Chapter – 4

VARIOUS ASPECTS OF DISABILITY AND DISABLED PERSONS
INTRODUCTION:

Concept of disability and its study require clarification of different terms to comprehend the whole matter. On the other hand it has been found that different national and international organizations have tried to identify ‘DISABILITY’ of their own way. Beside that a definite and précised definition of disability is to bring forward to wipe out the various misconceptions on it. In this concern terminological study has become relevant.

TERMINOLOGY:

"Language is critical in shaping and reflecting our thoughts, beliefs, feelings and concepts. Some words by their very nature degrade and diminish people with a disability." 50

The term "disabled young person" tends to convey a message that the only thing worth mentioning about a person is their disability. It is better to say "young person with a disability" as this emphasizes the person first without denying the reality of the disability. Terms such as cripple, spastic, handicapped, invalid are derogatory, and offensive and one should avoid them.
Sometimes people with disability are compared to normal people. This implies that the person with a disability is abnormal and ignores the fact that everyone has their own unique identity and abilities.

It has been noted that in recent discussions about the disabled persons, two new terms are being used frequently as ‘differently-able’ or ‘otherwise-able’ person instead of ‘disabled’ person. That means these special persons are not fully able to perform the works, but they are able to do all the deeds in a different way.

**DEFINITION OF DISABILITY:**

Disability means ‘incapacity to perform any activities in the usual or within the range considered normal for a human being’. A disability (or lack of a given ability, as the "dis" qualifier denotes) in humans may be physical, cognitive/mental, sensory, emotional, developmental or some combination of these.

A common man can see with eyes, hear with ears, perform tasks, speak with tongue and takes decision with brain. Malfunction of one or more organs lead to disability or multiple disability problems. Basically when most people think of the word "disability" they immediately picture someone in a wheelchair. But there are many different types of disability.
People with a disability may include:

- people who are blind or partially sighted
- people with learning or intellectual disabilities
- people who are deaf or hearing impaired
- people with a physical disability
- people with long term illnesses
- people with mental health or psychological difficulties
- people with an acquired brain injury

The most commonly cited definition is that of the World Health Organization in 1976 which draws a three-fold distinction between impairment, disability and handicap, defined as follows. 'An impairment is any loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological or anatomical structure or function; a disability is any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being; a handicap is a disadvantage for a given individual, resulting from an impairment or a disability, that prevents the fulfillment of a role that is considered normal (depending on age, sex and social and cultural factors) for that individual.' ⁵⁰

According to activists in the disability movement, the World Health Organization has confused between the terms 'disability' and 'impairment'. They maintain that impairment refers to physical or cognitive limitations that an individual may have, such as the
inability to walk or speak. In contrast, disability refers to socially imposed restrictions, that is, the system of social constraints that are imposed on those with impairments by the discriminatory practices of society.59

Thus, the Union of the Physically Impaired against Segregation defined impairment and disability in the following manner. An 'impairment [is] lacking part of or all of a limb, or having a defective limb, organism or mechanism of the body". 'disability [is] the disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by contemporary organization which takes no or little account of people who have physical impairments and thus excludes them from the mainstream of social activities50

According to the United Nations Standard Rules51 on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with disabilities:

• The term "disability" summarizes a great number of different functional limitations occurring in any population in any country, of the world. People may be disabled by physical, intellectual or sensory impairment, medical conditions or mental illness. Such impairments, conditions or illnesses may be permanent or transitory in nature.

• The term "handicap" means the loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in the life of the community on an equal level with others. It describes the encounter between the person with a disability and the environment. The purpose of this term is to emphasize
the focus on the shortcomings in the environment and in many organized activities in society, for example, information, communication and education, which prevent persons with disabilities from participating on equal terms.

• The use of the two terms "disability" and "handicap", as defined in the two paragraphs above, should be seen in the light of modern disability history. During the 1970s there was a strong reaction among representatives of organizations of persons with disabilities and professionals in the field of disability against the terminology of the time. The terms "disability" and "handicap" were often used in an unclear and confusing way, which gave poor guidance for policy-making and for political action. The terminology reflected a medical and diagnostic approach, which ignored the imperfections and deficiencies of the surrounding society.

