



About Swabhiman

Founded in 2001, Swabhiman is a registered nonprofit, a cross disability organization, advocating for and serving persons with disabilities in Odisha, India and South Asia. It advocates for the human rights-based approach to disability implying that all persons with disabilities need to participate in all spheres of society on an equal basis with their non-disabled peers.

Swabhiman has been in the forefront of several policy changes that have positively impacted the lives of persons with disabilities. It specifically focuses on supporting education, strengthening youth for availing employment opportunities, increasing public awareness on the issue of disability, working towards accessible cities and conducting research for enabling advocacy.

Swabhiman works at the international level with DPI (Disabled People's International), at national level with NDN (National Disability Network), and in local level with its network (Odisha State Disability Network) of district chapters to create a strong and impressive network of civil rights advocates promoting and protecting rights of persons with disabilities at all levels.

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GIANT LEAPS FORWARD

Regional Museum of Natural History

Regional Museum of Natural History, Bhubaneswar organised a program for "Children with special needs - 2017" on 8th and 9th February. Swabhiman mobilized 9 divyangs from different ICRCs (Suryakanta Mohanty (speech and hearing impaired of ICRC 1), Prerana Parida (orthopaedically challenged) and Ananta Jena (speech and hearing impaired) of ICRC 2, Kiran Behera (orthopaedically challenged) of ICRC 4, Pravati Patra (orthopaedically challenged) and Barsharani Behera (orthopaedically challenged) of ICRC 5, Subrat Kumar Sahoo (speech and hearing impaired) of ICRC 6, Soumya Ranjan Sahoo (speech and hearing impaired) of ICRC 7 and Sambit Das (speech and hearing impaired) of ICRC 8 to participate and learn with children from different organisation and schools. 5 schools/organisation (BBC School for the Deaf, Chetna, OLS, Rajdhani School for the Deaf, and Sri Harsha Mishra Memorial School for the Deaf) participated in the event.

In two days children were engaged in activities like Origami, Sand Art and Painting. In the evenings little starts performed in the cultural program and got a token of love from the organizers. Poonam Naik, Project Officer and Lalatendu Bhoi, Facilitator coordinated the two days mobilization of the children.

From the Editor's Desk

In this second issue of 2017 we have the activities of Swabhiman like visit of children to the Regional Museum of Natural History, cheering team blue in T20 World cup cricket match for blind, live for Odisha organised for youths, condolence of Swabhiman's beloved child, Visit of chief executive to different events and conferences, and Make a Wish activity in the paediatric ward of Acharya Harihar Regional Cancer Centre, Katak. In the pages in international news it has the latest of disability sector from round the globe. It has the glimpses of SDGs and its 17 goals, about first Special Rapporteur, discussion of disability issues in Commission for Social Development (CSocD55). In National News, the state's highlights related to disability have found space. Guidelines for PwDs during National Anthem, highlights from Assam, Rs. 1000 monthly for 45 lakh disabled people, and budget allocation as per new bill. State news celebrates the success of PwDs – visually impaired qualified the civil services and a lady in a wheelchair winning the panchayat election.



AHRCC

Likewise the other Mondays this month too volunteers representing Swabhiman visited the kids of Paediatric ward of Acharya Harihar Regional Cancer Centre (AHRCC), Katak and entertained the kids with some new stuff. On 6th February the children were taught making paper boats, getting ready to enjoy the rains and paper flowers from which they decorated their beds. On 13th February we made an entertainment session by screening childhood loved cartoons - Tom and Jerry, Motu Patlu, Doremon and many more. On 21st February children demanded to learn more making more flowers from paper and our volunteers fulfilled their wish by teaching those stars and flowers. Volunteers Lipsa Priyadrshini, Abhinash Deuria and Sanjay Kanhar volunteered for this month.

AT-20 World Cup For The Blind India Vs New Zealand

Blind cricket is a version of the sport of cricket adapted for blind and partially sighted players. It has been governed by the World Blind Cricket Council (WBCC) since 1996. So far, four Blind World Cups have been held, New Delhi, India (1998); Chennai, India (2002) and Islamabad, Pakistan (2006). India won the blind T20 World Cup in 2017 by beating Pakistan by 9 wickets. India played a T20 match with New Zealand here in the capital city.

The Indian team reached Bhubaneswar to play with New Zealand after winning six league matches out of seven in the T20 World Cup.

