary work of the survey was completed and the field work was launched in April, 2018. The field work for PMMY survey has been completed on 30th November, 2018 and data entry work is presently in progress.

MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS

The Ministry of Minority Affairs took a number of initiatives in the year 2018 for the welfare of the minorities in the country. These, among others, include Skill Development, Education, Haj, Waqf, Dargah Ajmer, Pradhanmantri Jan Vikas Karykram (earlier Multi Sectoral Development Programme), Secularism & Empowerment, Swachchhta and Mushairas on the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi.

1. Skill Development:

The Ministry of Minority Affairs organized several “Hunar Haats” in the country including at Baba Khadak Singh Marg, New Delhi (from February 11, 2018) at Allahabad (Sept, 2018), Pragati Maidan (2016, 2017, 2018) at New Delhi; Puducherry (2017, 2018) and Mumbai (2017).. The theme of “Hunar Haat” organized by the Ministry of Minority Affairs was “Development with Dignity”. “Hunar Haat” was organized from February, 10-18, 2018 in New Delhi “Hunar Haats”, are being organized by the Minority Affairs Ministry to provide an opportunity, as well as domestic and international exposure to the master artisans from across the country. “Hunar Haats”, being organized across the country have become a “credible brand” to fulfill Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi’s commitment to “Make in India”, “Stand up India” and “Start up India”.

In the coming days, “Hunar Haat” will be organized at Mumbai (December 2018), Baba Kharak Singh Marg, New Delhi (January 2019) and Goa (February 2019). More Than 1 lakh 50 thousand artisans and people associated with them have been provided employment and employment opportunities during about last one year through “Hunar Haat”.

2. Education:

- The Ministry of Minority Affairs has implemented a scheme namely “ Free Coaching and Allied Scheme for the candidates and students belonging to minority communities” all over

the country including North Eastern States, under which, free coaching is provided to students belonging to six notified minority communities through selected or empanelled coaching institutions or organizations for preparation of qualifying examinations for admission in technical and professional courses and competitive examinations for recruitment to Group “A” , “B” and “C” services and other equivalent posts under the Central and State governments including public sector undertakings, banks, insurance companies etc. The Ministry has organized “Taleem-o-Tarbiyat” programme at Anjuman-a-Islam Girls High School at Bandra, Mumbai.

- The Ministry has launched a pilot project for minority Cyber Gram for digital literacy in a minority dominated village Chandauli in Alwar district of Rajasthan. The Ministry mainstreamed the Cyber Gram project with the Multi-sectoral Development Programme in the year 2014-15 as a special initiative.
- The Ministry implements various schemes for pursuing higher research and institutions of National importance for minority students, though there is no specific skill scheme for minority youth to facilitate their entry into the areas of higher research and institutions of national importance.
- The Merit-cum-Means Scholarship Scheme is awarded for pursuing professional and technical courses, at under-graduate and post-graduate levels, in institutions recognized by the appropriate authority. The details of schemes/guidelines and achievements are available on the website of this Ministry (www.minorityaffairs.gov.in).
- The Ministry has launched a training programme to link Madarsa teachers with the mainstream education system on 27 March, 2018.
- The Ministry, in collaboration with Jamia Millia Islamia University, has organized residential training programme for 40 Madarsa teachers and distributed certificates after completion of training
- The Ministry, distributed certificates to those students who have been successful in “Bridge Course”, jointly conducted by Ministry of Minority Affairs and Jamia Millia Islamia, for school drop outs and those students who are pursuing their studies in Madarsas. Ministry of Minority Affairs, in collaboration with Jamia Millia Islamia University, had started “Bridge Course” to bring Madarsa students and school drop outs into mainstream education system
- The Ministry launched the country's first "National Scholarship Portal Mobile App" (NSP Mobile App) in New Delhi on 13 September, 2018. The portal will ensure a smooth, accessible and hassle-free scholarship system for students from poor and weaker sections.
- On 1st October, 2018, Union Minister for Minority Affairs Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi laid foundation stone of first world class educational institute being established with the assistance of Minority Affairs Ministry, Govt. of India, at Kohrapipli village of Alwar district in Rajasthan. the first world class educational institute in Alwar will be proved to be a milestone in the direction of affordable, accessible and quality education to poor, weaker sections including Minorities.
- This educational institution will start functioning in 2020. The Rajasthan Government has given 15 acres of land in Kohrapipali village for this educational institute. World class skill development centre, educational facilities for primary to higher studies, Ayurveda and Unani

science and sports facilities will be established here. Forty per cent reservation is proposed for girls in this institution.

