



ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

**NATIONAL CENTER FOR PROMOTION OF EMPLOYMENT FOR
DISABLED PEOPLE**



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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

OUR APPROACH

We believe that political advocacy is a critical part of the disability rights movement. To this day, NCPEDP continues to play the role of a watchdog organization to ensure that disability is mainstreamed in the development agenda, while upholding the slogan "Nothing About Us Without Us". We partner with institutions, policymakers, and disability rights activists to advocate for basic rights and ensure that stakeholders are held accountable. We substantiate our claims and propose solutions using evidence-based research. Working closely with experienced researchers and advocacy experts, NCPEDP targets each of its 6 core pillars, to ask the questions no one was asking, seek the answers to generate appropriate intervention strategies, and create new and innovative tools to advance the rights of persons with disabilities. We celebrate inclusion. The Awards instituted by us recognize the exceptional contribution by individuals and organizations in actively promoting employment and accessibility for people with disabilities, with the hope that awardees become brand ambassadors for the cause and take the momentum forward.

1. Advocacy
2. Awareness And Capacity Building Training
3. Knowledge Management & Dissemination
4. Media
5. Youth Mobilization
6. Recognition Of Best Practices and Empowerment

ABOUT THE BOARD



Mr. 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.



Mr. 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.

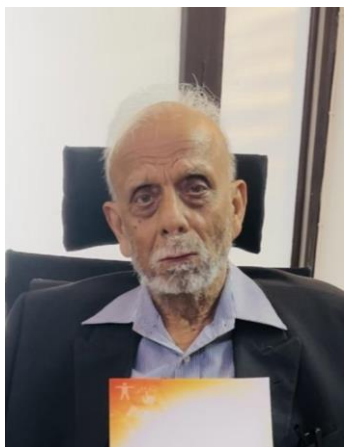
Narayanan's advocacy focuses on the recognition of Indian Sign Language as an official language of India and advocating for closed captioning on TVs. He serves on various committees, including those related to disability rights legislation and accessibility standards for Persons with Disabilities in TV programs. Through his tireless efforts, Narayanan continues to advance the rights and inclusion of the Deaf community in India.



Mr. 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.



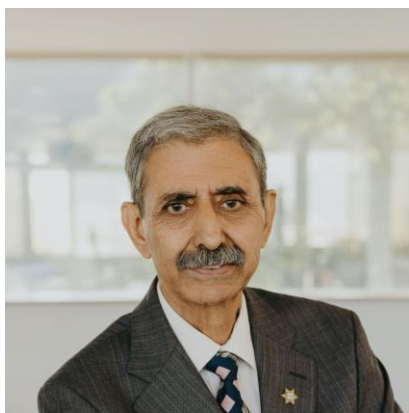
Major General Ian Cardozo

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.



Ms. 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.



Mr. Rakesh Jinsi

Mr. Jinsi has held leadership positions with organisations such as Eicher, Hero Motors, Chase Manhattan, Force Motors, Tata Trucks, New Holland Fiat Tractors, SOS Children's Villages and School Of Inspired

Leadership. He has been a member of National level bodies such as National Human Rights Commission, National Skill Development Corporation and Voluntary Action Network of India(VANI),the apex body of the NGO sector. He has also been an advisor to the Boards of few organisations including the CMD of Hero Cycles. He currently serves as the President (Chairperson) Of the Board of SOS Children’s Villages of India, as a member of the International Senate SOS Children’s Villages International Austria, as an Independent Director on the board of Fairfield Asia(a part of the Dana group), as a Chairperson of Khushboo Welfare Society, as a Trustee of Ahvaan Trust and Member Advisory Board with Leadership Et’ Humanite’.

He is also an empanelled Coach/Mentor for senior level executives and also works with small and medium size organisations, helping them to scale up their business. In the past he has been on the boards of many large organisations viz Schaeffler India Ltd,Minda Automotive Solutions, Hero Motors, Hero Cycles, Munjal Hospitality and Inspired Leadership Gurukul.



