

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 2540

TO BE ANSWERED ON 19.12.2023

MENTALLY RETARDED AND DISABLED CHILDREN

2540. SHRI MITESH RAMESHBHAI PATEL(BAKABHAI):
SHRIMATI SHARDABEN ANILBHAI PATEL:

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

- (a) whether the Government has any information about mentally retarded and disabled children in the country and if so, the details thereof during the last three years, year and State-wise;
- (b) whether the Government has conducted any research/study to find out the causes/reasons for such disability in the country, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government has taken/proposes to take any steps for the future of such children whose lives are very challenging because of being deprived of many facilities including education; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the facilities being provided to these children by the Government?

ANSWER

Minister of State for Social Justice & Empowerment

(SUSHRI PRATIMA BHOUMIK)

(a) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment relies upon census data for number of persons with disabilities in the country. As per Census 2011, there are 5,95,231 children with mental retardation and 78,64,636 children with disability in the age group of 0-19 years.

(b) No, Sir. No such study has been carried out.

(c) and (d) Relief to the disabled is primarily a State subject by virtue of entry 9 of the State list of the Constitution of India. The Central Government supplements the efforts of the States for the welfare of persons with disabilities through various schemes. The Central Government enacted the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016 which mandates every child with benchmark disability between the age of six to eighteen years shall have the right to free education in a neighborhood school, or in a special school, of his choice. The Act mandates the appropriate Government and local authorities to ensure that every child with benchmark disability has access to free education in an appropriate environment till he attains the age of eighteen years.

In pursuance of the RPwD Act, 2016, there are various provisions available for welfare and improvement of lives of the persons with disabilities. Under these provisions, various

schemes such as Scheme of Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP Scheme), scholarship for education, skill development etc. are implemented. Section 34 of the Act provides for 4 % reservation in the government employment to the persons with benchmark disabilities. Further, Section 32 of the Act provides 5% reservation in government or government aided higher educational institutions for persons with benchmark disabilities.

The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Samagra Shiksha launched in 2018-19, has dedicated Inclusive Education component for the education of Children with Special Needs (IE for CwSN) covering all CwSN with one or more disabilities as mentioned in the schedule of disabilities of RPwD Act, 2016 including children with neuro-disorders like cerebral palsy, autism spectrum disorder and disability caused due to chronic neurological conditions. It aims to look at education of CwSN in a continuum from Pre-Primary to Class XII studying in Government, Government-aided and local body schools.

Through this component, CwSN are provided support via specific student oriented interventions such as identification and assessment camps, provision of aids, appliances and assistive devices, transportation, scribe and escort allowance support, Braille books and large print books for children with visual impairment, stipend for girls with special needs and teaching-learning materials etc. in order to appropriately address their unique educational requirements in general schools.

Capacity building of general teachers and special educators on meeting learning needs to provide quality education to children with disabilities and improve their learning outcomes, are also covered. Further, individualized support is also provided through therapeutic interventions at the block level. There is also provision for Home Based Education for children with severe multiple disabilities etc. in order to appropriately address the unique educational requirements of CWSN in inclusive schools.

According to Central Board of Secondary Education's (CBSE) affiliation bye-laws and being sensitive to the needs of disabled students, CBSE provides several exemptions/concessions to CWSN as defined in RPwD Act, 2016 such as issuing authority of Medical Certificate, facility of Scribe and compensatory time, appointment of Scribe and related instructions, fee and special exemptions for class X like exemption from third language, flexibility in choosing subjects, alternate questions/Separate Question and special exemptions for class XII like flexibility in choosing subjects, separate question paper and questions in lieu of practical component.
