PRESS RELEASE ON THE 377TH REPORT OF PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, WOMEN, CHILDREN, YOUTH AND SPORTS

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The Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports headed by Shri Digvijaya Singh, M.P., Rajya Sabha presented the 377th Report on Demands for Grants 2026-27 pertaining to the Ministry of Women and Child Development to the Rajya Sabha on 25th March, 2025. The said Report was also laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 25th March, 2025. The Parliamentary panel scrutinized the various aspects of the Demands for Grants of the Ministry at its meeting held on 19th February, 2026. The panel discussed the matter thoroughly in meeting spanning over three hours and eleven minutes, with the Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development; Chairpersons/representatives of Savitribai Phule National Institute of Women and Child Development (SPNIWCD) erstwhile National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD); Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA); National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR); and National Commission for Women (NCW). The panel also consulted the Ministry of Women and Child Development through questionnaires, so as, to have a deep insight on the Demands for Grants 2026-27 and schemes being run by the Ministry. The Observations/ Recommendations made by the Committee in the Report are enclosed herewith.

The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at its meeting held on 23rd March, 2025.

The Report is also available on https://sansad.in/rs/committees/16?departmentally-related-standing-committees

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (2026-27) OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

1. The Committee observes that the allocation for National Commission for Women (NCW) at Rs. 36 crores for 2026-27 is grossly inadequate. NCW a national apex statutory body mandated to protect and safeguard women's rights deserves to be strengthened financially in order to carry out its assigned mandate and play a major role in the empowerment of women in the country, especially for the vulnerable groups. The Committee recommends that budget of NCW should be substantially enhanced as also highlighted by the Committee during the meeting, to enable NCW to effectively discharge its mandate.

(Para 2.11)

2. The Committee notes the reduction in the allocation of funds for flagship schemes of the Ministry, which are crucial for the development, safety and empowerment of women and children. The contention of the Ministry that the States are not drawing the funds in a timely manner is not tenable. The Committee is of the view that the Ministry should examine whether the SNA itself is restricting timely fund flow to the States. If so, the release norms should be simplified to prevent disruptions in the flow of funds. The Committee also recommends that the Ministry should identify the reasons for the slow pace of withdrawal of funds by the States and come up with corrective measures so that the funds are effectively utilised by the States and there is no obstacle in the implementation of the schemes.

(Para 2.15)

MISSION SAKSHAM ANGANWADI AND POSHAN 2.0

3. The Committee observed that there has been a significant increase in the allocation of funds to Mission Saksham Anganwadi which reflects the Government's commitment to work for the welfare of children.

(Para 3.5)

4. The Committee expresses appreciation on the setting up of the POSHAN Tracker but is concerned at the fact that there could be issues of network connectivity and the workers operating the application may not be literate. The Committee also notes about the quality of the food served in the Anganwadis and is of the opinion that the quality should be strictly monitored. The Committee feels that it should be the moral obligation of the Government of India and the State Governments towards ensuring quality of food served at the Anganwadis. The Committee is of the view that the Ministry should leverage Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes for operating the AWCS.

(Para 3.12)

5. The Ministry in their submission informed the Committee that detailed guidelines for nutritional quality have been issued by the Ministry. District Level Committees have been formed that monitor the quality of food in the labs. However, the quality varies from State to State. The Committee recommends that the cost norms per unit should be revised as these are very low in order to serve uniform quality and nutritious food across the country.

(Para 3.13)

6. The Committee notes that the common grievance of AWWs and AWHs is enhancement of honorarium and giving permanent status to their appointments. The Committee is of the view that payment of fair wages is the rightful entitlement of the workers and the revision is pending for a long time and the honorarium paid to the AWWs and AWHs is very meager. Keeping in view the expanded scope of work of the Aganwadis, the Committee recommends that the honorarium of AWWs and AWHs, should be increased at the earliest along with the amount of incentives. The Committee also recommends that the States that already top-up payments may be allowed to receive matching central incentives.