3. Haj:

- Saudi Arabia has given the green signal for India's decision to revive the option of sending Haj pilgrims through sea route also and officials from both the countries will discuss on all the necessary formalities and technicalities so that Haj pilgrimage through sea route can be started in the coming years. A decision in this regard was taken, during the signing of bilateral annual Haj 2018 agreement between India and Saudi Arabia at Makkah. Sending pilgrims through ships will help cut down travel expenses significantly. The practice of ferrying Haj pilgrims between Mumbai and Jeddah by waterways was stopped from 1995.
- This time Haj 2018 has been made 100 per cent digital/online. For the first time about 1300 Muslim women from India went to Haj without "Mehram" (male companion). Separate accommodation and transport was arranged for these women Haj pilgrims in Saudi Arabia. For the first time more than 100 female Haj Assistants were deployed in Saudi Arabia to assist women Haj pilgrims.
- India's Haj Quota Increased for the second consecutive year and for the first time after the Independence, record number of 1 lakh 75 thousand 25 Haj Pilgrims from India went for Haj 2018 that too without Haj subsidy. The Government, led by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, has succeeded in getting India's Haj quota increased for the consecutive second year.
- The amount of Haj subsidy provided by the Government of India reflects in the budget of Ministry of Civil Aviation, which is the nodal Ministry responsible for making air travel arrangements for Haj pilgrims identified by the Haj Committee of India.
- The welfare schemes meant for minorities are implemented by Ministry of Minority Affairs from the budget allocated to the Ministry. An additional allocation of Rs. 505 Crore has been made for the Ministry of Minority Affairs for the year 2018-19. It has been decided to allocate bulk of the additional funding for educational empowerment of Minority communities. For the first time after the Independence, a record number of Muslims from the country went to Haj this year and that too without any subsidy.
- The Union Government's commitment to transparency and strict directives given to the airlines to check unreasonable increase in fares has ensured that Haj 2018 air fares have been come down significantly this year.
- Even after ending the Haj subsidy, Rs 57 crore less were paid to airlines this year for those Haj pilgrims, who went through Haj Committee of India.
- Union Minister for Minority Affairs Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi flagged off the first batch of Haj pilgrims from New Delhi Airport in the morning of 14 July, 2018, with prayers of country's safety and prosperity.
- It is for the first time after Independence that preparation for next year's Haj has been started immediately after completion of the current year's Haj process in India.
- Union Minister for Minority Affairs Shri Naqvi has reviewed the Haj 2019 preparation meeting on 3rd October, 2018.

4. Waqf:

- The Ministry of Minority Affairs has decided to award those “Mutawallis” who will perform well in management of waqf properties to ensure utilization of these properties for upliftment of the society especially educational empowerment of girls. Central Waqf Council is providing financial help to state waqf boards for digitization of records so that state waqf boards can complete the task within timeframe.
- The Central Government has launched a scheme in 2009 namely „Computerization of Records of State Waqf Boards” with a view to streamline record keeping, introduce transparency, and to computerize and digitize the records of waqf properties of the State/UT Waqf Boards (SWBs). The scheme has now been modified and renamed as Qaumi Waqf Board Taraqqiati Scheme (QWBTS). Under the “Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karykram” (PMJVK), the Minority Affairs Ministry will construct schools, colleges, ITIs, skill development centres, multi-purpose community centres “Sadbhav Mandap”, “Hunar Hub”, hospitals, business centres etc on waqf properties across the country. This will be for the first time after the Independence of the country.
- As per provisions of section 32 of the Waqf Act 1995 as amended, general superintendence of all auqaf in a State is vested with the State Waqf Board (SWB) and the Waqf Board is empowered to manage the waqf property and take legal action against unauthorized occupation and encroachment of such properties. The Central Waqf Council (CWC) has decided to provide training to women for their empowerment in the trades of i) Tailoring & Knitting ii) Food Processing iii) Embroidery and iv) Cloth Printing and accordingly, proposals have been invited. The CWC has also decided to provide financial support for coaching of muslim students for competitive examinations for jobs through the coaching centers of Jamia Millia Islamia for 50 students for Civil Services and Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), Aligarh for 100 students i.e. 50 for Civil Services and 50 for SSC-CGL/Bank PO examinations.
- Ministry of Minority Affairs has been implementing a scheme called “Nai – Roshni. The scheme is for Leadership Development of Minority Women with an aim to empower and instill confidence in women by providing knowledge, tools and techniques for interacting with Government systems, banks and intermediaries at all levels.
- Maulana Azad Education Foundation (MAEF) is implementing Begum Hazrat Mahal National Scholarship for girls belonging to minorities. Under this scheme scholarship is provided to girls students for classes 9th, 10th, 11th & 12th. The eligible girls may apply online. The details of this scheme is available on the website for MAEF i.e. www.maef.nic.in. The details of the various schemes of the Ministry are available on its website i.e. www.minorityaffairs.gov.in.