Mr. Arvind Gupta

Arvind Gupta has dedicated the past three decades to leading and innovating within the digital space. As the Head and Co-Founder of Digital India Foundation, he has committed himself to digital inclusion and policy innovation. His role extends to academia, where he shares his knowledge as an Adjunct Professor at IIT-BHU.

Mr. Gupta's extensive career spans sectors and continents, excelling in Consumer Internet, Digital Media, Payment Systems, Analytics, and the Data Economy. Recognized on the Global FinTech Top100 list, he also holds prestigious roles at the World Economic Forum and OECD.

He received the Eisenhower Global Fellowship for Innovation in 2014, the DataQuest Pathbreaker of the Year award, and the Distinguished Centenary Alumni award from IIT-BHU. As CEO of MyGov, he spearheaded efforts for digital inclusion through participative governance.

Mr. Gupta drives successful startups like amplify.ai and ApnaPay. As a Founder Member of iSPiRT, he champions nationwide Digital Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) initiatives, showcasing his commitment to digital progress. He's a prominent speaker at global forums and contributes articles on the digital economy and governance to prestigious publications like The Harvard Business Review and The World Economic Forum. Recently, he joined an advisory council addressing digital monopolies.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK



Dear readers,

I am delighted to present the Annual Report for the fiscal year 2022-2023, showcasing our steadfast dedication to inclusivity and the rights of persons with disabilities. In the face of significant challenges, our organization has consistently empowered individuals with disabilities, ensuring equal access to meaningful opportunities within society. Over the past year, we have persistently innovated, advocated, and partnered with various stakeholders to break down barriers and pave the way for inclusivity, making sure no one is left behind.

Our efforts, which include implementing inclusive policies and nurturing future leaders, have led to significant outcomes. We have empowered countless individuals to reach their full potential and become equal members of society. Our newly launched scholarship program for students with disabilities is a testament to this commitment. By providing financial support and resources, this program ensures that students with disabilities can access quality education, thereby creating opportunities for their personal and professional growth.

Reflecting on the past year's successes, we acknowledge the transformative power of collective action. Our achievements are a result of the unwavering dedication of our staff, the support of our partners, and the resilience of the individuals we serve.

Looking forward, we are determined to build on our successes and pursue our mission with renewed enthusiasm. We will continue striving for a future where everyone, regardless of ability, can thrive and succeed in the workplace.

I extend my deepest gratitude to all who have supported us on this journey and invite you to join us as we continue to advance toward a more inclusive and equitable society.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

ADVOCACY

The Advocacy Unit of NCPEDP made significant strides in promoting disability rights over the past year. The Disability Law Units (DLUs) in the North, South, and East regions played a crucial role. DLU North established India's first legal aid helpline for persons with disabilities, addressed numerous legal cases, and filed RTIs to enhance transparency in government schemes. DLU South organized a major regional conference in Bengaluru to raise awareness of disability policies, while DLU East conducted important accessibility audits and organized awareness programs involving hundreds of participants.

In addition to regional efforts, the Advocacy Unit achieved policy advancements through collaboration with various ministries. This included securing accessible tourism guidelines, promoting inclusive education, and advocating for non-discriminatory air travel policies. They also influenced policy changes, such as the 100% work-from-home facility for employees in SEZs and the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the national e-census. Efforts with the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDAI) led to mandated disability-inclusive insurance policies. These achievements highlight the unit's dedication to fostering an inclusive society and securing tangible benefits for persons with disabilities across India.

SCHOLARSHIP

The NCPEDP-Bajaj Finserv Scholarship Program, launched in December 2022, successfully provided financial support to 112 students with disabilities, exceeding the initial target of 100 due to efficient fund management. A total of 350 applications were received, showcasing significant demand and successful outreach efforts. The program also organized impactful capacity-building workshops in Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh, with participation from 151 individuals, including students, parents, and educators. These workshops provided practical advice on disability rights, education, and employment, and featured expert speakers from the disability sector.