(Para 3.18)

7. The CDPO is an important functionary in the Saksham Anganwadi Scheme. As the CDPO works directly with the AWCs, he is an important link between the State authorities and the AWCs. A CDPO is also well aware of the ground realities and can assess the effectiveness of the Scheme. The Committee notes that the sanctioned strength of Child Development Project Officers (CDPOs) has not been revised since 2008-09, a period of 17 years, when 7,075 projects were sanctioned. As per Annual Programme Implementation Plan (APIP) meetings held in February-March 2025, 2,348 out of 7,075 sanctioned CDPO posts (33.18%) are lying vacant across the country which impairs programme oversight at the field level. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Government should undertake a review of sanctioned strength of CDPO expeditiously in light of current programme requirements and fill the vacancies.

(Para 3.20)

8. **Further, the Committee also recommends that the Ministry should undertake State-wise vacancy mapping and prioritise recruitment support for high-performing States. Besides, States may be allowed flexibility in cadre restructuring or contractual appointments to avoid programme disruption.**

(Para 3.21)

9. The Committee notes that a specific budgetary commitment made by the Finance Minister regarding revision of cost norms for Anganwadis has not been implemented by the Ministry. The Committee recommends that the Government should expedite the revision of Anganwadi cost norms, particularly for Supplementary Nutrition, and ensure its implementation before the 16th Finance Commission cycle commences.

(Para 3.23)

10. The Committee notes that there is a reduction of Rs 100 crores *i.e.* from Rs 125 crores in BE 2025-2026 to Rs 25 crores in RE 2025-2026, which is around 80 per cent. The Committee notes that in three years *i.e.* from May 2023 to January 2026, only 132 net AWCCs have been added (from 2,688 standalone crèches to 2,820 AWCCs). Accordingly, against a target of 17,000 AWCCs for the 15th Finance Commission cycle, the progress is very slow. The Committee recommends that action to accelerate the AWCC programme should be expedited. Further, the states where the number of AWWCs is nil, reflects that implementation problems needs to be rectified there for making the scheme efficacious.

(Para 3.30)

11. The Committee further recommends that a special fast-track approval window should be created for States with nil coverage, including Tamil Nadu. Further, given Tamil Nadu's high female workforce participation in informal sectors, Palna centres should be prioritised in industrial belts, urban slums, fisheries clusters and textile hubs.

(Para 3.31)

12. The Committee appreciates the enhanced allocation for the revision in cost norms of supplementary nutrition. The primary objective of the Mission is taking care of the nutritional needs of children in a vulnerable age group, therefore, it is imperative that the beneficiaries are provided quality nutrition at the AWCs. The Committee recommends that periodic revision of the norms should be undertaken so that there is no lack of nutrition in the meals supplied to the children.

(Para 3.34)

13. The Committee notes that the Saksham Anganwadi & Poshan 2.0 is functioning without adequate manpower as a result the objectives of the Mission would not be achieved if there is insufficient manpower to carry out the day to day activities in the AWCs. The Committee recommends that with the increase in the number of beneficiaries over the years, it becomes important that the required manpower is appointed at the earliest so that the beneficiaries are not deprived of the services crucial for their well being. Further, the progress in the matter should be placed before the Committee as it has been informed that the States have been regularly issued instructions in this regard.

(Para 3.37)

14. The Committee also notes that the availability of funds from MNREGA for construction of AWCs in rural areas, is a matter of concern. Since MNREGA has been replaced by VBRAM-G in December 2025, there is an urgent need to relook at the funding pattern because under the new Act, the funding pattern has undergone a change. Therefore, the Committee recommends that the Ministry should take necessary steps to work out the modified funding pattern for the Mission and till the issue is resolved, the Ministry should seek funds for the smooth functioning of the Mission.

(Para 3.38)

15. Regarding the strengthening of the monitoring at State levels, the Committee recommends that the Ministry should take up the issue on a priority basis with the States for consistent monitoring of the Mission. As far as construction of AWCs in urban areas is concerned, the Committee recommends that since the AWCs are based on co-location, the Ministry should tie up with schools to set up AWCs or explore the option of acquiring ready built structures as acquiring land in urban areas can be challenging. Further, urban-specific cost norms should be introduced for Metro cities.

