

PARLIAMENT OF INDIA**RAJYA SABHA****DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY STANDING
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
HUNDRED NINETY-FIRST REPORT****ON****IMPLEMENTATION OF SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN,
MID-DAY MEAL SCHEME AND INTEGRATED CHILD DEVELOPMENT
SERVICES SCHEME
IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR AND NORTH-EASTERN STATES****(PRESENTED TO THE RAJYA SABHA ON 2ND MARCH, 2007)****(LAID ON THE TABLE OF LOK SABHA ON 2ND MARCH, 2007)****RAJYA SABHA SECRETARIAT****NEW DELHI****MARCH, 2007/PHALGUNA, 1928 (SAKA)****C O N T E N T S****(a) COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE****(b) PREFACE****(c) REPORT****1. INTRODUCTION**

- Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
- Mid-day Meal Scheme
- Integrated Child Development Services

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF SSA IN J&K

- Release of State Share for SSA
- Out of School Children
- Physical progress under SSA
- Teacher Training

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF ICDS IN J&K**4. IMPLEMENTATION OF MID DAY MEAL SCHEME IN J&K****5. IMPLEMENTATION OF SSA IN NORTH EASTERN STATES**

- Arunachal Pradesh
- Nagaland
- Sikkim

- Manipur
- Assam
- Meghalaya
- Mizoram
- Tripura

6. GENERAL

- Funding
- Diversion of Funds
- Out of School Children
- Deficiencies noticed in the preparatory activities
- Opening of schools/alternative schooling facility
- Opening of upper primary schools
- Norms for classrooms
- Supply of free textbooks to focus group children
- Infrastructure facilities
- Training for upgrading teachers' skills
- Research, Evaluation, Supervision and Monitoring
- Management cost
- Provision for disabled children

7. OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

8. MID DAY MEAL SCHEME IN NORTH-EASTERN STATES

- Arunachal Pradesh
- Assam
- Manipur
- Meghalaya
- Mizoram
- Nagaland
- Sikkim
- Tripura

9. OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

10. IMPLEMENTATION OF ICDS IN NORTH EASTERN STATES

- **Tripura**
- **Manipur**
- **Arunachal Pradesh**

- **Need for providing vehicles to ICDS Projects**
- **Lack of infrastructure**

11. OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

(d) OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS AT A GLANCE

(e) MINUTES

**COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON HRD
(2006-07)**

- 1 Shri Janardan Dwivedi -- *Chairman*

MEMBERS

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- 2 Shri Dwijendra Nath Sharmah
3 Shri Shantaram Laxman Naik
4 Shri Vijay Kumar Rupani
5 Shri Laxminarayan Sharma
6 Shri Uday Pratap Singh
7 Shrimati Brinda Karat
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27 Dr. Meinya Thokchom
28 Shri K. Virupakshappa
29 #Dr. Kunwar Devendra Singh Yadav
30 *Shri Ravi Prakash Verma
31 @Shri Rahul Gandhi
32 @Shri Ram Lakhan Singh

^ Ceased to be a member of the committee *w.e.f.* 28.11.2006

Ceased to be a member of the committee *w.e.f.* 31.8.2006

Ceased to be a member of the committee *w.e.f.* 25.09.2006

* nominated *w.e.f.* 25.09.2006

@ nominated *w.e.f.* 10.10.2006

(i)

SECRETARIAT

Shri N.C. Joshi, Additional Secretary
Smt. Vandana Garg, Joint Secretary
Shri N.K. Singh, Director
Shri Vimal Kumar, Under Secretary
Shri Swarabji B., Committee Officer

(ii)

PREFACE

I, the Chairman of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Human Resource Development, having been authorised by the Committee, do hereby present on its behalf this Hundred Ninety-first Report of the Committee on Implementation of Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA), Mid-Day Meal(MDM) & Integrated Child Development Services Scheme(ICDS) in Jammu & Kashmir and North-Eastern States.

2. The Committee while examining Demands for Grants of various Ministries/Departments over the years noticed that the centrally-sponsored schemes, particularly the three major schemes i.e. SSA, MDM and ICDS were facing problems to really take-off in the North-Eastern States and J&K. The Committee, therefore, decided to understand the problems faced by these States having peculiar conditions of topography, climate, geographic locations, etc, and make a report thereon.

3. In this exercise, the Committee heard the Secretaries of the Department of School Education and Literacy on SSA & MDM and the Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development on ICDS.

4. The Committee after gaining useful insights on the problems in implementation of the said schemes undertook on-the-spot study visits to J&K and North-Eastern States (Assam, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh) to better appreciate the ground realities. The representatives of remaining States of the North-East and Sikkim were called at Guwahati for holding a discussion on these schemes.

5. The Committee found that the norms/guidelines on the various aspects relating to implementation of these schemes were in many important respects not in keeping with/suitable to the conditions and realities of these States and these needed to be modified accordingly. The Committee, therefore, decided to present a Report focusing mainly on this aspect.

6. The Committee expresses its gratitude to the officers of the Department of School Education and Literacy and the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India as well as to the officers of the Department of School/Elementary Education of the J&K, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim for their cooperation in furnishing the required material and information in connection with the examination of the subject and also making arrangements for the visits of the Committee.

7. The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at its meeting held on 25th January 2007.

NEW DELHI;

January 25, 2007

Magha 5, 1928(Saka)

JANARDAN DWIVEDI *Chairman,*

Department-related Parliamentary

Standing Committee on Human Resource

Development

(iii)

REPORT**I INTRODUCTION**

1.1 A brief introduction of the schemes considered by the Committee i.e. Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, Mid Day Meal and Integrated Child Development Services is given below.

1.2 Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)

1.2.1 Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is a comprehensive and integrated flagship programme of Government of India for universalising elementary education in the country. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) or Education for All Programme was launched in 2001-2002 to provide useful and relevant education for all children in 6 to 14 age group by 2010. The SSA cover seeks to ensure access, retention and quality improvement in elementary education. The scheme aims to bridge social, regional and gender gaps, with the active participation of the community in the management of schools. The assistance under the programme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan had been proposed on an 85:15 sharing between the Union and the States during the IX Plan; 75:25 during the X plan; and 50:50 sharing thereafter between the Central Government and State Government.

1.2.2 The Programme covers all the districts of the country and addresses the needs of 192 million children in 11 lakh habitations, 8.5 lakh existing primary and upper primary schools and 33 lakh existing teachers. The programme seeks to open new schools in habitations which do not have schooling facilities and strengthen existing school infrastructure through provision of additional class-rooms, toilets, drinking water, maintenance grant and school improvement grant. The approach is community-owned and even the village education plans are prepared locally in consultation with the panchayati raj institutions.

1.3 Mid-Day Meal Scheme

1.3.1 Government of India launched **National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education** (Commonly known as **Mid-Day Meal Scheme**) on August 15, 1995 to provide mid-day meal to the children studying at primary stage. It was revised in September, 2004 and in September, 2006. The objectives of Mid Day Meal Scheme are: -

- (i) Boost universalization of primary education (classes I-V) by improving enrolment, attendance, retention and learning levels of children, specially, those belonging to disadvantaged sections;
- (ii) improve nutritional status of children of primary stage; and
- (iii) provide nutritional support to students of primary stage in drought-affected areas during summer vacations also.

1.3.2 This Programme covers all children studying in schools run by the government, local bodies, and in aided schools as well as in learning centres established under the Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative & Inovative Education (AIE). Children are to be provided cooked mid-day meal with minimum 450 calories having 12 grams of protein content and adequate quantities of micronutrients like iron, folic acid, vitamin A etc.

1.3.3 Central Government provides assistance under the revised Scheme to State Governments/UT Administrations to the following extent:-

- (i) Supply of free foodgrains @ 100 grams per child per school day from the nearest FCI godown,
- (ii) Reimbursement of actual cost incurred in transportation of foodgrains from nearest FCI godown to the Primary School subject to the following ceiling (effective from 1.10.04):-
 - (a) Rs. 100 per Quintal for 11 special category States (viz. Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, Tripura, Sikkim, J&K, Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal); and
 - (b) Rs. 75 per quintal for other States and UTs
- (iii) Provide assistance for cooking cost at the following rates:-
 - (a) States in North-Eastern Region: - @ Rs. 1.80 per child per school day, provided the State Govt. contributes a minimum of 20 paise
 - (b) For Other States & UTs: - @ Rs. 1.50 per child per school day provided the State Govt./UT Admn. Contributes a minimum of 50 paise.
- (iv) Assistance for Management, Monitoring & Evaluation (MME),
- (v) Assistance for provision of cooked Mid-Day Meal during summer vacations to schoolchildren, as per revised parameters, in areas declared by State Governments as “drought affected”.

1.3.4 In addition to above, to enable States to implement the programme better, they have been permitted to meet certain requirements such as kitchen sheds, drinking water, utensils etc. under various other Centrally assisted schemes.

1.4 Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)

1.4.1 The ICDS Scheme aims at holistic development of children (0-6 yrs) and pregnant and lactating mothers from disadvantaged sections, by providing a package of integrated services comprising of supplementary nutrition, immunization, health check-up, referral services, pre-school, non-formal education and nutrition and health education.

1.4.2 The objectives of the Integrated Child Development Services are:

- (i) to improve the nutritional and health status of children in the age-group 0-6 years;
- (ii) to lay the foundation for proper psychological, physical and social development of the child;
- (iii) to reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school dropout;
- (iv) to achieve effective co-ordination of policy and implementation amongst the various departments to promote child development; and
- (v) to enhance the capability of the mother to look after the normal health and nutritional needs of the child through proper nutrition and health education.

1.4.3 Introduced in 1975 in 33 blocks on an experimental basis, the scheme has been gradually expanded and there were 5635 operational projects as on February, 2006.

II IMPLEMENTATION OF SSA IN J&K

2.1 The Committee visited Srinagar and Leh from the 14th July to 18th July, 2005 for obtaining first-hand idea about the implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Mid day Meal Scheme, and Integrated Child and Development Services. The Committee visited several primary schools and Anganwadi Centres both in the Valley as well as in the Laddakh region. It also interacted with the J&K Government officials, implementing agencies including NGOs, teachers, students, Anganwadi Workers (AWWs), helpers, supervisors and Child Development Project Officers (CDPOs) and community leaders to

ascertain the practical difficulties in implementation of these centrally sponsored schemes.

2.2 Release of State share for SSA

2.2.1 The Committee found that when Committee visited Srinagar, there was no backlog of State's share in J&K for earlier years. For the year 2005-06 also, the State had provided the required share of the annual allocation approved by the Union. The State, therefore, demanded the Union to release the amount approved for it.

2.2.2 As regards pace of implementation of SSA, the Committee was informed by the Union Department of Elementary Education that it was slow in 2004-2005 as the State was able to spend only Rs. 01.72 crores as against annual plan of Rs. 207.04 crores for that year. Argument of State was that pace of implementation should be judged by actual amount released in the year and not by the total work plan approved. That being so, State was able to spend about 83.38% the fund released.

2.3 Out of school Children

2.3.1 Representatives of the Government of J&K informed the Committee that the State had reduced the number of out-of-school children from 3.67 lakhs to 1.54 lakhs during 2003-04 and 2004-05. A large number of EGS centers and new primary schools had been opened to provide access to the far flung areas. There has been good changes in the educational scenario of the State at elementary level.

