



# ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

NATIONAL CENTER FOR PROMOTION OF EMPLOYMENT FOR DISABLED PEOPLE



NATIONAL CENTRE FOR  
PROMOTION OF EMPLOYMENT  
FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

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# ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

**National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP)** is a cross-disability, non-profit organization, working as an interface between the government, industry, international agencies, and the voluntary sector towards empowerment of persons with disabilities.

## VISION

A society where people with disabilities are equal members leading dignified lives through economic independence.

## MISSION

To promote equality for people with disabilities in all spheres of life through research and advocacy around Employment, Education, Accessibility, Communication.

By putting the rights of people with disabilities at the heart of everything we do, NCPEDP aims to empower people with disabilities through appropriate legislation, encouraging employment of people with disabilities, creating awareness on disability issues, and promoting accessibility in public spaces, products, services and technologies.

NCPEDP has a pan India presence through the **National Disability Network (NDN)**. Formed in 1999, NDN has members from the majority of States and Union Territories of the country.

NCPEDP has also constituted the **National Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (NCRPD)** consisting of disability sector leaders and experts from across the country, that meet at regular intervals to discuss ongoing pertinent issues concerning people with disabilities and to plan a viable strategy to address their issues.

For the last 28 years, NCPEDP has been advocating for viewing the issues of disabled people with a rights-based approach and equality and gender-based lens; subsequently moving away from traditionally held views of charity and welfare. Since 1996, NCPEDP has successfully advocated for several policies that have positively impacted the lives of thousands of people with disabilities.

NCPEDP works on six core principles, also called the six pillars of the organization, namely:

1. Education
2. Employment
3. Accessibility
4. Legislation/Policy
5. Awareness/ Communication
6. Youth

# ABOUT THE BOARD



## **Som Mittal**

*Chairperson, NCPEDP*

Som Mittal is the Chairperson of NCPEDP and the former Chairman and President of NASSCOM, where he led the IT-BPM industry through significant milestones, including surpassing the USD 100 billion mark. A graduate of IIT Kanpur and IIM Ahmedabad, he has over three decades of senior leadership experience in IT companies such as Wipro, Digital, Compaq, and HP, as well as in the engineering, manufacturing, and automotive sectors with Larsen & Toubro, Escorts, and Denso. Mittal has held global CXO positions and influenced government policies on trade, serving on the Prime Minister's Committee on National e-Governance and the Advisory Council for Indian Railways IT Vision. He is a board member of several major companies, including Cyient Ltd., EXL Service Holdings, Inc., and Apollo Hospitals Enterprise Limited, and chairs multiple board committees. In the social sector, he chairs NGOs like NCPEDP and the Museum of Art and Photography (MAP) and is involved with educational institutions like Lady Shri Ram College and NIIT University. Recognized for his contributions to the global ICT industry, he has received several prestigious awards, including a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Indian Merchants Chamber and World Information Technology and Services Alliance, and he is a Distinguished Alumni of IIT Kanpur.



## **Pradeep Gupta**

Pradeep Gupta, a prominent figure in the IT industry, chairs the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP). He's lauded for his leadership and mentoring, receiving the "National Entrepreneurship Award as the Best Mentor" from the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India. He's deeply engaged in fostering startups globally, evident in his roles as an Angel investor, Chief Mentor at Electropreneur Park, and co-founder of the Indian Angel Network. Recognising Pradeep's contribution to the startup ecosystem of India, the Government has put him on the Investment Management Committee of its 10,000 crore (\$1.25 Bn) Fund of Funds. As the Chairman of the CyberMedia Group, overseeing brands like Dataquest and PCQuest, Pradeep remains at the forefront of media innovation. His contributions have earned him prestigious awards, including the Distinguished Alumni accolades from IIT Delhi and

IIM Calcutta, as well as the Helen Keller award for his work in the disability sector. He features in the book "100 Great IITians". Pradeep holds degrees from IIT Delhi (1975) and IIM Calcutta (1977), and has been awarded an Honorary Doctorate by Rai University for his remarkable contributions.



