




Be Mains Ready

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Q. What are the various challenges faced by Persons with Disabilities in India? Highlight the measures taken by the government for the welfare of Persons with Disabilities. (250 words)

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Approach

- Briefly mention the discrimination and marginalization of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).
- Summarize the various kinds of challenges faced by this community.
- Enumerate the government measures for their aid and assistance.
- Conclude with the Constitution's ideals and attitudinal change required in society.

Answer

One of the largest minority groups in India, who have suffered long years of neglect, deprivation, segregation and exclusion are Persons with Disability (PwD). As per Census 2011, the number of Persons with Disabilities in India is 268.14 lakhs constituting 2.21 per cent of the total population.

Persons with Disabilities in India continue to face myriad challenges that prevent them from enjoying their full civil, political, economic, social, cultural and developmental rights:

- **Loss of independence:** Disabled people have difficulties in self-care, many of them are financially dependent on their family members or relatives, which leads to loss of autonomy.
- **Transportation:** Disabled people face lots of problems in taking public transport while they lack the ability to operate and sometimes afford private means of transport.
- **Accessibility:** Physical barriers still exist in public buildings, offices, schools and hospitals.

- **Communication** and social relationship: Disabled people have difficulties in social relationships and they usually have smaller social networks. This is mainly due to discrimination and misunderstanding.
- **Self-esteem:** Their 'disability' is often seen as their 'inability' by many and people in general have preconceived notions about their capabilities. This ultimately results in lower self-esteem in these people.

Schemes for inclusive development of Persons with Disabilities

- **Assistance to Disabled Persons Scheme (ADIP):**The main objective of ADIP scheme is to assist the needy disabled persons in procuring durable and scientifically manufactured standard aids and appliances that can promote their physical, social and psychological rehabilitation, by reducing the effects of disabilities.
- **Inclusive Education for the Disabled at Secondary Stage (IEDSS):** This scheme supports children with disabilities aged 14 or above for completing their secondary education from Class 9 to Class 12 in government, local body and government aided schools.
- **Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan):** This campaign aims to create universal accessibility for PwDs in the built environment, transport, information and communication technology (ICT) ecosystem. This campaign is based on the principles of the social model of disability, that disability is caused by the way society is organised and not by the person's limitations and impairments.
- **Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS):** Financial assistance is provided to NGOs for projects relating to rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities.
- **Scheme for Implementation of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (SIPDA):** It is a wide ranging scheme, under which financial assistance is given for skill development and creation of a barrier free environment.
- **Rights of Persons With Disabilities Act, 2016:** This landmark Act on disability increased the number of disabilities from 7 to 21. This Act also increased the quota of reservation for persons with disabilities from 3% to 4% in government jobs and 3% to 5% in higher education institutions.

The Constitution of India applies uniformly to every legal citizen of India, whether they are healthy or disabled in any way (physically or mentally). It guarantees the right of justice, equality of status and of opportunity. For this we need a shift from a charity-based approach to a rights-based approach for welfare of Persons with Disabilities.