2.3.2 Dropout rate in 2002-03 was reported to be 24.8% for primary and 26.71% for elementary level. At primary level dropout of boys was higher (33%) than girls (11.5%). During the financial year 2004-2005, 2861 EGS centers were opened raising the total number of EGS centers to 5125. During 2005-06 financial year, 79870 children were enrolled in EGS centers. Besides this, 37325 children were enrolled in the newly opened primary schools in the State. The percentage of out-of-school children thus was reduced to 7.32% from 10.78% during 2003-04. The total number of out-of-school children as on 31-03-2005 was 1.54 lacs; out of which, 68736 children were in the age-group of 6-11 and 85102 in the age group of 11-14. In all, 37000 children were targetted to be admitted to EGS centers and bridge courses to be offered to 1.17 lakh children.

2.3.3 The State Government informed that special attention was being given to Gujjars, Bakerwals and Gadis tribes. Mobile schools were being activated and special EGS centers were being opened in the highland pastures. Data regarding the number of children who migrate with their families to the valley during summer especially Bakerwals are being collected so that proper strategies could be devised for them.

2.4 Physical progress under SSA

2.4.1 On a perusal of the physical progress under SSA, the Committee noted big gaps between targets and achievements regarding school buildings and additional rooms as shown in the table given below:-

Major component	Cumulative target	Completed	In progress
School building	1666 (1166)	345 (407)	248 (680)
Additional rooms	2176 (2146)	696 (878)	367 (1109)
Toilets	1928	0 (0)	0 (0)
Drinking water	1727	0 (0)	0 (0)
BRCs	100	30 (30)	22 (22)
CRCs	334	75 (75)	59 (182)

* Figures in parentheses are those provided by the State.

2.4.2 Representatives of the State argued that the outlay for civil works during 2004-05 was Rs. 80.92 crores, but only less than 50% of it was received as against the full allocation. However, the spill-over part of civil works was prioritized and the State was able to spend almost entire amount that was actually made available to it. Due to paucity of funds, the State Government could release only 25% of funds for achieving the targets of 2004-05.

2.4.3 The Committee was informed that the State Government had appointed 28 Junior Engineers, 14 Assistant Engineers and 2 Executive Engineers; and recruited 45 more Junior Engineers to strengthen the technical support system. The Manual for implementation of civil works programme was also being developed.

2.5 Teacher Training

2.5.1 Teacher Pupil ratio in J&K (2002-03) was reported to be 1:19 at primary level and 1:18 at upper primary level. Here also, as per Central Government, only 61% teachers were trained, whereas the State informed that 80% of its teachers were trained and rest were being trained through IGNOU. English had been introduced as a subject from class I and as a medium of instruction from class III onwards.

2.5.2 The Committee visited many schools in Srinagar and nearby districts which were implementing the SSA Scheme and interacted with the teachers, students and the local people. The Committee is happy to say that the State administration appeared to be making all out efforts to make the SSA a success. However, in many schools, the classes were found to be held in open space and in corridors due to paucity of space. Toilet facilities were insufficient and many schools had no separate toilets, for boys and girls. The Headmasters of the schools complained that the instalments of the SSA money were not being received in time.

2.5.3 The Committee held a meeting with the Commissioner and Secretary, Education Department, Government of J&K and other Senior Officers responsible for the implementation of SSA. The Committee was informed that apart from 3260 SSA schools in J&K and 15000 teachers appointed under the scheme, six thousand more schools were to be covered under the SSA. The centralized recruitment of teachers for the SSA had already started. The Committee found that in many schools in rural areas the classes were functioning from semi-permanent structures. Construction of more permanent classrooms was one of the major requirements under SSA. The construction of additional class-rooms wherever begun, needed to be speeded up. The Committee would like the Central Government to chalk out a contingency plan to construct permanent school buildings wherever required and give all possible help to the Government of J&K for the construction of more and more pucca school buildings, girl's toilets, etc.

2.5.4 The Committee was informed that earlier the militants were targeting school buildings and destroyed large number of them. As a result, there used to be hardly 15 to 20 working days in a year. The Committee was further informed that now the situation had changed and in the last couple of years not a single day was lost due to militancy. All the teachers have already been insured and the students might also be insured in collaboration with ICICI Bank.

2.5.5 The Committee also feels that due to the peculiar political, economic, geographical, climatic and other situations that are specific to J&K, the Government of India needs to revise norms/guidelines for many of its programmes like SSA & MDM with a view to making them more suitable and relevant. For instance, the schools in Kashmir region are closed during the peak winter season. Whereas, the Government of India is releasing the funds for SSA and other schemes towards the end of the year. This

results in underutilization or non utilization of funds in certain cases. In view of poor economic situation in the State as also due to militancy and other reasons, the proposed pattern of funding for SSA must be reviewed with a view to providing more funds to the State.

2.5.6 The Committee visited several primary schools and Anganwadi Centres in Ladakh region as well. A meeting was held with officials of Education as well as Child Development Departments in which the representatives of Ladakh Autonomous Development Council at Leh were also present. The Chairman/CEO of Ladakh Autonomous Development Council (LADC) stated that all subjects in Ladakh, except law and order, were under the Council. However, the CEO complained that all the decisions were taken in Srinagar and New Delhi without consulting the LADC and without taking in to account the local conditions peculiar to Leh & Ladakh region. It, therefore, causes great difficulty at the implementation stages, as many norms of these programmes were not suited to the conditions of Leh & Ladakh. For example, the CEO submitted, the SSA had been, in fact, devised without taking into account the specific conditions of the Ladakh & Leh region. The State Government, he complained, had not passed on any power to the LADC either to contribute to its content or to implement it; SSA is directly implemented by the State Government. The CEO also submitted that the programmes prepared by the LADC were rejected by the State Government on the ground that there was no flexibility in the SSA guidelines. The CEO, LADC also submitted that all the parameters and guidelines of the Central and State Government programmes should give a different treatment to the Leh & Ladakh region considering its rough and tough conditions. The area is very vast and the students are scattered in remote villages miles apart with no roads, transportation etc. Most of the year climate is very harsh. He therefore, emphasized the need for suitably amending the SSA guidelines to be adaptable to Leh & Ladakh.

2.5.7 The Special Secretary, Education Department, Government of J&K who was present in the meeting, however, informed the Committee that the SSA and ICDS programmes were implemented through the LADC and the salary component was routed through the Council. Since these schemes were centrally sponsored, the guidelines did not allow any deviations.

2.5.8 The CEO of LADC informed the Committee that the curriculum of SSA was not locally relevant. He further emphasized that all the buildings in this cold region needed to be south-facing in view of the direction of sun rays and strong winds, for keeping them warm and safe. But the buildings constructed under the SSA did not follow this, resulting in climatic hardships to the students.

2.5.9 The Committee found that the construction ceiling of 33% under SSA guidelines was not a practical proposition due to the fast changing climatic conditions in the area. By the time the sanction for construction was received, it is winter and winters being very severe, it is very difficult to carry out construction activities. The construction cost of buildings in Leh was several times more than what it was in other parts of the country.

2.5.10 It was suggested to the Committee that the funds for this purpose must be non-lapsable and building work may be allowed when the winter was over. The building-plans may be permitted to be approved at the district level according to the requirements of the area. The Committee would like to have response of the Department in this regard.

2.5.11 The Committee during its on-the-spot-visits found that upkeep and basic infrastructure/amenities in the primary schools needed special attention. Similarly, participation of village education/school management Committees was conspicuous by its absence. It needed to be strengthened in a big way as it is the prime mover of the SSA. Toilets in this region were virtually non-existent in many schools visited by the Committee. Wherever toilets were, they were common and in a very bad shape. These components need special and urgent-attention by the State Government.

2.5.12 The Committee notes the progress of SSA in J&K with satisfaction as regards allocating State's share, increasing enrolment as well as reducing out-of-the school children gradually. However, the State did not seem to have district-wise data regarding dropouts from the schools. The Committee feels that districts like Poonch, Rajauri, Doda, Kargil and Budgam need special attention which have higher ratio of out-of-school children. Focused attention is required for education of ST girls belonging to Bakerwal, Gujar and Gaddi tribes. The problem of child labour in carpet weaving and paper machie industry in some districts (e.g. Budgam) also needs greater attention.

2.5.13 The Committee feels that the overall progress of civil works in the State was quite low i.e. 35% to 40% only. The construction of drinking water facilities and toilets in primary schools has not yet picked up. One constraint has been the absence of technical staff at all levels. The State also needs to develop a construction manual and manual on training of Village Education Committees and engineering personnel on a regular basis. The Committee recommends that the Government of India must look into it and try to provide resources and other support for capacity- building of the engineers.

2.5.14 There appears to be a huge backlog in training teachers, an important component of SSA. The Committee recommends that a detailed strategy should be chalked out for training the teachers in a time-bound manner and development of curriculum and textbooks and training of teachers in English medium.

2.5.15 The Committee recommends that efforts be made to see that the installments of SSA were not delayed and there should be regular consultation in this regard between the Union and the State Government.

2.5.16 The Committee found that in many schools in rural areas, the schools were functioning from temporary or semi-permanent structures. Construction of permanent classrooms was one of the major problems that needed urgent attention. The Committee, therefore, calls upon the Government to chalk out a contingency plan to construct permanent school buildings wherever required in a fixed time schedule. The Government of India should give all possible help to the Government of J&K for the construction of school buildings.

2.5.17 The Committee was informed that earlier the militants were targeting school buildings and destroyed large number of them. As a result, there used to be hardly 15 to 20 working days in a year. He added that now the situation had changed and in the last couple of years, not a single day was lost due to militancy. All the teachers have already been insured and the students also were planned to be insured in collaboration with ICICI Bank. The Committee would like to know about the progress regarding providing insurance cover to students in J&K schools.

2.5.18 The Committee is happy to see that the situation in J&K appears to have been improving and the Government officials deserve appreciation for working even in such trying circumstances. The Committee recommends that the State should utilize the opportunity to spread the SSA in every human habitation so that no child remained out-of-school or dropped out of it.

2.5.19 The Committee is fully aware of the ground situations prevailing in the State of J&K. Education can be an effective tool to eliminate militancy. Keeping this in view, the Committee recommends that the Government of India should time the release of funds according to the climatic and other conditions of the State. Giving all the benefits of special category States that are available to NE States, must be considered for the J&K also. If need be, the guidelines of SSA be amended in such a way so as to suit the ground realities, topography and other conditions of the State.

2.5.20 The Committee feels that LADC being an elected body of the local people, is more close to and conversant with the needs of the Leh and Ladakh regions. The Committee, therefore, recommends that

the Government of India and Government of J&K must involve and consult the LADC in implementing SSA keeping in view the fact that community participation was the bedrock of this mission-mode programme. They may also be involved in formulating educational curriculum specific to the different areas within the Leh and Ladakh regions. The Leh and Ladakh conditions must be kept uppermost while laying down guidelines of SSA and other such schemes. The Government of India must bring out necessary changes in the guidelines of Central/Centrally Sponsored Schemes to suit the conditions of these regions.

2.5.21 The Committee during its on-the-spot-visits found that basic infrastructure/amenities in the primary schools needed more attention. Similarly, participation of Village Education Committee/School Management Committees needed to be activated/sensitized in a big way, as these were important bodies under the SSA. There were no toilets in some schools visited by the Committee and in most of the schools, it was a common facility for boys and girls. These were very poorly maintained. The Committee, therefore, calls upon the State Government to take urgent steps to constitute/sensitize and empower the VECs/SMCs also for constructing more and more separate toilets in schools and to clean them regularly.

2.5.22 The Committee further recommends that a wide publicity campaign should be launched to educate the Village Committees as well as parents on various aspects of SSA and MDM so that the programmes can be implemented in all the villages effectively.