### **A.S. Narayanan**

A.S. Narayanan has dedicated 25 years to working with the Deaf community. He serves as the President of the National Association of the Deaf, India, the sole Disabled People's Organization advocating for Deaf rights in the country. Additionally, he is a member of the steering committee of NITI AAYOG, representing Deaf interests at the highest levels of government. Narayanan is actively involved in the establishment and operation of the Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre.

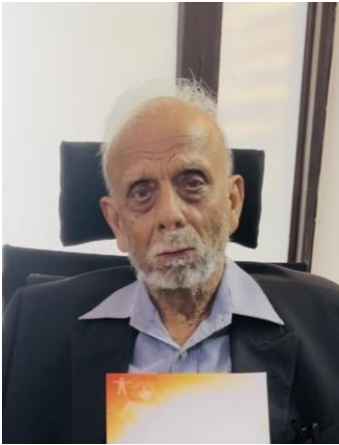
With a global perspective, Narayanan has attended key events such as the World Federation of the Deaf Congress in Durban, South Africa, and Paris, France, in 2019. He also completed the "Bummy" Burstein Leadership Institute at Gallaudet University, USA, enhancing his leadership skills. Narayanan's advocacy focuses on the recognition of Indian Sign Language as an official language of India and advocating for closed captioning on TVs. He serves on various committees, including those related to disability rights legislation and accessibility standards for Persons with Disabilities in TV programs. Through his tireless efforts, Narayanan continues to advance the rights and inclusion of the Deaf community in India.



### **Arun Seth**

Mr. Seth is Board member, Narayana Health and Jubilant Pharmova. Mr. Arun Seth took early retirement from his corporate career to focus on bringing the benefits of IT/Telecom to real world businesses in energy, health, fintech, med-tech, education, hospitality etc. via a vibrant innovative entrepreneurial eco system and a focus on giving back to society. He had been very active with Govt and Regulators on shaping Telecoms Policy and IT policy being an elected member of Nasscom for more than a decade. Currently an independent Director on FMRT, IITK and on the board of listed cos Jubilant

Pharmova Ltd, Jubilant Ingrevia Ltd, Narayana Hrudalaya. An alumnus of IIT Kanpur and IIM Calcutta – he has worked in senior commercial positions in the BT, HCL, Usha Martin and the UB Group, in the last 40+ years.



### **Major General Ian Cardozo**

A decorated war veteran, Major General Cardozo became the first officer with a disability in the Indian Army to be approved for command of an infantry battalion and brigade, after losing a leg during the battle of Sylhet in Bangladesh. He was also the first officer of the Indian Army to be awarded the Sena Medal for gallantry on a patrol in the erstwhile North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA) in 1960. Major General Cardozo has been part of the Sino-Indian war of 1962, and the Indo-Pak wars of 1965 and 1971. After retirement as Chief of Staff of a Corps in the North East of India, he worked as Vice

President of the War Wounded Foundation and was later appointed as the Chairman of the Rehabilitation Council of India. His books 'Param Vir', and 'The Sinking of INS Khukri' have been widely acclaimed.



### **Kanchan Pamnani**

Ms. Pamnani is a Solicitor practicing mainly in the Bombay High Court in the field of Corporate, Testamentary, Property and Disability law. A graduate in Commerce from Sydenham College and a postgraduate in law from the University of Bombay, Ms. Pamnani has completed two courses from the World Intellectual Property Organisation, Geneva and a course in Arbitration from the Indian Merchant's Chamber and a diploma in Intellectual Property Law from the University of Bombay. She has passed the examination of the Bombay Incorporated Law Society and additionally the Qualified Lawyers Transfer Test from the Law Society, England.

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK



Dear Readers,

I am honored to present the Annual Report for the fiscal year 2021-2022. This report highlights our unwavering commitment to promoting inclusivity and advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities.

Despite unprecedented challenges, our organization has remained dedicated to empowering individuals with disabilities, ensuring they have equal access to meaningful opportunities in society. Over the past year, we have continued to innovate, advocate, and collaborate with stakeholders across various sectors to dismantle barriers and create pathways for inclusion, ensuring no one is left behind.