• In 1980, the World Health Organization brought out a manual on International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps, 59 made a clear distinction among "impairment", "disability" and "handicap". and suggested a more precise and at the same time relativistic approach, It has been extensively used in areas such as rehabilitation, education, statistics, policy, legislation, demography, sociology, economics and anthropology. Some users have expressed concern that the Classification, in its definition of the term "handicap", may still be considered too medical and too centred on the individual, and may not adequately clarify the interaction between societal conditions or expectations and the abilities of the individual. Those concerns, and others expressed
by users during the 12 years since its publication, will be addressed in forthcoming revisions of the Classification.

- As a result of experience gained in the implementation of the World Programme of Action and of the general discussion that took place during the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons, there was a deepening of knowledge and extension of understanding concerning disability issues and the terminology used. Current terminology recognizes the necessity of addressing both the individual needs (such as rehabilitation and technical aids) and the shortcomings of the society (various obstacles for participation).

In this concern, it may be mentioned that a ‘disability’ includes those that:

- are present, or
- Once existed but do not have any more, for example, a person who has had a back injury, a heart attack or an episode of mental illness, earlier,

- may develop in the future, for example, a person with a genetic predisposition to a disease, such as Huntington's disease or heart disease or a person who is HIV positive, or
- Someone thinks or assumes a person has.
TYPES OF DISABILITY:

Human beings can see with their eyes, hear with ears, perform tasks, with muscles speak with tongue and take decision with brain malfunction of one or more organs lead to disability or multiple disability problems. Disabilities can be broadly classified as follows.

1. Loco Motor (LM)
2. Deaf and Dumb (DD)
3. Hearing Handicapped (HH)
4. Visual Impairment (VI)
5. Mentally Retarded (MR)

Loco motor Disability: Loco motor Disability is defined as a person’s inability to executive activities associated with moving both himself & objects from place to place & such inability resulting from affection of musculoskeletal and/or nervous system.

Speech & Hearing Disability: A person with hearing impairment hearing difficulty of various degrees in hearing sounds is an impairment person.

Visually Disability: Blindness refers to a condition where a person suffers from any of the following condition:

- Total absent of sought or
- Visual acuity not exceeding 6/60 or20/200 (smells) in the better eye with best correcting lenses or
- Limitation of field of visual subtending on angle of 10 degree or worse

Low vision: person with low vision means a person with impairment of vision of less than 6/18 to 6/60 with best correction in the better eye or impairment of field in any one of the following:

- Reduction of the fields less than 50 degrees
- Heminaopia with macular involvement
- Altitudinal defect involving lower fields

Mental Retardation: Mental retardation is a condition of arrested or incomplete development of the mind which is especially characterized by impairment of skill manifested during the development periods which contributed to the overall level of intelligence i.e. cognitive, language, motor and social abilities

There are various factors which are responsible for the loco-motor disability:

- Diseases like polio, cerebral palcy, Leprocy
- Physical defects or deformity of the body or limb (orthopaedics problem ) and
- Amputation due to accident.

On other hand it must be mentioned that “The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2014” [clause (x) of section.2] states:-

19 conditions of disability including definitions such as: autism; low vision and blindness; cerebral palsy; deaf blindness; haemophilia; hearing impairment; leprosy;
intellectual disability; mental illness; muscular dystrophy; multiple sclerosis; learning
disability; speech and language disability; sickle cell disease; thalassemia; chronic
neurological conditions; and multiple disability. Persons with benchmark disabilities are
defined as those with at least 40 per cent of any of the above specified disabilities. 11

This bill of 2014, also categorized ‘disabled persons’ in three ways, as:

i) “Person with benchmark disability” means a person with not less than forty per
cent. of a specified disability where specified disability has not been defined
in measurable terms and includes a person with disability where specified
disability has been defined in measurable terms, as certified by the certifying
authority;

ii) “person with disability” means a person with long term physical, mental,
intellectual or sensory impairment which hinder his full and effective
participation in society equally with others;

iii) “person with disability having high support needs” means a person with
benchmark disability certified under clause (a) of sub-section (2) of section 57
who needs high support; (s) “prescribed” means prescribed by rules made
under this Act; (t) “reasonable accommodation” means necessary and
appropriate modification and adjustments, without imposing a
disproportionate or undue burden in a particular case, to ensure to persons
with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise of rights equally with others.
NEEDS OF THE DISABLED PERSON IN A LIBRARY:

Individuals with disability have varying degrees of needs. Their needs are just like those who are not disabled. They often strive hard for a high quality of life as other normal individuals. Unfortunately many times people fail to understand that disability in simple terms is nothing but a natural part of the human experience. Often they are shrouded by misconceptions such as, that the disabled persons are forced to lead a poor quality of life. But the fact is, a person with disability with all limitations can carry out normal activities of living if they have an easy access to community based on long term services such as an attendant care, accesses to buildings, public transportation, sidewalks etc. Even the severely disabled persons, when provided with quality health care services and the necessary equipments are able to carry on the tasks similar to those done by the non-disabled. One cannot but feel disturbed that in spite of having the capacity they have to continue remaining disabled persons because of lack of a strong community based support system. A disabled person who is in the prime of his youth, demands an equal opportunity and must therefore be offered a range of assistance such as examination support, specialized equipments, library assistance, note taking in class, reader sign interpreters and parking provisions etc. Only when they have a strong support such as the ones mentioned above they can hope to lead normal lives.

A library should contain the following assistive devices for the disabled persons:

- Screen Reader & Magnifier
- Braille Printer
- Braille Display Keyboard
• JAWS Screen Reader
• Kurzweil 3000
• Cranktop Tables
• Scanner
• Natural Speaking
• Supernova
• Readit wand
• NVDA & Braille embosser (printer)
• Talking typing
• Daisy book reader (for e-books)
• Special keyboard (large font with florescent yellow keys)
• Magnifier mouse
• Seika Cell Braille display (stop anytime to correct spellings)
• BAT (single hand keyboard)
• Foot mouse (slipper mouse) with programmable paddle
• Device to make a normal book
• Adjustable high power optical lens
• Photocopying Machine
ROLE OF A LIBRARY FOR DISABLED PERSONS:

We have discussed in this chapter the prevailing situation in information support services in relation to the user community with disability. Our Indian constitution is pledging equality irrespective of class, caste & sex etc, we have the disability act, equal opportunity in all spheres of lives for the disabled. Our library laws which ensures right to information irrespectively, but the actual scenarios are as follows:

As user of library & information services to consider the disabled people, most of the public libraries are not available wheelchair and not included with-in the curricula as special service to the disabled. There is not positive guide line for helping disabled people.

Public libraries, academic libraries and Institute libraries must stress on the need for equality to access for the disabled person in general & disabled student in particular. Librarian must liaise with coordinator of the organization working for the person with disability for necessary information.

- The Librarian has a special responsibility to address to service to person with disability & not regulated to disabled user.
- Information Technology is used for the disabled user.
- Popular guide line accessible disabled user.
• Public libraries can act as referral centre by developing collection as disabled issue.

• To prepare list of relevant website for reference for disabled people.

• Ensure that every child with disabled has access to free education.

• Endeavor to promote the integration of student with disability in the normal school.

• Promote setting up special school in Govt. & private sector for those in need of special education.

• Endeavor to equip the special school for persons with disabilities with vocational training facilities.

All though the new act with help to develop positive action programme. There is no positive guide line for helping the disabled to have access to an effective library & information services programme. If the low offer them equal opportunities they must also ensure that people serving the disabled such as the Govt. & NGOs find new way of serving the disabled. However the library & information professional can play their part to hasten the process of full & total integration of the disabled in the society.

A disabled persons who is in the prime of his youth demands an equal opportunity and must therefore be offered a range of assistance such as examination support, specialized equipment, library assistance, note taking in class, reader sign interpreters and parking provision etc only when they have a strong support such as the ones mentioned above they can hope to lead normal lives.
CREATING A MODEL LIBRARY PROGRAMME FOR THE DISABLED PERSONS:

In order to create an efficient and effective library programme for the differently-able persons, libraries need managers who are up to date and are aware of the latest developments that are likely to have profound effect on their services. It is their collective responsibility to promote quality services by gaining a good insight into the problems faced by the disabled persons. Library-staff must recognize that some of the disabled persons have no control over their behavior and therefore they have to be competent enough to handle difficult situations. They should be prepared to give individual attention so as to understand their strongest communication mode. Therefore the following aspects are essential to develop a model library programme for them by way of:

a) Training the Library staff,

b) Developing User Assistance Schemes,

c) Offering Special Services.