2.5.23 The Committee recommends that a suitable mechanism may be devised for accommodating area-specific requirements and problems of J&K in general and Leh and Ladakh regions in particular. To start with, the SSA norms/guidelines may be suitably amended to enable the local authorities to finalise building plan and to carry out the construction activities as per local climatic conditions by locally available material.

2.5.24 The Committee observes that in Leh, infrastructure facilities like toilets, kitchens etc. in the schools are very poor, and the teachers are not getting their salary in time. Most of the teachers are not trained. The Committee recommends that immediate steps should be taken to provide training under SSA to all the teachers. The Committee also feels that a regular consultation and coordination mechanism needs to be devised with representatives of the LADC, State Government and Central Government for implementing schemes like SSA, MDM, etc.

2.5.25 The Committee found that the main problems affecting implementation of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in J&K are (i) enrolment of out of school children (ii) involvement of Leh and Kargil District Councils in the implementation of SSA (iii) delay in civil works and (iv) teachers training. The Committee recommends that the Union Government in consultation with the State government must try to sort out the major problem in these regards and submit a status report to the committee within three months.

III IMPLEMENTATION OF ICDS IN J&K

3.1 The Committee visited some of the Anganwadi centers in J&K and found that even the basic facilities required at these centers were non-existent. Rooms were small and stuffy, hardly enough to accommodate the kids and lactating mothers, not to speak of kitchen, stores, etc. Condition at the centres visited by the Committee was unhygienic, quite prone for infections of various types. There were no facilities for toilets. The reason given for this was the low rate of rent payable for Anganwadi centers. The Committee was informed that the ANMs also did not visit these centres frequently.

3.2 The Committee was informed during the meeting with senior State Government officials that there were around 6070 sanctioned Anganwadi workers in J&K. Appointment of new Anganwadi

workers had already been delayed. The representatives of the J&K Government admitted that the monitoring of the Anganwadis was not upto the mark, especially in areas affected by the militancy. They also admitted that there might be fake Anganwadis in the remote areas where the monitoring system was difficult, hence poor. They also conceded that many vacancies existed in the Anganwadi set up and the condition of many of the Anganwadis was pathetic.

3.3 It was brought to the notice of the Committee by some NGOs that the State Government employees were deployed in ICDS projects usurping thereby the posts of ICDS projects and due to this, the Anganwadi workers were not getting promotions. Another problem was the bulk supplies to the Anganwadis with poor infrastructure. In many cases the Anganwadi supplies were bungled and misappropriated by unscrupulous elements. The NGOs demanded that supplies to Anganwadis may be regulated and done on the monthly basis to avoid any kind of misappropriation. They also demanded that all Anganwadi workers may be regularized and promotions may be given to them. They also wanted the rent for Anganwadis centres to be increased, as the present rate was abysmally low.

3.4 The Committee notes that spread of Anganwadi centres in J&K was uneven as well as inadequate; all the settlements/habitations were yet to be covered under ICDS. Mechanism of monitoring is very poor; large number of fake Anganwadis were reported that existed only on paper. The Committee is aware that parts of State, particularly the valley is facing twin problems of militancy and under-development. The problems are complex but not insurmountable. Ultimately the women and children are suffering and the benefits of this scheme were not reaching them. The Committee, therefore, has come to the conclusion that a more concerted effort, well thought-out and better-planned strategy needs to be chalked out to tackle the problems afflicting the implementation of the ICDS scheme in the State. The Anganwadi workers are the agents of social change; they should be equipped and motivated to achieve the proclaimed objectives of ICDS. To achieve this, the Committee recommends to ensure that the honorarium was paid to them in time and their problems/grievances must be considered in a sympathetic manner. There is a strong case to consider giving higher amount of honorarium and better working conditions to them who are daring the terrorists and harsh climate in the difficult and inaccessible areas of J&K.

3.5 In J&K, large number of Anganwadi Centres do not have permanent buildings. The Committee notes that the recent earthquake has also damaged many of the Anganwadi centers. After the earthquake, Government of India has offered a large package for reconstruction of the earthquake affected areas. The Committee, recommends that the Ministry of WCD should obtain fund from the disaster management scheme not only for the reconstruction of all the damaged Anganwadis in J&K but also for constructing permanent Anganwadi buildings for those Anganwadis which are functioning from temporary buildings.

3.6 The Committee further recommends that the J&K State may also be provided full central assistance for construction of Anganwadis on the pattern of the full central assistance provided to the North Eastern States for construction of Anganwadi Centres.

IV IMPLEMENTATION OF MID DAY MEAL SCHEME IN J&K

4.1 The Committee visited several schools in Srinagar and adjoining districts, many of these were without a proper kitchen and utensils for cooking mid day meals. The Committee also visited many schools in and around Leh. The Committee interacted with the students, teachers and the representatives of the local community. In many schools, the Committee noted no Mid Day Meal was served to the students and wherever it was done, proper cooking facilities were not available; quality of food and hygiene etc. were not up to the mark. Cooking was done in the class-rooms and cooks were also not available at many places.

4.2 The Committee was informed by the representative of the Union Ministry that the State

Government was yet to appoint the Nodal Officers for lifting food grains and other officers required for operating the scheme. The Monitoring Committee, and nodal officers at State, District and Block levels were not in place. The quarterly report was not sent in time.

4.3 The Committee notes that in implementing the Mid Day Meal Scheme the State of J&K has to come a long way. It has to gear itself up for implementing this scheme in a big way. What is unfortunate is that a noble scheme to attract out-of-school children is not being implemented in right earnest. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Central Government may make special efforts to ascertain the problems afflicting the Mid Day Meal Scheme in J&K and facilitate them to implement MDM scheme in a most pro-active manner. Monitoring mechanism for this also needs to be put in place. The Committee recommends that the J&K Government should take immediate remedial measures in right earnest to step-up the Mid Day Meal Scheme.

V IMPLEMENTATION OF SSA IN NORTH EASTERN STATES

5.1 The Committee discussed this issue with State Government officials from the North Eastern States and visited schools in Assam, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh. The Committee found that all the States in the North East had begun the SSA after some initial reluctance. The expenditure figures showed very encouraging trend in this regard. For example while Assam spent 90 per cent of funds allocated in 2004-05, Nagaland spent 90.5 per cent, Mizoram 94 per cent and Tripura spent as high as 99.8 per cent of the allocation. Utilization of fund by Sikkim was 63 per cent, Meghalaya 60 per cent, Manipur 65 per cent and Arunachal Pradesh around 55 per cent. Main problem faced by NE States the Committee found, was in providing their share. All of them have severe financial constraints of their own. The Committee was informed that recently it was decided not to revise the sharing pattern of 75:25 as such, between the Center and the States. To tide over the financial difficulties of the North Eastern States, however 15 per cent of their share, as a special case, was decided to be made available from the non-lapsable funds of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DONER). As a result, effectively, this share has since become 90:10 between Centre and NE States.

5.2 The Committee welcomes this decision of the Central Government and hopes that the NE States would utilize this opportunity to implement the programme with renewed vigour. Regarding future requirements of funds, the States should mobilise their own resources to fund the State share.

5.3 Implementation of SSA in Arunachal Pradesh

5.3.1 The SSA was implemented in the state in the year 2000-2001 and by 2001-02 all the districts had been covered under this programme. Arunachal Pradesh has 4261 villages, out of which only 2777 have schools. In other words, 35% habitations were without schools. The physical and financial progress of SSA in Arunachal Pradesh is given below:-

Sr. No.	Year	Funds received (Lakh)		Total	Expenditure (Lakh)
		GOI Share	State share		
1.	2000-01	163.89	Exempted	163.89	86.10
2.	2001-02	151.57	26.74	178.31	106.50
3.	2002-03	1412.00	470.67	1882.67	263.96
4.	2003-04	675.35	Nil	675.35	1334.66
5.	2004-05	3009.00	600.00	3609.00	2275.50
6.	2005-06	144.31	500.00	644.31	1348.90
	Total	5556.12	1597.41	7153.53	5415.62

5.3.2 The Committee is happy to note that the implementation of SSA in Arunachal Pradesh was

picking up after being slow initially. It still needs further impetus so that this momentum was not lost. The State needs to fill up all vacancies at State Project Office and in the Districts and to utilize funds that are lying unspent with the Districts. The backlog of State share also has to be cleared. Pace of construction work as per the requirement of the SSA programme also needs to be speeded up. There are a large number of vacancies of teachers in the State which must be filled up at the earliest.

5.3.3 Implementation of the SSA in Arunachal Pradesh is plagued with different problems at the very beginning of the project, such as lack of clear cut guidelines for implementation of various interventions; non-availability of skilled manpower like consultants and experienced technical persons to man different interventions; non-release of funds from Government of India as well as the State share on time. These resulted in undue delays or stoppage of the activities at a crucial stage.

5.3.4 Civil construction is not possible during the long spell of rainy & cold seasons; per unit cost of construction is extremely high due mainly to very high transportation cost of building material and labour in remote forest & hilly areas. There are no full-fledged pedagogical units to undertake curriculum renewal and preparation of modules for teacher's training programme. As a result, quality of teaching-learning is very low. Harsh climate, inaccessible topography, hostile climate, lack of transport and communication facility, lack of general awareness among the masses, the Committee found, are the major roadblocks to speedy and effective implementation of the SSA in Arunachal Pradesh. Despite all these hardships, the Committee wishes to put on record its appreciation for the efforts currently being made and the progress achieved in respect of SSA and MDM Schemes during the recent years.

5.4 Implementation of SSA in Nagaland

5.4.1 The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was initiated in the year 2002 in the State. The total number of elementary schools in Nagaland is 1814. The problem of access is there, particularly in very small hamlets that consist of just eight to fifteen households separated from the main villages. Out of such 192 inaccessible habitations, 125 habitations are being covered by Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) centers. The EGS centers are run by the communities with help under SSA.

5.4.2 The State has a very good-pupil teacher ratio (PTR) of 1:16 in the government elementary schools. It, therefore, has not gone for any recruitment of teachers under SSA. The Committee was informed that most of the existing school buildings had outlived their life and some were even in a state of collapse. Infact, about 75% of the classrooms required repairs, 33% needing major repairs. Most of the schools also required additional class-rooms.

The financial progress of SSA in Nagaland

(Rs. in lakhs)

Year	Outlay approved by PAB	Govt. of India released	of State Govt. released	Expenditure	Unspent balance
2002-2003	1297.00	973.28	Nil	109.77	863.51
2003-2004	2951.50	0	500.00	1015.23	371.52
2004-2005	3439.70	2088.49	579.00	2751.24	287.78
Total	7688.2	3061.77	1079.00	3876.24	

5.4.3 Improvement/addition of infrastructure in the elementary schools, the Committee feels is, should be a priority area for the State under SSA. While the Committee is happy to note that the State was able to release more money as its share, actual expenditure has been far from satisfactory for different reasons. The Committee recommends that at least basic infrastructure in the Schools be given without further delay so that the purpose and target under the Scheme are achieved in time. At the same time it is incumbent upon the Centre as well as the State Government to spend the funds within

stipulated time. Having funds and not being able to spend it, reflects a disappointing scenario.

5.4.4 The representatives of the Government of Nagaland submitted the following suggestions before the Committee:

(i) The State of Nagaland does not have a big revenue base. The predominant part of the state expenditure is financed with the help of grants and other releases from the Government of India. It becomes very difficult for the state to provide adequate and enough funds for the various time bound social sector programmes. For proper and timely implementation of the SSA programme the funding pattern should be revised from 75:25 to 90:10. This may be especially considered for the north eastern states as their internal revenue base is too small. For such a comprehensive and time bound programme it is essential that there are no problems in getting the required funds in time.