Our efforts, ranging from implementing inclusive policies to nurturing future leaders and torchbearers, have produced tangible results. We have empowered countless individuals to realize their full potential and become equal participants in society. Notably, we launched a groundbreaking program, India's first fellowship for youth with disabilities, aimed at creating the leaders of tomorrow. This fellowship will provide young individuals with the resources, mentorship, and support needed to drive change and foster a more inclusive future. Reflecting on the past year's accomplishments, we are reminded of the transformative power of collective action. Our achievements would not have been possible without the unwavering dedication of our staff, the support of our partners, and the resilience of the individuals we serve.

Looking ahead, we are committed to building on our successes and advancing our mission with renewed vigor. We will continue to strive for a future where every person, regardless of ability, can thrive and succeed in the workplace.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all who have contributed to our journey thus far and invite you to join us as we continue to pave the way toward a more inclusive and equitable society.

# KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

## ADVOCACY

The Disability Law Units (DLUs) in North, South, and East India have made notable achievements. DLU North, in collaboration with Symbiosis Law School, Hyderabad, organized a webinar on online education accessibility, advocating for inclusive environments for students with disabilities. DLU South held a workshop on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016, conducted advocacy meetings, distributed 405 ration kits, facilitated over 200 vaccinations, and engaged policymakers to improve accessibility and health facilities. DLU East facilitated MNREGA cards for 527 PwDs, provided legal assistance in 31 cases, distributed 405 ration kits, organized medical camps for 127 children, and conducted sensitization programs reaching 1033 PwDs and their parents, addressing employment, social security, health, and nutrition needs.

## SCHOLARSHIP

A significant achievement in addressing the educational and employment challenges faced by persons with disabilities in India was the agreement signed in August between NCPEDP and Bajaj Finserv. This partnership aims to support students with disabilities, helping them continue their education and improve their employability, thereby addressing the high dropout rates exacerbated by financial distress, especially post-Covid-19.

## FELLOWSHIP

In its first year, the NCPEDP-Javed Abidi Fellowship on Disability achieved significant milestones. Launched on June 11, 2021, the fellowship was promoted through an extensive social media campaign, reaching over 17,000 users on Facebook and 1,200 on Instagram, and further amplified via print media and Radio Udaan, which reached an average of 17,500 youth with disabilities. The fellowship received 239 applications from 20 states, with 83.3% from persons with disabilities. After a rigorous screening process, 30 fellows representing diverse disabilities were selected. The program included an online induction and a comprehensive five-day capacity building workshop to develop fellows' skills in networking, resource management, and advocacy. Throughout the year, fellows actively participated in national and global disability forums, conducted workshops, published articles, and initiated awareness campaigns, significantly raising awareness about disability rights and issues.



# CURRENT PROGRAMS

## 1. PROMOTING INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Promoting Inclusive Development for Persons with Disabilities (PIDPD) is a 3-year program of National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People which is being supported by Mphasis F1 Foundation. The program solely focuses on promoting legal rights of persons with disabilities through policy/advocacy, awareness, legal aid & guidance, and capacity building. Promoting awareness of RPwD Act 2016 and supporting persons with disabilities is the primary goal of the program. The program has a pan-India reach through its National Disability Network (NDN) & National Committee on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (NCRPD).

The uniqueness of this project is its pan India coverage of all disabilities in all domains. It is notable that this program is not limited to a specific boundary and reforms itself as per the current needs of the sector & ongoing practices of the government.

### Objectives of the programme:

1. To continue to systematically work with the identified ministries, i.e., Ministry of Panchayati Raj & Rural Development, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Home Affairs, and Ministry of Finance for the effective implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.
2. To continue to represent India and the Disability Sector on global platforms such as The Conference of the State parties, The Global Disability Summit, Sustainable Development Goals etc.
3. To create awareness with various stakeholders including persons with disabilities about the RPWD Act, 2016. To ensure its easy & effective implementation through awareness workshops, campaigns, capacity building, academic workshops, research, and legal aid.
4. To recognize and promote good practices and to create awareness through NCPEDP- Mphasis Universal Design Awards.