The players were welcomed by the officials from Cricket Association for the Blind in India (CABI), Cricket Association for the Visually Impaired Odisha (CAVI Odisha), and the Brand Ambassador for Cricket for the Blind in Odisha and Odia actor Sabyasachi Mishra. The match was held in KIIT Stadium on 7th Feb, 2017. Around 300 divyang students from Odisha Blind Association, BBC School for Deaf, Ravenshaw University, BJB College, Khalikot College, Odisha Orthopaedic Association and Children from different ICRCs (Inclusive Child Resource Centres) were mobilized by Swabhiman to support and cheer for team Blue.



Condolence of Guddu Das



Guddu Das, the pride of Swabhiman dwelling in Bhubaneswar and a shining student of BJB College Colony Project UP School achieving heights sitting in a wheelchair took his last breath on 5th February. He was a gifted singer and painter. He participated in many competitions and won numerous prizes. For his soul to rest in peace we organised a condolence in the centre (ICRC 1).



Live For Odisha

On 2nd February 2017 Biswajit Swain, founder and president of 'Live for Odisha' organised a Youth Development Conclave for encouraging the young minds of Odisha in Jaydev Bhawan.

Dr. Sruti Mohapatra, Chief Executive, Swabhiman was invited as Guest of Honour. She shared the dais with Chief Guest Soumya Ranjan Patnaik, Editor of



The Sambad, daily newspaper, Jagadananda, founder of CYSD, Bhabani Charan Patnaik, Freedom Fighter, Madhusudan Das, State Convenor, NYP and Subhashree Dash, Social Activist.

Dr. Mohapatra told her childhood memories, challenges of life and inspired the youths to dream and to take action to fulfil the dream.

Orientation on Swavlamban Health Insurance

On 20th February Swabhiman organised an orientation on Swavlamban Health Insurance Scheme, launched by The New India Assurance Company Limited in association with Ministry of Social Justice, Dept of Empowerment of PwDs. It is a group mediclaim policy for PwDs that provides affordable Health Insurance to persons with blindness, low vision, leprosy - cured, hearing impairment, loco - motor disability, mental retardation and mental illness. Its motive is to improve general health condition & to increase the style of living of PwDs. 5 divyangs, 3 from Ravenshaw College, and 2 from Aaina organisation along with 18 staffs of Swabhiman attended the orientation. Two Representatives



Mahila Sahabhagita

Bharat Vikash Parishad, Bhubaneswar Central, in association with Jagruti Ladies Club had organised MAHILA SAHABHAGITA PROGRAMME on 20 February, Monday, in Metrocity Apartment Complex. Dr Sruti Mohapatra, Subhashree Das (Ashakiran) & Prof Jayanti Jagdeb (Ex.HOD. Utkal University Women's wing) were the guest Speakers. Geeta Rout (President Jagruti Ladies Club), Nellie Chaterjee (Secretary), Sangita Dash (Secretary.BVP.BBSR Central) & Dr Jyotshna Mohapatra (Convenor) coordinated the program under the dynamic leadership of Dr Mahesh Prasad Rout (President.BVP Bhubaneswar Central) head of the coordination team. All the speakers narrated about the involvement and participation of women in every sphere; be it cultural, social and traditional for creating a healthy nation. Dr. Mohapatra spoke on "Unconditional Love" which was widely acclaimed. A large no of BVP members from all branches, about 150, were in the audience.



Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation centre

Swabhiman with an aim to rehabilitate the injuries is planning to set up a centre in Odisha. A preparatory meeting was held on 11th February in Swabhiman Office. Around 8 members (G. C. Pati, Former Chief Secretary, Odisha, S Vaidyanathan, co founder of Ganga Trust, Durga Prasad Parida, a person with spinal cord injury, Dr. Abhishek Samal, Spinal Cord Specialist, Dr. Apurba from AIIMS and Dr. Sruti Mohapatra, Chief Executive) participated and gave their opinions in the construction of the rehabilitation centre.

Annual Get together of Person with Spinal cord Injury

On the last Sunday of the month Swabhiman and Spinal Foundation organised 2nd annual get together of persons with spinal cord injury. 15 members (Durga Prasad Pattanaik, Santosh Kumar Panda, Jitendra Mohapatra, Deenabandhu Sahoo, Ashok Kumar, Rabi Tripathy, Surya Kumar Sahu, Chumki Dutta, Syana Sekhar, Manas Ranjan Sahoo, Alaka Kar, Ashish Kumar Biswal, and Dr. Sruti Mohapatra) joined the get together and spent some leisure time.