(ii) The honorarium for teachers training may be increased to Rs 100 per day from the present Rs 70 per day.

(iii) Rs. 6.00 lakhs provided for establishing an Educational Block Resource Centre (EBRC) under SSA is insufficient for carrying out the construction due to hilly and difficult terrain in remote areas of the State. A higher amount, therefore, is needed to meet construction costs of an EBRC.

5.4.5 The Committee would like to have the government's response to the above mentioned suggestion/demands submitted by the Government of Nagaland. The Committee would like to add here that these demands were made by other North Eastern States also.

5.5 Implementation of SSA In Sikkim

5.5.1 Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was launched in a phased manner in Sikkim starting with the West District in 2000-01. The other three districts. North, South & East, were covered during 2001-02.

5.5.2 Under SSA, Sikkim has 40 New Primary Schools, 111 Graduate teachers, 80 Primary teachers, 106 Monastic Teachers, 131 Cluster Resource Centre (CRC) Coordinators, 09 Block Resource Centre (BRC) Coordinators, 82 School Mothers and 87 EGS centers/AIE Centers.

Total number of out of school children as per 2001-02 household survey was 15033, of which 6035 were covered under different categories. As per the household survey 2004 there are 10402 out of school children, 597 have been covered by mainstreaming (341) and by Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) Centers (256), now balance to be covered is 9805.

The Financial position under SSA:

(Rs. in lakhs)

Year	Total AWP & B	Central share	State share	Released		Total	Expenditure
				Central Share	State Share		
2000-01	52.05	52.05	--	52.05	--	52.05	51.80
2001-02	146.22	124.29	21.93	62.00	11.00	73.00	73.00
2002-03	566.86	425.14	141.72	425.14	75.00	500.14	309.93
2003-04	1096.60	822.45	274.15	269.73	140.24	409.97	618.04 (including spill over)
2004-05	1600.68	1200.41	400.27	600.25	200.00	800.25	755.00

5.5.3 The State of Sikkim, Committee notes, has since shown good performance and is trying to utilize the amount every year to a greater extent. It is however, not able to meet more than half of its share, which during 2004-05 was only one-third.

5.5.4 The State of Sikkim, the Committee found was facing the following problems in implementing SSA and MDM:

- (i) Delayed release of installment of Central and State shares
- (ii) There is no provision under SSA for furniture for new primary schools. This adversely affects retention and enrolment drive.
- (iii) The provision of language teachers under SSA, if made would help achieving the objectives greatly.
- (iv) The progress of civil works in the State was comparatively low as compared to other activities. This was due to the following reasons.
 - (a) Non-availability of matching State share in time
 - (b) Difficult geographical terrain and harsh climate
 - (c) Lack of technical support to the School Management Committee (SMC)

5.5.5 The following Suggestions were submitted to the Committee for its consideration:-

- (i) The honorarium of Education Volunteers should be raised.
- (ii) Teachers' Learning Material (TLM) grant of Rs. 100/- is not sufficient enough to meet the expenses of textbooks and other expenditure. Hence, the amount should be raised.

5.5.6 The Committee would expect a precise response from the Union Government on the suggestion/demands put forward by the Sikkim government. The unit cost of civil works needs to be duly revised considering the difficult terrain/geographical conditions of this hilly State.

5.6 Implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in Manipur

5.6.1 In Manipur, SSA programme was implemented in 9 districts since 2003-04. Central Government had released Rs. 17.25 crores and Government of Manipur had released Rs. 3.68 lakh during the year 2003-04 and 2004-05 but there was no progress in implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in the State during that year 2003-04. The State could utilize only Rs. 1354.93 lakh (which is 65%), leaving an unspent balance of Rs. 738.07 lakhs as on April 01, 2005.

5.6.2 The Project Approval Board (PAB) had, in its 72nd meeting held on 17 May 2005, approved a total budget of Rs. 5015.98 lakhs for the year 2005-06, out of which, Rs. 4058 lakhs was for fresh activities and Rs. 957.55 lakhs was for spill-over activities. The Central Government had sanctioned an amount of Rs. 13.27 crore upto October 2005 to the State Society for the year, 2005-06.

5.6.3 In Manipur there are 111047 children who are out of school in the age group of 6-14 years.

5.6.4 The Committee found that implementation of the SSA in Manipur required a lot to be done. There are several constraints that needed to be over-come. What is required is closer cooperation and coordination between the Union and State Government for implementing the SSA.

5.7 Implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in Assam

5.7.1 SSA is being implemented in all the 23 districts of Assam since 2001-2002. The year-wise position of approved Annual Work Plan & Budget, State and Central Governments shares and the fund

received is reflected in the table below:

Financial Year	Approved Annual Work Plan & Budget	Govt. of India's share	Govt. of Assam's share	Fund released by Govt. of India	State share proportionate to Govt. of India releases	Fund released by State Govt.	(Rs. in lakhs)
							Total Fund Received
2001-02	7,651.86	6,504.08	1,147.78	3,252.04	573.89	754.00	4,006.04
2002-03	18,685.75	14,014.31	4,671.44	10,054.06	3,351.35	750.00	10,804.06
2003-04	41,136.93	30,852.70	10,284.23	10,798.94	3,599.65	2,238.17	13,037.11
2004-05	31,746.45	23,809.83	7,936.61	20,654.00	6,884.67	6,000.00	26,654.00
2005-06	28,000.00	21,000.00	7,000.00	9,969.00	3,323.00	7,000.00	16,969.00
Total	127,220.99	96,180.92	31,040.06	54,728.04	17,732.56	16,742.17	71,470.21

5.7.2 The Committee noted from the figures shown above, that except in the year 2001-02, SSA, Assam could never receive its due share either from the State Government or from the Government of India. Although an amount of Rs. 1272.20 crore was provided for in the 'Annual Work Plan & Budgets' from the year 2001-02 to 2005-06, the actual receipt of fund from both, Government of Assam and Government of India, has been only Rs. 714.70 crores. It implies that not more than 56% of the planned activities could be implemented ever since the inception of SSA in Assam. Not only that, entire fund provided in the budget was not received and whatever was released was also not received in time and in the beginning of the plan year.

Financial Year	Approved Annual Work Plan & Budget	Fund Received From GOI & State	Closing Balance of the preceding year	Total Fund Available during the year	Fund Utilised	% of Exp.	(Rs. in lakhs)
							Remarks
2001-02	7,651.86	4,006.04	0.00	4,006.04	2,401.38	82%	Audited
2002-03	18,685.75	10,804.06	754.00	11,558.06	2,134.93		
2003-04	41,136.93	13,037.11	5,654.02	18,691.13	23,484.74		
2004-05	31,746.45	26,654.00	249.62	26,903.62	22,400.00	83%	Un-audited
2005-06	28,000.00	16,969.00	708.34	17,677.34	8,109.41	46%	Up to Sept'05
Total	127,220.99	71,470.21	7,365.98	78,836.19	58,530.46	74%	

5.7.3 The Committee notes that these figure do not highlight the fact that the reason for non-utilisation of the total available fund has been the late receipt of the same. For example, an amount of Rs. 40.00 crore was sanctioned in the year 2004-05, but was received during the next financial year. If this amount is deducted from the fund available during 2004-05, the figure of utilization is found to be 97.80% of the fund actually available.

5.7.4 During the year 2005-06, a sum of Rs. 99.69 crore had been sanctioned for release up to October 2005 as central share against the central share of Rs. 207.02 crore (75%). The State Government had sanctioned Rs.70.00 crores as the State share for that year. There was thus a backlog of Rs. 46.66 crore and the contribution of the State in the year will meet this backlog and thus make only Rs. 23.34 crore available as State contribution for year 2005-06 against a requirement of Rs. 70.00 crore.

5.7.5 The Committee was informed about the following constraints in implementation of SSA in Assam.

1. Due to non-receipt of the entire fund in the beginning of the plan year, there always prevailed an

atmosphere of uncertainty whether any fund will be received at all. This spectre of uncertainty compelled the Mission to prioritise the activities which could be implemented with the available fund and revise the time-frame for the implementation of such activities.

2. The approval of the Annual Work Plan & Budget for the year 2005-06 was received in the month of August, 2005 only. Actual release of fund also took some more time. Delay of this nature creates problems in the implementation of activities, because the remaining period of the financial year is highly inadequate for proper implementation.
3. Uneven distribution of teachers and presence of Single Teacher and High Pupil Teachers Ratio (PTR) Schools have come in the way of ensuring quality education. Only 67% (38416) of the schools have the PTR within the accepted norm of 40:1. Remaining 33% schools are High PTR schools, and there are 13% (5017) single teacher schools in the State.
4. With the increasing enrolment, the problem of inadequate space in schools has gone from bad to worse. An analysis of the school wise enrolment and existing space reveals that 53% of the Lower Primary schools and 39% of the Upper Primary schools in the State have less than required space for the children enrolled.
5. Education Guarantee School (EGS) Centres have been operationalised in school less habitations, but these centers are required to be converted into full-fledged formal schools with adequate facilities to ensure that the children of these habitations get a reasonably good education. In a State like Assam with 6 to 7 months of rain, it becomes very difficult to ensure regular and good attendance of the children in EGS centers. These centers do not have satisfactory accommodation as they are not provided any assistance like building grants, repair grants etc. under SSA.

5.7.6 The Committee would like the Department to submit factual position as well as its response to the problem encountered and issues raised by the State of Assam as given in the paragraph above.

5.8 Implementation of SSA in Meghalaya

5.8.1 The Committee found that SSA was being implemented unevenly in the Districts of Meghalaya. The expenditure incurred for implementing SSA in Meghalaya in the previous years is given below:

(Rs. in lakh)

S. No.	Year	Grants Released	Expenditure (includes unspent balance & State Share)
1.	2001-2002	857.59	0
2.	2002-2003	711.37	634.96
3.	2003-2004	825.77	2285.37
4.	2004-2005	2930.81	2150.33

5.8.2 The Committee was informed that no amount was released by the Central Government for 2005-06, as there was a large amount of unspent balance available with State Government and the revised Utilisation Certificate for 2003-04 had not been received. The Committee noted the twin problems of unspent balance and non-submission of the UCs in time in the State. These are badly hampering implementation of the scheme. The Committee recommends that this vicious circle must be broken by taking appropriate steps urgently.

5.8.3 The Committee is happy to note that despite these problems, the targets regarding the appointment of teachers, opening of new schools, opening of EGS Centres and upgradation of primary to upper primary schools have been achieved by the State.

The cumulative progress of civil works till 2004-2005 is as follows:-

Sl. No.	Name of Works	Total Approved	Completed
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1.	New School Buildings	270	0
2.	Addl. Classrooms	14	0
3.	Toilets	630	0
4.	Drinking Water Facility	1100	0
5.	BRC Building	31	10 (in progress)
6.	CRC Building	32	14 (in progress)

5.8.4 The Committee notes with concern that the pace of civil works was very slow in the State as is evident from the large unspent amount of Rs.1525.81 lakhs from 2004-05. There is a backlog of State share of SSA to the tune of Rs.2.48 crores. In view of huge spillover of civil works, no fresh proposals were approved for 2005-06. The Committee notes with concern the slow/delayed pace of construction activities in the State. It feels that the State has to take up intensive capacity building exercise for all involved in implementing the programme.