5- Dargah Ajmer:

- Union Minister for Minority Affairs Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi offered 'Chadar' on behalf of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi at dargah of Sufi Saint Hazrat Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti at Ajmer Sharif on 19 March, 2018.

- In his message, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi conveyed greetings and best wishes to followers of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti in India and abroad on the occasion of 806th annual Urs. Prime Minister said, “On the occasion of the annual Urs of this great saint, I am offering “Chadar” and Khiraaj-E-Aqueedat (homage) to Dargah Ajmer Sharif and wish for a harmonious co-existence of our culture. Greetings and best wishes to the followers of Khawaja Moinuddin Chishti across the world on the annual Urs. ”People from all sections of the society welcomed wholeheartedly the “Chadar” send by the Prime Minister. Shri Naqvi also inaugurated 100 toilets complex, constructed by Ministry of Minority Affairs at “Vishramsthal”, Kayad near the Dargah. Zaireen, coming in large number at Dargah, will be benefitted from the facility. Shri Naqvi also took stock of various ongoing development works related to Ajmer Dargah with the officials.
- Union Minister for Minority Affairs Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi has emphasized that the philosophy of Sufism spreads the thoughts of peace and harmony. While launching the official web portal of Dargah Khwaja Sahib Ajmer on 17 July, 2018 in New Delhi, Shri Naqvi said that the present government is doing efforts for inclusive growth of every section of the society.
- The web address can be accessed at <https://gharibnawaz.minorityaffairs.gov.in>

6. Pradhanmantri Jan Vikas Karykram (earlier Multi Sectoral Development):

- “Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karykram” (earlier Multi Sectoral Development Programme) has been proved to be a milestone in the direction of socio-economic-educational empowerment of Minorities and other weaker sections of the society. For the first time after the Independence, a campaign has been started on war-footing to provide basic amenities to ensure educational empowerment of Minorities especially girls in 308 districts across the country.
- The Central Government, keeping in mind the educational empowerment and employment oriented skill development of Minority girls, is providing school, college, polytechnic, girls hostel, ITI, skill development centre etc under “Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas karykram” in those “backward and ignored” areas which had been deprived of these facilities since the Independence.
- During the last 4 years, under PMJVK, 16 Degree Colleges, 1992 School Buildings, 37,123 Additional Classrooms, 1147 Hostels, 173 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), 48 Polytechnics, 38,753 Anganwadi Centres, 3,48,624 IAY (PMAY) houses, 323 Sadbhavna Mandaps, 73 Residential Schools, 494 Market sheds, 17,397 drinking water facilities etc have been constructed by the Central Government in the Minority concentrated areas. This has led to significant improvement in lives of weaker sections, Minorities especially women.

7. Secularism and Empowerment:

- "Secularism, social-communal harmony and tolerance" is in the DNA of India and compared to the entire world, constitutional, social, cultural and religious rights of minorities are more safe and secure in India. A campaign has been started by the government on war-footing to provide basic amenities to ensure educational empowerment of girls belonging to Minority

communities in 308 districts across the country. The Central Government, keeping in mind the educational empowerment and employment oriented skill development of Minority girls, is providing school, college, polytechnic, girls hostel, ITI, skill development centre etc under “Pradhanmantri Jan Vikas Karyakram” in those “backward and ignored” areas which had been deprived of these facilities since the Independence.