Invest Bhubaneswar

While Odisha is going to complete 100 years in 2036, the next two decades are crucial to curve out a vision to showcase the state where it should be in the global arena with all its resources and potential. On this context 'Invest Bhubaneswar' brought together many powerful Odia minds from across the lives and globe who shared their vision on the long-term and sustainable development of the state. Speaking at the occasion, Dharmendra Pradhan, union minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas said that water is one of the biggest resources of Odisha. Thus we should try to tap it. Similarly, the fate of Odisha can be turn around if we can focus on agriculture and agro-based products, he mentioned. He further referred that as the market of metals is facing a global challenge, we can explore plastic and other sectors to adopt futuristic business models.

Dr. Sruti Mohapatra spoke on the vision of Odisha that is clean, green and has social equity. She spoke about the business sense of addressing universal accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities in society. That they constitute a



Among others, Guruprasad Mohapatra, Chairman, Airports Authority of India; Asoka Kumar Das, VC, Utkal University; Haraprasad Das, writer and critic; Ashok Basa, past President, Institution of Engineers (India); Pulin B. Nayak, former Director, Delhi School of Economics; Baijayant Panda, MP Lok Sabha; Sudarsan Pattnaik, Sand Artist; Prashanta Nanda, Film Actor and Director; Sruti Mohapatra, social activist; Sopnendu Mohanty, Chief Fintech Officer, Monetary Authority of Singapore; Aruna Mohanty, Odissi dancer; Panchami Manoo Ukil, wildlife enthusiast and Akshaya Parija, Ex-banker & entrepreneur and Santrupt B. Misra, CEO, Carbon Black Business and Director, Group Human Resources of the Aditya Birla Management Corporation. At opening of the conclave Debashis Patnaik, Convenor 'Invest Bhubaneswar' briefed the audience on the objectives of the program. The valuable insights emerged in the conclave will be compiled as a vision document to rekindle the pace of growth and progress of the state, he informed. The conclave was attended by leading entrepreneurs, professionals of various fields and students of various disciplines.

International News

bus-Yorkshire

In September 2015, the General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Building on the principle of “leaving no one behind”, the new Agenda emphasizes a holistic approach to achieving sustainable development for all. The SDGs also explicitly include disability and persons with disabilities 11 times. Disability is referenced in multiple parts of the SDGs, specifically in the parts related to education, growth and employment, inequality, accessibility of human settlements, as well as data collection and the monitoring of the SDGs. Although, the word “disability” is not cited directly in all goals, the goals are indeed relevant to ensure the inclusion and development of persons with disabilities.

The newly implemented 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development holds a deep promise for persons with disabilities everywhere. The year 2016 marks the first year of the implementation of the SDGs. At this critical point, Envision2030 will work to promote the mainstreaming of disability and the implementation of the SDGs

- Raise awareness of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the SDGs for persons with disabilities;
- Promote an active dialogue among stakeholders on the SDGs with a view to create a better world for persons with disabilities; and Establish an ongoing live web resource on each SDG and disability.
- The campaign invites all interested parties in sharing their vision of the world in 2030 to be inclusive of persons with disabilities.



Understanding Sustainable Development Goals from Disability Perspective

The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals point towards humankind's approach to development from the perspective of people, planet and prosperity. It also seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom. The world has finally concurred in recognising that eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development.

The Heads of State and Government and High Representatives, meeting at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 25-27 September 2015, envisaged a world free of poverty, hunger, disease and want; free of fear and violence; with equitable and universal access to quality education at all levels; to health care and social protection; universal respect for human rights and human dignity, the rule of law, justice, equality and non-discrimination; a just, equitable, tolerant, open and socially inclusive world in which the needs of the most vulnerable are met.

Persons with disabilities were not included in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and consequently excluded from many development initiatives and funding streams. Whereas the MDGs were framed behind closed chambers without involving the disability sector, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were framed in consultation with the disability sector.

