

**Press Information Bureau
Government of India
Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment
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New Disability Rights Bill is Being Drafted**

Special Campaign to fill up over 12000 Vacancies for PWDs and Over 5 Lakh PWDs to be provided Skill Training in Next Three Years

Five National Sports Centers to be set up for Disabled

Provisions to check Atrocities against SCs will be enforced Strictly with the Enactment of New Act



Addressing the editors conference on social sector issues in Jaipur today, Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment, Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot said that, in order to fast track socio-economic development and empowerment of SCs, OBCs, Persons with Disabilities and other vulnerable sections of society, the Government policies and legislations have been reviewed and time bound action plans have drafted for the speedy implementation.

He said that, welfare of SC students has been given very high priority by the Government, hence scholarship for SC students at different levels have been enhanced. Under various Scholarship Schemes over 50 lakh students have been benefited during 2015-16.



Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot, Union minister for Social Justice & Empowerment addressing the All India Regional Conference at Jaipur

The Government has enacted new bill to check the atrocities against SCs. Now many more offences against SCs have been brought under the purview of the Act and provisions have been enforced from January 26, 2016. He said that rehabilitation of manual scavengers is being monitored at highest level to ensure speedy results. State Governments have identified 12226 manual scavengers upto December 2015. Of these, 7364 manual scavengers have been provided financial assistance and skill training for rehabilitation. Not only that to create employment opportunities for women dependants of the Safai Karamcharis, skill training have been provided for Commercial Motor Driving.

Keeping in view the changing demographic pattern, socio-economic needs of the senior citizens, a New National Policy for Senior Citizens is under finalization. Integrated Programme for Older Persons has also been launched and effective scheme for Prevention of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse has been started.

In order to promote entrepreneurship among the Scheduled Castes and to provide concessional finance to them 'Venture Capital Fund for SCs' has been created by the Government which will result in job creation besides confidence in Scheduled Castes. In the current year also (up September 2015), NBCFDC, with a gross disbursement of Rs.2970.89 Crore, have supported 19,99,519 beneficiaries so far.

Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot said the Government has decided to develop all the major spots related life and work of Dr. Ambedkar as memorials. A committee under chairmanship of the Prime Minister has been set up for yearlong celebrations of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's 125th anniversary. Co-chairman of the committee, Shri Rajnath Singh, Union Home Minister yesterday reviewed the programmes to be taken up for this purpose. As a part of this celebrations study tour programme of 100 research scholars in four groups of 25 each to the Columbia University USA and London School of Economics UK, where Dr. Ambedkar has taken up his higher studies. During the month of October and November 2015, research scholars have visited the Columbia University, USA and London School of Economics, UK.

Regarding efforts being made for empowerment of transgender community, the minister said that his Ministry has drafted an umbrella scheme for empowerment of transgender persons and "The Rights of Transgender Persons Bill, 2015" has been drafted.

Social Welfare and Empowerment Minister said that meaningful thrust has been given to activities aimed at welfare and empowerment of Persons with Disabilities. It is the vision of the Government to have an inclusive society, in which equal opportunities and access is provided for the growth and development of PwDs to lead productive, safe and dignified lives. In this direction, his Ministry has launched the "Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan)" as a nation-wide flagship campaign for achieving universal accessibility for PwDs. Under the programme important buildings in 50 cities will be made accessible for the PwDs under a time bound action plan.

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2014 has been drafted and all stakeholders are being consulted before it is in parliament. Filling up vacancies earmarked for Persons with Disabilities in the Central Government has been taken up on the priority basis and a time bound action plan has been prepared to fill up 12,786 vacancies. Launch of National Action Plan for Skill Training of Persons With Disabilities: within next 3 years, 5 Lakh PwDs to be Skill Trained

The minister said that, a new scheme for Cochlear Implant for Empowering Persons with Hearing Disability has been launched in last December using Modern Technology. This involves a surgery costing about Rs.6.00 lakh per child, it will hugely benefit to the poor

beneficiaries, especially children, whose parents do not have the capacity to plan such surgery. After the launch in last December, 305 surgeries have been completed. Children who have been performed this surgery have been showing improvement and has started responding to sounds and started speaking. He observed that “All these children come from poor families and are enjoying the world of sounds and have started developing speech and command on language”.

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has also taken major steps to modernize aids and assistive devices for PwDs. ALIMCO, a PSU under the Ministry, with collaboration world known companies like Ottobock, Germany, Motivation, UK, etc. 1836 Camps for distribution of Aids and Assistive devices have been organized during last 20 months. The Aids & Assistive Devices with cost of Rs.5905.5 Lakh distributed to PwDs.

A “Job portal for the PwDs” for facilitating employment of PwDs has been launched. This will aggregate various jobs availability for PwDs in Governments/PSUs and private sector, and facilitate placement and employment of unemployed, skilled and semi-skilled PwDs. Beside this Toll-free “Help Desk/Help Centre” is being developed by the Department. The Department is establishing Five National Sports Centres of Sports to develop and encourage disabled sports persons.

Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot expressed the hope that these initiatives taken by the Government will create a homogenous society where all vulnerable class will get equal opportunity for development and to participate in the mainstream.
