20.1 The sensitive areas, which are prone to corruption and malpractices, are being closely monitored regularly.

20.2 Preventive and corrective measures have been taken to contain recurrence of corrupt practices and to instil confidence in the minds of people about the objectivity and impartiality in the functioning of the Ministry and to create conditions, which would spread signals of probity, rectitude and orderliness in public dealings.

20.3 Instructions have been issued to all autonomous bodies and attached/subordinate offices of the Ministry to the effect that for handling sensitive posts at all levels only such Officers whose integrity is beyond doubt should be posted. They have also been advised to introduce greater transparency and openness in the functioning of all the offices in general and the offices having extensive dealing with public in particular.

20.4 All the offices of the Ministry dealing with public have been advised to simplify the work procedure at the cutting edge level so as to avoid delay in taking decisions, as it is the delay at this level that generally breeds corruption. Instructions have been issued to various organizations under this Ministry to improve vigilance administration by leveraging technology and increase transparency through effective use of websites in discharge of regulatory, enforcement and other functions of the organizations.

20.5 In the year 2015, 'Vigilance Awareness Week' was observed in the Ministry from 26.10.2015 to 31.10.2015. All the Officers and members of staff in the Ministry took a pledge on 26.10.2015 to maintain absolute integrity, transparency in all spheres of activities and to work unstintingly for eradication of corruption in all spheres of life.

20.6 Complaints received from Central Vigilance Commission and other sources containing allegations of corruption against individuals and organizations are pursued with the requisite degree of promptitude and thoroughness at senior officers’ level. The pendency of CVC cases/complaints has been minimized to the larger extent. Proper inquiry is conducted in each case in a time bound manner and feedback is sent to the concerned organization/individual.

Redressal of Public Grievances in Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)

20.7 With an aim to provide service to our members, the Head Office at New Delhi and all field offices comprising of 122 offices across the country are equipped with full-fledged Facilitation Centers, PROs and supporting staff. One can obtain relevant information as well as get one's grievance, if any redressed by approaching them. The grievances received from the members through various sources relating to the settlement of claims, issue of account slips, matter arising out of non compliance etc. are required to be redressed by the field offices at the earliest.

20.8 All the prescribed forms can be obtained free of cost during working hours at the Facilitation Centres in all EPFO offices. An Officer of the level of Accounts Officer is designated as PRO to attend to the grievances at the facilitation centre. At all the facilitation centres, time limits for settlement of claims/petitions, and other important information has been notified through display boards and physical facilities have been provided including sitting space, drinking water etc. for the
convenience of all those who visit our offices.

20.9  The PROs at the Reception Counters are available on all working days to redress the grievances of the visiting members. At the same time, PROs are also available in each office to assist the members seeking any information regarding their accounts and/or claims submitted by them for benefits accruing to them under the social security schemes being administered by EPFO.

20.10  Realising the importance of addressing the myriad needs of our customers, the organisation today has a separate two tiered Customer Service Division exclusively looking after the task of handling and redressal of public grievances both at Head Office level as well as in all field offices.

20.11  At the Head Office level, this division is headed by Additional Central Provident Fund Commissioner and assisted by Regional Provident Fund Commissioners, Assistant Provident Fund Commissioner and Public Relation Officer who are constantly monitoring grievances received at various Offices from members on-line or through post, email, phone calls and even personal visits.

20.12  The Regional P.F. Commissioner of the Regional Offices and Officer-in-Charge of Sub-Regional Offices head the Customer Service Division in their respective offices and they are available for redressal of the grievance of the members on all working days. Recently Nodal Officers have been designated in each field office to closely monitor the receipt and disposal of grievances with an aim to redress the grievances promptly in our offices and to improve service to our customers. This nodal officer is responsible for ensuring that grievances pertaining to that office are redressed immediately so that the overall grievances are minimised. He/she sends his daily report in this regard to RPFC (In-charge) of the office. He/she is also personally held responsible for any inordinate delays in redressal of grievances in his/her respective office.

Grievances received and redressed

20.13  The details of grievances received and redressed during the last three years are given below:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grievances pending at the beginning of the year.</strong></td>
<td>4587</td>
<td>27853</td>
<td>28752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Received during the year.</strong></td>
<td>179893</td>
<td>171224</td>
<td>2,48,072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>184480</td>
<td>199077</td>
<td>2,76,824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disposed off during the year.</strong></td>
<td>182321</td>
<td>194490</td>
<td>2,48,971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance at the end of the year.</strong></td>
<td>2159</td>
<td>4587</td>
<td>27,853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage of Disposal</strong></td>
<td>98.83</td>
<td>97.69</td>
<td>89.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
20.14 In addition to grievances registered under EPFiGMS the grievances received via CPGRAMS i.e. Centralised Public Grievance Redressal and Monitoring System were also acted upon. While the opening balance was 348 during the year 3217 grievances were received at H.O. via CPGRAMS out of which 3353 cases were disposed off during the year with a closing balance of 212 cases as on 31.03.2015.