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2030 Agenda & SDGs

Adopted in 2000 and end in 2015 Adopted in 2015 and end in 2030

Focus on developing countries Universal, applies to all countries

To reduce extreme poverty to eradicate poverty in all its forms and to realize economic empowerment through sustainable development

8 goals and 18 targets with 48 indicators 17 goals and 169 targets with 231 global indicators

No references to persons with disabilities 7 references in SDGs: education (2), employment, reducing inequalities, inclusive cities (2), disaggregation of data by disability

(All together 11 in Agenda 2030 and 9 in global indicators)

Disability is referenced in various parts of the SDGs and specifically in parts related to education, growth and employment, inequality, accessibility of human settlements, as well as data collection and monitoring of the SDGs, for instance:

- Goal 4 on inclusive and equitable quality education and promotion of life-long learning opportunities for all focuses on eliminating gender disparities in education and ensuring equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities. In addition, the proposal calls for building and upgrading education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and also provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.
- In Goal 8: to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, the international community aims to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.
- Closely linked is Goal 10, which strives to reduce inequality within and among countries by empowering and promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all, including persons with disabilities.
- Goal 11 would work to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe and sustainable. To realize this goal, Member States are called upon to provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, such as persons with disabilities. In addition, the proposal calls for providing universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, particularly for persons with disabilities.
- Goal 17 stresses that in order to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development, the collection of data and monitoring and accountability of the SDGs are crucial. Member States are called upon to enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS), which would significantly increase the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data that is also disaggregated by disability.

Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Eradication of poverty in all its forms remains the overriding priority and a necessary condition for sustainable development. The pursuit of this would provide a strong nexus to the realization of the unfinished business of the MDGs. Some areas that could be considered include: eradicating absolute poverty; reducing relative poverty; addressing inequalities at both national and international levels; access to property and productive assets, finance and markets for all women and men; providing social protection to reduce vulnerabilities of the poor, including children, youth, unemployed, persons with disabilities, indigenous people and local communities and older persons. Since poverty is multidimensional, progress is linked to action in all other focus areas.

Targets

1.1 By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day

1.2 By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions

1.3 Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable

1.4 By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance

1.5 By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters

1.a Ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation, in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions

1.b Create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional and international levels, based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies, to support accelerated investment in poverty eradication actions.

What it means for persons with disabilities?

➤ Eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere

Implement social protection systems and measures for all, and achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable

➤ Ensure that the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources

➤ Access to basic services

➤ Ownership (land, property, inheritance, natural resources)

➤ New technology

➤ Financial services, including micro finance

➤ Build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure

When is the goal achieved for persons with disabilities?

All are lifted out of extreme poverty, empowered, active contributors of society and enjoy equal rights

The Convention on Right of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was ratified as the first human rights treaty in the 21st century with a record number of signatories in history to any United Nations (UN) Convention. The CRPD is one of nine core international human rights treaties and also the first internationally legally binding instrument to address the plight of persons with disabilities globally. The onus lies on us to mainstream the provisions of the Convention and



National News

Catalina Devandas Aguilar

(<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Disability/SRDisabilities/Pages/SRDisabilitiesIndex.aspx>)

Ms. Catalina Devandas Aguilar (Costa Rica) is the first Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, following Human Rights Council resolution 26/20 establishing the new special procedures mandate. She is a lawyer by training and human rights advocate, who has worked extensively on disability issues at the national, regional and international level. Before taking up her duties as first Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, she was working as a Program Officer for Strategic Partnerships with the Disability Rights Advocacy Fund, and was formerly with the UN Secretariat unit responsible for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the World Bank as a consultant for the Disability and Inclusive Development team for Latin America and the Caribbean region. With this new mandate the UN system continues to strengthen its efforts to recognize, promote, implement and monitor the rights of persons with disabilities from a human rights-based approach, in line with the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the broader human rights framework.

Mandate of the Special Rapporteur

The Special Rapporteur is mandated to:

- Develop a regular dialogue with States and other stakeholders for the identification, exchange and promotion of good practices related to the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities;
- Receive and exchange information and communications on violations of the rights of persons with disabilities;

➤ Consult with and involve PWDs and their representative organizations in a participatory manner in the conduct of her work;

➤ Make concrete recommendations on how to better promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities, including on how to promote development that is inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities;

➤ .Provide technical assistance in support of national efforts for the effective realization of the rights of persons with disabilities;

➤ Raise awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities;

➤ Closely cooperate with other UN human rights mechanisms and UN entities to advance the rights of persons with disabilities in a coherent manner;

➤ Integrate a gender perspective throughout the work of the mandate;

➤ Report annually to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly

In the discharge of these functions, the Special Rapporteur:

Acts on information submitted to her regarding alleged violations of the human rights of persons with disabilities by sending urgent appeals and communications to concerned States to clarify and/or bring this information to their attention.

