

**SPEECH OF CMD, NHFDC at
EmployABILITY -2012,Equal Opportunity Job Fair for Persons with Disabilities
Organized by Ability Foundation at Hyderabad on 03.11.2012**

The Ability Foundation is a non-profit organization which is organizing Job Fair in collaboration with Naukri.com, Shree Vishnu Educational Society and National Institute of Mental Health in Hyderabad today for the benefit of both PwDs and the employers in the Private Sector.

I am indeed very happy to note that such a committed organization is working in this difficult area of match-making wherein qualified PwDs would be joining on the posts in the private companies in the diverse fields like IT & ITES, Manufacturing, Logistics, Hospitality, FMCG, Banking, Advertising etc.

Friends, 95% disabled youth are studying on their own, getting training on their own and despite the odds, are coming to the forefront by dint of their own strength and grit and today these companies will be absorbing them on merit and not as a policy of special dispensation.

While majority of the PwDs are acquiring training skills with the help of unqualified training providers but they are coming up to the standard of mainstream candidates and are getting placements on the basis of equality and competence, yet there is a vast reservoir of PwDs which is yet to be properly trained and is yet to be absorbed in Private or Public Sector or in self-employment ventures. With education, expectations are rising and even PwDs are under pressure to show the results by way of placement or otherwise. I would like to reiterate here that a large pool of PwDs is still part of unorganized sector and comprises of labour force. Therefore, we have to think about the policies which can rehabilitate them either in the jobs or in the self-employment ventures.

I would like to mention here an incentive scheme of Govt. of India that wherever the Private Companies are employing the PwDs, The Government will pay the employer's contribution to the Employees Provident Fund and Employees State Insurance for the first three years. The details of the schemes are available in the website of Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Govt. of India. National Handicapped Finance & Development Corporation has also launched a scheme wherein a PwD can take concessional loan for purchase of assistive devices to enhance their employability and efficiently perform the assigned job. Assistive Devices like, Screen Reader, Retrofitted mobility Aids, Artificial Limbs etc. are included in the assistive devices scheme. The details of the scheme are available in the website of NHFDC. These two schemes will benefit both the employer and the PwDs.

Government of India accords very high priority to Skill Development to reap maximum advantage of demographic dividend. Prime Minister's National Council on Skill Development has set a target of skilling 8 crore people in the XII Plan period. The PwDs constitutes about 2.13 % of the total population of India (Census 2001) and are also one of the marginalized sections of the society. The 75% of the PwD population is dispersed in Rural areas. Therefore, there is a need to focus on unorganized sector from the perspective of skill development.

Still, we have to achieve the target of skilling 24 lac PwDs in the XII Plan period. It means roughly about 5 lac PwDs are to be trained annually during the XII Plan period. This is an ambitious target which can only be achieved with the efforts of good NGOs, Private training providers, Govt. sector infrastructures and the efforts of PwD themselves. But in this great effort, following precautions are to be observed :-

Firstly, the training providers/Training Institutions should be dispersed in the rural areas where 75% PwDs reside.

Secondly, skilling of PwDs need to be focused in those sectors of economy where they can have placement by way of employment or self-employment in the rural areas itself. Here we can see the Govt. sector Banks, IT sector, Mobile repair, Photography, Motor winding etc. etc. In this area we will have to utilize the vast network of ITIs, Polytechnics and short term training courses run by IGNOU through its Regional Centres and other courses of the Universities through the network of Colleges in the rural areas. We can also flag some of the vocational courses of Govt. of India.

Thirdly, the training should be linked to placement. We should not stress on training which is not yielding an employment and

Lastly, the skilling of a PwD should result in employment with a salary to sustain him on regular basis.

The persons with disabilities face dual challenges of marginalization on account of normal socio-economic changes as well as on account of their physical and mental conditions. Hence, education, economic, social empowerment of persons with disabilities requires specialized efforts for bringing them in the mainstream. The main aim of the National Handicapped Finance & Development Corporation is to provide concessional credit to Persons with Disability (PwDs) for starting self-employment activities and also for pursuing professional/technical education through the channelizing agencies in the state. NHFDC has so far benefitted around 72,000 PwDs with a concessional credit support of over Rs.350 crores. NHFDC has started to reach out to PwDs through various Regional Rural Banks and Public Sector Banks. I am happy to inform that shortly the concessional credit of NHFDC will be available through the branches of Andhra Bank also.

I would like to inform this august gathering that NHFDC proposes to bring an ambitious scheme extending handholding support to young entrepreneurs/trained persons seeking self-employment ventures. We would be associating the reputed NGOs, reputed private training providers, LIC Agents and Bank Mitras. These facilitators will be bringing the PwDs to the Regional Rural Banks or Public Sector Banks/State Channelising Agencies of NHFDC wherein these facilitators will be guiding the PwDs for the appropriate self-employment ventures and would be filling up the forms etc by writing the project details etc. These facilitators will be provided a support of around Rs. 200 in each case by NHFDC simultaneously on the release of first instalment of loan amount. In this way, the NGOs, training providers, Bank Mitra and LIC Agents etc will join hands with NHFDC in expanding the potential of self-employment ventures in the country for PwDs. This will also ensure organizing timely credit to beneficiaries.

NHFDC also provides financial assistance in the form of grant to training institutes for conducting/sponsoring the training of PwDs between 15-50 years of age in order to make them capable and self-dependent through proper technical training in the field of traditional and technical occupations and entrepreneurship. Here, the recurring cost of the training and a stipend of Rs. 1,000/- per trainee per month is provided during the entire training duration as grant by NHFDC. NHFDC has so far sponsored 184 skill training programmes for training of 2904 PwDs.

These skill trainings are conducted through various institutes like Vocational Rehabilitation Centers for Handicapped (VRCs) of Ministry of Labour and Employment, Apparel Training & Design Centre , Apparel Export Promotion Council, Central Institute of Plastic Engineering and Technology (CIPET), state consultancy organization like MITCON, HARDICON, RAJCON etc. and the trades covered are : Sewing Machine Operator Course, Carpentry, DTP/Screen Printing, Mobile Repairing, Repair and Maintenance of Electrical Appliances, Machine Operator course, Motor winding, Bamboo Articles making, Practical Accounting & Book Keeping, Computer Application & Data Entry operator, Tally Programme (financial accounting), Food & Fruits Processing, Leather Products, Lac Products, Beautician Skill Development , Auto CAD, Mould Polishing and Inspection, Injection Moulding, Radio & TV Repair, Welding etc.

Recently, NHFDC has taken initiative for collaboration with leading training institutes like ITDC in hospitality related field, ATDC for textile related trainings, NSIC for training in small enterprises and NIESBUD for entrepreneurship trainings. NHFDC has also introduced registration on its website of interested PwDs for training through above institutions/ other institutions. The interested PwDs can register themselves on the website and will be advised suitably by NHFDC after registration. All these training programmes are free of cost to the PwDs and also a stipend of Rs.1,000/- p.m. will be provided by NHFDC to the trainees for the training duration. NHFDC has further made collaborative arrangement with reputed public sector undertakings for post training support in the form of essential tool kits/equipments so that a trained PwDs may further horn their skills besides making a small step towards self-employment. The interested trained PwDs are given concessional credit support from NHFDC for starting a self-employment venture.

Thank you.
