

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT  
DEPARTMENT OF EMPOWERMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

**RAJYA SABHA**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1242**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 13.12.2023

**SELF DEPENDENCY OF PWDS**

**1242#.** Dr. Kalpana Saini:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the steps taken by Government to reduce the dependency of persons with disabilities (PWD) on other people during the last three years;
- (b) whether any technology has been developed by Government to make the disabled people self-reliant; and
- (c) the efforts being made by Government to make people with disabilities more technological friendly?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT  
(SUSHRI PRATIMA BHOUMIK)

(a) The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities vide Notification dated 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021 has identified more than 3500 posts for reservation in government employment under Section 34 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016.

Further, the Department is also implementing Scheme of **Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP)** for providing assistive devices and performing corrective surgeries for the Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) fulfilling income criteria prescribed. To provide PwDs with aids and assistive devices, is essential for their overall rehabilitation and empowerment that promotes their independent living and reduce dependence on others.

The Department also provides financial assistance to the Persons with Disabilities under **National Fund**. Similar benefits are available to the Persons with Disabilities under the **Ayushman Bharat Scheme** under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Further, the Department administers the **Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992**, governing rehabilitation courses and programmes and regulation of rehabilitation professionals for creating pool of rehabilitation professionals in the disability sector.

The Ministries of Electronics and Information Technology, Housing and Urban Affairs & Culture have notified the accessibility standards to foster ease of access to the persons with disabilities and make them self-reliant.

(b) and (c) Following steps/technology have been taken/developed by the Government:

1) The objective of the above mentioned **ADIP Scheme** is to provide durable, modern and scientifically manufactured aids and assistive devices to PwDs for promoting their physical, social and psychological rehabilitation, thereby reducing the effects of disabilities and enhancing their educational and economic potential. Provision of suitable aids and assistive devices is one of the first steps in the process of rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).

**2) Under the Accessible India Campaign (AIC)**, work has been done by the Central Government in three areas to create a universal barrier-free environment. The achievements of AIC in various fields are as follows:

2.1 Built-Up Environment – Access audit of 1671 buildings has been completed and 1711 government buildings including 1100 Central Government buildings have been provided with features of accessibility.

2.2 Transportation Sector – 35 International Airports and 55 Domestic Airports have been provided with features of accessibility. Ambulifts are available at 12 airports. All 709 A1, A and B category railway stations have been made fully accessible and 50% of all railway stations have been partially accessible with few short term Facilities. 42,348 (29.05%) buses have been made partially accessible and 8,695 (5.96%) made fully accessible

2.3 ICT Ecosystem (Websites)– 767 Central and State/UT government websites have been made accessible. 13 different Departments have created accessibility guidelines. All the participating ministries/departments are catering to various sectors which shall directly impact the livelihood of people across the various sectors for example, Harmonized Guidelines 2021 of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (**MoHUA**) highlights on standards for making buildings accessible by information about variety of tactile ground surfaces indicators, arrangements of the same are demonstrated through illustrations, multiple designs for parking and access demonstrated, levels of lift accessories, knee space below counter specifications turning space in corridors etc. Such guidelines will extend the support to the implementing agencies while making buildings accessible to achieve universal accessibility that would directly impact people using such buildings. Similarly, standards of accessibility guidelines for civil aviation sector highlights about facilities and services for airport operators, for airlines and security agencies. It details out the standards for accessibility at baggage claim areas, accessible format for inflight entertainment, ramps for boarding, special assistance and special training of staff and attendants etc.

3) **Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO)** under the administrative control of this Department, has taken several steps to develop in-house production of high quality products to increase the mobility of Divyangjans to minimize their dependency on others such as:

3.1 Technology Transfer Agreement (TTA) with Germany based M/s Ottobock Healthcare for developing in-house manufacturing & Assembly of Lower Extremity Prosthetics (Above Knee (AK) & Below Knee (BK) Kits) for Persons with Disabilities

3.2 Transfer of Technology (TOT) Agreement with U.K based M/s Motivation (India) Charitable Trust for in-house manufacturing of WHO compliance Active Folding Wheelchairs.

3.3 In-house developed sensors based electronic Sugamya Cane for visually impaired persons and;

3.4 Motorized Tricycle with advanced features like reversed gears and improved disc break mechanism.

4. There are nine **National Institutes (NIs)** working under the Ministry specializing in different kinds of disabilities. The main objectives of these Institutes are to conduct various courses in the field of disabilities, to provide rehabilitation services to Persons with Disabilities and to undertake Research and Development.

4.1 National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Visual Disabilities (**NIEPVD**), Dehradun has been implementing the technologies such as Talking Book Studios which has the facility to play books on several kinds of electronic devices. It also provides financial support for developing accessible learning materials in addition to continuing the provision of Braille books. It has also launched On-line Braille library-‘Sugamaya-pustakalaya’ to access collection books in Braille readable format. It is also helping Persons with Visually Impairment (PwVI) to make them technology friendly by training of screen reading software on digital devices, it has installed Braille Displays devices i.e. Refreshable Braille display that convert digital information into Braille characters, provides tactile graphics, magnifiers and reflective glasses to children with visual impairment and also provide books in Accessible Document such as talking book, e-text, e-pub etc.

4.2 National Institute for Locomotor Disabilities (**NILD**), Kolkata does evaluation of prevocational skills and training through Baltimore Therapeutic Equipment and other evaluation tools.

4.3 Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre, (**ISLRTC**), New Delhi, has developed a free mobile app called Sign Learn to provide ISL dictionary videos to both people with and without disabilities to promote communication accessibility. It is also providing video relay service (VRS) to provide ISL interpretation service to deaf people across India to facilitate communication accessibility in various situations. In collaboration with NCERT, ISLRTC has converted NCERT textbooks of classes I-VI into ISL to provide school textbooks to children with hearing disabilities. An ISL dictionary with around 10,000 terms of everyday, academic, legal and administrative, medical, technical agricultural and finance & banking terms was

developed and made freely available on multiple platforms like YouTube, Google Drive and DIKSHA portal. A dedicated website for the ISL dictionary has also been developed.

4.4 National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities (**NIEPMD**), Chennai, is implementing technologies like 3D printing technology towards preparation of mobility aids and people with disabilities. It also has an ICT lab, Interactive sports lab, adapted sports & games, e-content guidelines for children with multiple disabilities.

4.5 National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (**NIEPID**), Secunderabad is conducting Capacity building Training programmes for Rehabilitation Professionals to use Digital technology for teaching and training. It is also extending technical support to develop software's and mobile apps for facilitating assessment, training and intervention through R&D collaborations.

4.6 Training and Research projects National Institute for Locomotor Disabilities (**NILD**), Kolkata in collaboration with VSSC & ISRO conducts Clinical Trial on Microprocessor controlled Knee Joints. It uses laptops and desktops for IT professionals with disabilities and using EMG-Biofeedback for improving functional independence, It also uses splints and upper limb orthotic devices to make the PwDs independent in doing their day to day functions.

4.7 National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation (**NIMHR**), Sehore, Madhya Pradesh is creating awareness on Sugamya Bharat app at grassroot level such as Aganwaadi, Pachayat, Schools etc.

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