Conducts country visits upon the invitation of the Government, to examine the state of protection of the human rights of persons with disabilities in the given country. The Special Rapporteur submits a report of the visit to the Human Rights Council, presenting her findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Participates in conferences, seminars and panels on disability-related matters and issues press releases

Reports annually to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly, in accessible formats, about the global state of protection of persons with disabilities, her main concerns and the good practices observed in relation to the rights of persons with disabilities. The Special Rapporteur formulates specific recommendations with a view to enhancing the protection of the human rights of persons with disabilities.

CSocD55 discusses

7 February 2017

Persons with disabilities and disability issues were featured at the fifty-fifth session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD55) was conducted at UN Headquarters in New York from 1 to 10 February 2017. The priority theme for the 2017-2018 review and policy cycle is "Strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all".

High-Level Panel Discussion on Poverty and Disability

On 3 February, a High-Level Panel Discussion titled "Leaving no one behind: poverty and disability" took place. Delegates spotlighted the obligation of Governments and international organizations to promote and protect the inalienable rights of the world's 1 billion persons with disabilities. The Panelists focused on the nexus between disability and poverty, underscoring the need to incorporate disability into all future development efforts. They also responded to a range of comments and questions raised by delegates, including several persons with disabilities, who demanded full participation in decision-making and emphasized that "nothing about us without us".

- Concept Note of the High-level Panel Discussion on "Leaving No One Behind: Poverty and Disability"
- Presentations and Statements

Ms. Nora Groce, PhD, Moderator – Professor and Director, Leonard Cheshire Centre for Disability and Inclusive Development, University College, London

Ms. Catalina Devandas Aguilar, Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the Human Rights Council

Mr. Mosharraf Hossain, Director of Global Policy, Influencing & Research of ADD International

Ms. Catalina Devandas Aguilar, the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities of the Human Rights Council stated: "The 2030 Agenda is a unique opportunity to eradicate poverty, but that goal cannot be achieved without persons with disabilities." Emphasizing that all actors working to implement that Agenda - including Governments, development specialists, United Nations agencies and others - must take account of disability issues in a rights-based manner, she pointed to the clear correlation between disability and inequality, saying structural barriers such as lack of access to education and transport contributed to their exclusion.



National News

Budget 2016: Social Justice Ministry allocated Rs 7,350 crore

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley

Mon, 29 Feb 2016-10:36pm, New Delhi, PTI

Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry was allocated Rs 7,350 cr. in the Union Budget for the next fiscal, an increase of 11.69% over the last budget. Budgetary allocation for Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in 2015-16 was Rs 6,580 cr. while for the Tribal Ministry was Rs 4,573.80 cr. The Social Justice and Empowerment Department has received a hike of over Rs 596.5 crore and the Department of Disability Affairs has received a raise of nearly Rs 173 cr. in 2016-17, compared to the revised estimates for 2015-16. The Department of Social Justice and Empowerment has been earmarked Rs 6,565.95 cr, while the Dept of Disability Affairs has been earmarked Rs 783.56 crore.

The Self Employment Scheme of Liberation and Rehabilitation of Scavengers has been earmarked Rs 9 cr.. The allocation for total Welfare of Persons with Disabilities is up by over Rs 160 cr. this year, which has been allocated Rs 527.93 cr. Allocation for Aids and Appliances for differently-abled people has also been increased to Rs 117 cr. The objective of Aids and Appliances scheme is to provide grants-in-aid to various implementing agencies to assist the needy disabled persons in procuring durable and modern aids and appliances that can promote their physical, social and psychological rehabilitation.

Budget 2017: Where is the Money to Implement the Disabilities Act?

<https://thewire.in/105066/budget-disability-rights-bill-accessible-india/>

State News

Despite having passed the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act in 2016, the Budget allocated only about 0.0039% of the GDP for the differently abled.

Persons with disabilities and their families had many hopes resting on the Budget speech. After all, the prime minister himself had made it quite clear that he held this sector close to his heart – rechristening them divyang and even spending his birthday distributing aids and appliances to them. The Sugamya Bharat Abhiyaan (Accessible India Campaign), launched in 2015, was said to be another highlight of this commitment. And finally, with the passage of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill – which brought the ruling party and the opposition together ostensibly for the betterment of the sector – people with disabilities were led to believe that their lives would change for the better.

Instead, all that the sector got were some references in opening lines of the Budget speech regarding the 'poor and underprivileged' sections of society – "Sabka saath sabka vikas (everyone together, everyone progressing)". Despite the government's efforts, they still left this significant population behind.