A model library can perform its duty by providing some assistive devices to the disabled people, such as-

1. Provide primary introduction and help to the disabled persons with using assistive technology software like Read &Write, SuperNova (SuperNova is a screen reader and magnifier to aid those with visual impairments to use Windows applications) etc. which can assist visually challenged students by magnifying and reading back text.
2. Provide assistance with using equipment like **Braille embosser, CCTV reader** (25" Color CCTV), **Scanner, Kurzweil 3000** which is used in conjunction with a scanner to read out scanned text. Zoom OPAC facility must be available.

3. Photocopying services for articles or chapters from books, including enlarged version (within permissible copyright restrictions) with computer print outs.

4. Assistance with locating materials by the trained library staffs.

5. Flexible & longer loan periods.

6. Allow the disabled students to authorize their supporting or helping workers to borrow books, collect holds or photocopying receipts and pay fines on their behalf.

7. Provide assistance with the use of library computers, catalogs, literature indexes, microform readers, or other library equipments.

8. Meet their reference questions with a kind manner.

9. Provide assistance with printing from library computers with emailing search results.

10. Help in filling out interlibrary loan, document delivery, reserve, or search requests.

11. In the absence of Reference Desk staff, Circulation Services staff will help as per their limit. Reference assistance is available by calling a reference desk or by email.

12. The Librarians can provide advice on print and electronic resources for specific subject areas.
TRAINING FOR LIBRARY & INFORMATION STAFF:

Library profession always needs cordial assistance for serving the users in a better way. So, professional library services depend largely on the continuous upgrading of staff through methodical trainings on a regular basis. It could be fortnightly, monthly, or seasonal training. Special training requirements can be determined by the Library management and training Officers depending upon the skills and training needs of the individuals. Once the need has been assessed the method of training can be planned. Here is a simple and effective training plan that can be implemented:

Objective:
To familiarize with important aspects of disability and disabled users in a Library environment.

Structure:
A five day course of lectures, discussions and practical work. The practical training could be held in small groups giving each group an opportunity to work with all types of disabled users.

Materials:
A resource package of the training manual.
Contents:

- Concepts on disability: (visits to hospitals, centers for the blind and other kinds of handicapped persons).
- Developing communication and counseling skills.
- Professional library services, single line of command, concentration of effort, time bound work, field orientation and linkage with research.
- Case studies.

In training and work review session’s staff of all levels can report and discuss their successes from which lessons may be drawn.

**TEACHERS TRAINING PROGRAMME:**

Teachers training should be comprehensive. Every teacher education programme at various levels should essentially include contents to prepare the teacher trainee to be a teacher of regular and special education. This will ensure appropriate education to the persons with disability in regular class. Special education should merge with general education if persons are to be included.

In-service training to regular and special educators to update and refresh their knowledge and skills is imperative. Mandatory courses in continuing education to all teachers on disabilities to retail their teaching certification will ensure quality in education.
Students with disability are learning in various classes, typically need a special education teacher close by teaching him or her. Because of the critical role he or she plays in the educational experience of students with disabilities, a Special Education teacher needs continual training to keep abreast of the latest techniques and innovations. Teaching children with disabilities requires college level Special Education Teacher training. Additionally, teaching a child with a disability calls for a unique skill-set and knowledge. Throughout their career, teachers will take on the life-long commitment of learning about disabilities and training to improve and hone their teaching skills. Hence, disability teaching requires the instructor to take the role of the student in order to achieve their responsibilities as a successful Special Education teacher.

To be successful in today’s educational environment, and to teach students with disabilities, continuous professional development is necessary. Of course, disability learning resources are no substitute for experience. However, education classes and professional development can be supplemented with cost effective multi-media tools, DVDs and training. Programme Development Associates Disability Teacher Training Store has a large variety of resources focused on disabilities, teacher education, as well as teacher aids.27
IMPORTANCE OF ASSISTIVE DEVICES IN A LIBRARY:

Once the Library worker gets trained they will feel that it is their collective responsibility to provide quality services by gaining a good insight into the problems faced by the disabled persons and thereby he/ she will be competent enough to create an efficient and effective use of assistance scheme such as:

- Providing the disabled persons users with reading lists and catalogues, high demand materials and lecture tapes that are held in open reservation.
- Delivering books and other documents from library shelves.
- Photocopying of Library materials and enlarging for the partially blind.
- Paging books from stacks and shelf areas.
- Extending loan periods or modifying other lending rules on an individual basis.
- Accepting telephone requests and providing reference service.
- Conducting orientation tours and information skills sessions.
- Providing audio visual equipments.
- Assisting in the use of computer aided learning equipments such as CD-ROMS, optical disks etc.
- Providing access to library facilities by ensuring that directional signs are labeled at appropriate locations with large, simple and clear messages.
OFFERING SERVICES FOR SPECIALIZED USERS:

Different types of disability require different types of specialized services. The same theory holds good for library services as well and hence the trained library personnel will take into consideration the following points to fulfill the objectives:

- Library services for the blind must enable them to have access to equipments such as Braille printers, Braille embosser and tape duplicators, Kuzweil reader (a text-to speed reading machine with synthesized speech output), closed circuit TVs for magnifying regular text, PCs with CD ROMS, Power Macs with CD ROMS, large print tape writers, special track tape recorders, computers that are having adaptable equipments such as voice eyes.

- Services for speech and hearing impaired users must include TTD communications (a device also known as TTY-text type telephone) for those needing library questions answered on telephone. Librarians must also familiarize themselves with American Sign Language which is considered to be the common language of the deaf community.

- For the physically challenged the library facility must be barrier free to wheel chairs and other mobility devices and ensuring that all devices including door handles are designed for easy manipulation.

- Modern technical library having keen interest to provide assistive service to the users with disabilities should undergo systematic planning and programming.

- User belong to different disability group are to be identify and on the basis of which a special focus group is to be made
• A separate location within a library can be chosen to provide such kind of services
• Automatic wheel chair, automatic doors elevators is highly needed
• Staff training to impact this kind of specialized service is highly needed
• Downloading of freely available software like MAGIC if needed

Persons suffering from mental disability can be served by helping to locate and retrieve materials. Because reading is a common problem for them they may enquire assistance in identifying the materials of both the print and electronic types of documents. They also need help in turning catalogue cards or keying in commands on the computer. People suffering from mental illness such as Schizophrenia must be motivated to read books on self-development and may require constant counseling to use library resources to overcome their depression. This is termed as "Biblio-therapy", that is, using books for therapy.

‘Early Support’ is the central government mechanism for achieving better coordinated family-focused services for very young disabled persons and their families.

Local authorities and persons’ centres need to be aware of the ‘Early Support Programme’ when planning services for this group.

It is the government's means of achieving the objectives set out within the Every Child Matters green paper and the National Service Framework for Persons, Young People and Maternity Services for this particular population.
ROLE OF NGO:

There has been a proliferation of NGOs in all sectors. Over all the number have increased from less than 200 to 10000 registered bodies, of particular significance in the disability field has been the growth in numbers of organization of disabled people. NGOs play a key role in the delivery of services to disability people in India. Some of this work is funded by the govt. but much of the funding devices from NGOs. There are now some NGOs of and for disabled people. That organization is working with disabled persons through a CBR approach.

The services supplied by them are---

- Production of Braille school books
- Provision of training for teachers in inclusive education
- Sponsorship of place in government school
- Special school
- Provision of vocational training
- Development of CBR programme
- Mobile health camps
- Health clinics
- Special hospitals
- Cultural and sporting events
- Rehabilitation Training
In addition to those there is a growing commitment amongst organization of disabled people to invest more of their limited resources in advocacy, highlighting government responsibilities in respect of disabled people, raising awareness of disabled people’s right and lobbying for compliance. Example

- Public awareness campaigns
- High profile activities around international disabled day on 3rd of December
- Weekly programmes on public service radio
- Production of a monthly disability magazine to celebrate the talents of disabled people and promote their rights
- Policy analysis of compliance with international human rights standards in respect of disabled people
- Challenging example of non-compliance though the courts
- Working with national and local government to improve the standards of policy and practice
- Provision of free legal aids programme in collaboration with Bar council

It is widely accepted at both national and local government levels that disability organization particular those of disabled people have played a key role in raising awareness of disability rights and pressing the government to give the issues greater priority. Their expertise and contribution is both valued by the government and they are viewed with considerable respect.
RIGHTS FOR DISABLED PERSONS:

Change needs to happen at all level of society and everyone needs to play a part for the development of society, as the disabled persons are also the part of it. Without their development, a society cannot proceed forward by not making them burden on the society. So full-fledged participation is needed from their sides along with the participations from government district officials, NGOs, teachers, parents, the media and non-disabled persons who have come to work together on their behalf.

THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES BILL, 2014 states the rights of persons with disabilities in that manner that persons with disabilities shall have the right to equality and shall not be discriminated against on grounds of their disability. Rights of disabled persons include protection from inhuman treatment and equal protection and safety in situations of risk, armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters. All existing public buildings shall be made accessible for disabled persons within five years of the regulations being formulated by the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities. No establishment will be granted permission to build any structure, issued a completion certification or allowed to occupy a building, if the building does not adhere to the regulations formulated by the Commission.
EDUCATION FOR ALL PERSONS:

“Education for All” has not been inclusive of disabled persons and has failed to treat them with equal priority. In order to achieve equal rights to education for disabled persons following measures may be taken as early as possible:

- The Education Code must be implemented fully to end discrimination against disabled persons.
- Schools should become more inclusive and accommodate non-disabled persons, together with disabled persons.
- The right of deaf and hearing impaired persons to use sign language in schools must be respected.
- Schools must be made physically accessible.
- Education must be completely free so that the poorest persons can go.
- The curriculum needs to be flexible and appropriate for all persons.
- More teachers need to be trained in signing and writing Braille, and working in an inclusive environment.
- More Braille books should be available and must be ready at the beginning of the school year.
- Education materials and text books in all forms should be freely distributed.
- Furniture should be arranged in an accessible way.
- Recognition needs to be given to the needs of some disabled persons to have longer times in which to sit exams- blind persons, persons without arms.
- Higher education should be accessible to disabled persons.
On the other, it must be mentioned that Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2014 provides for the access to inclusive education, vocational training and self-employment of disabled persons. All government institutions of higher education and those getting aid from the government are required to reserve at least five percent of seats for persons with benchmark disabilities.

**HEALTH CARE FOR ALL PERSONS:**

Many persons are disabled persons through lack of access to health care and ignorance about their conditions. In order to reduce the prevalence of disability and improve disabled person’s health following steps to be adopted:

- Health facilities, including orthopaedic services and assistive devices, must be made available and accessible for all persons, including in rural areas. Health for All must be more than a slogan
- Health care should be free for all persons
- Campaigns need to be launched to raise awareness on how to prevent impairments, as many could be avoided with improved information and awareness.
- Parents need orientation in helping protect the health of their persons
- Community based rehabilitation services need to be more widely available
- Special care and attention needs to be given to disabled patients. Health worked need to be equipped and trained in order to identify types of impairment.
EQUALITY OPPORTUNITY FOR DISABLED PERSONS:

We have come to know that disabled persons are not seen as equal to normal persons in India. In order to challenge these inequalities and create opportunities for them the following measure have been suggested:

- Legislation should be introduced giving us equal rights and it should be properly enforced- in education, in employment, in healthcare, in access to all services.
- Recognition should be given to the fact that different persons are differently-able and that all should be equally respected and valued.
- More efforts should be made to promote the right of disabled people and especially disabled girls, to get married.
- Legislation should be introduced requiring new public buildings to be made accessible for disabled people.
- Recognition should be made of disabled persons’ equal rights to participate in all aspects of society – including sports, the arts, recreation.
- The Government should develop a proper policy on vocational training needs which must be backed up by genuine opportunities to allow disabled people to get employment.
- Training should be provided to government officials to help them understand disability and the different needs of people with different impairments.
- Official recognition should be given to sign language in Bengali and this should be backed up by a media campaign on signing.
Disabled persons must be consulted in the development of government policies which affect their lives- because it tends to be the poorer disabled persons who are given an opportunity through NGOs to speak about their lives the Government is less likely to take them seriously than if they came from rich families.

As per the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2014, the central and state governments have to identify posts in establishments under them to be reserved for persons with benchmark disabilities. At least five percent of the vacancies are to be filled by persons or class of persons with at least 40 percent of any of the disabilities. Of this, one per cent shall be reserved for persons with (i) blindness and low vision; (ii) hearing and speech impairment; (iii) loco-motor disability; (iv) autism, intellectual disability and mental illness; and (v) multiple disabilities. The Bill provides that the reservation has to be computed on the basis of total number of vacancies in the strength of a cadre. The government may exempt any establishment from this provision.