### DISABILITY LAW UNITS

Disability Law Units (DLUs) are one of the key bodies in their region i.e. North, East and South providing legal aid support to persons with disabilities. They are also the prime stakeholder promoting transparencies of government schemes and programs by filing of RTIs and submitting the memorandums. The DLUs act as NCPEDP's outreach pillars in different regions of the country helping it bridge the gap between the center and these regions.

## **DLU North**

The Disability Law Unit (DLU) North, covering Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Delhi, organized a webinar in collaboration with the Centre for the Rights of the Differently Abled, a unit of Symbiosis Law School, Hyderabad. This event focused on the accessibility of online education for students with disabilities, particularly in the context of a post-COVID world where educational institutions have shifted to online platforms. The discussions highlighted the struggles that students with disabilities face in adapting to these changes, bringing attention to the need for more inclusive online educational environments. This initiative not only raised awareness about the difficulties faced by these students but also underscored the necessity for systemic changes to accommodate their needs effectively.

## **DLU South**

The Disability Law Unit (DLU) South, operating in Karnataka, conducted a series of impactful activities aimed at advocating for the rights and welfare of persons with disabilities (PwDs). A significant event was the two-day district-level workshop on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act 2016, held in Raichur in collaboration with various local organizations. This workshop oriented district leaders and PwDs on the provisions of the RPwD Act 2016, leadership qualities, and the monitoring of its implementation. Additionally, the DLU South engaged extensively in advocacy campaigns, organizing 14 meetings across multiple districts to discuss issues such as rehabilitation, social security schemes, and COVID-19 vaccination for PwDs.

## **DLU East**

The Disability Law Unit (DLU) East, covering Odisha, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, and West Bengal, undertook numerous initiatives to support and empower persons with disabilities. The unit facilitated access to MNREGA cards for 527 PwDs, providing them with opportunities for employment and financial stability. Legal assistance was another critical area of focus, with 31 cases related to UDID, pension, and Aadhar issues documented and addressed. The distribution of 405 ration kits to urban slum dwellers and migrant families of PwDs in Bangalore highlighted the unit's commitment to ensuring food security during challenging times.

## **IMPACT IN NUMBERS**

The Disability Law Units (DLUs) across North, South, and East India have had a substantial impact through their various initiatives. DLU North, covering regions like Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Delhi, organized a significant webinar focusing on online education accessibility, raising awareness and advocating for systemic changes to benefit students with disabilities.

DLU South, operating in Karnataka, conducted a two-day district-level workshop on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016, reaching numerous district leaders and PwDs. They organized 14

advocacy meetings, distributed 405 ration kits, and facilitated over 200 vaccinations for PwDs. Their efforts in media advocacy and policy engagement resulted in improved accessibility and health facilities.

DLU East facilitated MNREGA cards for 527 PwDs, providing them with employment opportunities. They provided legal assistance in 31 cases, distributed 405 ration kits, organized three medical camps for 127 children, and conducted grievance meetings. Their sensitization efforts reached 1033 PwDs and their parents, highlighting their comprehensive approach to improving the lives of PwDs through legal support, social security, health, and nutrition initiatives.

## **2. NCPEDP-JAVED ABIDI FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Program Brief**

The NCPEDP-Javed Abidi Fellowship on Disability was launched on June 11, 2021, to honor the legacy of Shri Javed Abidi and mark the 25th anniversary of NCPEDP. This fellowship was designed to empower youth with disabilities across India by providing them with opportunities for evidence-based advocacy. The program aimed to nurture leadership skills through networking, capacity building, mentoring, and financial support.

### **PROGRAM LAUNCH AND PROMOTION**

#### **Content Creation and Website Launch**

On June 11, 2021, the NCPEDP-Javed Abidi Fellowship was officially launched on the newly revamped NCPEDP website. This significant date was chosen to commemorate the birth anniversary of Shri Javed Abidi. The content for the website was meticulously created and refined through interdepartmental feedback, ensuring clarity and comprehensive coverage of the program's components. The launch was accompanied by regular monitoring and updates to enhance visibility and accessibility.

#### **Social Media Campaign**

A robust social media campaign was executed across Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn, consisting of pre-launch, launch day, and post-launch postings. This campaign successfully reached a wide audience, showcasing the fellowship's broad appeal and engagement.