- The steps taken by the Central Government aimed at inclusive growth has ensured that today Minorities have been brought into mainstream development. Schemes such as “Seekho aur Kamao”, “Ustaad”, “Garib Nawaz Kaushal Vikas Yojana”, “NaiManzil”, “Nai Roshni”, “Begum Hazrat Mahal Girls scholarships” etc have proved to be the guarantee of empowerment of Minorities especially girls. More than 6 lakh people from Minority communities have been provided employment and employment opportunities through these job-oriented skill development programmes.
- The Ministry has stressed upon fast and transparent implementation of schemes for the welfare of the Minorities. A workshop on “Financial Management” was organized by National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation (NMDFC) on 17 July, 2018 in New.
- The schemes/ programmes implemented by this Ministry for the minority communities notified under section 2(c) of the NCM Act 1992 viz. Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and Parsis are :-
 1. Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK) [restructured Multi-sectoral Development Programme (MsDP)] - implemented in identified Minority Concentration Blocks, Minority Concentration Towns, Minority Concentration District Headquarters & Clusters of Villages for infrastructure development.
 2. Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme, Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme and Merit-cum-Means based Scholarship Scheme – for educational empowerment.
 3. Maulana Azad National Fellowship – for research fellows’ empowerment.
 4. “Naya Savera” Free coaching and Allied Scheme - to enhance skills and knowledge of students and candidates for employment through competitive examination and admission in technical and professional courses.
 5. Padho Pardes – Scheme for interest subsidy on educational loans for overseas studies in technical and professional courses.
 6. Nai Udaan - Support for students clearing Preliminary Examination conducted by UPSC, SSC, State Public Service Commissions, etc.
 7. Jiyo Parsi – Scheme for containing population decline of Parsis.
 8. Nai Roshni – Scheme for leadership development of minority women.
 9. Seekho Aur Kamao – Skill development initiative for minorities.
 10. Nai Manzil – Scheme for formal school education & skilling of school dropouts.
 11. USTTAD - Upgrading the Skills and Training in Traditional Arts/Crafts for Development.
 12. Hamari Dharohar - Scheme to preserve rich heritage of minority Communities under the overall concept of Indian Culture.
 13. Grants-in-Aid to Maulana Azad Education Foundation (MAEF) for implementation of

education and skill related schemes.

14. Garib Nawaz Skill Development Centre Scheme.

15. Equity to National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC) for providing loans at concessional interest rates to minorities for self-employment and income generating activities.

Details of the schemes and the achievements in respect of the schemes are available on the website of this Ministry (www.minorityaffairs.gov.in), on the website of MAEF (www.maef.nic.in) and, on the website of NMDFC (www.nmdfc.org).

8. Swachchhata:

- The Ministry has stressed the need of cleanliness of our inner and outer self. At the SWACHHTA HI SEWA programme at Maulana Azad Educational Foundation in New Delhi on 15 September, 2018, the Minister of Minority Affairs Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi participated in the SHRAMDAAN activities along with film star Annu Kapoor, singer Sabri Brothers and other dignitaries.

9. Mushaira:

- The Ministry of Minority Affairs, organized “Mushaira”, on 6 October, 2018 based on the themes of teachings and principles of Mahatma Gandhi as a part of Central Government’s decision to commemorate 150th Birth Anniversary of the Father of the Nation in New Delhi.
- On 26th October, 2018, A “Mushaira”, to commemorate 150th Birth Anniversary of Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi, was organized in Mumbai. Maharashtra Governor Shri C. Vidyasagar Rao inaugurated this “Mushaira” in the presence of Union Minority Affairs Minister Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi.
- This “Mushaira” was organized at Rangsharda Auditorium, Bandra West, Mumbai. Famous Urdu poets like Shri Wasim Barelvi, Shri Haseeb Soz, Shri Manzar Bhopali, Shri Mansoor Usmani (Nazim), poetess Dr. Naseem Nikhat, Shri Aizaz Popular Merathi, poetess Shabina Adeeb, poetess Nikhat Amrohvi, singer Salma Agha, Shri Shakeel Azmi, Shri Qaiser Khalid and Col. Dr V P Singh gave strong message of peace, humanity and unity through their poetry.
- A large number of people from political, social and other fields, intellectuals and youths were present and encouraged the performing poets. These Mushairas will also be organized in Lucknow, Chandigarh, Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Ranchi and other cities in Future.

DEPARTMENT OF EMPOWERMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (DEPWD) UNDER M/O SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT

In order to give focused attention to policy issue and meaningful thrust to the activities aimed at welfare and empowerment of the person with disabilities, a separate Department of Disability Affairs was carved out of the Ministry of Social justice & Empowerment on May 12,

2012. The Department was renamed as Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities on 08-12-2014. The Department acts as a nodal agency for matters pertaining to disability and persons with disabilities including effecting closer coordination among different stakeholders; related Central Ministries, State/UT Governments, NGOs etc. in matters pertaining to disability.

