

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

03-July-2015 19:24 IST

**Conference of State Social Welfare Secretaries/Administrators of UTs Dealing  
with Disability Affairs Held**

The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment held a two days Conference of State Social Welfare Secretaries / Administrators of UTs dealing with Disability Affairs on 2nd and 3rd July, 2015 here today. The Conference was inaugurated by Shri Thaawar Chand Gehlot, Minister Social Justice & Empowerment.

27 States/Union Territories of the Country were represented including the North Eastern States.

The Minister in his inaugural address stated that although the Schemes are of the Central Government, the implementation lies primarily with the State Governments, without whose cooperation achieving success would not be possible.

Shri Lov Verma, Secretary, DEPwD in his inaugural address gave an overview of the Major Policy Issues concerning the Person with Disability, new initiatives taken by the Central Government for the Welfare and Empowerment of such persons including launch of new scholarship schemes and appealed to all the States/UTs to take pro active measures in this regard. Shri Awanish Kumar Awasthi and Shri Mukesh Jain, Joint Secretaries in their presentations besides giving Status of implementation of various schemes highlighted the following issues:

(i) Need for issue of Disability Certificates to all eligible persons with disability in mission mode and Universal ID for such persons and creation of a National Data Base.

(ii) 'Sugamaya Bharat Abhiyan' launched by the Government impressing upon the State Governments to create an accessible environment at all public places, buildings, transport and also making the website accessible to Persons with various types of disabilities;

(iii) New initiatives including inclusion of Cochlear Implant for children with hearing

impairment, high end aids and assistive devices including electronic wheel chairs under ADIP Scheme.

Some of the State Governments / UTs especially the States of Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Haryana, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Kerala, Odisha, Bihar and the NCT of Delhi, highlighted the best practices being followed in their respective States.

The major conclusions drawn and the announcements made were as follows:

(i) Accessibility audit of all the Government buildings and public places may be conducted for which Central Government could provide financial support. It was mentioned that the "Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan", envisages to identify 100 most impactful buildings and make them accessible to the PwDs. The representative from Kerala informed that they had prepared a Detailed Project Report involving Rs.50 crore to create a barrier-free district, which will be replicated in other districts.

(ii) International Day for Persons with Disabilities, 3rd December may be celebrated in all the States and UTs where inter-alia the achievers amongst the PwDs may be rewarded..

(iii) The States/UTs may send their updated figures on Issue of Disability Certificates.

(iv) Action Plan for Skill Development of PwDs targets of skilling 25 lakh persons with a view to enable them to get wage or self-employment may be pursued vigorously.

(v) The State Governments, especially, Haryana & Tripura stated that there was a great need for sensitizing the Government officials and all other stakeholders on the disability issues, which could be done only with the help of experts who understand disability.

(vi) Raahgiri Day for Persons with Disabilities may be organized. (vii) Sporting events highlight the potential of PwDs. The State Governments may encourage the same.

## **Best Practices**

i. The UT of Chandigarh is giving petrol/diesel subsidy to PwDs @Rs.2500/- per month. Transportation being important for the category, this needs to be followed by other States/UTs also.

ii. Programmes like Hum Raahi of Government of Haryana could be started by other States/UTs for which Central Government assistance under awareness generation scheme can also be available.

iii. The Himachal Pradesh representative informed that they had no homes for the mentally retarded persons in the State. The same was required in 3 regions. It was stated that the Central Government could give one-time grant for the purpose whereas the recurring expenditure will have to be borne by the State Government.

All the States could follow the pattern of Assam Government for half-way homes.

iv. The Government of Telangana representative informed that under their SADAREM scheme they are issuing disability certificate within 1 day. Under this disability data of a person is fed into computer and the computer itself assesses the percentage of disability.

v. The State Government of Tamil Nadu is operating Chief Minister's Health Insurance Scheme under which financial assistance is given for Cochlear Implants. Other States can also learn from such schemes.

In his concluding remarks, Secretary, DEPwD invited attention to the Incheon Strategy, its 10 broad goals, targets, indicators and the supplementary indicators to measure success rate in achieving rehabilitation and development of the persons with disabilities. He also appealed to all the States and UTs to adopt and follow good practices being followed by other States and UTs.

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