#### **Key Statistics:**

- Facebook: 26 posts, reaching over 17,162 users.
- Instagram: 20 posts, engaging 1,221 users.
- Print Media: Campaigns in publications like The Hindu, reaching approximately 5,000 readers.

- Radio Udaan: Promotion through 2 broadcasts, reaching an average audience of 17,500 youth with disabilities.

These efforts ensured that the call for applications reached diverse and extensive audiences, maximizing the program's impact.

## **FELLOWS' PARTICIPATION IN IMPORTANT DISABILITY FORUM EVENTS**

The NCPEDP-Javed Abidi Fellowship on Disability ensured that fellows were regularly updated and encouraged to participate in significant disability forums at both national and global levels. This participation not only enhanced their advocacy skills but also amplified their voices on prominent platforms.

### **Key Events and Fellow Participation**

1. Aarti Batra participated in the National Conclave on 'Gender and Disability Inclusion in Indian Cities,' organized by the National Institute of Urban Affairs in New Delhi. She discussed the accessibility needs of persons with invisible disabilities and thalassemia in urban infrastructure.
2. Sakshi Chauhan, Nikhileshwar Gugnani, and Kavya Poornima took part in the Global Disability Youth Summit, co-hosted by the Governments of Norway and Ghana, the International Disability Alliance, and the Atlas Alliance. They spotlighted the ideas and concerns of the estimated 200 million youth with disabilities worldwide.
3. At the 'Design for Social Inclusion' event at IIT Roorkee, fellows Kavya Poornima, Kavya Mukhija, and Sakshi Chauhan shared their personal journeys, challenges, and perspectives on disability and gender inclusion.
4. Anjali Vyas participated as a panelist in the 'Building Back Better: MSunderstand Campaign,' organized by NGO Trinayani, to create awareness about multiple sclerosis, addressing myths, current scenarios, and best practices.
5. Kavya Mukhija spoke about the aspirations of youth with disabilities and the importance of the campaign at 'The Missing Millions Campaign Launch Event,' organized by NCPEDP on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities in New Delhi.
6. During the program, fellows engaged in various impactful activities. Saurabh Prasad conducted four workshops with TCS, Saksham Trust, Perna Education, and Bookshare Library, focusing on the equal treatment of disabled employees, mathematics accessibility, STEM opportunities, and available resources.
7. Amit Yadav initiated an awareness campaign for infrastructural accessibility in schools and colleges, and his viewpoints were published in Outlook magazine.

8. Sanya Zehra published articles in "Greater Kashmir" and "Rising Kashmir" on World Disability Day, discussing life experiences, educational challenges, and job opportunities for educated disabled students.
9. Ferdinand Lyngdoh received a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities and the Chairman of the Research Committee, with a research focus on accessible transportation in Shillong.
10. Kumar Mahavir conducted a cross-disability workshop in Math Bari Bela Bagan (Deoghar) with support from the District Administration, which was covered in Dainik Jagran Newspaper.

## RESEARCH

### "LEST WE FORGET: COVID-19, PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND AN (UN)INCLUSIVE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM"

The report by Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy and the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP) highlights the impact of COVID-19 on persons with disabilities (PwDs) in India. It reveals significant challenges in accessing healthcare and vaccines, with policy recommendations for a more inclusive healthcare system.

Before the pandemic, 25.3% of PwDs found healthcare inaccessible due to long waits, financial difficulties, and lack of transportation. During the pandemic, this increased to 33.5%, exacerbated by hospital closures and medical staff shortages. Only 3.8% of respondents contracted COVID-19, with 77.8% receiving timely treatment.

Vaccine accessibility was problematic; 69.5% registered on the CoWIN platform, but 66.9% needed help. Although 89.5% were vaccinated, 28.5% had to try multiple times, and only 52.8% accessed priority vaccination, with 46.2% finding facilities inaccessible. Moreover, 87.7% could not access door-to-door vaccination.

Information access was also poor, with 61.1% finding general COVID-19 information inaccessible and 57.7% struggling with vaccination information. Additionally, 73.2% were unaware of helplines for PwDs.