- The Department is primarily entrusted with the task of empowerment of person with disabilities to build an inclusive society in which equal opportunities are provided for the growth and development of person with disabilities so that they can lead productive, safe and dignified live.
- To empower persons with disabilities through its various Acts/Institution/Organizations and Schemes for rehabilitation and to create an enabling environment that provides such persons with equal opportunities, protection of their rights and enables them to participate as independent and productive members of society.
- To realize its vision and achieve the mission, the departments strives for the following objectives:-
 - Undertaking following measures for rehabilitation:
 - 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;
 - Educational rehabilitation including vocational education and
 - Economic rehabilitation and social empowerment.
 - Developing rehabilitation professionals/personnel.
 - Improving internal efficiency/responsiveness/service delivery.
 - Advocating empowerment of person with disabilities through awareness generation among different sections of the society.

ACCESSIBLE INDIA CAMPAIGN (AIC)-IMPORTANT ACHIEVEMENTS/ MILESTONES OF THE CAMPAIGN

Accessible India Campaign (AIC) was launched on December 3, 2015, for creating universal accessibility for Persons with Disabilities in Built Environment, Transport, and Information & Communication Technology (ICT) ecosystem. So far, Access Audit of 1662 buildings in 50 cities has been completed by the auditors. Financial proposals for retrofitting of 1217 buildings have been received and sanction has been issued in respect of 910 buildings amounting to Rs. 264.91 crores. All 34 International Airports and 48 Domestic Airports have been provided with accessible features viz. ramps, accessible toilets, lifts with Braille symbols and auditory signals. Out of 709 'A-1', 'A' & 'B' category Railway Stations, 670 railway stations have been provided with all Short-Term Facilities and 639 railway stations have been provided with all Long-Term Facilities. 8.4% Public Transport buses of 58 SRTUs have been provided overall accessibility. Out of 100 Central Government Ministries/Departments, Websites of 94 Ministries/Departments have been made accessible so far. Out of 917 identified

websites of State Governments /UTs which are in the process of being made accessible through ERNET India, 217 States/UTs websites have been made live.

UNIQUE DISABILITY IDENTIFICATION (UDID) PROJECT

The Department has already initiated Unique Disability Identification project with a view to create national database for PwDs, to issue Unique Disability ID (UDID) Card along with disability certificate to everyone. In this regard, a web based software has been developed and is being shared with all the State Government and UTs, through training of their personnel. Once the project covers all persons with disabilities, UDID Card will be made mandatory for availing various governments benefits. So far, 463 districts of 27 States/UTs have generated 11.20 lakh e-UDID Cards.

OTHER IMPORTANT ACHIEVEMENTS/MILESTONES OF THE YEAR 2018

- 100 Accessible websites of various State Government/UTs under Accessible India Campaign were launched by the Union Minister for social Justice and Empowerment, Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot on the occasion of 'National Conference on Improving Accessibility' on 19.01.2018.
- Under the Scheme of Assistance to Disabled persons for Purchase/Fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP), in the month of February, 2018, Special camps were held at 8 locations in the country for distribution of aids and assistive devices to Divyangjan.
- Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment felicitated 17 member Blind Cricket World Cup winning Indian Team and presented them with a cash award of Rs. 34 lakhs at a function in New Delhi on 21.2.2018. Union Minister of State for Social Justice & Empowerment.
- The first and second meeting of the Central Advisory Board on disability was held under the Chairmanship of Union Minister of social justice and Empowerment on 13.02.2018 and 5th October, 2018 in Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi. The meeting was attended by Ministers and their representatives from various States/UTs representatives from various Central Ministries/Departments and other nominated members of the board. The Board deliberated on various important policy issues in disability sector such as inclusive education, implementation of the RPWD act, Accessible India Campaign (AIC) etc.
- The National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities, launched and Inclusive India Initiative. To spread the initiative in other parts of the country, a regional workshop was organized in Bhopal on 10th February 2018. The workshop was inaugurated by Shri Shivraj Singh Chauhan, Hon'ble Chief Minister, M.P, in the presence of the Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment. The workshop was attended by experts in the field, students, NGOs, parents and other citizens. The objective of the workshop was to spread awareness on Inclusion of Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.
- Review meeting with eight North-Eastern States was held on 23.02.2018 at Guwahati, Assam to discuss issues relating to Schemes/Programmes/Initiative undertaken by the Department.
- First Indian Sign Language Dictionary of 3000 words, developed by Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC), New Delhi, was launched by Dr Thaawarchand

Gehlot, Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment on 23.03.2018. ISL dictionary consists of various categories of words, for example, legal terms, medical terms, academic terms, technical terms and daily use words.

