

Press Information Bureau
Government of India
Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment
03-December-2015 18:05 IST

Accessible India Campaign to achieve universal accessibility for persons with disabilities launched

National Awards for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities presented

Union Minister of Finance, Shri Arun Jaitley along with Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment, Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot today launched “Accessible India Campaign”(Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan), a nationwide campaign that will enable persons with disabilities to gain universal access, equal opportunity for development, independent living and participation in all aspects of life in an inclusive society.

Under the campaign, atleast 50% of all the government buildings of National Capital and all the State capitals will be made fully accessible for persons with disabilities by July 2018. All the international airports in the country and railway stations of A1, A & B categories will be made fully accessible by July 2016. As per campaign drafted by Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, atleast 10% of government owned public transport carriers in the country will be converted into fully accessible carriers for these persons by March 2018. It will also be ensured that atleast 50% of all public documents issued by the Central Government and the State Governments meet accessibility standards for persons with disabilities by March 2018.

Shri Arun Jaitley along with Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot also presented the National Awards for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, in a function organised by Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment here today. Minister of States, Shri Krishan Pal Gurjar, and Shri Vijay Sampla were also present on the occasion.

In a message for the occasion Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi said that proposed smart cities should have the provisions for full accessibility for person with disabilities. He said that, all Central Ministries and States should make all efforts to make “Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan” successful. Congratulating the awardees the Prime Minister said that “we should consider replacing ‘Viklang’ word with ‘Divayang’”.

Lunching the campaign and presenting the awards, Finance Minister, Shri Arun Jaitley said it is the society's responsibility to take up the campaign in mission mode. Sugamya Bharat is a right step towards inclusive society. Accessibility for persons with disability to all infrastructure and activities should be one of the parameters of our development. Shri Jaitley said mass awareness should be created about the issue of accessibility for these persons.

Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment, Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot said that the Government has taken a number of initiatives for the empowerment of persons with disabilities which include scholarships separate institute for deaf and dumb persons and development of new brail language. The Government has also decided to set up a special University for persons with disabilities with the cost of Rs. 1700 crore. It will start functioning with next academic year. He said that accessible India Campaign will empower persons with disabilities further.

A web portal and mobile application for creating a crowd sourcing platform to get information about inaccessible was also launched on the occasion.

The National Awards are conferred on 3rd December every year on the 'International Day of Persons with Disabilities' on outstanding Persons with Disabilities; individuals and organizations that are working for the empowerment of persons with disabilities.

This year, the National Awards were conferred on 52 individuals/institutions under fourteen broad categories. One Award pertaining to the year 2014 was also conferred during this year. List of National Award winners can be accessed on <https://goo.gl/nmVIJc>.
