

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

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1190
TO BE ANSWERED ON 30.07.2024

AGING PEOPLE AND DIVYANGJANS

1190. SHRI RAJU BISTA:

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken any steps to ensure that senior citizens and divyangjans have access to essential services, financial support and protective measures, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the extent to which the Government addresses the unique challenges and needs of the aging population and divyangjans;
- (c) whether the Government is making education and employment more accessible for people with disabilities;
- (d) if so, the details of schemes for making education and employment more accessible for people with disabilities; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government to raise awareness about disability rights?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

(SHRI B L VERMA)

(a) & (b): Department of Social Justice and Empowerment is implementing Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana for welfare of Senior Citizens with the following components:

- i. Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens under which Grant in aid is provided to Non-Governmental/ Voluntary Organisations for running and maintenance of senior citizen homes (old age homes), continuous care homes, etc. Facilities like shelter, nutrition, medicare and entertainments are provided free of cost to indigent senior citizens.

- ii. State Action Plan for Senior Citizens under which Grant in aid is provided to States/ UTs for activities like awareness generation, sensitization, cataract surgeries and State specific activities.
- iii. RashtriyaVayoshri Yojana under which senior citizens, belonging to BPL category or the senior citizen with the monthly income not more than Rs. 15000/- and suffering from age related disabilities/ infirmities are provided with such physical aids and assisted living devices which can restore near normalcy in their bodily functions.
- iv. Elderline- National Helpline for Senior Citizens under which registration of grievances, redressal of Grievances and Monitoring of the performance of States /UTs are done through the website of Elderline for Senior citizens (elderline.dosje.gov.in).
- v. Senior-care Ageing Growth Engine under which innovative start- ups are identified and encouraged for developing products, processes and services for the welfare of the elderly.

Further, for empowerment of Divyangjans, the Government enacted RPwD Act, 2016 which came into force on 19.04.2017. Section 45 (2) of the RPwD Act mandates the appropriate Government and the local authorities to formulate an action plan based on prioritisation, for providing accessibility in all their buildings and spaces providing essential services such as all primary health centres, civil hospitals, schools, railway stations and bus stops. Section 24 of the said Act mandates the appropriate Government, within the limit of economic capacity, to provide disability pension subject to income ceiling. Section 6 and 7 of the said Act provides for measures to protect persons with disabilities from cruelty, inhuman treatment, abuse, violence and inhuman treatment.

Furthermore, though relief to the disabled is 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 State Governments through various schemes and programmes. Some of the major schemes are as follows:

- i. 'Assistance to Persons with Disabilities for Purchase/Fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP)' under which funds are released to various implementing agencies to assist the eligible PwDs in procuring durable, sophisticated and scientifically manufactured, modern, standard aids and appliances that can promote their physical, social and psychological rehabilitation by reducing the effects of disabilities and enhancing their economic potential throughout the country.
- ii. Scheme for Implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (SIPDA) an umbrella scheme, under which assistance is provided to State Governments and to autonomous organizations/Institutions under Central or State Governments, for various activities relating to

implementation of the RPwD Act, 2016, particularly for creation of barrier free environment, accessible india campaign and skill development of PwDs.

iii. Deendayal Divyangjan Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS) under which grant-in-aid is provided to Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) for projects relating to rehabilitation of PwDs aimed at enabling persons with disabilities to reach and maintain their optimal, physical, sensory, intellectual, psychiatric or social functional levels.

iv. Scholarship Scheme under which Government provides scholarships to students with disabilities.

(c) & (d): To make education more accessible, the Accessibility Guidelines and Standards for Higher Education Institutions and Universities and Accessibility Code for Educational Institutions formulated by the Department of Higher Education and Accessibility Code for Educational Institutions by Dept. of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education respectively have been notified under the RPwD Rules, 2017.

Further, Department of School Education & Literacy has launched an overarching programme for the school education sector- Samagra Shiksha Scheme. Under Samagra Siksha, there is a dedicated component for Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs (IE for CwSN), to ensure full equity and inclusion such that all children with special needs are able to fully participate in schools. The scheme aims to look at education for CwSN in a continuum from pre-school to class XII. The scheme covers all CwSN with one or more disabilities as mentioned in the Schedule of disabilities of the Right of the Person with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016. The Samagra Shiksha Scheme is being implemented through State Governments/ UT administrations and the Central Government provides necessary financial support for the same.

Through the inclusive education for CwSN component, various provisions are made available for CwSN such as identification and assessment camps (at block level), student specific interventions @ Rs. 3500/- per CwSN per annum for support, such as provision of aids, appliances, assistive devices, teaching-learning material, Braille books, large print with severe & multiple disabilities who are unable to attend school. The focus of Samagra Siksha is on providing inclusive education to CwSN, wherein children regardless of their abilities/disabilities participate and learn together in the same class, thus creating an equitable enabling educational environment for all students.

Further, Section 16(ii) of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 mandates the appropriate Government and local authorities to make building, campus and various facilities accessible for the purpose of providing inclusive education to children with disabilities. Section

17(i) of the said Act provides for making suitable modification in the curriculum and examination system, by way of provisioning extra time for completion of examination paper and exemption from second and third language courses to meet the needs of students with disabilities. In view of this, CBSE being sensitive to the needs of students with disabilities provides several exemptions/concessions to CwSN including deaf and dumb 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 questions and special exemptions for class XII like flexibility in choosing subjects, separate question paper and questions in lieu of practical component.

Furthermore, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) implements 'National Action Plan (NAP) for Skill Development of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs)' which was launched in March, 2015. NAP is implemented under the umbrella scheme—"Scheme for Implementation of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 (SIPDA)". Under NAP, funds are released as per Common Norms Guidelines issued and subsequent amendments from time to time by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship for imparting skill training to persons with disabilities in the age group of 15 to 59 years. This Department recently launched PM-DAKSH-DEPwD Portal. The link of the portal is available on <https://pmdaksh.depwd.gov.in/login>. Under this portal, there are two modules:-

- i. Divyangjan Kaushal Vikas:- Skill training is conducted for PwDs through the portal across the country.
- ii. Divyangjan Rozgar Setu:- The platform aims to act as a bridge between PwDs and employers having jobs for PwDs. The platform provides geo-tagged based information on employment/earning opportunities within private companies as well as PwDs across India.

(e): The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) is implementing "Awareness Generation & Publicity Scheme" as one of the component under SIPDA Scheme across the country. The main objective of the scheme is creation of general awareness about the schemes and programmes of the Government for the welfare of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and to train and sensitize key functionaries of the Central/State Government/Local Bodies and other service providers on a regular basis on disability related matters through State/District/Block level workshops with the aim to raise awareness among employees and peer groups about capabilities of PwDs.