- The newly established ALIMCO Auxiliary Production Centre (AAPC) Ujjain was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Minister, Social Justice & Empowerment on 28.04.2018. The state of art production centre established under the Modernization programme of ALIMCO.
- Department organized the '1st Sensitization Meeting of Stakeholders to make Delhi a Model Accessible City' on the 7th May, 2018. The Department has taken up the initiative to coordinate the meeting of all key stakeholders, sensitize them about the legal mandates and would hold supervisory role in this entire journey.
- A Composite Regional Centre for Persons with Disabilities at Narsingarh, West Tripura was inaugurated on 08th June, 2018 by Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tripura in the presence of Hon'ble Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India and other dignitaries.
- The National IT Challenge for Youths with Disabilities, in the age group of 13-21 years (school going or school dropout had been held at NIT Kurukshetra, Haryana on 25-26 June 2018.
- Department organized a meeting on 17.7.2018 with the Scientists of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation (ALIMCO) on the issue of commercialization of various technological interventions developed by DST for the benefits of persons with disabilities. The meeting was convened as a follow up of CoS meeting held on 2nd April, 2018 wherein CoS recommended that DST and DEPwD may jointly explore the possibilities of commercialization of various technological interventions developed by DST for benefit of PwDs.
- A National workshop on Skill Development for Persons with Disabilities was held on 3rd July, 2018 in Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi. The meeting was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Minister, SJE and attended by Hon'ble Minister Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, other stakeholders representing industry houses, Empanelled Training Partners (ETP) and State Government representatives etc. In the meeting, various core issues relating to promoting skill development for Persons with Disabilities, Skill curriculum design, participation of industry and experts were deliberated upon.
- An Indian delegation headed by Hon'ble Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment (SJE), comprising Secretary, DEPwD attended the Global Disability Summit held at London on 24th July, 2018. Hon'ble Minister (SJE), while reiterating India's commitment to international principles, put forth the initiatives taken by the Government of India for empowerment of persons with Disabilities. The conference was attended by global leaders of more than 40 countries. About 1100 delegates from all over the world attended the conference.
- Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh in the presence of the Hon'ble Union Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment and Hon'ble Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare conducted the Bhomi Pujan on 02.09.2018 for construction of a new building for the Composite Regional Centre (CRC), Gorakhpur at BRD Medical College, Gorakhpur.

Estimated cost of project is Rs. 16.63 crores. On this occasion, services of CRC, Gorakhpur at Sitapur Eye Hospital, Gorkhpur was also inaugurated.

- A National Conference was organized on 14th September, 2018 at Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi to create awareness about important components of revised scheme of District Disability Rehabilitation Centres (DDRC). Hon'ble Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment was Chief Guest of the Conference. The Conference was attended by Principal Secretaries of states, District Magistrates/Districts Commissioners, Chief Commissioner as well as State Commissioners for Persons with Disabilities and implementation agencies.
- Indian Sign language Research and Training Centre, New Delhi celebrated "Sign Language Day" on 23.09.2018 at Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra, New Delhi. Hon'ble Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment was the Chief Guest on the occasion. The centre observed "Foundation Day" on 28.09.2018. Diploma Certificate (Diploma in Indian Sign Language Interpretation) to 27 students of academic year 2016-17 were distributed.
- A National Workshop on Physical and Mental Disabilities in the light of Global Best Practices in Care, Rehabilitation and Research under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment was held on 23rd October 2018 at Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi. The workshop was hosted by National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities (NIEPMD), Chennai. The outcome of the workshop will support protocol development in the service deliveries and encourage adaptation of global best practices in Indian context.
- A three day international event of the "Global IT challenge for Youth with Disabilities, 2018" was hosted by the Department in association with the Ministry of Health & Welfare, Government of Republic of Korea from 9th to 11th November at Hotel Ashok, New Delhi. Ninety six youth with disabilities from 18 countries namely, Indonesia, China, Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Mongolia, Cambodia, Laos, Philippines, Korea, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, UAE, India and UK participated in the event. India won three medals in the event.
- An MoU has been signed between the Government of Australia and the Government of India for cooperation in disability sector on 22.11.2018 during the visit of Hon'ble President to Australia. Indian High Commissioner to Australia signed the MoU on behalf of the Government of India.