5.8.5 Out of school children in 2005-2006 was estimated to be 149992, which is more than 20.2% of the total child population; 38.48% of the children drop out at the Primary stage; and 15.47% of the children dropout at upper primary level. In all 56% of the primary teachers and 70% of the upper primary teachers are untrained. These figures indicate a very dismal scenario in the State. The Committee reaches to the conclusion that implementation/performance of SSA in the State needs to be speeded up with lot of support and strict monitoring by the Centre.

5.9 Implementation of SSA in Mizoram

5.9.1 The State of Mizoram has eight districts with a total population of 9.54 lakh and a literacy rate of 86.99%. The number of children in the age group 6-14 years is 2.14 lakh, out of which only 4512 children (2.10%) are out of school.

5.9.2 The Funds sanctioned and released to Mizoram under SSA is as follows:

(Rs. in lakhs)

Year	Total Outlay	GOI share released
2001-02	1017.79	432.56
2002-03	1602.24	903.29*
2003-04	3152.79	1182.37
2004-05	4670.57	3300.24

5.9.3 The Committee was informed by the Union Ministry that the State had been defaulting in providing its matching share for SSA in time.

5.9.4 Drop-out rate is very high in the State. According to the selected Educational Statistics during 2002-03, the State had a dropout rate of 56.38 % at the primary stage (Boys 56.25%, Girls 56.52%) and 58.31% at the upper primary stage (Boys 60.35% and Girls 56.39 %). The number of children reported to be out-of-school was 8985 at the beginning of 2004; it has come down to 4512 children now. Three districts namely Serchhip, Mamit & Aizwal districts have already achieved universal enrolment by March, 2005.

5.9.5 The Committee notes with concern the state of school education in the State particularly the impact of SSA; it is not discernible as yet. While enrolment ratio was considerably high, drop-out rate both at primary and upper-primary levels needs to be tackled urgently. The Union Ministry, the Committee feels, must initiate urgent steps to see that the performance of the State under SSA improves still faster by providing any possible help/assistance to the State for this.

5.10 Implementation of SSA in Tripura

5.10.1 The State of Tripura has four districts with a total population of 31.91 lakh, with literacy rate of 74%. Of the total 6.36 lakh children in the age group 6-14 year, 10,070 children (1.5%) were out-of-school upto 2005.

5.10.2 Drop-out rate is high in the State (39% at primary level). The State has drawn an Action Plan for bringing the drop out rate to zero level at primary stage by 2007 and upper primary stage by 2009. The Committee appreciates the high enrolment of children in the State. It, however feels, that drop out rate needs to be brought down significantly and efforts must be made for retaining them in the school. The goal set-by the State to bring down drop-out rate at zero level must be fulfilled with cautious optimism. All out efforts need to be made by both the Governments in this regard.

5.10.3 The funds sanctioned and released to Tripura under SSA including National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) is as follows:

Year	Total Outlay	(Rs. in lakhs)	
		GOI share released	
2001-02	1047.95	491.57	
2002-03	1654.98	1162.18	
2003-04	5116.95	2752.39	
2004-05	6262.14	4703.96	
2005-06	9525.43	3535.09	

5.10.4 The Committee found that 70% of the teachers in the State were untrained. The Committee feels that it was undoubtedly very high. It was, the Committee found, mainly due to limited intake-capacity of training institutes. The Committee was informed that the State has since drawn up an Action Plan to impart training to these untrained teachers. The Department must ensure in its own way that the said action plan of the State was implemented.

VI GENERAL

6.1 Committee's attention was drawn towards a Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year ending March 2005, which had conducted performance audit of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in 28 States. This performance audit covering the period 2001-02 to 2004-05 was conducted through sample checks of the records in the Department and the implementing agencies in the States. The Committee would like to highlight the following audit findings pertaining to NE States.

6.2 Funding Pattern

6.2.1 The State-wise position of funds released (Government of India and State Share) and the expenditure during the period 2001-02 to 2004-05 was at variance with the position of release/expenditure forwarded by States as indicated below:

State	Information given by Central Govt.			Information given by State Govts.		
	GOI release	State release	Expenditure	GOI release	State release	Expenditure

Arunachal Pradesh	5377.49	1097.41	3000.66	5412	1097	3632
Assam	46493.52	9742.17	49450.44	44759	9742	50421
Manipur	1834.93	368.00	1354.93	1725	368	1368
Meghalaya	5325.54	1490.47	3412.54	5258	1380	3169
Mizoram	5818.46	1117.41	6006.37	5819	1117	6537
Nagaland	3138.33	1079.00	3952.75	3142	1079	3990
Sikkim	1795.17	426.24	1105.53	1357	426	1756

6.2.2 This indicates that the Ministry and the States did not maintain the data properly and in uniform manner.

6.3 Diversion of Funds

(Rs. in crore)

State	Period	Amount	Reason for diversion of funds	Ministry's comments
Assam	2002-05	6.81	To meet the expenditure on other activities/ schemes (UNICEF : Rs. 50.47 lakh, XI Finance Commission Award : 75.50 lakh, PMGY : 5.55 crore) not approved by PAB.	The Ministry stated that the expenditure incurred by diversion of SSA funds on UNICEF activities was taken up with UNICEF for reimbursement. For Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY) and SSA a single bank account was maintained. SSA funds were temporarily utilised for PMGY which were recouped on 15 September, 2003.
Meghalaya	2004-05	4.31	To meet the expenditure on salary to teachers not engaged under SSA.	The Ministry stated that the salaries of the teachers appointed to fill up vacancies were paid from SSA funds under BRC head. The reply is not tenable as the teachers appointed were adhoc/ officiating and in the unapproved schools.
Mizoram	2001-05	3.99	Lying unspent as of March, 2005, out of Rs. 69.36 crore released during 2001-05.	

6.4 Out of School Children

On 31st March 2005, after four years of implementation of the scheme and after having incurred an expenditure of Rs. 11133.57 crore by the Ministry/ State Govts., 1.36 crore (40%) children still remained out of school. Thus, neither was the original goal of all children in school by 2003 nor the revised target of bringing all children in school by 2005 was achieved. The position of out-of-school children in the NE States revealed during the course of audit is as indicated below:

State	Coverage of target group	Ministry's comments
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Assam	Out of 1.43 lakh, 0.71 lakh covered (50 per cent)	Majority of the children comprised domestic child labour, street children, nomadic tribals and indigent families.
Arunachal Pradesh	Out of 2.87 lakh, 0.57 lakh (20 per cent) children were out of school	Some children were already covered. Balance were to be covered in 2006-07. Some children could not be covered being less than 10 children in a habitation.

6.5 Deficiencies noticed in the preparatory activities

State	Remarks
Assam	Out of Rs. 1.24 crore sanctioned by the Ministry during 2001-02 and 2002-03 for pre-project preparatory activities, only Rs. 25.70 lakh was spent on the purchase of office equipment and technical survey instead of household survey. The Ministry agreed (May 2006) and stated that the amount was spent for creation of infrastructure/ technical facilities, as at the initial stage, these were inadequate.
Manipur	No perspective plan was prepared either for the district or for the State. Annual Plan for 2002-03 was prepared without conducting household survey.

6.6 Opening of Schools/ alternative schooling facility

As per the norms, new primary schools were to be opened only in those areas which did not have any school within one km of a habitation. EGS centres at primary level were to be opened in unserved habitations where no school existed within a radius of one km and there were at least 15 children in the age group of 6-14 years, who were not going to school. Status of habitations without schools in NE States as revealed by the audit scrutiny is indicated below:

State	Total no. of habitations	Habitations without schools	Percentage of habitations without schools
Arunachal Pradesh	4261	1484	34.83
Assam	7124	2354	33.04
Manipur	4834	1812	37.48
Mizoram	910	62	6.81
Nagaland	1429	192	13.44
Tripura	7556	1114	14.74

6.7 Opening of upper primary schools

As per the norms, new upper primary schools were to be opened based on the number of children completing primary education, upto a ceiling of one upper primary school/ section for every two primary schools. Test check of records revealed shortage of upper primary schools in the NE States as indicated below:

State	Number of Schools required	Number of Schools in position	Shortage
Assam	15034	10791	4243

Manipur	1888	1403	485
Sikkim	250	151	99

6.8 Norms for Classrooms

As per the norms, every primary school should have two classrooms with verandah. In addition, a room for the Headmaster in upper primary school was also required. Test check in audit revealed that in Assam (in six selected districts), 19 primary schools did not have the minimum of two rooms required with verandah and 29 schools did not have a separate room for Headmaster. In Sikkim, no room for the headmaster was provided even after incurring an expenditure of Rs. 1.27 crore during 2002-05 on upgradation of 37 primary to upper primary schools.

6.9 Supply of free textbooks to focus group children

6.9.1 The scheme envisaged that free text books within an upper ceiling of Rs. 150 per child would be provided to all children in the focus group namely girl child and SC/ST children. States were to continue to fund free textbooks being currently provided from the State Plans. In such cases, free textbooks under SSA should not be provided to the focus group children.

6.9.2 In Nagaland, students of 29 schools were given cash at the rate of Rs. 150 per student in lieu of free text books. The Ministry stated (May 2006) that cash payment in lieu of textbooks was made in the form of reimbursement where the children themselves had procured the textbooks. The Ministry's reply would appear to support contravention of the norms of the scheme, which was not a good practice.

6.9.3 The survey further revealed that a high proportion of students in urban areas of Arunachal Pradesh (61.44 per cent), Meghalaya (45.18 per cent), Nagaland (34.68 per cent) and Sikkim (34.62 per cent) reported having received only a part of the books meant for them.

6.9.4 The survey conducted by SRI at the instance of audit revealed that in the rural areas of Manipur, an overwhelming majority (79.09 per cent) of the school-going children reported having not received the free text books in time. The other States where the school-going children in the rural areas did not receive the text books in time were Arunachal Pradesh (12.11 per cent), Mizoram (26.29 per cent).

6.9.5 In the urban areas, the states where a sizeable proportion of the school going children did not receive the text books in time were Arunachal Pradesh (59.31 per cent), Manipur (65.6 per cent), Meghalaya (30.56 per cent), Mizoram (35.04 per cent), Nagaland (24.10 per cent) and Sikkim (26.92).