As per the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2014, the disabled persons have the right, equally with others, to own and inherit movable and immovable property, as well as control their financial affairs.
PUBLIC AWARENESS:

There is widespread lack of understanding about disability and many people have a negative and hostile view of disabled persons and our capacities. In order to end discrimination and prejudice, we have to adopt following steps:

- People need to believe in themselves and challenge negative opinions by showing how able we are.
- People need to be at the forefront of arguing for their rights—not just rely on non-disabled adults do this on their behalf.
- Traditional beliefs that disability is a curse or a punishment need to be challenged by providing education through the media.
- Positive stories about disabled persons should be promoted through the media to make them more visible and break down negative attitudes.
- As disabled persons, people should have opportunities to talk to the media, appear on television and radio to talk about our experiences and concerns.
- Parents of disabled persons need education so that they can play a part in building persons’ confidence.
- Parents of disabled persons should be encouraged to meet with each other to give support and promote more positive attitudes towards their persons many do not respect their disabled persons and discriminate in favour of their non-disabled persons.
- Disabled persons should be included in more activities, meetings and organizations, together with non-disabled persons in order to break down barriers.
➢ All disabled persons, regardless of impairment, need opportunities to meet together in common forums in order to give each other support, build alliances and campaign for our right to equality of opportunity

➢ People should organize campaigns at village and local level, as well as with the government and campaign at village and local level, as well as with the government and relevant authorities, to raise awareness of our concerns and negotiate our rights.

FAMILY SUPPORT FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITY:

One of the important voluntary programme for disabled persons is family support which would aim at the social work support and financial resources to families to assist with the care and support required to meet the special developmental needs of their child with disability. Here active participation from the members of the families of disabled persons is highly expected to strengthen partnerships with professionals and providers, community members and elected officials. Consequently, the families are able to assume a role in the improvement of systems of supports and service for people with disabilities. Family support for disabled persons includes counseling, support groups, respite, training, cash assistance, and information and referral. Best practice recognizes that family members and individuals with disabilities provide a perspective critical to the successful development of effective policies and practices. Family involvement will increase the likelihood that support and services are helpful, effective, and efficient and
provide the greatest possible flexibility regarding the nature and use of services and support and maximize community inclusion and natural supports. Philosophically family support includes a way of delivering services, and a way of organizing systems to support families in ways that maximizes their capacity, strengths, and unique abilities so they can support, nurture, love and launch individuals with disabilities within their family.

Legislation that is unique in India for persons with disabilities and their families went into effect on Aug. 1, 2004.

The Family Support for Persons with Disabilities Act is better for families because it:

- Provides supports to families including while their child is awaiting a formal diagnosis
- Recognizes the needs of families, not just the needs of the child
- Promotes better co-ordination and integration of services
- Improves families' access to information
- Recognizes families as partners in the planning and decision-making process regarding services that will best meet their needs
- Ensures greater consistency in families' access to support and services across the province
- Recognizes and respects the ability and responsibility of families as the primary source of care and support for their child.
The name of the programme administered under the new act by Persons’ Services has been changed to the Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD) programme to incorporate the new emphasis on supporting families as they care for their persons with disabilities.

The FSCD programme is a reimbursement programme that provides a range of proactive and family-centre services to assist families in helping their persons achieve their potential. The programme assists with some of the extraordinary costs of raising a child with a disability.

Two levels of services are identified in the new act: family support services and child-focused services.

Family support services are available to families caring for a child with a diagnosed disability or to families who are awaiting confirmation of their child's diagnosis. These services are primarily based on the needs as identified by the family.

In addition to information, referral and advocacy supports, family support services also include assistance with counseling, extraordinary clothing and footwear costs, travel costs for medical appointments, meals while traveling to medical appointments, accommodation costs associated with attending medical appointments and respite services.

Child-focused services are provided when a child has a confirmed diagnosis and assessment information to specify their individual needs. Child-focused services provide
a range of respite services, aide supports, child care supports, health-related supports, specialized services for persons with severe disabilities and out-of-home living arrangements.

To help make disability-related information more accessible for families, a provincial toll-free phone line was launched on Aug. 3, 2004.

The ‘Child Disability Resource Link’ gives callers information about a wide range of government and community supports, services and resources for persons with disabilities and their families. Information and referral specialists will be available toll-free weekdays from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. by calling.