(Para 3.39)

16. The Committee notes that the Union Budget 2026-27 has attempted to give a push to the care economy. The Committee notes that through the Anganwadi programme, the Ministry supports 2.6 million Anganwadi workers and helpers who are already trained and skilled in care work. The Ministry should take steps to leverage these strengths and invest in capacity building and resourcing of key institutions in the care economy.

(Para 3.40)

17. The Committee notes that through Anganwadi platforms, adolescent girl programming, and community outreach, the WCD Ministry reaches girls before they exit the education-to-work pipline. This makes the Ministry well placed to shape early aspirations, digital exposure, and job readiness among adolescent girls. The Committee recommends that adolescent girls in the Anganwadi system should be introduced to a broader set of employment pathways, including digital work, care work entrepreneurship and community-based service roles. The provision of low-cost digital literacy, English and communication exposure, information on sectors where women can work, and referrals into formal skilling channels could all fit within the ambit of such a scheme.

(Para 3.41)

MISSION SHAKTI

18. The Committee observes that One Stop Centres (OSCs) have become de facto Short-Stay Homes rather than comprehensive one-stop facilities. The original vision that a victim need not narrate her trauma to 50 different people is not being realized. The Committee, therefore, recommends that OSCs should have police support and legal aid within the Centre, rather than requiring victims to visit police stations separately. The Ministry of Women and Child Development should get an assessment done through a third-party, of the impact and the outcomes of the Scheme. Further, the Committee is of the view that the Ministry should use the Ministry of Rural Development reports on DISHA meetings and conduct a proper study through Cluster Random Sampling, so that the qualitative dimensions of the actual progress of the scheme is assessed.

The committee recommends a capacity-building programme for the staff of the One Stop Centres. The committee noted that the number of people working in a small district in the North East and in a large district in Uttar Pradesh is the same. The committee recommends that staff should be allocated to districts according to the average number of cases they are handling.

(Para 4.7)

19. The Committee notes that out of 1,025 OSCs, 896 are presently operational. The Committee recommends that operalisation of the OSCs should be expedited in the best interest of the women undergoing trauma and in need of immediate care. A comprehensive rehabilitation plan should be chalked out for the women after they leave the OSCs and some kind of monitoring mechanism should also be developed so that the women could be able to lead a normal life.

(Para 4.8)

20. The Committee recommends the Ministry the following:-

- **Increase the number of OSCs in high-population districts of each State.**
- **Provide urban-specific OSC funding norms, since violence reporting and case load is higher in metropolitan areas.**
- **Integrate OSC services with State women police stations and social welfare hostels.**

(Para 4.9)

21. The Committee observes that in cases of centre-state funding pattern of a scheme, some States are sometimes unable to pay their share of contribution. Instead of putting the States in disadvantage position the Committee, therefore, recommends that the Ministry should review the

existing funding pattern and accordingly modify the same in order to streamline the implementation of the scheme.

(Para 4.10)

22. The Committee recommends that the Centre must simplify fund flow norms (Single Nodal Agency mechanism) and provide state-specific flexibility, where implementation capacity exists.

(Para 4.11)

23. The Committee notes that migrant women are particularly at risk of sexual violence and harassment. Given their physical presence and trained personnel, the Committee observes that OSCs present a strategic opportunity to address the needs of women migrating independently for work who lack access to safe, short-term accommodation and counselling in their destination cities. In this context, the Committee recommends that the Ministry consider introducing a structured Migration Support Function within OSCs to provide short-duration transitional accommodation (10-15 days) for women migrating for verified employment, skilling, apprenticeships, or interviews. Alongside accommodation, OSCs could provide city orientation, information on safe hostels and rental options, linkages to safety helplines, and referrals to local employment and skilling institutions. Strengthening OSCs in this manner would shift them from a purely crisis-response institution to a preventive and enabling platform directly supporting safe migration and sustained workforce participation among first-generation women workers.

(Para 4.12)

24. Regarding the effectiveness of WHL 181, the Committee observes that the Helpline has become a mere call centre rather than a ground-support response mechanism. The Committee recommends that the Helpline should be linked with ground support teams, with on-site rescue capabilities, transport and counsellors. Without any ground support, rescue of distressed women cannot be carried out.

