

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4718
ANSWERED ON:23.04.2013
PROMOTING TECHNOLOGY FOR DISABLED
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Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is promoting technology for persons with disabilities especially for the weaker and backward sections in the country including Jharkhand;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the steps taken to address the issues during each of the last three years and the current year, State-wise; and
- (c) the funds allocated and spent for such programmes during the said period, State-wise?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI P. BALRAM NAIK)

(a) to (c) A number of initiatives have been taken to promote research & technology for the benefit of Persons with Disabilities:-

The Ministry confers National Awards for the empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), every year under various categories. One of these categories is for "Best applied research/innovation/product development aimed at improving the life of PwDs"

2.The Ministry made its website accessible to persons with disabilities and launched the accessible website in January, 2010, at a cost of Rs.20.09 lakh. Other Central Ministries were also requested to similarly make their own websites, as well as of their associated organizations, accessible to persons with disabilities.

State Governments have also been requested to make their important websites accessible to persons with disabilities and financial assistance has also been offered to them for doing so. Central assistance of Rs.31.00 lakh has so far been released to 3 State/UT Governments for this purpose. No proposal, in this regard, has however been received from the Government of Jharkhand.

The Government has also, in 2010, instituted a new category of National Award viz for websites with best accessibility features. Under this category one award each is given for such websites of

- (i) Government organizations,
- (ii) Public Sector/autonomous/local bodies, and
- (iii) Non-Govt. organizations.

3. An online Braille Library, established by the National Institute for Visually Handicapped (NIVH), Dehradun, has been launched on 4th January, 2012. This library has books, in different languages including Hindi, which can be accessed in real time from any location, including Jharkhand. An amount of Rs.71.05 lakh has been spent on this project so far.

An online catalogue of Braille books has also been hosted by NIVH which enables visually-impaired persons to ascertain the location and availability of a desired Braille book, without going to Braille Libraries and Braille Presses. An amount of Rs.27.00 lakh has been spent on this project so far. NIVH has also launched an Online Directory of Services for the Visually Impaired persons. Services available in Jharkhand have also been documented in this Directory.

4. The National Institute for Mentally Handicapped (NIMH), Secunderabad has developed certain technology based teaching modules for training of persons with mental retardation. Technological methods like electroencephalography (EEG) and electromyography (EMG) are used for assessment of disability. EEG bio-feedback is used for stimulation of electrical impulses in the brain of children with mental retardation, and softwares are used for speech therapy.

5.The National Institute for the Orthopaedically Handicapped (NIOH), Kolkata has developed proto-types of myo-electric hand, multi-use wheelchair, low-cost pediatric below-knee prosthesis, and functional electric stimulation devices for persons with foot-drop.

6. The Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO), functioning under this Ministry, also works on developing technological aids and appliances at a relatively low cost.

7.The Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) is running a TV channel called "Navshikhar" through which programmes on disability-related topics are telecast for the benefit of teachers/special educators, professionals, parents of children with disabilities, and other stakeholders. At present, there are 686 Direct Reception System (DRS) centres for this channel, of which 8 are in Jharkhand.