The study's sample included 239 PwDs, mostly urban (65.5%), with 50.6% women and 49.4% men. Most respondents were young (45.6% aged 18-25), 46% had education beyond grade 12, and 75.7% were unemployed. Disabilities included locomotor (31%), visual (29.7%), and multiple disabilities (13.8%).

### "KEEP GIRLS IN SCHOOL" INITIATIVE BY P&G - WHISPER AND UNESCO NEW DELHI CLUSTER"

#### Project Description:

UNESCO New Delhi, in partnership with Whisper®, India's leading feminine care brand, launched the #KeepGirlsInSchool program to enhance Menstrual Hygiene Management awareness and education. NCPEDP collaborated with UNESCO to conduct research and develop a Puberty Education module tailored for Girls with Disabilities. This module aims to integrate into national and state school curricula, teacher education, and the Rehabilitation Council of India's curriculum for Special Teachers. The resource will incorporate best practices, lessons learned, and address various disabilities, including

autism, physical challenges, and sensory impairments. It will be accessible, pictorial, and designed for both regular and special educators.

### **Background and Context:**

In India, 2.2% of the population is disabled (Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, 2016), with 61% of disabled children aged 5-19 attending educational institutions. However, a significant gap exists in menstrual hygiene management (MHM) for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), who often lack access to adequate MHM resources and trained support. Disabled women and girls experience menstruation more negatively compared to their non-disabled peers, facing challenges like dysmenorrhea, menorrhagia, and inadequate WASH infrastructure. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these issues, increasing discrimination and isolation.

The #KeepGirlsInSchool project seeks to engage with national and state education authorities to incorporate the developed Puberty Education module into school curricula, ensuring inclusivity for girls with disabilities.

The Consultant's responsibilities include:

- Conducting a desk review of existing MHM research and materials for girls and young women with disabilities across educational levels.
- Designing and developing a comprehensive Puberty Education module, covering health education from early childhood to tertiary education, with themes such as health and MHM.
- Incorporating case studies, testimonies, and activities from various states (Maharashtra, Delhi, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh).
- Ensuring the module is user-friendly and accessible for parents, teachers, NGOs, CSOs, private and public schools, special teachers, and both in-service and pre-service teachers.

# Awards And Campaigns



## MISSING MILLIONS CAMPAIGN

The "Missing Millions" campaign, spearheaded by the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP), was officially launched on 3rd December 2021, coinciding with the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. This initiative was created to address the stark invisibility of persons with disabilities (PwDs) in national data and statistics. Recognizing that the absence of comprehensive data has led to the exclusion of PwDs from mainstream development programs, the campaign aims to ensure that PwDs are included in future policy and development interventions.

### Launch Event

The launch event for the "Missing Millions" campaign was held on 3rd December 2021 from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM, marking the beginning of a significant movement towards the inclusion of PwDs in India. The event commenced with a welcome address by Mr. Som Mittal, Chairperson of NCPEDP, who set the tone for the evening by emphasizing the importance of the campaign.

Following the welcome address, Mr. Eric Falt, Director of UNESCO New Delhi, delivered a video message underscoring UNESCO's support for the initiative. The keynote address was delivered by Mr. Arman Ali, Executive Director of NCPEDP, who introduced the "Missing Millions" campaign and highlighted the theme of World Disability Day.

A poignant video was then launched by the Chief Guest, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Shripathi Ravindra Bhat, Judge of the Supreme Court of India. The video, titled "What is not counted doesn't count!", vividly illustrated the plight of PwDs and the consequences of not having accurate data on disabilities. Justice Bhat officially launched the campaign and provided insights into its significance and goals.

The event featured a session titled "Amplifying the Voices of Missing Millions," where PwDs shared their personal experiences and the challenges they faced. This was followed by a panel discussion moderated by Mr. George Abraham, CEO of Score Foundation, which brought together perspectives from employers, government representatives, civil society, and political leaders on bridging the gap for PwDs.

A significant highlight of the event was the launch of the book "Invisible Majority," authored by Mr. V.R. Ferose. The book was launched by Hon'ble Member of Parliament Mr. Gaurav Gogoi, adding a scholarly dimension to the campaign's advocacy efforts.