20.15 At present the disposal of grievance is also being reviewed under programme PRAGATI (review during monthly teleconferencing by Hon’ble Prime Minister acted upon.

**Lodging of Grievances**

- One can file grievance via the following modes for redressal:-

  - **Online:** The grievance can be filed using the internet based grievance redressal system, i.e. EPFiGMS, through the portal on EPFO’s website www.epfindia.gov.in. These are regularly monitored by ACCs & RPFCs to ensure prompt disposal.

  - **By Post/email:** One can sent grievance by post or email to the concerned office of EPFO or Head office. RPFC’s looking after CSD work ensures that these are entered into EPFiGMS by the officials and a prompt reply is sent.

  - **In person/by phone:** One can also approach the PRO in the Facilitation Centre of any office of EPFO personally or by telephone.

- At the Facilitation Centre one can obtain following services:-

  - Procure information regarding schemes and procedures through brochures, booklets etc.

  - Obtain information regarding status of claims/complaints.

  - Obtain acknowledgments on claims/complaints submitted.

  - Get the grievance registered in EPFiGMS on the spot by the PRO against the category walk in subscribers.

  - Get feedback of action taken so far on any of the complaint from the PRO.

  - RPFCs looking of the CSD work monitor the performance of PRO to ensure that they fulfill their responsibilities.

**Helpdesk outsourcing for Universal Account Number**

20.16 The UAN program launched on 16-10-2014 by the Hon’ble Prime Minister of India was initiated with the allotment of Unique Account Number (UAN). As on 31.03.2015, 4.41 crore EPF members and 4.35 lakh establishments have been allotted UAN.

20.17 During the entire process of allotment of UAN to EPF members, it was anticipated that there would be a need for handholding in the process for both the employer as well as the employee who may be requiring assistance in the aspects such as uploading process of KYC, process for linking previous and current membership, file for transferring, clarification on type of KYCs etc.

20.18 Accordingly, a help desk was set up right from the initial stages of the launch of the program which has been found to be quite successful in addressing to all the queries raised during this period and has been instrumental in making the UAN program a success. The Help Desk can be approached either through the toll free number 1800118005 as well as through e-mail atuanepf@epfindia.gov.in.
Bhavishya Nidhi Adalats

20.19 All Field Offices conduct “Bhavishya Nidhi Adalats” for redressal of complex nature of grievances of members of the fund which the facilitation centres are not able to resolve in normal course. The “Bhavishya Nidhi Adalats” are held on 10th of every month and if 10th happens to be a holiday “Bhavishya Nidhi Adalats” are conducted on the next working day. Adequate publicity in local newspapers is carried out regularly to invite the grievances from the public in the Adalat. The activities of the “Bhavishya Nidhi Adalats” are being monitored and deliberated upon by the Regional Committee Members at regional level during their review meetings.

20.20 The number of complaints filed before the “Bhavishya Nidhi Adalats” and cases decided during last three years is as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Bhavishya Nidhi Adalats organized</td>
<td>1,608</td>
<td>1,391</td>
<td>1,523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of grievances registered before Bhavishya Nidhi Adalats.</td>
<td>3,688</td>
<td>4,843</td>
<td>4,426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of grievances disposed off by Bhavishya Nidhi Adalats</td>
<td>3039</td>
<td>4,805</td>
<td>4,396</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Facility of Online Registration of Grievances and Redressal

Using the Centralised Public Grievance Redressal and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) in PG portal of Government of India

20.21 CPGRAMS is a program developed and executed by the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DARPG) under Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pension, Government of India has been successfully implemented in the Organisation also. All the Offices are regularly attending to CPGRAMS to monitor and redress the grievances.

Using the EPF Internet Grievance Management System (EPFiGMS) in portal available on EPFO website

20.22 EPFiGMS launched in 2010 is an Internet based grievances management system that has been developed by CSD in collaboration with the NIC, which is customised to the needs of the Organisation. The EPFiGMS has been developed with a view to provide a single window platform that is able to record, acknowledge and track/monitor grievances till its final redressal.