FELLOWSHIP

The NCPEDP-Javed Abidi Fellowship on Disability, supported by the Azim Premji Foundation, successfully completed its second year, highlighting significant achievements. Key accomplishments include the establishment of a robust cross-disability network with over 2310 members and the conduction of training sessions for more than 3150 participants. Fellows actively participated in national and international disability forums, engaging in policy advocacy and capacity-building workshops. Noteworthy initiatives include media campaigns, baseline studies on accessible

healthcare, advocacy for universal design in public places, and climate change's impact on persons with disabilities. The program also facilitated field visits, systematic monitoring, and documentation, ensuring continuous improvement and substantial contributions to disability rights advocacy.

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).

Objectives of the Program:

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

DLU North

The DLU North was established in the second quarter and quickly became operational, managing the NCPEDP helpline, which is India's first platform providing legal aid and guidance to persons with disabilities. Throughout the year, DLU North successfully addressed 81 calls seeking various resource information and legal guidance. The unit also conducted district level meetings to promote awareness about disability issues, with 11 persons with disabilities participating in these sessions. DLU North played a crucial role in filing 46 RTIs to ensure transparency in government schemes and programs, making it a key stakeholder in the region. Additionally, it actively planned and coordinated

with institutions, government authorities, and NGOs to further its mission of legal advocacy and support.

DLU South

DLU South organized significant events, including the South India Regional Conference in Bengaluru on January 30th and 31st, 2023. This conference brought together DPOs from all South Indian states to enhance their capacity and awareness of recent developments in disability policies and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016. The workshop provided a platform for participants to highlight regional-specific issues and collaborate with experts. DLU South was also involved in filing 91 RTIs and disseminated information through various channels. It conducted several awareness programs and consultations with DPO leaders, further strengthening the advocacy network in the region.

DLU East

DLU East was proactive in conducting accessibility audits and awareness programs. The unit carried out accessibility audits of Mo Bus services and Bhubaneswar and Cuttack railway stations, ensuring the participation of persons with disabilities to understand challenges closely. These audits provided valuable insights and recommendations for improving accessibility. DLU East also organized events on significant days such as World Braille Day, International Women's Day, and World Leprosy Day, engaging over 300 participants from women's SHGs, NGOs, schools, and colleges. These programs aimed to raise awareness about disability issues and promote inclusion. On International Day of Persons with Disabilities, DLU East organized competitions in Bhubaneswar government schools to foster understanding and inclusion.

ACADEMIC COURSES

Introduction to Disability Research - A Legal and Social Studies Perspective

The National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP) has introduced a unique certificate course aimed at generating awareness among college students about disability rights from a legal perspective. This initiative is designed to foster a deeper understanding of disability issues and to act as a catalyst in combating discrimination and exclusion of people with disabilities. The course is open to undergraduate and postgraduate students from universities across India, making it accessible to a broad audience of future leaders.

The "Introduction to Disability Research - A Legal and Social Studies Perspective" course aims to enhance understanding of disability laws and the rights-based needs of people with disabilities, emphasizing inclusive society and advocacy mechanisms. Open to undergraduate and postgraduate students across India, the course partnered with Kirori Mal College, University of Delhi, and Symbiosis Law School, Hyderabad. The course at Kirori Mal College ran from February 16 to April 22, 2022, with 72 students enrolled, while the Symbiosis Law School's course details are pending. Feedback

highlighted the course's high relevance (97%), comprehensiveness (94%), ease of understanding (96%), and a largely glitch-free experience (84%). The course was highly beneficial, with plans to better integrate it with students' curricular and extracurricular activities in future sessions.

CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOPS

Capacity Building at Sabal, Tata Steel Foundation

Workshop conducted for the employees of the SABAL initiative under the Tata Steel Foundation. SABAL focuses on ensuring equal rights and respect for persons with disabilities by creating a sensitized environment. This three-day workshop, held from February 28 to March 2, 2023, in Jamshedpur, Jharkhand, aimed to equip SABAL employees with the necessary knowledge and tools to advocate effectively for disability rights. The workshop brought together 22 participants, including five executives from NCPEDP and SABAL, with primary objectives to provide an in-depth understanding of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016, develop skills for creating effective advocacy plans, and promote evidence-based advocacy through budget analysis.