(Para 4.14)

25. The Committee notes that the current focus of the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme is on avoiding female infanticide and supporting female education. The Committee recommends that the Ministry consider expanding the scope of the campaign towards encouraging women in the workforce as well. The Committee notes that the existing institutional and communication architecture can be leveraged to anchor a new campaign that extends the narrative from education to employment (jobsa nd entrepreneurship). The Committee further recommends the following:-

i. **A National Role Model Programme highlighting women working in non-traditional roles, such as shop floor technicians in EV manufacturing, construction supervisors, logistics operators, to reshape societal perceptions.**
ii. **Introduction of Gender Champion Awards to recognise corporates demonstrating substantial representation of women across entry, middle, and leadership levels.**

iii. Sectoral convenings in partnership with Ministry of Labour and with private employers to share best practices on recruitment, retention, workplace safety, and career progression for women.

iv. Working with the Ministries of Labour and Corporate Affairs to encourage systematic use of gender-disaggregated disclosures by listed companies to identify workforce participation gaps and accelerate corrective action.

(Para 4.18)

26. The Committee reaffirms the importance of safe housing for first-generation female workers, migrant women, and unmarried women/Domestic violence victims. The Committee welcomes the announcement by the Honourable Finance Minister in her Budget Speech regarding a Rs 10,000 crore budget to build ~800 hostels for women in STEM education. The Committee however would additionally recommend that the WCD Ministry work with the relevant stakeholders (including the Ministry of Education) to extend the One Hostel per District scheme to include working women (and women apprentices) to help bridge the education-to-employment gap for women. The Ministry may focus its efforts on enhancing hostel capacity in high-migration and employment districts, and near industrial parks, hospitals, service clusters, university towns, district headquarters, and digital work hubs.

(Para 4.27)

27. The Committee is of the view that the contractual nature of engagement and lack of social security is a major concern that discourages skilled workers from joining these critical programmes. The Committee, therefore, recommends that provisions for extending health insurance to workers engaged under Sakhi Niwas, Shakti Sadan and Palna Scheme may be considered to ensure their working conditions under the Scheme.

(Para 4.36)

28. Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) received the highest BE of Rs. 2,185 crore in 2025-26. The Committee recommends that the Ministry should ensure that all eligible first-time pregnant women and nursing mothers in every State/UT receive timely DBT benefit without procedural delays. Further, The Ministry should track pending, rejected, and returned applications State-wise/UT-wise and publish quarterly grievance redressal data, so that PMMVY coverage is expanded to ensure universal maternity benefit.

(Para 4.37)

29. The Committee notes that PMMVY currently recognizes and compensates wage loss around maternity but that there is an opportunity to connect maternal support to later workforce continuity. Maternity support should not enable safe delivery but also help prevent long-term economic exit. Most of the schemes for women's healthcare are focused on expecting mothers and young girls to prepare them for a healthy future, with little attention given to women in their middle age. The Committee recommends that PMMVY beneficiaries be proactively linked to post-partum support, childcare options, digital skilling opportunities, local job information, referral to self-help group enterprise and skilling initiatives, and return-to-work counselling. This would be especially useful for women in the informal sector who often exit work permanently after childbirth. There is

also a need to focus on urban childcare infrastructure. The women's health system has largely approached women through a narrow, reproductive lens. Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCH+A) programmes have delivered real gains; however, this focus narrows women's health to reproduction. Mental health, occupational health, non-communicable diseases, and ageing-related conditions remain under-prioritized.

(Para 4.38)

30. The Committee notes that the District Hub for Empowerment of Women could be leveraged to support district-level convergence plans that map where women are dropping out of work because of childcare, mobility, housing, safety, or information failures, and then align existing schemes accordingly.