20.23 Now, the system not only afforded convenience to subscribers to register their grievances/queries without any spatial or temporal restrictions but also proved to be of immense value to field offices in managing grievances. Subscribers can now access the system from anywhere and all paper grievances are also been registered in the system.
20.24 EPFiGMS is loaded with several advances features; most important being that movement of registered grievance guided by database which tracks the registered grievance to any of the offices to which it might be related. Once a grievance is registered, system generates a unique registration number and auto generates acknowledgement letter directly to the subscriber e-mail (if provided).

Guidelines prescribed for handling of Public Grievances in EPFO Offices

- Every complaint/grievance is required to be registered and acknowledged.
- Also, any grievance received, by whatever mod (post, e-mail, telephone, personal visit etc.) is to be necessarily entered in the EPFiGMS.
- Information required regarding payment of Provident Fund/Pension cases/EDLI cases/Status of complaints to be provided across the counter/over phone.
- Monitoring of the grievance and its qualitative disposal with the held of online internet based grievance handling systems viz. EPFiGMS and CPGRAMS.

Review Mechanisms

20.25 In order to further strengthen the process of monitoring of the grievance handling machinery in EPFO, it has been decided that Regional Committees shall henceforth during its meetings, invariably review all issues related to handling of grievances pertaining to respective regions. Data pertaining to grievances is also provided to the Regional Committee for review during meetings. Regional Committee of the state is headed by State Labour Secretary with members from Industry, Trade Unions and State Govt. representatives.

20.26 National Level Committee on Grievances in EPFO under chairmanship of ACC(CSD) is also in place to review grievance handling mechanism and suggest improvements in existing systems and introduction of new mechanisms for further quantitative and qualitative improvements in the grievance handling in the organisation.

New Initiatives

20.27 Of late many new initiatives have been taken which have a bearing in minimising the grievances by improving the functioning. Some of these initiatives are given as follows:-

- Launch of Online Batch Processing Software facilitating prompt updation of Accounts of members.
- Online Transfer claim Portal(OTCP)
- Online Registration of Establishments(ORLE) Portal.
- Allotment of Universal Account Number (UAN) for members.
- More facilities in the Electronic Challan cum Return (ECR) Portal
- Pension process Re-engineering
- Release of monthly pension through CBS network of banks.
- Release of PF money through NEFT mode.
- “Know you Claim Status” has been incorporated for members in our website.
- Seminars are arranged to educate employers, employees and various representatives.
- Launch of Special Corporate Office(SCO) of the EPFO at Bandra, Mumbai.
- Online helpdesk for settlement of Inoperative EPF Accounts.
- Short code SMS service for members who have activated their UAN number whereby
members can send an SMS from their registered mobile number to a specified number and thereby receive information regarding their PF account in 10 different languages, namely English, Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Punjabi, Gujarati, Marathi, Kannada, Bengali and Malayalam.

- Auto-Update of members accounts at end of financial year.
- Online Helpdesk for Universal Account Number (UAN) for members.

20.28 For maintaining purity, integrity and efficiency in the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation, the Vigilance Wing was put in place by a decision of the Central Board in its 68th meeting in 1976. The Vigilance Wing, headed by a Joint Secretary level Chief Vigilance Officer, provides the crucial link between the EPFO and the Central Vigilance Commissioner and his Organisation and the Central Bureau of Investigation. The functions of the Vigilance Wing can be broadly divided into 3 parts- Punitive Vigilance, Preventive Vigilance and Surveillance & detection.

Performance during the year 2014-15

Punitive Vigilance

- **Complaints** - With an opening balance of 213 un-disposed complaints received during the previous year (2013-14), 163 new complaints were received during 2014-15 taking the tally to a total of 376. Out of these 300 complaints were disposed leaving behind a closing balance of 76 complaints as on 31-3-2015 which required further investigation.

- **Disciplinary proceedings initiated** - 17 new Disciplinary cases were initiated during the year. Out of these 8 were major penalty and 9 were minor penalty case.

- **Disciplinary proceedings finalised** - 64 Disciplinary cases were finalised during the year. Out of these, major and minor penalty were awarded in 43 cases. Sincere and sustained efforts are being made continuously for expeditious finalisation of pending disciplinary cases in accordance with the guidelines of the Central Vigilance Commission. To reduce the pendency of Disciplinary Proceedings, a multi pronged strategy has been worked out for reducing delay at all stages which included seeking active involvement of Disciplinary Authorities at various levels. The progress of inquiries are being monitored through meetings with the Inquiry Officers and through written communication to them from the Central PF Commissioner and Chief Vigilance Officer at regular intervals.