6.10 Infrastructure facilities

It was noticed that almost all the NE States were plagued by severe lack of infrastructure and the schools were running without proper buildings, toilets, and drinking water facilities as indicated below :

State	Works	Buildings	Drinking Water	Toilets	Others	Ministry's comments
Arunachal Pradesh		158 schools were running without own buildings and 609 schools	660 schools had no drinking water facilities	1419 schools had no toilets and 1679		The DPOs have been instructed to take active steps to improve

		were in dilapidated condition		schools had no separate toilet for girls		infrastructural facilities with the involvement of Village Education Committees. Drinking water and toilets will be provided through convergence.
Assam	Against the target of 6436 works, only 1196 works could be completed during 2002-05	In Karbi Anglong district, out of Rs. 1.32 crore meant for construction/repair of buildings, Rs. 41.82 lakh was utilised for salary etc.				The works have been geared up during 2005-06 and considerable portion of works have already been completed. Against the total target of 14108 works for 2001-02 to 2004-05, the achievement upto 2004-05 is 7439 works (53%). Due to shortage of funds, Rs. 41.82 lakh provided for civil works was utilised temporarily by District Mission Coordinator, Karbi Anglong and the same has been recouped.
Manipur		623 schools had no buildings	Out of 42 selected schools, 19 schools had no drinking water facility	No separate toilets for girls in 33 schools	38 schools had no electricity	
Mizoram			1208	974		Mizoram being

			schools had no drinking water facility	schools had no toilets. 1936 schools had no separate toilet for girls		a hilly area, providing piped water is not feasible. However, rain water harvesting is practiced in all schools. Toilets will be provided in all schools through convergence with other Departments.
Nagaland		86 per cent schools were in dilapidated condition	76 per cent schools had no drinking water facility	97 per cent schools had no separate toilets for girls	94 per cent schools had no electricity	Considering the ceiling of 33% of the outlay on civil works, it is not possible to complete all the infrastructure gap early. The civil works will be taken up in a phased manner. The drinking water and toilets will be completed through convergence. The Ministry's reply is not tenable as removing the ceiling of 33 per cent of the outlay on civil works would affect other components of the scheme.
Tripura	Against the target of construction of 725 additional classrooms during		191 schools had no drinking water facilities	296 schools had no toilet facilities		

	2003-05, only 400 were completed as of 31 March 2005					
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6.11 Training for upgrading teachers' skills

To upgrade the skills of teachers, the SSA provides for in-service course for 20 days for all teachers each year, refresher course for untrained teachers already employed as teachers for 60 days and orientation for 30 days for freshly trained recruits. Shortfall in teachers' training in NE States as on 31st March, 2005 is indicated below:

State	Total No. of teachers	No. of teachers not provided training	Percentage of teachers not provided training
Arunachal Pradesh	6967	4076	58.50
Assam	57308	32205	56.20
Manipur	8053	4667	57.95
Mizoram	9302	5275	56.71
Sikkim	5185	4430	85.44
Tripura	24956	15032	60.20

6.12 Research, evaluation, supervision and monitoring

6.12.1 An assistance of Rs. 1500 per school per year could be provided for research, evaluation, supervision and monitoring under SSA. Out of Rs. 1500, Rs. 100 at the national level and Rs. 1400 at the state level per school per year was to be utilised.

6.12.2 In Manipur, Rs.20.28 lakh had been shown as spent by the State Mission Authority on research and evaluation during 2004-05, although no such expenditure had been incurred by the district offices. In Meghalaya, Rs. 1.19 crore was released to 7 districts during 2002-03 to 2004-05, but there was no record of the implementation of the said intervention. The Ministry stated (May 2006) that a coordinator had since been appointed to accelerate research and evaluation activity in the State.

6.12.3 In Tripura, the amount of Rs. five lakh meant for research and evaluation was spent on purchase of computers for day-to-day official use of SCERT. The Ministry stated (May 2006) that since Director, SCERT was the nodal officer for teacher-training under SSA, the fund was utilised for strengthening SCERT by way of installation of computer hardware and software for maintaining all records of teacher-training. The reply is not tenable as the funds given for a specific purpose were diverted for an unapproved purpose. Consequently, no research and evaluation work was conducted.

6.13 Management cost

6.13.1 As per the norms of SSA, the total management cost should be less than 6 per cent of the total cost, separately for each district and also in totality for the entire State. No new permanent post was to be created. The vacancies should be filled up only through contract or through deputation. No permanent liability should accrue on the Society or the State Government due to filling up of these posts. Deputation allowance was also not allowed for posts filled on deputation basis.

6.13.2 Audit scrutiny of the records in the States revealed that the management cost exceeded the six per cent norm in Assam (7.36 per cent) and Sikkim (18.24 per cent) during 2003-04 to 2005-06.

6.14 Provision for disabled children

6.14.1 Identification of children with a special needs was an integral part of the micro-planning and household survey under SSA. Every child with special needs irrespective of the kind, category and degree of disability, was to be provided education in an appropriate environment. SSA was also required to adopt 'zero rejection' policy so that no child was left out of the education system and all such children were integrated into the existing main stream of education. SSA authorities were required to spend Rs. 1200 per annum per child for providing special services to children with special needs in schools, EGS schools and AIE centres. Status of disabled children covered under SSA in NE States is as follows:

State	Identified	Enrolled
Arunachal Pradesh	6257	186
Assam	72279	33539
Manipur	2899	1552
Tripura	11777	5068

6.14.2 The implementation of SSA clearly establishes that there are substantial gaps between the planned and actual achievement in key areas in NE States. The Committee observes that findings of this detailed analysis touching upon all envisaged components of the scheme need to be given due importance and necessary follow-up action initiated at the earliest. The Committee is of the firm opinion that the Department should initiate action for bringing out changes under the scheme wherever necessary keeping in view the State specific needs of the remote and inaccessible NE areas of the country. The Committee would appreciate if the Department takes the benefit of valuable suggestions/recommendations made in the Performance Audit Report for expanding the reach of SSA for making it more effective and fruitful. The Committee would like to be apprised about the follow-up action taken on the CAG Report recommendations/observations in respect of NE States.

VII OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

7.1 The Committee notes that the problems of North Eastern States are peculiar which are different from those in rest of the country. Apart from low level of economic development, these States including J&K are faced with large scale law and order problems including militancy. Most of the States are not in a position to release their share due to their limited revenue base. The pace of construction of school buildings and additional class-rooms, toilets etc. is quite slow. The per unit construction cost is very high due to the difficult terrains, harsh climate and inaccessibility of human habitations. Transportation of goods & materials to schools makes every thing highly expensive. In fact even within the sanctioned project area, the programme does not reach every settlement. Many of these States are using funds under PMGY (Pradhan Mantri Gramodyog Yojana) to substitute rather than supplement the funds allocated.

7.2 Most of the States have, therefore, demanded that the funding pattern for NE States may be revised to 90:10 between the Centre and the States. The Committee feels that their demand needs serious consideration, particularly in view of the small internal revenue base of the North Eastern States & J&K. The Committee also recommends that the per unit cost of civil works may be revised keeping in view the difficult terrain/geographical conditions of these States. The Committee wishes to point out that the problem of increasing amount of State-share every year is due to increase in annual allocation for SSA every year. Some NE States therefore, demanded that it should be made hundred per cent centrally

funded scheme. In view of this the Committee also feels that feasibility of this proposal deserves serious consideration.

7.3 The Committee was informed that the progress of civil works under SSA was very slow in the entire NE region. The Government of India had sanctioned 7656 primary schools all over the North Eastern States out of which, the construction of only 45 percent schools has been completed. Out of the 2202 upper primary schools only 28 per cent have been completed. In all 8604 additional classrooms have been sanctioned, out of which 48 percent have been completed. As far the drinking water, achievement level is only 31 per cent. In case of toilets, out of sanctioned 10789, achievement figure is 28 per cent. The Committee is concerned at the very slow pace of construction activities under SSA. This pace would lead us nowhere and NE States shall be left far behind the other regions. The Committee therefore, emphasizes that the progress of civil works needs to be at least doubled during 2006-07.

7.4 The Committee notes with concern that, of the total out-of-school children in the country, 10 per cent are from the NE States. Another aspect of concern in the North Eastern States is the high drop-out rate; it is as high as 71 per cent in some States. The Gross Enrolment Ratio, however, is fairly good in this region. Similarly the pupil teacher ratio in the North East is also better than the national average. Against a national desirable ratio of 1:40, Arunachal Pradesh has a ratio of 1:27, Assam has 1:22; Mizoram 1:19; Nagaland 1:12; Sikkim 1:12 and Tripura has 1:23. Yet another area of concern is the appointment of teachers. The North Eastern States have so far appointed only 5204 teachers, which is roughly about 34 per cent of the total sanctioned; 66% are yet to be appointed. Besides, the North Eastern States have a very large number of untrained teachers. The Committee was further informed that the assistance of IGNOU is being taken for training the teachers through distance education mode.

7.5 The Committee found that the teaching materials and text books used in schools was of poor in quality. The Committee emphasises the need for thorough revamp of the curriculum for making it local specific as also for providing quality text books and other teaching learning material to the students which they are able to read with interest and grasp easily.

7.6 The Committee was informed that the honorarium for the Education Volunteers is very less. The Committee recommends that keeping the conditions peculiar to the North Eastern States in view, the amount of this honorarium must be increased suitably.

7.7 Most of NE States had complained that there is a delay in conveying the approval of the annual work plan and budget of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan by the Central Government. Many a time, the approval is received in the month of August or thereafter. This is creating operational problems and resulting in underutilisation of the money. The Committee recommends that the Central Government should take effective steps to convey the approval of the PAB in the beginning of the financial year itself so that States get some time to arrange their share. This will also minimize the uncertainty about the quantum of the work to be implemented.

7.8 The Committee notes that the North Eastern States have harsher climate with prolonged rain and extreme cold round the year. This creates operational problems of different kinds that need to be kept in mind while preparing guideline/norms for the SSA and the MDM schemes. The schools in these areas, therefore, need to be provided with proper/suitable infrastructure, manpower, buildings, etc. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Government must look into the feasibility of providing suitable infrastructure to schools and EGS centres at the beginning itself. The EGS centres, the Committee feels, need to be converted into proper schools after two years of their functioning.

7.9 The Committee notes that there are a large number of vacancies of teachers in the North Eastern

States. The Committee is afraid that this may adversely affect the efficacy and quality of education under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. It would result in wastage of our scarce resources. The Committee recommends that all-out effort be made to give top priority to the appointment of teachers. Another equally important aspect is the teacher training which leaves much to be desired. The Central Government, the Committee feels, should intervene effectively and proactively to train the teachers in this region by supporting the training agencies as most of the States are lacking proper training institutes and sufficient number of trainers.

7.10 The Committee notes that the percentage of out-of-school children is quite high in all the North Eastern States. This issue needs to be addressed on priority basis. The State Governments should make special efforts/ drive for bringing all the children beyond six were to the schools/EGS under Sarva Shikha Abhiyan as per the time frame fixed under it.

7.11 Some of the States have submitted before the Committee that there is no provision for teacher of vernacular languages. They have opined that teaching in vernacular languages is helping enrolment as well as retention of children in the schools. The Committee, therefore, recommends that Government of India may suitably amend the SSA guidelines to enable the North Eastern States to appoint teachers in vernacular languages also.

7.12 The Committee notes that most of the NE States are not able to submit their utilization certificates on time. As a result, many of the them are left with unspent balances. The Committee found this to be a general problem that does not augur well for the success of any scheme and SSA the least. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Department and the States must ensure that the available scarce resources were utilized in time and the States submitted the utilization certificates in time. Otherwise, it would lead to a vicious circle and ultimately the intended purpose of SSA will be defeated. Success of such a noble and large scheme like SSA and MDM can succeed only if the Centre and State Government worked in unison with complete coordination.

VIII MID DAY MEAL SCHEME IN NORTH-EASTERN STATES

8.1 Implementation of MDM in Arunachal Pradesh:

8.1.1 The Education Department is the nodal agency for implementing the Mid-Day-Meal Programme in the State. The Programme was universalized in the State in 2003. During 2005-06, about 2.18 lakh children were being covered. Main food item being served is *khichdi*. Average cooking cost of the meal varies between Rs. 2 to 3 per child per school day depending upon the place. In all, 4,541 MTs of rice had been allocated by the Central Government, of which, upto September, 2005, 22% was lifted by the State Government.

8.1.2 The Committee visited several schools in rural as well as city areas. It found that concerned schools make arrangement for cooking & serving mid-day meal by engaging cooks/helpers from the allocated funds. The programme is being supervised by the Administrative Officer at the Block level, Deputy Director of School Education at District level & Director of School Education at the State level.