The only mention this sector finds is in the reference to making of 500 railway stations 'differently abled friendly by providing lifts and escalators'. The Accessible India Campaign, however, had already taken up this task. Accessibility is much beyond merely lifts and escalators – the latter not being helpful for most persons with disabilities. Specifically, targets were set to ensure that A1 and A and B category railway stations are converted into fully accessible railway stations by July 2016, and 50% of all railway stations ought to be converted into fully accessible ones by March 2018.

In fact, the funding for this does not fall within the railway budget – the Rs 193 crores which were claimed to be 'exclusively' for the Accessible India Campaign is budgeted expenditure for 2016-17 under the existing Scheme for Implementation of the Persons with Disabilities Act (SIPDA), which is available for any entity obliged to make their infrastructure accessible under the Act. As pointed out in an analysis by the Equals Centre for Promotion of Social Justice, allocating this fund to the Accessible India Campaign is retrogressive as it limits the government efforts towards providing accessibility to infrastructure and services in a limited number of cities, particularly considering that 69.5% of the disabled population reside in rural areas. Also, lest we forget, without rolling stock that is universally designed, persons with disabilities aren't

going to go very far. There is no mention of this, nor is there any report on the commitment of the previous year's railway budget promise of 'divyang friendly toilets' at railway stations.

The demand for grants by the Department for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities has shown a 9% increase, with most of the expenditure allotted for institutions old and new; only 41% of the expenditure will actually go into demand driven schemes for the welfare of persons with disabilities, even though the new law expands the number of impairments included under such schemes from seven to 19. The Accessible India Campaign and progress therein was absent from the Budget speech and the companion documents, while the SIPDA fund gets a marginal increase of 6.7%. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 creates a national fund for persons with disabilities that finds no mention in the Budget. The statute does not provide for automatic absorption of the SIPDA. The first year of this new law, which seeks to implement India's obligations under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, does not look optimistic.

While the prime minister appreciated the need for personal mobility and assistive devices – enough to break Guinness World Records while promoting them – the Scheme for Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of Aids and Appliances has actually seen a decline in allocations, with a Rs 20 crore decrease from the revised estimates of the previous year. The Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India has seen no increase in its allocation of Rs 5 crores over the last three financial years despite research and development around prosthetics progressing by the day. The government has failed to link Budget expenditure to meaningful implementation of the Bill that it enacted in all earnestness, let alone international obligations. Although the estimates on the number of persons with disabilities in India differ – the WHO estimates 15% of the population to be disabled while the Indian census puts the figure at 2.1% of the population – a 0.0039% of specific allocation of the Budget is nothing but abysmal.

Advocacy efforts must focus across ministries to ensure that their service delivery design is inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities, as well as with state governments to do their bit considering disability is a state subject in the constitution. The finance minister's speech refers to outcome based monitoring of expenditure by the NITI Ayog, but restricts it to expenditure of the scheduled castes and tribes sector. In the case of persons with disabilities, the present lack of disaggregated data collection would make any kind of monitoring meaningless – which is why activists harp upon the demand for collation of disaggregated data, including disability, year after year.

All these efforts, therefore, may prove challenging sans government mandate, but influencing this mandate seems difficult given the failure to recognise the disability sector as a lobby of significance. India is shortly due for review of its compliance with the Committee of Rights for Persons with Disabilities' State Obligations, which includes the allocation of maximum possible resources towards respecting, protecting and fulfilling rights under the convention. Perhaps civil society may consider this a valuable opportunity to galvanise as an empowered lobby to ensure that rights are guaranteed.

Amba Salelkar is a lawyer with the Equals Centre for Promotion of Social Justice. The organisation focuses on policy and budget advocacy towards furthering the rights of persons with disabilities.

Govt guidelines for disabled during national anthem: Maintain maximum alertness physically

Updated: Jan 19, 2017 13:08 IST

The Union home ministry has come out with guidelines to be followed by differently abled when the national anthem is being played in theatres.

The Union home ministry has issued guidelines on how people with disabilities can show respect

when the national anthem is being played in movie halls or public functions, saying they should not move and position themselves “maintaining the maximum possible alertness physically”.

The home ministry's December 21 guidelines follow the Supreme Court's modified order that exempted physically challenged people from standing during the national anthem. They also spell out how those who have a hearing disability, mild intellectual disabilities or are visually challenged should show respect to the national anthem. In November last year, the Supreme Court ordered cinema halls to mandatorily play the national anthem before the screening of a film and directed that the audience must stand in respect. It subsequently modified its order on December 9 following a plea that disabled people should be exempted. Attorney general Mukul Rohatgi informed the apex court that the Centre will issue guidelines within 10 days.