- **Suspension Cases** - 19 Suspension cases were pending from 2013-14 and 6 new suspension orders were made in 2014-15. Out of these 25 cases of suspension, order revoking suspension were made in 17 cases. The remaining 8 suspension cases as on 31-3-2015 were mostly the trap cases of the CBI/ACB.

- **Prosecution Sanctions accorded** - 6 cases of Prosecution Sanction as sought by the CBI/ACB during the year 2014-15 were accorded.

Preventive Vigilance

- Upon the directions of the Central Vigilance Commission given in the Annual Zonal/sectoral Review Meeting with the Chief Executives/CMSs and CVOs of Social Sector on 20-8-2014 at New Delhi, specific steps were taken to increase the coverage of workers in the Construction Industry. A Sub-Committee on Construction Workers was constituted on
15.10.2014 to look into this issue. The said Committee is chaired by Central PF Commissioner and has one representative each of Central Government; employers’ side and employees’ side. CVO has also held meetings in the matter of coverage of Construction Workers at Regional Office, Jaipur, Zonal Office, Mumbai and Regional Office, Delhi(South). Being a part of this exercise the Chief Vigilance Officer is preparing a detailed proposal on the issue of coverage of construction industry workers as CVC has suggested exemplary punishment for any evasion in the Sector by the establishments.

➢ There are several cases of fraudulent PF claim settlement involving vigilance angle. The Information Service Division of EPFO has installed Corporate Cheque Payable At Par(CCPAP)- a new Software for detection of such fraud cases. It was observed by the Vigilance Division that there were certain deficiencies in the software. For better detection of frauds likely to be committed in respect of PF claim settlement, it was proposed by the Vigilance Wing to the Information Service Division of EPFO to provide an ‘audit trail’ in the new software.

➢ To overcome the problem of individual passwords getting compromised, biometric log-in was also suggested by Vigilance Division to Information Service Division.

➢ Information Service Division has also been advised to take precautionary steps to prevent issuance of multiple Universal Account Number to subscribers by ensuring de-duplication of the UAN allotment under UAN Programme.

➢ For better work environment in the Vigilance Hqrs, initiatives were taken to week out the old records (as per CVS's/DOPT's instructions) which were not done since very long time. More than 2500 old and outdated records were reviewed and weeded out.

➢ Vigilance Awareness Week was observed in all offices of Employees' Provident Fund Organisation during 27.10.2014 to 01.11.2014. Seminars, Symposia, Competitions etc. were held in various offices countrywide with the main theme for the year being “Combating Corruption-Technology as an enabler”.

➢ Agreed List and list of Officers of Doubtful Integrity is being prepared and updated regularly as per guidelines.

➢ For better and faster redressal of complaints a circular has been issued to streamline the Compliant Redressal Mechanism in EPFO vide circular No.Vig.Coord/1/2012/Circular/4000 dated 24.12.2014.

**Surveillance & Detection**

➢ Vigilance Review Meetings were held regularly with the Central PF Commissioner which resolved various issues relating to smooth functioning of Vigilance Wing.

➢ Coordination meetings have been held with CBI, Mumbai, New Delhi, Jaipur, Ghaziabad and Goa.

**Vigilance in Employees State Insurance Corporation**

20.29 A full-fledged Vigilance Division is functioning in the ESIC at Hqrs. Since 17.06.1974. Besides implementing instructions and guidelines from Central Vigilance Commission in regard to eradication of corruption, the Vigilance Wing undertakes investigation on the complaints involving vigilance angle and initiates departmental action against the officials of the Corporation for committing misconducts as envisaged in the ESIC
(Staff & Conditions of Service) Regulations, 1959. The Vigilance Division at the Hqrs. is headed by a Chief Vigilance Officer who is assisted by one Additional Commissioner and two officers of the rank of Director/Joint Director and other supporting staff. In addition, four Zonal Vigilance Officers and four Zonal Director/Joint Directors (Departmental Inquiry) are posted at Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata and one Deputy Medical Commissioner (Vigilance Medical Wing) is posted at Hqrs. The post of Zonal Vigilance Officer and Zonal Director (Departmental Inquiry) also approved for newly created Central Zone which is likely to be operative soon at Nagpur (Maharashtra). The investigation of the complaints are undertaken by the Zonal Vigilance Officers and DMC (Vig.) (MW) and Vigilance Investigation (VIU) Medical in each State. The departmental enquiries are conducted by the Zonal Inquiry Officers (Departmental Inquiry) and by other Officers appointed as Inquiry Officer by Disciplinary Authority.