(Para 4.43)

31. The Committee expresses concern over the persistent gap between the allocation and actual release of funds under the Nirbhaya Fund. It is noted that while ₹8,212.85 crore has been provided since inception, only ₹6,581.84 crore has been released. The Committee observes that the reduction in RE 2025-26 to ₹278.00 crore (from a BE of ₹500.00 crore) was due to non-compliance with SNA SPARSH guidelines and delays in bill submissions by States/UTs. The Committee recommends that the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) proactively assist States in transitioning to the SNA-SPARSH module to eliminate technical bottlenecks. Furthermore, there has to be extra sensitivity towards the management and disbursal of Nirbhaya Fund and the Ministry may institutionalize a "Compliance Support Cell" to help State agencies to meet the documentation requirements for the release of subsequent installments, thereby ensuring that safety projects do not suffer from lack of funds.

(Para 4.53)

32. The Committee takes note of the ambitious Safe City Projects being implemented in 8 major cities with a central outlay of ₹1,951.11 crore. However, physical progress reports indicate that critical components like Gun Shot Detection Systems in Delhi and Forensic Labs in Hyderabad remain "In Progress" or "Partially Operational". The Committee recommends that the Empowered Committee (EC) on Nirbhaya Fund conduct a city-specific quarterly audit of these 8 cities to identify site-specific hurdles, such as land identification or procurement delays. The Ministry of Home Affairs, in coordination with MWCD, should set a definitive deadline for the completion of the tech-heavy components—specifically AI-based video analytics and facial recognition—to ensure the intended deterrent effect on street crimes.

(Para 4.54)

MISSION VATSALYA

33. The Committee would also like to be apprised about the details of the components of the scheme that will be implemented with the allocated budget of Rs 1550 crores during the FY 2026-27.

(Para 5.7)

34. The Committee observes that despite digitalisation adoption timelines remain long due to staffing and procedural gaps. It is evident that the Ministry is relying too heavily on digital systems while administrative bottlenecks remain unresolved. The Committee notes that mandatory identification of orphaned, abandoned and surrendered children is uneven across States and this actually weakens the child protection planning.

(Para 5.8)

35. The Committee is concerned about the issue of inter-State child repatriation. Some States report zero child repatriation cases while other States report large numbers which reflects an imbalance across the States regarding the reporting of such cases. The Ministry should treat zero reporting as governance concern and take corrective steps. The Committee is also concerned that unregistered childcare institutions and orphanages continue to operate which undermines the juvenile justice framework. The Committee recommends that the Ministry should complete a comprehensive national audit of childcare institutions to ensure compliance with statutory standards.

(Para 5.9)

36. The Committee recommends that MWCD urgently conduct a comprehensive study across all States to ascertain whether uniform cost norms for manpower in CCIs comply with respective State minimum wage notifications. Where shortfalls exist, the Ministry should make necessary revisions to ensure workers in child care institutions are paid at least minimum wages.

(Para 5.11)

AUTONOMOUS AND STATUTORY BODIES

Savitribai Phule National Institute of Women and Child Development (SPNIWCD)

37. The Committee notes that BE 2025-26 was Rs. 90.00 crores which was increased to Rs. 103.00 crores at RE 2025-26. The Actual expenditure as on 31.01.2026 is Rs. 91.94 crores only which is 89.26% of RE 2025-26. Further, the Ministry made a projection of Rs. 202.50 crores for BE 2026-27 to Ministry of Finance (MoF), however, Rs. 110 crores have been allocated as BE 2026-27. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Ministry should seek additional funds from Ministry of Finance at RE 2026-27 stage, if required, to ensure that SPNIWCD does not face any financial constraint in implementation of its mandate.

(Para 6.7)

38. The Committee notes that as of January 1, 2026, SPNIWCD has a high vacancy rate, with 125 out of 286 sanctioned posts (approximately 43.7%) remaining vacant. The vacancy of 38 Group 'A' faculty positions and the reliance on waiting lists for clerical staff (LDCs) may hamper the academic and research excellence of the Institute. The Committee recommends the Ministry to fast-track the appointments of the 22 faculty positions currently under process through the Pratibha Setu Portal of UPSC. Further, the Institute should move from contractual arrangements and ensure that core academic and research wings are manned by permanent, specialized cadres to maintain the quality of training under the three Umbrella Missions.

