

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2391

ANSWERED ON:12.03.2013

POLICY FOR DIFFERENTLY ABLED PERSONS

Adhalrao Patil Shri Shivaji; Adsul Shri Anandrao Vithoba; Das Shri Khagen; Dharmshi Shri Babar Gajanan; Yaskhi Shri Madhu Goud

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is a need for a public policy for the differently abled population whose interests cannot be protected in the absence of institutional mechanism;
- (b) if so, whether formulation of public policy in our country has not kept pace with the present needs;
- (c) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether the poor people remain vulnerable with no access to use of new technology like computers and newer ways of communication for children with autism; and
- (e) if so, the steps taken by the Union Government in this regard as well as to protect the interests of the differently abled persons across the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI D. NAPOLEON)

(a) to (c) The Central Government adopted the National Policy for Persons with Disabilities in 2006 which recognizes that Persons with Disabilities are a valuable human resource for the country and seeks to create an environment that provides them equal opportunities, protection of their rights and full participation in society. The National Policy recognizes the fact that a majority of persons with disabilities can lead a better quality of life if they have equal opportunities and effective access to rehabilitation measures.

The National Policy lays stress on Physical Rehabilitation, Educational Rehabilitation and Economic Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities for a dignified life in society.

The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment is the nodal Ministry to coordinate all matters relating to implementation of the Policy. The Central Coordination Committee, with stakeholder representation, coordinates matters relating to implementation of the National Policy. The Policy document also identifies other Ministries such as Ministries of Home Affairs, Health & Family Welfare, Rural Development, Urban Development etc. for implementation of the National Policy for Persons with Disabilities.

The Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities at Central level and State Commissioners at the State level are the agencies responsible for monitoring implementation of provisions of the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 and National Policy for Persons with Disabilities.

(d) and (e) National Trust is supporting development of indigenous Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices for use of children with Autism who are generally non verbal. Kathamala and Chitrakatha are the AAC devices developed by the National Trust in collaboration with IIT Kharagpur. In India also high-tech devices have been developed with encouragement and support from National Trust namely 'Awaj', 'Kavi', 'Aditi' and software called 'Slate'. These devices help persons with Autism communicate through visual selection of their action through a set of pictures and pre-recorded messages available in the devices.

National Trust has also set up a National Resource Centre 'Sambhav' in Action for Ability Development and Inclusion (AADII), 2, Balbir Saxena Marg, Hauz Khas, New Delhi-110016, where all such Assistive Devices and Technologies have been kept for live demonstration.