The protocol says while a person who is on a crutch should become stable (non-mobile) to the “extent of maximum alertness” those with hearing disability “if capable to stand, shall stand with attentiveness.” “... there must be appropriate indication on the screen that the national anthem is being played or sung as the persons with hearing disability is likely to miss the auditory cues. Suitable instructions may be given in the form of captioning as well as in sign language on the screen so that the persons with hearing impairment are well informed that the national anthem is being played,” the guideline says.

The rules give relaxation to people with severe intellectual disabilities but say that those with mild intellectual disability without associated conditions “can be trained to understand and respect the national anthem.”

The guideline also calls for generating public awareness “so as to avoid any unwarranted incident against persons with intellectual disabilities as some of the persons with intellectual disabilities may not exhibit physical disabilities.”

The national anthem is already played before movies in some states – such as Maharashtra – but the measure is often controversial, with instances of people beaten up for not standing up for the anthem.

Last October, award-winning writer Salil Chaturvedi - who suffers from spinal injury - was beaten up at a Panaji multiplex for not standing up while the national anthem was being played. It was last ordered to be played in cinemas in India after the country's 1962 war with China but the practice was discontinued in 1975 after most moviegoers ignored it.

Dhirubhai Ambani Scholarship (DAS) Programme

The Dhirubhai Ambani Scholarship Programme is aimed towards fulfilling Shri Dhirubhai Ambani's vision of providing opportunities to the youth and empowering them to become future leaders. Initiated in 1996, the scholarship supports meritorious students of standard XII to pursue college education and nurtures them to emerge as young professionals. Dhirubhai Ambani Scholarship Programme is a targeted programme where scholarship is awarded to top few meritorious students who meet the selection criteria of Reliance Foundation, based on the merit list provided by the State/CBSE Board.

The Dhirubhai Ambani Scholarship has enabled students to pursue higher studies in streams such as engineering, medicine, law, pharmacy, science, business management and other social sciences. A large number of Dhirubhai Ambani Scholars have pursued further higher education from premier institutes in India and abroad, for e.g. IIT, IIM, Stanford University etc. Almost half of the Dhirubhai Ambani Scholars are girls. The scholarship unleashes the potential of the youth of India to grow into leaders in their respective fields.

More than 11,000 meritorious students, including over 2,400 specially-abled students have been awarded scholarships under the Dhirubhai Ambani Scholarship Programme pan India. The scholarship programme plays a key role in building confidence and motivating students to excel in their lives.

Currently the programme reaches out to all States and Union Territories of India both in rural and urban areas. The scholarships are awarded to meritorious students who demonstrate need for financial support and to differently abled meritorious students under a separate category. These young scholarship recipients represent the 'hope, optimism and potential' of Future India.

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1,000 monthly for 45 lakh disabled people

Assam: Chief Minister of Assam Sarbananda Sonowal announced that the state government has decided to provide a monthly allowance of Rs 1,000 to 45 lakh people detected with disabilities in 32 districts next year onwards. This announcement was done after handing over artificial aids and assistive devices to nearly 1,200 beneficiaries from the Barak Valley areas organized by Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India in association with Cachar district administration and department of social welfare, the chief minister in his speech said this is a noble step taken by the Union government. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is extending total support to assist the 'divyangans' so that they live with pride and honour, Sonowal added.

The chief minister announced that the government is also planning to introduce 'Sugam Assam' to enable those with disabilities to visit government offices in a hassle-free manner. For the development of Barak Valley, the government of Assam is prioritizing road connectivity and Rs 2,000 crore has been sanctioned for the purpose. Moreover, four bridges will be constructed over the Barak river in the coming days.

Union minister for social justice and empowerment Thawarchand Gehlot said the government will soon introduce a law to provide 4% reservation for those with disabilities in government jobs. The Union minister also said the government will introduce an insurance scheme of Rs 2 lakh for the divyangans, of which the government will bear 90% of the expense while the remaining 10% will to be borne either by the concerned beneficiary or by the insurance agency.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/guwahati/1000-monthly-for-45-lakh-disabled-people/articleshow/57383899.cms>

State News

Disabled woman wins rural election

Kendrapada : Wheelchair-bound Minati Barik, 24, was officially declared winner as a ward member in Bajapur village under [Katanabania](#) panchayat. "My victory indicates things are changing for the disabled. The wheelchair does not obstruct me from doing any normal work. I want to show everybody that for people like me, disability is not the end of the world. I want to be a role model and empower young women and disabled persons," said Minati.

