

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

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARED QUESTION NO -1248**  
ANSWERED ON 03/12/2024  
**VISUALLY IMPAIRED PERSONS**

1248. SHRI JUGAL KISHORE

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

(a) whether any notable work is being done in the field of education, rehabilitation and skill development of visually impaired boys and girls in the national institutions under the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the activities being carried out by the Ministry in the field of welfare and education of the visually impaired persons?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

(SHRI B.L. VERMA)

(a) & (b) There are ten National Institutes (NIs) working under the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) (Divyangjan) specializing in different kinds of disabilities. The main objectives of these Institutes are to train rehabilitation personnel in the field of disabilities, to provide rehabilitation services to Persons with Disabilities and to undertake Research and Development.

National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Visual Disabilities (NIEPVD), Dehradun is working in the field of visual disability for education, training, rehabilitation & empowerment of persons with visual impairment. The facility provided by the NIEPVD is as follows:-

(i) NIEPVD Model School is imparting education (CBSE affiliated) to 248 students with visual impairment from class nursery to class 12<sup>th</sup> and provides free boarding, lodging, uniforms, library facilities, medical, assistive devices, accessible materials and scribe support for exam.

(ii) The Model School's BalVatika are designed to provide foundational learning for young children, preparing them for formal schooling in class 1.

(iii) Provides vocational & skill development training programmes to persons with visual impairment in different trades i.e. Computer Operator and Programming Assistant, Braille Stenographer and Secretarial Assistance (English & Hindi), Assistive Technologies, Data Entry Operator, Radio Jockey (RJ), Music, Coping Skills for Adjustment at work & Social Life, Gardener and Reflexology in order to enhance their skills, foster independence, and create employment opportunities for them.

(iv) Offers a range of Human Resource Development Special Education Programs recognized by the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI).

(v) Institute is also implementing the Braille Press Project as a Nodal Agency. Under the project, 25 Braille Presses were established across the country to ensure the timely availability of reading materials for school and university students, including Talking Books, E-Pubs/Digital Books and Large Print Books.

(vi) Hosting a National Accessible Library to provide learning materials in various accessible formats Braille large print, audio and E-Pub to the students.

(vii) NIEPVD received CBSE accreditation to conduct Mathematics and Science classes for visually impaired students of classes XI and XII and also started two new science laboratories equipped with accessible technologies and tools.

(c) Deendayal Divyangjan Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS), financial assistance is provided to the voluntary organizations for running Special Schools for the children with visual disability (including deaf blindness) with option for Home Based Rehabilitation and Community-Based Rehabilitation Project and Low Vision Centre Project.

Department is implementing the scheme of '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 persons with disabilities including Visually Impaired 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. Various types of aids and assistive devices distributed to Persons with Visual Impairment are Accessible Smart Phone, Smart Cane, Low Vision Aids, Teaching Learning Material (TLM) Kits etc.

To enhance skills of Persons with Disabilities to enable them to have gainful employment and to become self-reliant, productive and contribute members of society and stand up on their own feet, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities launched the National Action Plan for Skill Development of Persons with Disabilities (NAP-SDP) in March 2015. Under NAP-SDP, for imparting skill training to persons with disabilities in the age group of 15 to 59 years including Visually Impaired, boys and girls. Training under the NAP-SDP scheme is being provided through various Government and Non-Government Organizations, empanelling as training partners (ETPs) with the Department. These Government and Non-Government Organizations provide skilling across the Country.

Department has launched PM-DAKSH Portal-DEPwD on September 2023 for effective implementation of National Action Plan for Skill Development of PwDs (NAP-SDP). This portal is a one-stop digital destination for PwDs, who need skilling and employment, and for Training organizations and Employers/job aggregators of PwDs.

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.

The NAP-SDP Scheme is demand driven scheme and funds are released to Empanelled training partner based on their proposal.

There are 21 job roles for Visually impaired and 35 job roles for Low vision has been customized by Sector Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPwD) till date.

Now, 111 PwDs(Low vision and Visually impaired) training is going on through PM-DAKSH-DEPwD Portal.

Reimbursement of tuition fees through the National Institutes under the Department for 100% blind students pursuing STEM subjects from Class 9 to Class 12.

The financial assistance is limited to **Rs. 1.5 lakh per student per year** or the **actual tuition fee**, whichever is less. The assistance is provided from the National Fund for the PwDs.

Department is also implementing an Umbrella Scheme titled 'Scholarships for Students with Disabilities (Divyangjan)' which comprises six components viz;

- Pre-matric (Classes IX & X),
- Post-matric (Classes XI to Post graduate Degree and Diploma),
- Top Class Education (Graduate and Post graduate Degree/Diploma in notified institutes of excellence in education),
- National Overseas Scholarship (Masters Degree/ Ph.D in Foreign Universities),
- National Fellowship for PwDs (M Phil and Ph.D in Indian Universities),
- Free Coaching (for competitive exams for group A and B posts and entrance examinations for admission to technical and professional courses).

All above schemes are Central Sector Scheme and implemented PAN India basis. The scholarship amount is released directly to the Students' bank account in DBT mode.

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