(Para 6.13)

39. The Committee is of the view that the Institute is currently undertaking only eight research studies in the field of Women and Child Development. The Committee, therefore, recommends that SPNIWCD should expand its research portfolio to include impact assessments of restructured schemes like *Mission Shakti* and *Mission Vatsalya*. Research should specifically focus on the "outreach and outcome" of merged schemes. Besides, the Institute should act as a data-driven think-tank that provides the Ministry with empirical evidence to address implementation challenges such as "heavy interfaces" in digital tools or "data loss" experienced in previous applications.

(Para 6.14)

40. The Committee notes that SPNIWCD has recently been assigned Project "Assist" under the National Children's Fund, following the closure of the National Foundation for Communal Harmony (NFCH). The Committee is of the view that the Institute should develop digital tracking mechanism for the ₹4.00 crore scholarship fund dedicated to children affected by terrorist violence or LWE insurgency and ensure that the transition of the scheme from Ministry of Home Affairs to Ministry of Women and Child Development does not result in any disbursement delays for these vulnerable beneficiaries.

(Para 6.15)

41. The Committee notes that 12 officers from the erstwhile Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) have been adjusted against Research Assistant posts, while the proposal for the remaining 43 officials remains under consideration. The Committee recommends that the Ministry should expedite the absorption of the remaining 43 officials to end administrative uncertainty. Furthermore, the Institute should ensure that the "shortfall in duration" for promotion and MACP purposes is calculated as per rule provisions to ensure that the integration of the CSWB cadre does not lead to stagnation within the Institute.

(Para 6.17)

National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)

42. The Committee observes that there is 6.11 per cent increase in BE allocation 2026-27 vis-à-vis RE allocation 2025-26 while there was a decrease of 3.16 per cent in BE 2026-27 vis-à-vis Projection made for BE 2026-27 to Ministry of Finance for NCPCR. The Committee feels that in view of the inflationary trends in the country, the allocation should have been enhanced at least 8% to 10% over the allocation made during previous year to accommodate the inflation and to maintain the existing standards for expenditure by NCPCR and to avoid decline in actual allocation/expenditure for protection of children's rights. The Committee, therefore, is of the view that the current allocations should be increased at RE stage in order to ensure that implementation of programmes under NCPCR does not suffer due to shortage of funds.

(Para 6.24)

43. The Committee notes that NCPCR has 36 sanctioned posts out of which only 2 posts has been filled by permanent staff and 34 posts have been left vacant. The Committee notes that not a single post in NCPCR is filled by permanent officers. A statutory body of this importance, mandated to protect child rights across the country, operating entirely on deputation and contractual basis is a matter of concern about institutional continuity, accountability and effectiveness. The Committee recommends that the Government should initiate the process for regular recruitment to NCPCR posts.

(Para 6.27)

44. The NCPCR has received Rs. 28.44 crore in BE 2026-27 which was Rs. 25 crore in BE 2025-26 that shows an increase of 12.10%. The Committee is of the view that the allocated amount of Rs.28.44 crores may not be adequate to carry out the mandated responsibilities. The Committee recommends that the budget the allocation should be enhanced at RE stage to meet the requirements of additional manpower, regional outreach mechanisms, and a dedicated grievance redressal platform for child rights violations.

(Para 6.28)

45. The Committee observes that a significant number of core positions within the NCPCR, including technical roles such as Senior Consultant (Legal) and Consultant (Juvenile Justice), are currently being filled on a contractual basis. The Committee is of the view that persistent vacancies in senior administrative posts like Registrar and Presenting Officer may not be helpful for the Commission to carry out its statutory mandate. The Committee therefore, recommends that the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD) and the NCPCR should take steps to fill all sanctioned posts with permanent/regular officers rather than relying on deputation or contractual arrangements. This is essential to ensure institutional memory, accountability, and the effective protection and enforcement of child rights.

(Para 6.29)

46. The implementation of child rights depends heavily on the actions of State Governments and local authorities. The Committee is concerned by reports that several State Commissions (SCPCRs) have persistent vacancies and lack the requisite freedom to decide on broad policy matters. The Committee recommends that the NCPCR should institutionalize a quarterly review mechanism to monitor the functional status of SCPCRs, specifically regarding their vacancy levels and budgetary health. The Commission should issue directions ensuring that the Juvenile Justice Act and POCSO Act are implemented uniformly across all States/UTs.