8.1.3 The representatives of the state Government submitted before the Committee that the hill transport subsidy which has been discontinued for transportation of food grains under MDM from 01/08/2005, may be restored. Full financial support may be provided by the GOI from the beginning of the financial year for cooked mid-day-meal from the starting of the academic session from June onwards.

8.2 Implementation of MDM in Assam:

8.2.1 The Elementary Education Department of Govt. of Assam is the nodal Department for implementing Mid-Day meal scheme. The programme stands universalized from April, 2005. During 2005-06, 47.96 lakh children were being covered. Rice, Dal & Vegetables are the main items in the menu. Average cost of meal is Rs. 1.30 per child per school day.

8.2.2 The Central Government had allocated 92,126 MTs of rice during 2005-06, of which 33% was lifted upto September, 2005. First installment of Rs. 54.62 Crore has been released to the State Government as Central assistance to meet cooking cost.

8.2.3 At the local level, School Management Committees are responsible to make arrangement for cooking & serving of food. The programme is being supervised by Block Education Officer at Block level, District Elementary Education Officer at District level, and Department of Elementary Education at State level.

8.2.4 The Committee noticed the following problems in the implementation of MDM in Assam: -

a) Due to peculiar geographical location and difficult terrain in most part of the State, and the communication bottlenecks, the prices of materials in the area are higher than in many other States of the country. An enhancement of the provision of financial assistance per child per school day is necessary.

b) The guidelines prescribes engagement of school mothers, self help groups or NGO/SMC/VEC etc. for MDM Scheme. But the services of these groups have not been sufficiently available. As such teachers' involvement in the implementation of the scheme has been unavoidable in many schools and this has vitiated the academic environment of the schools to some extent.

c) Water for drinking and washing is essential in the implementation of the scheme. About 4000 schools are still deficient in drinking water facilities.

d) All Lower Primary Schools are having *Ka Sreni* (a pre-Primary class) attached to them. Similarly students of class V to VII in Middle Vernacular (MV) schools study along with children studying *Ka Sreni* to Classes IV. The scheme provides Mid Day Meal in exclusion of the students in *Ka-Sreni* and classes V to VII.

8.3 Implementation of MDM in Manipur:

8.3.1 The School Education Department of Govt. of Manipur is the nodal agency for implementing Mid-Day meal scheme. The programme was universalized in the year 2004-05. During 2005-06, about 2.95 lakh children are being covered. Food items such as rice, dal & vegetables form the part of mid-day meal. Average cooking cost of meal is Rs. 3.25 per child per school day.

8.3.2 The Central Govt. has allocated 6,539 MTs of rice during 2005-06, of which 59% was lifted upto September 05. First installment of Central assistance to meet cooking cost is yet to be released by the Central Govt. as demand from the State Govt. has not been received yet.

8.3.3 At the local level, School Management & Development Committee is the implementing agency. The supervisory agencies at the Block level is Block Education Officer/District Inspector of Schools, Deputy Commissioner/ Zonal Education Officer at the District level and Secretary (School Education) at the State Level.

8.4 Implementation of MDM in Meghalaya:

8.4.1 In Meghalaya, the programme is being implemented by the Education Department of the State Govt. The programme was universalized in the year 2004-05. During 2005-06, about 5.97 lakh children are being covered. Average cooking cost of meal is Rs. 1.13 per child per school day. The Central Govt.

has allocated 10,039 MTs of rice during 2005-06, of which 60% was lifted upto Sept, 05.

8.4.2 School Management Committee is responsible for arranging cooking/ serving of mid-day meal. At the local level, School Management Committees and Village Education Committees supervise the programme. Similarly, the Block Resources Centres, District Inspector of Schools and the School Education Department supervise the programme at Block, District & State levels. The main problems being faced in implementing the programme are transportation and non receipt of rice in time.

8.5 Implementation of MDM in Mizoram:

8.5.1 School Education Department of the State is implementing the Mid-Day Meal programme. The programme was universalized in 2004-05. During 2005-06, about 1.04 lakh children are being covered. Cooked food such as rice & vegetables is served to children. Average cooking cost of meal has been fixed at Rs.1.70 per child per school day.

8.5.2 1,838 MTs of rice has been allocated by the Central Government of which, upto Sept, 05, 40% of allocated foodgrains was lifted by the State Government. Rs. 1.04 Crore has been released as first installment of Central assistance to meet cooking cost.

8.5.3 The Parent Teacher Association/Village Education Committee have been entrusted the task of cooking & serving mid-day meal to children. The programme is being supervised by Circle Education Committee, District Education Committee & State level Coordination Committee at Block, District & State level respectively.

8.5.4 The transportation charges and bad quality of rice, the Committee noted, were the two major problems affecting the MDM Scheme in Mizoram. At present, transportation subsidy is given by Government of India @ Rs. 100/- per quintal. In a State like Mizoram where road transport is not good, the local rate for transportation of goods is very high. The current rate fixed by Government of India could not meet the actual requirement. For this reason, the State Transport Nodal Agency could place raw rice at the Supply Centres only and not at the nearest Fair Price Shop/Schools. As per guidelines issued by Government of India, quality of rice to be supplied under Mid-Day Meal is to be the best quality available. However, rice received from F.C.I. is most often of very bad quality and is not suitable for human consumption.

8.6 Implementation of MDM in Nagaland:

School Education Department is the Nodal Department implementing the Mid-Day Meal programme. The programme was universalized in 2004-05. During 2005-06, about 1.73 lakh children are being covered under the programme. The State Government has fixed cooking cost @ Rs. 1 per child per school day. In all 3,762 MTs of rice has been allocated by the Central Government, of which, upto September, 2005, 50% of allocated foodgrains was lifted by the State Government. Rs. 2.12 crore has been released as first installment of Central assistance to meet cooking cost. Village Education Committee has been entrusted the task of cooking & serving mid-day meal to children. The programme is being supervised by SDO, District Collector & Secretary (School Education) at Block, District & State level respectively.

8.7 Implementation of MDM in Sikkim

8.7.1 In Sikkim, Human Resource Development Department is the nodal Department implementing the Mid-Day meal programme. The programme was universalized in 2003. About 98,000 children are being covered. Main food item being served is *khichdi*. The State Government has fixed cooking cost @ Rs. 1.25 per child per school day. The Central Government had allocated 2,126 MTs of rice for the State, of which upto September, 2005, 50% was lifted by the State Government. Rs. 1.24 Crore has been released as first installment of Central assistance to meet cooking cost.

8.7.2 School Managing Committee is the agency incharge of cooking & serving mid-day meal at school level. The programme is being supervised by Assistant Director/Block Education Officer, District Collector, Director of HRD Department Block, District & State, respectively.

8.8 Implementation of MDM in Tripura

8.8.1 School Education Department is the nodal Department implementing the Mid-Day meal programme. The programme was universalized in 2003. During 2005-06, about 5.25 lakh children are being covered. Main food item being served is *khichdi*. The State Government has fixed cooking cost @ Rs. 1.50 per child per school day. 9,882 MTs of rice has been allocated by the Central Government, of which, upto September, 2005 only 56% foodgrains was lifted by the State Government. Rs. 6.87 crore has been released as first installment of Central assistance to meet cooking cost.

8.8.2 Village Education Committee has been entrusted the task of cooking & serving mid-day meal to children. The programme is being supervised by Deputy Inspector of School, District Inspector of School & Director of School Education at Block, District & State level respectively.

8.8.3 The Committee was informed that Mid-Day-Meal has not only improved enrolment but also reduced the drop-out rate; it has an overall positive impact on school education in the State. General nutrition in children has also improved due to this scheme.

8.8.4 The major feature of Mid-day Meal scheme in Tripura has been the involvement of the local Panchayat and the Mother-Teacher Associations (MTA). Utilisation of fund as also the availability of good quality rice being monitored on regular basis. Keeping in view the actual cost, the conversion cost has been revised by the State Government from Rs. 1.00 to Rs. 1.50 per student per day. However, the unit cost has remained Rs. 1.00 per student per day under the Central scheme. It was submitted before the Committee that keeping in view the prevailing field conditions, the unit cost for a North-Eastern State like Tripura is required to be increased.

IX OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 All the north eastern States, the Committee found, had since fully universalized the Mid Day Meal Scheme. The major problem in these States under this scheme related to the lifting of food grains which is very low, in certain cases being less than 50 per cent. The two States, which had shown low lifting of food grains, are Arunachal Pradesh and Assam. While Arunachal Pradesh was able to lift only 22%, Assam could lift just 33% of its allocation. As far as other States are concerned, Manipur had lifted 59 per cent, Meghalaya 60%, Mizoram upto 40% of their allocated food grains upto September 2005. Nagaland and Sikkim had lifted 50% and Tripura has lifted 46% of their allocation.

9.2 The high cost of transportation was cited as one of the major reasons for low lifting of food grains. The floods are also a reason for low lifting of food grains in some of these States. Another problem brought to the notice of the Committee was the high cooking cost, which varied from State to State from Rs. 1.13 to Rs. 3.25 per child depending on the place and the menu the States prepare for the Mid Day Meal.

9.3 The Committee has noted that lifting of food grains remains the main problem in many North East States. It is mainly due to high transportation cost in the hilly terrain with no adequate road connection. Problem is confounded due to long rainy season, making it impossible to lift and transport grains etc. to the schools. In view of this, the Committee feels that the demands of the North Eastern States for upward revision of transport cost is quite genuine and recommends that the Government of

India should come forward to help the North Eastern States by enhancing the transportation subsidy for them. The Committee also recommends that foodgrains may be directly supplied to the schools in North Eastern States.

9.4 The Committee was informed that at many places school teachers are engaged in cooking Mid-Day-Meals due to non-availability of helpers. This is vitiating the academic environment in the schools. The Committee feels that engaging teachers in cooking Mid-Day-Meal should not be allowed at all and it should be stopped wherever it is being done at the earliest. The Committee recommends that services of NGOs and Self Help Groups may be taken to cook the Mid-Day-Meals under the supervision of mothers of the children or their help may be sought in cooking the meals too.

9.5 Many States have brought to the notice of the Committee, the non-receipt of foodgrains in time from the FCI godowns. In many instances the food grains (rice) supplied was of poor quality; not good for human consumption. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Central Government must take it up with the Ministry of Food to ensure that the quality of rice supplied was not sub-standard and was fit for children's consumption. It should also be ensured with the help of FCI & State Governments that rice is supplied to the schools in time. The Committee feels that it is equally important that the foodgrain reaches schools in time. The feasibility of lifting/carrying foodgrains upto schools with the help of army helicopters/carriages to inaccessible areas should be considered seriously. This may be worked out in consultation with Department of Elementary Education, Ministry of Food, State Governments and The Army.

