



Press Information Bureau

Government of India

Empowering Persons with Disabilities



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The change in the name of the Department of Disability Affairs to the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities soon after the NDA assumed power was to send the message that 'empowerment' would be the key to the policies and programmes for the disabled and that a separate department meant this sector would receive focused attention it deserved .

A numbers of campaigns and schemes have been launched during the last 2 to 3 year towards creating disabled friendly environment in every sphere whether it is accessibility , education , providing assistive aides and appliance or empowering persons with disabilities through skills and providing employment.

“Accessibility” is one of the most important factors for making the disabled move about without depending on others. In order to enable persons with disabilities to gain universal access and independent living the government launched its ambitious “Accessible India Campaign” (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan) which seeks to make at least 50



percent of all government buildings in the national capital and all state capitals “fully accessible” for the disabled by July next year. Similar deadlines were set to make airports and railway stations accessible to the disabled. 50 cities have been selected as part of this Campaign.

Eighteen organizations have been empanelled as Access Auditors. Access Audit of 1092 buildings out of 1098 building in 31 cities is complete. In addition to this, work orders for 410 buildings in 13 more cities were issued last year in June and access Audit of 400 buildings also has been completed.

50 Accessibility Clubs in IITs, IIMs and other institutes have been set up for encouraging innovation and investment in Accessibility Solutions.

“Sugamaya Pustakalaya” an online platform that makes accessible content available to print-disabled people was also launched last year.



INDIA'S LARGEST ONLINE LIBRARY FOR BLIND & PRINT DISABLED

The library houses publications across diverse subjects and languages and multiple accessible formats. Books are available in Accessible formats for people with visual impairment and other print disabilities. Over 2 lakhs books in diverse languages. Integrating libraries across India and the Globe, including the largest international library, 'Bookshare'.

A lot of emphasis was laid on education of the students suffering from disabilities. As many as 2,747 Students with Disabilities (SwD) were benefited so far under the Pre-Matric Scholarship scheme, which was launched during 2014-15. The scheme provides for financial assistance to the SwDs studying 9th and 10th classes.

A total of 5,267 Students with Disabilities have benefited so far from the Post-Matric scholarship scheme, launched during 2014-15. Under the scheme financial assistance is provided to the SwDs for studying in class XI to Post Graduation. A total of 44 SwDs benefitted under the Scheme of Scholarship for Top Class Education, under which tend financial assistance is extended to the SwDs for taking up Post Graduate courses in the institutes of excellence.

Under the National Fellowship for Persons with Disability (NFPwD), launched in 2012-13, 854 SwDs have so benefitted in pursuing M.Phil and Ph.D. Seven students received financial support under the National Overseas Scholarship scheme launched during 2014-15.

Free Coaching for the economically disadvantaged students with disabilities to enable them to appear in competitive examinations for appropriate job in government, public and private sectors has also been envisaged.

In this regard, the government is also providing incentives to private sector establishments to encourage employment of PwDs in the corporate sector. Under the scheme, payment of employer's contribution towards the Employees Provident Fund organization and the Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) for the first three years, is made by the Central Government in respect of persons with disability appointed in private sector to a post carrying monthly emoluments up to Rs.25,000. So far 3,184 Persons with Disabilities have gained from this initiative.

Skilling India is one of the priority areas of the government, so also for persons with disabilities. As many as 62,232 Persons with Disabilities have been helped under the National Action Plan for Skill Development of PwDs scheme launched in 2015. Providing vocational training and creating employment opportunities are aimed at improving quality of life of the persons with disabilities.



Assisting the needy disabled persons in procuring durable, sophisticated, modern and standard aids and appliances can reduce impact of disability and at the same time promote their rehabilitation and enhance their economic potential.

Rs.356.73 crore were released/utilized during last two years and the current year benefiting 5.87 lakh beneficiaries through organizing 4,354 camps for distribution of assistive aides and appliances. Nearly 200 mega camps/special camps were organized covering 27 states for the assistive devices at the cost of about Rs.169.56 crore benefiting nearly 2.10 lakh Divyangjan. Aids and assistive devices costing Rs.108.70 crore were also provided to 1.83 lakh Divyang children with Special Needs (DCWSN) during 2,734 camps under ADIP-Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in the primary schools all over the country.

Cochlear Implant program was launched in the country On 'World Disability Day' in 2014 following empanelment of 140 hospitals both government and private for Cochlear Implant surgery. Another initiative is the State Spinal Injury Centre scheme, which is in operation from 31st of March 2015. It envisages, dedicated 12 Bed Ward in government hospitals with medical and paramedical staff with basic infrastructure.

As per the 2011 Census, there about 50 lakh people suffering from hearing handicap. The main objective behind the setting up of the Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC) is to develop manpower for using, teaching and conducting research in Indian Sign Language. The first batch of Diploma Course in Indian Sign Language Interpretation commenced from 28.10.2016 with intake capacity of 15 students. The second batch started from 14th of December 2016. Efforts are being made to prepare the sign language dictionary of about 6,000 words. There is a also plan to prepare a directory of Indian Sign Language interpreters in India.

District Disability Rehabilitation Centres (DDRC) are set up under SIPDA for providing comprehensive services to the persons with disabilities at the grass-root level and for facilitating creation of the infrastructure and capacity building at the district level for awareness generation, rehabilitation and training of rehabilitation professionals. Grants-in-aid of Rs.1,78,61,199 has been released for 44 District Disability Rehabilitation Centres in the current year as on 9th of January 2017.

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment confers National Awards on individuals, institutions, states/districts for their outstanding achievements or work done towards empowerment of Persons with Disabilities on the occasion of the International Day for disabled persons (3rd December). As many as 89 lakh citizens have benefitted.

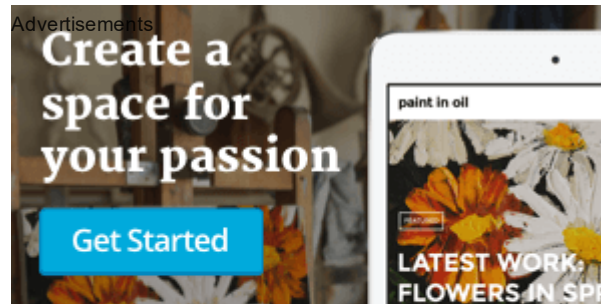
In a significant move towards empowerment of the disabled the Parliament passed the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2016 in the winter Session last year. This Act replaces the existing Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995. In the new Act, the categories of disabilities have been increased from existing 7 to 21. The Act also provides for

increasing reservation quota from 3 per cent to 4 percent in government jobs.

Hopefully, the rights based legislation with more Rights and Entitlements and strong monitoring agencies at the National and State Levels and the various schemes and campaigns launched by the government will go a long way in achieving empowerment and mainstreaming of the Persons with Disabilities in the society.

*(For latest data, please check PIB's special Webpage – link available on PIB's home page).

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Press Information Bureau, Government of India

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Uncategorized

Accessible India Campaign, Disabilities persons Day, International Day of Person with Disabilities

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