(Para 6.30)

47. The Committee appreciates the development of portals such as GHAR (Go Home and Reunite) and e-Baalnidan for the restoration of children and grievance redressal. However, the Committee observes that coordination issues and resource constraints still hinder the comprehensive reach of these digital tools. The Committee recommends that the NCPCR should integrate its various portals *i.e.* Monitoring App for Seamless Inspection (MASI), Go Home and Reunite (GHAR) and POCSO Tracking into a unified national dashboard accessible to all district-

level Child Welfare Committees (CWCs). This integration should facilitate real-time tracking of every child's rehabilitation plan, ensuring that no child remains in institutional care longer than necessary.

(Para 6.31)

48. The Committee notes that several challenges are being faced by the NCPCR in reaching marginalized and vulnerable communities in remote areas due to limited public awareness of its functions. The Committee, therefore, recommends the NCPCR to launch targeted awareness campaigns in Tier-II and Tier-III regions, focusing on child labour, trafficking, and the Right to Education (RTE).

(Para 6.32)

49. The Committee observes that the recommendations of NCW and NCPCR are non-binding in nature which limits its ability to enforce child rights effectively, often leading to a lack of compliance from concerned authorities. The Committee recommends that the Ministry may evaluate the feasibility of strengthening the legal powers of the NCPCR through legislative amendments. This should include the authority to issue binding orders in specific cases of rights violations and the power to impose fines on non-compliant agencies to ensure that the Commission's oversight is not merely recommendatory but reformative in nature.

(Para 6.33)

CENTRAL ADOPTION RESOURCE AUTHORITY (CARA)

50. The Committee notes that Technical Training of Master Trainers on Mission Vatsalya Portal has taken place at 5 locations viz: Delhi, Bengaluru, Guwahati, Bhopal and Lucknow for various stakeholders working in the child protection system. The Committee recommends that CARA mandate quarterly virtual refresher courses for all District Child Protection Units (DCPUs) and Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) to ensure they are updated on the latest amendments to the 2022 Regulations.

(Para 6.48)

51. In order to ensure "Medical Transparency", the Committee recommends that CARA, in coordination with the Ministry of Health, conduct specialized training for CMOs on preparing standardized Medical Examination Reports for every child including children with complex disabilities. Further, the mandatory Medical Examination Report (Schedule III – Part E) should be shared with Prospective Adoptive Parents (PAPs) along with the child's full medical history and treatment needs prior to final acceptance, so that, PAP can take informed adoption decisions.

(Para 6.49)

52. The Committee appreciates the integration of the CARINGS portal into the Mission Vatsalya portal to expand the adoption pool. The Committee recommends that "self-learning videos" should be developed for stakeholders to reduce procedural errors during Aadhaar enrollment of children.

(Para 6.50)

53. **The Committee notes that during Adoption Awareness Month 2025, the theme focused on "Promoting Non-Institutionalised Rehabilitation of Children having Special Needs". The Committee recommends the Ministry to sustain this momentum through multi-lingual media campaigns and regional consultative meetings, such as those held in Jaipur and Guwahati.**

(Para 6.51)

54. **The Committee feels that the PMMVY scheme has a "Track and Search" feature for beneficiaries. The Committee, therefore, recommends that a similar high-transparency dashboard be enhanced for Prospective Adoptive Parents (PAPs) on the CARINGS portal that would allow parents to see their real-time position in the waiting list across various categories, reducing anxiety and administrative inquiries.**

(Para 6.52)

55. **The Committee notes that under Regulation 14, post-adoption follow-up is mandated for two years. The Committee recommends that CARA should provide professional counseling and link families to district services during the mandatory two-year follow-up period to prevent adoption disruptions. CARA should develop a standardized "Post-Adoption Counseling Module" for implementation by all Specialised Adoption Agencies (SAAs) to reduce the risk of "disruption or dissolution" of adoptions, particularly for older children.**

(Para 6.53)