Minati, born with two paralyzed legs, did not allow her physical shortcomings to drop her from fulfilling her dreams. The grit and determination that helped her add another feather to her cap was present since childhood.

She completed her Class X and went on to become self-reliant by enrolling as member of a self-help group. She deftly made handicrafts from golden grass. Minati also wanted to add value to other's life and felt winning an election is the best way to do it. "I have many goals. One of it is to open a school and training centre for the disabled in our village," she said.

"She has become a symbol of political empowerment for the disabled," said Sruti Mohapatra, former chairperson of Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights and chief executive officer of Swabhiman, the State Disability Information and Resource Centre, Bhubaneswar.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bhubaneswar/disabled-woman-wins-rural-election/articleshow/57324618.cms>

Barrier Free Paths for the Disabled

Bhubaneswar: Barrier free paths for disabled people will be made in Odisha's 11 cities including its capital Bhubaneswar. At every government buildings, parks and at Assembly also special paths will be made for them. Government is making such plans, for which they will be able to go everywhere easily and get all the facilities. The Supreme Court ordered before to repair all government office surroundings to induce special paths. But still it is not done properly. So within July, 2018 all regarding places of Capital Bhubaneswar will be repaired. Then within 1 year at it will be done in the other 10 cities. Housing and



Urban Development Department gave a notice regarding this. Prime minister himself inspecting the special ground making for specially abled people. So to make it possible soon state government produced notice. Urban Development Department gave a notice regarding this. Prime minister himself inspecting the special ground making for specially abled people. So to make it possible soon state government produced notice. For this purpose it is decided to invest 6 crore 7 lakh 13 thousand rupees at 21 places of Bhubaneswar. Money will be supplied soon for Bhubaneswar division-1, 2, 3 and 4 of Public works department.

Maps are made according to the rules by Social Safety and Disability Empowerment Department and are informed to the Public Works Department.

In the first phase, work will start at 21 places of Bhubaneswar. In this 15 lakh 50 thousand rupees for Biju Pattnaik Park, 15 lakh 60 thousand for Indira Gandhi Park, 24 lakh 23 thousand 600 for Jaydev Bhawan, 15 lakh 73 thousand 500 for Lok Sampark Bhawan, 14 lakh 75 thousand 250 for Chief Minister Complain Cell, 12 lakh 70 thousand 500 for Chief Electoral Office, 4 lakh 87 thousand 500 for Social welfare board, 3 lakh 30 thousand for RTO-2, 4 lakh 63 thousand 850 for Rabindra Mandap, 4 lakh 8 thousand 650 for Harekrushna Mahatab State Library, 1crore 14 lakh 58 thousand 100 for Works department. 75 lakh 50 thousand for BJB autonomous College, 43 lakh 25 thousand for Heads of Department, 32 lakh 25 thousand for State Museum, 41 lakh for Assembly, 18 lakh 28 thousand for Secretariat, 20 lakh 5 thousand for Commissionerate Police Office, 28 lakh 60 thousand for State Election Commission Office, 43 lakh 48 thousand 50 rupees for Capital Hospital, 69 lakh 71 thousand for Rajeev Bhawan.

BMC will soon make a law to make special paths for disabled people at all the government and non-government buildings.

<http://latestodishanews.com/good-news-disabled-people-odisha-government/>

Visually impaired man cracks OPSC in Bhubaneswar

Bhubaneswar: Physical disability cannot be an impediment to success if one has the determination and grit to achieve the target. There cannot be a better example to establish the statement than Sanyas Kumar Behera, a visually impaired candidate, who has cleared the Odisha Civil Service Examination 2015 conducted by Odisha Public Services Commission (OPSC).

Widely acclaimed for his activism in the disability rights sector, Behera had attempted for the OPSC examination in 1991. However, the legal provisions deprived him of an opportunity to sit for the tests. While Behera had secured 220th rank in the visually impaired category in 1991, he was disqualified on the grounds of physical disabilities.

Later, Behera joined by his fraternity continued a long-standing fight with the Government machinery following which the persons with disabilities (PwDs) were allowed a three per cent reservation in the OPSC 2015 examinations. A jubilant Behera said he owes his success to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik for his personal intervention in allotting of reservation of seats for the PwDs in OPSC examination.

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/states/odisha/2017/feb/18/visually-impaired-man-cracks-opsc-in-bhubaneswar-1571934.html>

