

contravening the provisions of Section 5 of the MS Act, 2013. The State Government have been requested to ensure implementation of these provisions and furnish monthly progress report in this regard.

Progress of Accessible India Campaign

2034. DR. VIKAS MAHATME: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:—

(a) whether Government had launched an Accessible India Campaign (AIC) in 2015 for achieving universal accessibility for Persons with Disabilities and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government has made any progress in converting Government buildings in various parts of the country into fully accessible buildings within the specified timeline and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has conducted any annual accessibility audits in Government buildings to check whether they meet standards of accessibility and whether these standards are consistent with international standards, such as the ISO; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI KRISHAN PAL GURJAR): (a) Yes, Sir. Accessible India Campaign (AIC) has been launched for creating universal accessibility for Persons with Disabilities in Built Environment, Transport and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) ecosystem.

(b) to (d) Under AIC, access audit of 1662 identified buildings in 50 cities has been completed by auditors as per Harmonised Guidelines and space standards for barrier free built environment for persons with disability and elderly persons. The accessibility guidelines were made by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs after consultation with guidelines followed in other developed countries. These access audit reports have been shared with concerned States/UTs. Based on the proposals received, ₹ 308.44 crore have been released to States/UTs for making 1000 buildings accessible.

Rights to visually impaired persons

2035. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Health Organisation (WHO) has estimated that there

are over 62 million people in the country who are blind and visually impaired and most of these persons live in the margins of the society untouched and unreached by Government and NGO's programmes;

(b) if so, the details in this regard and Government's response thereto; and

(c) the details of steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government to provide rights to visually impaired persons, enabling them to avail employment, social and financial security to live with dignity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI KRISHAN PAL GURJAR): (a) to (c) As per Census 2011, there are 50,33,431 persons with visual impairment. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 recognizes visual impairment as a specified disability. The Act provides various rights and entitlements for persons with disabilities including persons with visual impairment. It also mandates appropriate Governments to take measures for promoting education, skill development, employment, sports activities, recreation, social security and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities.

Further, the Central Government implements various schemes and programmes for the welfare of persons with disabilities including persons with visual impairment. Major schemes of the Department are as under:—

- (i) **Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP):** Under ADIP Scheme funds are released to various implementing agencies to assist needy persons with disabilities in procuring durable, sophisticated and scientifically manufactured, modern, standard aids and appliances that can promote their physical, social and psychological rehabilitation by reducing the effects of disabilities and enhance their economic potential.
- (ii) **Scheme for Implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (SIPDA):** Under this scheme, assistance is provided to State Governments and to autonomous organizations/Institutions under Central or State Governments for various activities relating to implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, particularly for creation of barrier free environment and skill development of persons with disabilities.
- (iii) **Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS):** Under the scheme grant-in-aid is provided to Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) for their projects relating to rehabilitation of persons with disabilities aimed at enabling persons with disabilities to reach and maintain their optimal physical, sensory, intellectual, psychiatric or social functional levels.

- (iv) **Scholarship schemes for students with disabilities** such as Pre-matric, Post-matric, Top Class Education, National Fellowship, National Overseas Scholarship etc.

Commission for sub-categorisation of OBCs

2036. SHRI RAM KUMAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government proposes for sub-categorisation of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) into groups to ensure equitable distribution of reservation benefits;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government has formed any Commission to work out this sub-categorisation of OBCs; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI KRISHAN PAL GURJAR): (a) to (d) The Government has constituted a Commission on 2nd October, 2017 under article 340 of the Constitution to examine the issues of the sub-categorization of Other Backward Classes with the following terms of reference:—

- (i) to examine the extent of inequitable distribution of benefits of reservation among the castes or communities included in the broad category of Other Backward Classes with reference to such classes included in the Central List;
- (ii) to work out the mechanism, criteria, norms and parameters in a scientific approach for sub-categorisation within such Other Backward Classes, and
- (iii) to take up the exercise of identifying the respective castes or communities or sub-castes or synonyms in the Central List of Other Backward Classes and classifying them into their respective sub-categories.

The four-member Commission headed by Justice (Retd.) G. Rohini, Chief Justice (Retd.), Delhi High Court was to submit its report in twelve weeks time from the date of assumption of charge by the Chairperson. However, the Commission expressed the need for obtaining the caste-wise data for which additional time was required. Therefore, the tenure of the Commission has been extended by the Government from time-to-time.

The Commission has not submitted its report to the Government. The term of the Commission has been extended from time-to-time and is at present upto 31.07.2019.