56. **The Committee notes the variation in the budget allocations of CARA which was increased from BE of ₹14.49 crore to RE of ₹28.23 crore in 2025-26, before being reduced again to ₹15.34 crore in BE 2026-27. Variation in BE and RE 2025-26 was due to a one-time liability for building renovations. The Committee recommends that a more stable and realistic baseline for CARA's operational expenses should be provided to ensure that core adoption activities are not sidelined by infrastructure costs.**

(Para 6.55)

57. **The Committee observes that there is 45.66 per cent decrease in BE allocation 2026-27 vis-à-vis RE allocation 2025-26 while there was a decrease of 6.74 per cent in BE 2026-27 vis-à-vis Projection made for BE 2026-27 to Ministry of Finance for CARA. The Committee recommends to conduct a mid-year review to ensure that this reduction does not impede the technological upgradation of the CARINGS portal or the expansion of the adoption pool.**

(Para 6.56)

58. **The Committee notes that the Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) continues to operate with shortage of permanent employees. Data as of January 1, 2026, reveals that 13 out of 37 sanctioned posts (approximately 35%) remain vacant. The Committee recommends that the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD) should initiate a comprehensive review of the recruitment process for CARA to facilitate permanent appointments. Further, relying solely on**

deputation appointments for over five years undermines the administrative stability in a sensitive sector like child adoption. The 13 vacant posts identified should be filled as soon as possible to facilitate various activities undertaken by CARA.

(Para 6.60)

National Commission for Women (NCW)

59. The Committee notes about the fluctuations in Budgetary allocations for National Commission for Women (NCW) *i.e.* BE of ₹28.00 crore for 2025-26 which was marginally enhanced to ₹38.41 crore at RE stage. Further, the Committee observes that the BE for 2026-27 is fixed at ₹36.00 crore, which is higher than the BE 2025-26, but lower than the RE of ₹38.41 crore in 2025-26. The Committee is of the view that the BE allocations for 2026-27 (*i.e.* Rs. 36 crores) is not adequate for an apex body like NCW to effectively discharge its mandate. The Committee recommends the Ministry to conduct a mid-term review may be taken to ensure that the Commission's "Jan Sunwais" and "Maha Jan Sunwais" are not curtailed due to shortage of allocations and further, recommends that additional allocations should be made at RE stage to enable the Commission to expand district-level legal aid camps, complaint redressal, and awareness programmes.

(Para 6.65)

60. The Committee recommends that the National Commission for Women (NCW) should refine its digital interface to manage the "surge in complaints" cited as a reason for higher expenditure. The Commission should implement an end-to-end electronic tracking system for suo motu matters and complaints received via "Jan Sunwais" to ensure timely disposal.

(Para 6.69)

61. The Committee is of the view that the National Commission for Women (NCW) should collaborate with the Savitribai Phule National Institute of Women and Child Development (SPNIWCD) to develop specialized training modules for its staff on gender-based violence cases management and legislative drafting so as to develop a trained manpower pool.

(Para 6.70)

62. The Committee observes that 33 out of 64 sanctioned posts (over 55%) in the NCW remain vacant as of January 1, 2026. The Committee, therefore, recommends the Ministry and the Commission to initiate a fast-track recruitment drive to fill these vacancies as soon as possible.

(Para 6.75)

63. The Committee notes, from TABLE-XXXVII above, that 2 out of 5 positions for Members of the Commission remain vacant. The Committee recommends to expedite the appointments of these Members to ensure that the Commission can function as a full-bodied statutory authority.

(Para 6.76)

64. The Committee notes the engagement of contractual staff as a "stop-gap arrangement" due to persistent vacancies in regular posts. The Committee recommends that the Commission should move towards a permanent cadre-based system to ensure institutional memory and accountability.

(Para 6.77)

65. The Committee notes that the gender budget framework assesses schemes on welfare delivery metrics. However, the Committee observes that the WCD's gender budgeting and media advocacy functions can be used to require clearer reporting on whether schemes are enabling women to enter and remain in work. The Committee encourages the Ministry to include simple employment-linked indicators such as crèche usage by working mothers, hostel occupancy by employed women, or the share of beneficiaries connected onward to skilling and livelihoods.

(Para 6.78)

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