Ibis Chain of Hotels in New Delhi

NCPEDP organized a half-day awareness session for the staff of IBIS Hotel in Delhi as part of their project promoting inclusive development for persons with disabilities. Approximately 50 staff members from various departments, including Front Office, Food & Bakery, IT, Engineering, and Support Staff, attended the session. The 120-minute interactive session covered the meaning of disability, concepts of reasonable accommodation and universal design, challenges faced by persons with disabilities, and the duties of hotels as employers.

Disability Inclusive Budget Workshop

The National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP) conducted a two-day workshop on December 23-24, 2022, in Faridabad, to enhance understanding of budgetary processes and advocate for disability-inclusive budgets. Organized in collaboration with the Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability (CBGA), the workshop aimed to empower disability advocates with the skills needed to influence budgetary decisions. The workshop sought to increase budgetary knowledge among disability leaders, enabling effective advocacy for financial provisions. Twenty-four participants from various regions attended the workshop.

Awareness Webinar on RPWD ACT 2016 by the Department of Justice

On December 27, 2022, a webinar on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act 2016 was held by the Department of Justice via Webex. It aimed to raise awareness and understanding of disability rights among field-level functionaries. Key participants included Neeraj Kumar Gayagi, Joint Secretary of the Department of Justice, and Arman Ali, Executive Director of NCPEDP. The discussion highlighted critical issues in health, employment, and education, referencing key judgments like Jeeja

Ghosh vs. Vikas Kumar (UPSC), and addressed accessibility challenges faced by persons with disabilities in India.

POLICY ADVOCACY WITH MINISTRIES AND GOVERNMENT STATUTORY BODIES

Ministry of Tourism: A consultation meeting was organized on July 26, 2022, involving 25 members from NDN-NCRPD and accessibility experts from NITI Aayog. The meeting resulted in the Ministry of Tourism incorporating recommendations on accessibility into their new guidelines, ensuring tourist places consider the needs of persons with disabilities.

Ministry of Education: On July 26, 2022, a consultation meeting was held with 25 members from NDN-NCRPD and 3 NCPEDP executives. This meeting led to the creation of recommendations for accessible educational spaces, which were endorsed by 50 representatives and shared with the department. The focus was on promoting inclusive and equitable quality education for students with disabilities.

Ministry of Civil Aviation: A meeting took place on September 8, 2022, with the Honorable Minister of Civil Aviation, Mr. Jyotiraditya Scindia. NCPEDP presented recommendations to ensure accessible and non-discriminatory air travel for persons with disabilities, addressing the specific needs and challenges faced during air travel.

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment: A consultation meeting was conducted on July 27, 2022, with 25 members from NDN-NCRPD and 3 NCPEDP executives. The meeting resulted in recommendations for the National Policy for Persons with Disabilities 2022, which were endorsed by 50 institutions and shared with the department. These efforts aimed to address critical gaps in social assistance and empowerment schemes for persons with disabilities.

Ministry of Railways: On October 21, 2022, a virtual consultation meeting was held with 8 NDN-NCRPD members and 3 NCPEDP executives. The focus was on addressing accessibility issues in railway stations and train services. The recommendations were submitted to the ministry, and updates are awaited on the implementation of these suggestions.

Ministry of Jal Shakti: Detailed recommendations for the Jal Jeevan Mission's guidelines were submitted on October 15, 2022. These guidelines aim to ensure accessible and inclusive piped water supply for persons with disabilities. The response from the ministry is pending.

Ministry of Commerce and Industries: NCPEDP successfully advocated for up to 100% work-from-home facility for employees in Special Economic Zones (SEZs). This policy, effective from December 2022, supports reasonable accommodation measures for persons with disabilities, enhancing their employment opportunities.