X IMPLEMENTATION OF ICDS IN NORTH EASTERN STATES

10.1 The Committee was provided with the State-wise physical targets and achievements as well as release of funds to under ICDS for the years, 2004-05; 2005-06. Operationalisation of ICDS projects & Anganwadi Centres in the North Eastern States, are given below:-

Sl. No.	State/U.T.s	Number of Sanctioned/ Operational ICDS Projects				Number of Sanctioned anganwadi	
		2004-05 Sanctioned	Operational	2005-06 Sanctioned	Operational	2004-05 Sanctioned	Operational
1.	Arunachal Pradesh	58	58	58	58	2359	2359
2.	Assam	196	195	196	195	25416	25302
3.	Manipur	34	34	34	34	4501	4500
4.	Meghalaya	32	32	32	32	2218	2218
5.	Mizoram	21	21	21	21	1361	1361
6.	Nagaland	54	54	54	54	2770	2770
7.	Sikkim	5	5	5	5	500	500
8.	Tripura	40	39	40	39	3874	3768

10.2 Number of beneficiaries for supplementary nutrition

Sl. No.	State/UT	Total beneficiaries as on 31.7.2005	Total beneficiaries as on 31.3.2005	Total beneficiaries as on 31.3.2004
1.	Arunachal Pradesh	87512	73959	68871
2.	Assam	1251169	1251169	1405864
3.	Manipur	0	0	60492
4.	Meghalaya	207190	221523	217240

5.	Mizoram	143808	141021	132338
6.	Nagaland	411703	283735	267747
7.	Sikkim	0	38654	40444
8.	Tripura	170293	170293	139055

10.3 Position of funds released under ICDS(General) Scheme during the year 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 (upto 31.12.2005)

Sl.No.	State/UT	(Rs. in Lakh)		
		2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
1.	Arunachal Pradesh	1552.73	1697.61	1518.91
2.	Assam	4388.19	15799.37	11689.64
3.	Manipur	1413.99	2054.55	1328.05
4.	Meghalaya	876.52	1450.81	1034.88
5.	Mizoram	832.80	781.68	713.49
6.	Nagaland	1486.21	1358.50	1560.89
7.	Sikkim	173.69	332.88	191.38
8.	Tripura	1797.81	1414.45	1677.54

10.4 Implementation of integrated child development service (ICDS) in Tripura

10.4.1 The ICDS scheme was launched in the Chawmanu Block of Tripura during 1975-76. Subsequently 42 ICDS Projects with 3902 Anganwadi Centres (AWC) were sanctioned for the State. In October 2005, 11 new ICDS projects and 2220 AWCs had been sanctioned for covering the entire State. The Committee was informed that action was being taken for setting up the new projects and AWCs for covering the target group i.e. about 4.27 lakh children and 41,000 pregnant & nursing mothers, with particular emphasis on those living below poverty line. The elected Panchayati Raj Institutions were being actively involved in running the ICDS. Action is being taken to converge health and education schemes for strengthening AWCs and providing better services.

10.4.2 It was submitted to the Committee that the unit cost for construction of Anganwadi Centre was required to be enhanced from Rs. 1.25 lakh to Rs. 1.75 lakh per center for meeting the actual cost of material and other labour wages. Further, assistance needed to be provided for those centres, which did not have building as well as the newly sanctioned centres. Besides, financial assistance for construction of office of CDPO and godowns for storing foodgrains may be provided for smooth operation of the programme.

10.4.3 Training of the manpower engaged in the project i.e., Anganwadi workers and ICDS staff and officers, is essential for delivering, the desired services effectively. The existing arrangement for the training, the Committee found, was inadequate and therefore, needs to be adequately strengthened. Efforts should also be made for generating awareness and capacity-building of the elected representatives of the panchayat raj institutions.

10.4.4 Keeping in view, the prevailing field conditions, particularly in the interior areas of the State inhabited by scheduled tribes, an estimated requirement of 56 ICDS projects and 7379 Anganwadi Centres was made before the Committee for covering the entire population of the State. In respect of the scattered pockets in the tribal areas, a relaxed norm of 300 populations per center was also suggested. Three more ICDS projects and 1257 Anganwadi Centres were required, over and above the project/center sanctioned in October, 2005 for covering the entire population.

10.4.5 At present, the supplementary nutrition component of ICDS (SNP) is being funded on a 50:50 basis between the center and the State. Keeping in view the special nature of North Eastern States including Tripura a demand to relax it to 90:10 was made by the State government.

10.5 Implementation of ICDS in Manipur

10.5.1 Manipur, the Committee noticed, found it difficult to spare even 50% amount as State share for the SNP due to severe resource constraint. This causes irregular and inadequate supply of supplementary nutrition items to the targeted beneficiaries. In the year prior to 2004-05 the supply of SNP items was sufficient only for 50-80 days approx. per year as against the existing norm of 300 days in a year. Under PMGY, due to 100% central assistance, regular supply had been achieved. To tide over this problem, the State may require 100% assistance as special case.

10.5.2 The pay structure of ICDS functionaries, the Committee came to know, differed from State to State in the region. During the successive pay revisions from 1995, till date, the pay structure of the ICDS functionaries of Manipur had remained unchanged. As a result, it is much lower compared to other functionaries of the State. The criteria/guidelines issued by Government of India stated that CDPO's pay should be equal to that of a BDOs. Their scale was the lowest as compared to the rest of neighboring NE States. It has remained unrevised in spite of repeated appeals to the State Government for rectifying this anomaly. It was suggested/demanded that the Government of India may persuade/direct State Government for adoption of equivalent and uniform structure in this regard. Another problem found by the State was the delayed release of fund, the salaries and honorarium of ICDS functionaries remained unpaid. This not only causes hardships to ICDS functionaries but also affects performance of the scheme. To avoid this, it was suggested that the State Governments may make regular payment of salaries and honorarium to the ICDS functionaries, that may be adjusted later from the funds released by the Union government.

10.5.3 The Committee also noticed that timely utilization of funds was hampered due to the long financial process involved in sanction, release etc. of funds. Encashment permission required by the State also causes some delay in this regard. In the case of ICDS, it was suggested that the States might be exempted from this permission to allow them direct access to allotted funds for speedy implementation of the Scheme.

10.5.4 The Committee feels that the problems brought before it by the State government that it faced in implementing ICDS seemed to be genuine, and convincing. The Committee therefore, recommends that in view of the efforts made by the State in implementing the Scheme, the central government must examine/consider various suggestions contained in preceding paragraphs for early implementation. A note containing Government's response on such suggestions be submitted of the Committee at the earliest.

10.5.5 The Committee was further informed that a large number of remote villages in the hill districts and rural areas of the State were still not covered under ICDS. Such uncovered areas include the new Development Blocks which had been created recently. Proposals submitted for inclusion in the second phase of selection/opening of additional Anganwadi Centres and Projects were to be approved when Committee went there. The Committee recommends that approval of these projects be expedited for an early operationalisation.

10.5.6 Almost all of Project and District Cell offices function from rented buildings as the district and local administration has not been able to provide Office accommodation. There was a suggestion that an infrastructure development fund may be provided for construction of offices in phases. The Committee underlines the need of serious consideration of suggestion for implementation.

10.6 Implementation of ICDS in Arunachal Pradesh

10.6.1 The ICDS Scheme was launched by the Government of India in the State of Arunachal Pradesh in the year 1978-79, with one ICDS Project namely *Niausa* ICDS Project in Tirap District. So far 79 ICDS Projects with 3037 anganwadi centres have been sanctioned. Out of which, 58 ICDS Projects with 2359 anganwadi centres, sanctioned upto 2000-2001, are operational and 21 ICDS Projects with 678 anganwadi centres sanctioned on 29th September 2005, will be operational soon. In order to cover all 85 CD Blocks of the State, proposal for 1125 more anganwadi centres has been submitted to the concerned Ministry for consideration during the financial year 2005-06. The Committee recommends that these projects/centers be approved/operationalised without further delay.

10.6.2 The following problems were submitted before the Committee by the representatives of Arunachal Pradesh Government:-

10.6.2 (a) Need for providing vehicles to the ICDS Projects

For an effective & efficient working of the scheme as well as monitoring, use of vehicle in a vast area like Arunachal Pradesh becomes unavoidable. These vehicles are also used in carrying food stuff to AWCs. The Government of India has stopped providing vehicles under ICDS and allows to hire only three private vehicles for the entire State. Out of 58 ICDS Projects and 6 Divisional Level ICDS Cells, 7 ICDS Projects and 2 Divisional Level ICDS Cells do not have vehicles. Recently sanctioned 21 ICDS Projects are also without the provision of drivers and vehicles. State has more than 82% areas under forest and private vehicles in rural areas are hardly available on hire. Therefore, there was urgent need for providing vehicles for an effective & efficient implementation of the scheme.

10.6.2 (b) Lack of Infrastructure

10.6.2(b)(i) The Committee found that there was lack of requisite infrastructure for ICDS in the State. Most of the ICDS projects did not have their own office building as also the residential quarters available for the ICDS functionaries. The Committee was informed that private buildings were not easily available for rent especially in the rural and inaccessible areas. The staff ICDS functionaries therefore, were facing lot of problems on this accounts. At the Project Head quarters also the office accommodation provided by the local administration was not sufficient for running day-to-day office works and storing food stuffs.

10.6.2(b)(ii) It was also submitted before the Committee that the present ceiling of Rs. 1,25,000/- fixed for construction of an AWC was not sufficient because of the difficult terrain and harsh conditions in hilly & forest areas. It is very expensive to transport food stuff or even to reach the centres; it takes 6-7 days walk to reach some anganwadi centres. In such a situation it is very difficult to mobilize construction materials etc. at the construction site within this amount. The State Government representatives requested for enhancement of the rate of construction of an Anganwadi Building to Rs. 3.00 lakh per Anganwadi Building for Arunachal Pradesh considering the inaccessibility and remoteness of villages.

10.6.2(b)(iii) The Committee noted the following major constraints in the implementation of the Integrated Child Development Scheme in the North East States:

(a) Need for expeditious operationalization: States in NE region generally take long time to operationalise the sanctioned projects/AWCs. States have constantly been requested to operationalise the pending projects.

(b) Vacancies of ICDS functionaries: There are large number of vacancies of CDPO and

Supervisors in many States. There has been constant emphasis on States to fill up all vacant posts.

(c) Inadequate budgetary provision for supplementary nutrition: Under the Schematic pattern, the Committee was informed, the States have to provide supplementary nutrition. However, from the year 2005-06, the Government of India has decided to provide Central assistance to NE States for supplementary nutrition also to the extent of 50% of the actual expenditure incurred by them or 50% of the cost norms, whichever is less. First instalment of GOI's share for supplementary nutrition has already been released to NE States. It has, however, been noticed that despite the Central assistance in this regard States have not been providing remaining 50% of their share.

XI OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 Most of the representatives of the North Eastern States submitted before the Committee that they lacked in resources for the implementation of the services included in the ICDS Scheme. The ICDS projects were without proper vehicles to reach inaccessible areas. The provision for taking vehicles on rent most of the time was not feasible. The Committee, therefore, recommends that keeping in view the peculiarity of the geographical terrains, some feasible way out must be found out for an efficient implementation of the ICDS Scheme.

11.2 Due to limited resources, State were finding it difficult to construct project offices and Anganwadi Centres. Monetary ceiling of 1.25 lakh for construction of Anganwadi centres, the Committee agrees, was not sufficient to construct the centres in the North Eastern States, as most of the Anganwadis were located in remote forest & hilly areas, where the construction cost was quite high. The Committee, therefore recommends that the Government of India may consider enhancing the amount to Rs. 3 lakhs for construction of Anganwadis in North Eastern States.

11.3 The Committee appreciates the resource crunch in the North Eastern States and recommends that the funding pattern under Special Nutrition Programme be revised to 90:10 between the Centre and the States instead of 50:50 at present.

11.4 Another issue brought before the Committee was that the ICDS workers were not getting uniform honorarium across the north Eastern States. The Committee feels that there is a need to pay uniform honorarium to ICDS workers in all the North Eastern States.

11.5 The Committee calls upon all the states to ensure that all the existing vacancies in the ICDS system were filled up at the earliest. The Committee desires that the Government of India should adopt a proactive role for implementation of ICDS in the North Eastern States. The monitoring system should be redefined to see that ICDS reached all the human habitations in the North East.

MINUTES

MINUTES OF THE DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT XI

