

**Special Schemes for disabled, transgender and senior citizens  
during COVID-19**

474. SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry propose to formulate schemes for the welfare of disabled, transgender community and senior citizens affected by the COVID-19 pandemic; and

(b) whether such schemes have been formulated, if so, the details of allocation of funds for such schemes for each of the above mentioned categories?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI KRISHAN PAL): (a) and (b) There is no proposal for developing any new scheme for Divyangjan at this stage. However, the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities implements various schemes and programmes for empowerment of persons with disabilities. Some of the major schemes of the Department in this regard are:—

- (i) Grant-in-aid is provided under 'Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS)' to NGOs/voluntary organisations for projects relating to rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, aimed at enabling persons with disabilities to reach their optimal, physical, sensory, intellectual, psychiatric or social functional level.
- (ii) Assistance is provided to persons with disabilities under 'Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP)' for 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 enhancing their economic potential. The scheme also has a provision to provide cochlear implant to hearing impaired children upto 5 years of age at a cost of up to ₹6.00 lakh per child.
- (iii) The Government provides scholarships for students with disabilities such as Pre-matric (for classes IX & X), Post-matric (from class XI up to Post Graduate degree/diploma level), Top Class Education (Post graduate degree/

diploma in notified Institutes), National Fellowship (M.Phil and Ph.D courses), National Overseas Scholarship (for Overseas education at P.G./Doctorate level) under Scholarship schemes.

- (iv) The National Action Plan for Skill Training of persons with disabilities aims at imparting skills to persons with disabilities for enhancing their employability.
- (v) The Scheme for Implementation of Rights of Persons with Disabilities aims at providing assistance for creating barrier free environment in Government offices, promoting research and awareness, etc.

As regards senior citizens, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, *vide* D.O. letter 13.04.2020, has issued an advisory for protection of senior citizens of the country, through States and Union Territories. The Advisory is particularly for those senior citizens who suffer from medical conditions like chronic respiratory disease, chronic heart disease, chronic kidney disease, diabetes, hypertension, etc. The advisory contains "Do's and Don'ts" for senior citizens who are mobile, and also for their mental well being. Caregivers of dependent senior citizens have also been advised for taking care of the elderly. A copy of the advisory is at Annexure. All the States and UTs have also been requested to issue necessary directions to District Administrations/concerned authorities so that the senior citizens may not face hardships during the pandemic in respect of provision necessary medicines, masks, sanitizers; timely payment of Old Age Pension and priority in admission to Government Hospitals. For issuing of directions to concerned authorities in respect of Old Age Pension and priority in admission in Govt Hospitals the Ministry of Rural Development and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare have been requested separately.

Besides this Ministry is implementing National Action Plan for Senior Citizens (NAPSrC) which has a component of Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC) under which grants in aid is given for running and maintenance of, *inter alia*, Senior Citizens Homes (Old Age Homes) to Implementing Agencies (IAs) such as State Governments/Union Territory Administrations (through Registered Societies)/ Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)/Local bodies; Non-Governmental (NGOs)/Voluntary Organizations. In view of the ongoing pandemic and considering the fact that the Implementing Agencies may not have sufficient funds, the Ministry has decided for release of

advance grant to them. A total of ₹ 83.74 crore has already been released to the IAs during 2020-21, till date.

As regards transgender, the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment has prepared a concept note for a comprehensive scheme for transgender persons. For the year 2020-21, an amount of Rs 10.00 crore has been allocated for Welfare of Transgender Persons.

#### **National council for transgender persons**

475. SHRI MAHESH PODDAR: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the exact mechanisms *via* which stakeholder perspectives will be incorporated in impact assessments of policies by the National Council for Transgender Persons;
- (b) the avenues for grievance redressal open to transgender persons in cases of discrimination; and
- (c) the avenues through which the National Council for Transgender Persons shall receive funding to carry out its operations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA): (a) The Ministry has enacted "The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights), Act, 2019. As per Chapter VII of the Act in the Council along with other members, five representatives of transgender community from the State/UTs by rotation and five experts to represent Non-Governmental Organizations or associations working for the welfare of transgender persons are to be nominated by the Central Government. The Council will assess the impact of various policies and they are free to decide on the modalities.

(b) Clause 18 of the Act, prescribes offences against transgender persons along with the penalties. Also, one of the functions of National Council for Transgender Persons is redressal of their grievances. The provisions of this Act shall be in addition to, and not in substitution of, any other law for the time being in force.

(c) As per clause of 19 of the Act, the Central Government shall, from time to time, after due appropriation made by the Parliament by law in this behalf, credit such sums to the National Council as may be necessary for carrying out the purposes of this Act.