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare: On June 27, 2022, a consultation meeting was held with 25 members from NDN-NCRPD and 3 NCPEDP executives. The meeting focused on improving healthcare

accessibility for persons with disabilities. Recommendations were shared with the ministry to ensure better healthcare delivery and outreach.

Office of Registrar General of India: A meeting with Dr. Suchita Gupta was organized to discuss the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the e-census. NCPEDP submitted WCAG guidelines to develop an inclusive e-census tool, ensuring accurate socio-economic data collection for better policy design.

Ministry of Information & Broadcasting: NCPEDP engaged with the ministry and media groups to include disability issues in public service broadcasting slots. Continuous advocacy efforts led to updated guidelines that now suggest including disability as a theme in national and social importance broadcasts, promoting greater awareness and sensitization.

ADVOCACY WITH INSURANCE REGULATORY AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (IRDAI)

NCPEDP has been addressing the lack of universal insurance coverage for persons with disabilities, as current schemes largely exclude them, except for a small segment of formal employees and those below the poverty line. Following a directive from the Delhi High Court led by Justice Pratibha M. Singh, NCPEDP met with IRDAI officials on February 8, 2023, to discuss inclusive insurance schemes. They proposed stakeholder meetings and shared a draft policy brief highlighting concerns and suggesting a standardized product. These efforts led to IRDAI issuing a circular mandating insurance providers to offer specific coverage for persons with disabilities, HIV/AIDS, and mental illness. The Delhi Court has mandated the release of a disability-inclusive insurance policy, and NCPEDP plans to continue developing policy briefs and consultations with IRDAI.

2. NCPEDP-BAJAJ FINSERV SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

The NCPEDP-Bajaj Finserv Scholarship Program was launched in December 2022 to address the significant financial and accessibility barriers faced by students with disabilities in India. With an estimated 70-100 million persons with disabilities in the country, many face exclusion from education and employment opportunities. This program aims to provide financial support to students with disabilities in Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra, helping them continue their education and improve their employability.

Objectives

The program aims to provide scholarships to 100 students with disabilities to help them continue their education, organize state-level capacity-building workshops to educate and empower students, parents, and teachers, and conduct research studies on the educational status of persons with disabilities in India.

Application and Verification

The application process was initiated in December 2022 and closed on February 5, 2023. During this period, a significant outreach effort was undertaken to ensure that students from various backgrounds and locations were aware of the scholarship opportunity. As a result, a total of 350 applications were received, showcasing the high demand and need for such financial support among students with disabilities.

Verification of student documents and contacts with educational institutions were completed by the first week of March. This verification process was thorough and involved multiple steps to ensure the authenticity and eligibility of the applicants. The verification team coordinated closely with educational institutions to confirm the details provided by the students, ensuring that only deserving candidates were selected.

Selection and Disbursement

Two state-level capacity-building workshops were organized in March 2023, one in Maharashtra and one in Uttar Pradesh. These workshops aimed to create awareness about disability rights, provide practical advice on education and employment, and build a supportive community for students, parents, and teachers.

The Maharashtra workshop, held on March 17, 2023, saw the participation of 47 individuals, including students, parents, and educators. Four sessions were conducted by experts from the disability sector covering topics such as advocacy, rights, and employability. Resource persons included Mr. Ketan Kothari from Xavier's Resource Centre for the Visually Challenged, Mr. Suryakant Phadke from Youth4Jobs, Dr. Ketna Mehta from Nina Foundation, and Dr. Vaishali Kolhe from TISS. Mr. Arman Ali, Executive Director of NCPEDP, delivered the welcome address and spoke about the power of advocacy in the disability sector.

The Uttar Pradesh workshop, held on March 26, 2023, had a high turnout with 104 participants, including students, parents, and teachers. The Chief Guest, Shri Awanish Kumar Awasthi (Retd. IAS), Adviser to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, delivered a motivational speech that inspired the students. Sessions covered rights and entitlements for persons with disabilities, employment rights, and practical tips for job readiness. Speakers included Mr. Suraj Yadav, Secretary of UP Vikalang Manch, and Ms. Vaishnavi Ganesh, Specialist in Disability Inclusion at V-sheesh.