Report of Vigilance Cases as on 31.12.2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of Vigilance (Disciplinary) cases pending as on 31.03.2015</th>
<th>189</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Vigilance cases registered during 01.04.2015 to 31.12.2015.</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total (1+2)</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Number of cases decided</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Cases pending as on 30.09.2014</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Redressal of Public Grievances in Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC)

20.30 In pursuance of the instructions issued by the Directorate of Public Grievances, Govt. Of India, the Corporation has been making all out efforts for speedy redressal of Public Grievances. The Corporation monitors public grievances received from various quarters including IPs, their family members, employers and their Associations, employees and their Unions, VIPs/ Mps/ Legislatures through a network of Public Grievance Officers posted in various offices of the Corporation. Grievances received from the Prime Minister's Office and the Cabinet Secretariat are directly monitored by a senior officer at the Hqrs. of the Corporation for their effective redressal and periodical(weekly and monthly) reports are sent to the Ministry of Labour & Employment, Govt. of India. In respect of disposal of other Public Grievance cases for various subordinates offices of the Corporation, i.e., Ros/ SROs/ ESI Hospitals/Dispensaries and hospitals including Model Hospitals, a consolidated quarterly report is sent to the Ministry of Labour & Employment at the end of every quarter.

20.31 The monitoring of public grievances received in the Regional Offices, Sub-Regional Offices, ESI Hospitals/Dispensaries/ESIC Model Hospitals is done by a designated Public Grievance Officer. Apart from this, periodic Suvidha Samagam open house meetings are conducted in the respective Regions/Sub-Regions/Branch Offices level at regular intervals in presence of Senior Offices of the Corporation and representatives of Trade Unions and employer's representatives. Such meetings are generally presided over by the Regional Director/I/c of Sub-Regional Offices or a senior officer to redress the grievances across the table, wherever, it is possible.

20.32 In the states where the ESI Scheme has been implemented, the grievances relating to the medical benefits are taken up with the State Govt. authorities by our Regional Directors as well as State Medical Commissioners for timely redressal of grievances.

20.33 The Corporation has opened facilitation Centres in all the Regional offices/Sub Regional Offices/ ESI Hospitals & Model Hospitals in order to have a better interaction with the beneficiaries of
the Scheme. The Corporation conducts workshops and seminars on public grievances for its officers and staff. Instructions, Circulars and other important information are also uploaded on the website.

20.34 The Regional Director/ JD.(I/C)/ SSMC/ SMC/MS/DMD have been instructed that the grievances received from Directorate of Public Grievances of Ministry will be given top priority and grievance will be settled within 6 weeks as per instructions of Cabinet Secretariat. They have been asked to visit Govt. of India, website http://pgportal.gov.in on working days and dispose off complaints online relevant to their office through ‘Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System’ (CPGRAMS) online as available on above website of Ministry and will report Hqrs. on e-mail address pg-hqrs@esic.in.

20.35 To make the Scheme user friendly and to provide urgent and correct information/guidance to stakeholders and beneficiaries a Toll Free Help Line bearing no. 1800-11-2526 was activated w.e.f. 7th December, 2006 (functioning all the working days from 9.30 AM to 5.30 PM) and w.e.f. 01.07.2011, this helpline is functioning round the clock for all seven days of the week. A total 44026 calls have been received from 01/04/2015 to 31/12/2015. These calls were of varied nature i.e. starting from seeking information to registering complaint. It is to mention that all the calls are not only being attended promptly but also answered politely.

20.36 The independent PG Module of ESIC, in line with CPGRAMS has been launched on 13.08.2015 and made it accessible to the public from 15.08.2015. It helps various stakeholders to file grievances directly to the concerned office/hospitals.

20.37 Details of grievances processed by ESIC during the period from 01.04.2015 to 31.12.2015 is as under:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Grievances</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Balance of unsettled grievances as on 31.03.2015</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Grievances received during 01.04.2015 to 31.12.2015</td>
<td>2945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Grievances settled during the period during 01.04.2015 to 31.12.2015</td>
<td>2869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Unsettled grievances as on 31.12.2015</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20.38 Besides this, ESIC is redressing the grievances coming through CPGRAMS from various sources. The details of the redressal of grievances by ESIC from 01.04.2015 to 31.12.2015 are as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Grievances received through CPGRAMS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Balance of unsettled grievances as on 31.03.2015</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Grievances during 01.04.2015 to 31.12.2015</td>
<td>1332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Grievances settled during the period during 01.04.2015 to 31.12.2015</td>
<td>1439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Unsettled grievances as on 31.12.2015</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>