# NCPEDP-MPHASIS UNIVERSAL DESIGN AWARDS

NCPEDP, in association with Mphasis, instituted The NCPEDP - Mphasis Universal Design Awards. It was collaborated efforts from the two institutions which started the discourse around accessibility and universal design, because of which, the concept of universal design and accessibility found its place in the currently prevailing legislation on disability, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016, which mandates all products, services, and infrastructure to be accessible.

These Awards are given away every year to those who have been doing exemplary work towards the cause of accessibility and thus ensuring a life of equality and dignity for people with disabilities.

## Category A: Persons with Disabilities

1. Ankit Rajiv Jindal fostered inclusion and universal design through innovations like Signer.AI and Mera Mitra.
2. Prateek Khandelwal founded RampMyCity for infrastructural accessibility.
3. Payal Kapoor created "Rasoi Ke Rahasya" for accessible cooking.
4. Madhav Ajay Lavakare developed TranscribeGlass™ for speech-to-text captions.
5. Paul Gerard D Souza invented assistive devices like affordable Braille modules.

## Category B: Working Professionals

1. Dr. Hema Parikh founded Ummeed Cerebral Palsy Centre for children's rehabilitation.
2. Rymo Technologies developed a smart mobility trainer for physical rehabilitation.

## Category C: Companies/Organizations

1. Samsara Paediacare created the Boond® cleft lip and palate infant feeder.
2. India Signing Hands broadcasts accessible content for the Deaf community.
3. Vispala Technologies developed affordable prosthetics for amputees.

## Special Jury Award

1. Phonologix Health Solutions makes speech therapy accessible for children.
2. Subhash Chandra Vashishth, a disability rights lawyer, contributed to accessibility standards.

# **NCPEDP-LTIMINDTREE HELEN KELLER AWARDS 2021**

The NCPEDP Helen Keller Awards aim to promote equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in employment. These awards recognize and celebrate individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions towards this cause.

## **Category A: Role Model Persons with Disabilities**

1. Dr. Sharad Philip - Psychiatrist in psychiatric rehabilitation.
2. Dr. Jayanthibhai Bhim Patel - Physiotherapist aiding visually impaired employment.
3. Natasha Pinto - Promotes disability inclusion at LSEG.
4. Manasi Girishchandra Joshi - Para-badminton world champion and disability rights advocate.
5. Kanchanmala D. Pande - International para swimmer and RBI officer.

## **Category B: Role Model Supporter of Increased Employment Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities**

1. Chumki Datta - Founder of Vriddhi Training Centre for differently-abled.
2. Shashwati P - Consultant for employing persons with disabilities.
3. Dr. Sharanjeet Kaur - Enhances education and employment for the deaf.

## **Category C: Role Model Companies/NGOs/Institutions**

1. Sarthak Educational Trust - Empowers persons with disabilities.
2. Kenduadihi Bikash Society - Provides training and livelihood in rural West Bengal.
3. ATPAR - Enables entrepreneurial ventures for persons with disabilities.
4. Spastics Society of Karnataka - Promotes employment for developmental disabilities.

## **Category D: Role Model Entrepreneurs with Disabilities**

1. Anand VS Kulkarni - Founder of Flop Films.
2. Santosh Sharma - Founder of Diti Trade.
3. Tariq Ahmad Mir - Founder of Special Hands of Kashmir.

## MEDIA COVERAGE

1. The Times of India, The Sikkim Chronicle, India Education Diary, Higher Education Digest - "NCPEDP organises national webinar on accessibility of online education for students with disabilities"
2. ET Healthworld (Op-ed) - "India urgently needs a nationwide disability-inclusive disaster management system: Arman Ali"
3. India News Republic (ET Healthworld pick up) - "Arman Ali - Health News: ET Healthworld"
4. Podcast coverage: All Indians Matter:
5. Outlook India, Devdiscourse, Navbharat Times, Yahoo News India, Flipboard - "Clarity on timeline for digital census of people with disabilities missing: NCPEDP"
6. The Times of India, The New Indian Express, News18, India TV News, Republic TV, Disability Law News, Maharashtra Times, Orissa Post - "Govt exempts certain establishments from giving job quota to disabled; rights groups object"