

**Press Information Bureau  
Government of India  
Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment**

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**States should emphasise on Empowerment and Inclusion of the Disabled, says  
Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment**

An interactive daylong Conference with Ministers of Social Welfare in States/UTs dealing with issues related to disability was held under the Chairmanship of Shri Thaawar Chand Gehlot, Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment here today.

Welcoming all the State Social Welfare Ministers, the Minister said that the Government has a seven-point agenda in its Manifesto including enactment of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill using technology to deliver low-cost home-based education through e-learning; issue of Universal ID to each and every person with disability for all applicable government benefits; ensuring access to public facilities, public buildings and transport; developing income generation models to ensure economic independence; aid and support to voluntary organizations; and tax relief to the family members taking care of persons with disabilities. The Minister sought the cooperation of all the States and UTs to draw up an action plan for the empowerment of persons with disabilities and make the initiatives a success.

Expressing concern about the rehabilitation of disabled persons, the Minister said though it is mainly a state subject but Municipalities and Panchayats also have the responsibility to deal with disability-related matters, as there is an increase in persons with disabilities from 2.19 crores in 2001 to 2.68 crores in 2011. He asked the State Governments to gear up and take effective steps for prevention, early detection and intervention and thereafter rehabilitation and empowerment of disabled people.

The Minister urged State Governments to be more attentive towards improving accessibility to public buildings and making Government websites accessible. He further said formulation of State Policy on Disabilities is an important factor which provides an enabling framework in prioritising various tasks.

Laying great stress on Disability Certificate, the Minister said it is essential for the persons with disabilities to avail various government benefits. As per the data available, a number of States have yet to cover all the eligible persons with disabilities and provide them with these certificates. There is a need for holding regular campaigns to achieve 100% disability certification. Further, persons with disabilities also experience serious problems when the certificate issued by one State is not applicable in another State or in a Central Government

Department. To overcome this problem, the Central Government is seriously examining the feasibility of issuance of universal ID which is applicable across the country.

Shri Gehlot said the disability sector is mainly driven by the voluntary organisations. In order to streamline the procedures for smooth grant of funds without delays and improve transparency, the Government has introduced online application for grants under these schemes. The Minister said that the State Governments will fix time-limits for sending recommendations to the Central Government, so that the objectives of introduction of online application are achieved. He urged the State Governments to encourage NGOs to increase their involvement to improve the conditions of persons with disabilities. Simultaneously, they should be asked to monitor the implementation so as to check their performance.

The Minister also urged the States and UTs to make optimum use of the Central Schemes to augment their efforts. He said funds under schemes like SIPDA, DDRS and ADIP have been under-utilised by the States/UTs in the recent years. The Minister informed that the Government has doubled financial allocation for the schemes during the XII Plan compared to the previous Plan and proposes to introduce 19 new schemes.

The Minister requested the State Ministers to share 3 or 4 best practices which are successful in States so that other States could benefit from their experience. The Minister, in his concluding remarks, directed states on following issues:

- States should undertake 10% NGO verification.
- Formulation of State Policy
- 3% Reservation in Government job
- 100% Accessibility to Public buildings
- Separate Commissioner for PWDs.
- Full Utilization of Centrals Funds by timely submission of proposals
- Setting up CRCS in all North East states
- Distribution of new devices under ADIP like motorised tricycles on priority.

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