

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 721
TO BE ANSWERED ON 07.02.2023

DIGITAL GOVERNANCE INITIATIVE FOR DIFFERENTLY ABLED

721.SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI KARUNANIDHI:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT सामाजिक न्याय और अधिकारिता मंत्री be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that the digital governance initiatives do not cater to the differently abled population of the country especially visual and cognitive disabilities, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has any existing policy to promote and enhance differently abled friendly tech and apps and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the details of the Government apps and web portals that have been tested for differently abled persons friendliness;
- (d) whether the Government has undertaken any initiative or policy to promote inclusive designing of commercial apps for differently abled persons; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

(SHRI A. NARAYANASWAMY)

(a) to (e) The Central Government has enacted the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016, which came into force on 19.04.2017. The said Act focuses on creating barrier free environment for persons with disabilities (PwDs) including persons with visual and other disabilities in built-up infrastructure, transportation, information and communication technology (ICT) ecosystem etc. Section 42 of the said Act mandates the appropriate Government to take measure to ensure that all contents available in audio, print and electronic media are in accessible format. The Central Government also notified the standards of accessibilities for public building, passenger bus transport, websites and documents to be placed on Government websites under RPwD Rules, 2017 on 15.06.2017. As per these Rules all Government website are required to comply with the guidelines for Indian Government websites, as adopted by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances which takes care of the accessibility needs of PwDs.

In addition, the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has notified the accessibility standards for the ICT products and services in two parts on 24.12.2021 and 04.05.2022 respectively to address the accessibility needs of PwDs on web platforms.

Further, 95 websites of Central Government Ministries/Departments were made accessible by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITY) under the Content Management Framework, in 2017-18. The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) has also made 632 websites of various States/UTs accessible. Further, Government has launched a Crowdsourcing mobile application namely Sugamya Bharat App. This user-friendly and accessible App enables anyone, anywhere, anytime to bring to notice accessibility-related issues being faced by them while using public centric infrastructure, facilities and services which require redressal.