BASELINE SURVEY AND RESEARCH STUDY

The baseline survey and research study aim to gather comprehensive data on the educational status of persons with disabilities. The pilot study has been initiated, and full-scale data collection is underway.

CONCLUSION

The NCPEDP-Bajaj Finserv Scholarship Program has made significant strides in its first year, successfully supporting 112 students with disabilities and conducting impactful capacity-building workshops. The program's efficient management and flexible approach have allowed it to exceed its initial targets and create meaningful change in the lives of these students. As we move forward, the focus will remain on expanding these efforts, conducting thorough research, and continuing to empower students with disabilities through education and financial support.

3. NCPEDP-JAVED ABIDI FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The NCPEDP-Javed Abidi Fellowship is a transformative three-year initiative designed to empower youth with disabilities, equipping them to become leaders in advocacy. This program annually supports 25 fellows by providing stipends, mentorship, networking opportunities, and capacity-building workshops, fostering evidence-based advocacy in disability rights.

Program Structure

NCPEDP plays a central role in the fellowship, ensuring that it operates smoothly and effectively. Their comprehensive involvement includes:

Program Management: NCPEDP oversees all aspects of the fellowship, from planning to execution. This includes coordinating various activities, managing resources, and ensuring that the program's objectives are met. Their role is pivotal in maintaining the quality and consistency of the fellowship.

Fellows Selection and Induction: Each year, NCPEDP carefully selects 25 fellows from a pool of applicants. This process ensures that a diverse group of individuals from different regions and backgrounds are chosen, bringing a wide range of perspectives to the fellowship. Once selected, fellows are inducted into the program, where they receive an orientation about their roles and expectations.

Training: NCPEDP provides extensive training focused on evidence-based advocacy. This training includes workshops, seminars, and interactive sessions designed to equip fellows with the knowledge and skills necessary to advocate effectively for disability rights. Topics covered include policy analysis, strategic communication, and stakeholder engagement.

Coordination: NCPEDP facilitates communication and collaboration among fellows, mentors, and host organizations. They ensure that all parties are aligned with the fellowship's goals and that mentors and host organizations provide the necessary support and guidance to the fellows.

Monitoring and Reporting: Regular monitoring of the fellows' progress is a key component of NCPEDP's role. They collect and analyze data from monthly reports submitted by the fellows, track

milestones, and provide feedback. This continuous monitoring helps in identifying areas where fellows may need additional support and ensures that the program stays on track.

The NCPEDP-Javed Abidi Fellowship on Disability, supported by the Azim Premji Foundation, successfully completed its second year. This report outlines the fellows' achievements, challenges, and progress in developing leadership and advocacy skills among young disabled individuals, aiming for their active participation in policymaking and community development.

Activities and Progress

Cross Disability Networking and Training: Fellows built extensive networks and mobilized support among various stakeholders and communities, resulting in networks comprising over 1000 members and conducting numerous cross-disability training sessions. These efforts significantly enhanced stakeholder sensitization and mobilization, fostering a more inclusive approach to disability issues.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM FELLOWS

Aarti Batra: Conducted a baseline study on accessible healthcare services in Gurugram, organized sensitization workshops for ASHA and ANM workers, co-authored a paper for TISS' journal on disability studies and research, and published an article on healthcare burdens in The Hindu. Her efforts led to increased awareness among healthcare workers and contributed to academic discourse on disability.

Kavya Poornima: Advocated for accessible public places in Visakhapatnam, initiated an online platform for universal design in architecture, influenced the Council of Architecture to incorporate universal design into their courses, and reported on Rushikonda Beach, leading to policy changes by the state tourism department. Kavya's work improved accessibility in public spaces and influenced architectural education and policy.

Abhishek Kumar: Launched campaigns on the impact of climate change on persons with disabilities, represented at national and international forums, including the Global South Climate Database by Carbon Brief, delivered guest lectures, and developed a lexicon of terminologies for climate change and disability. His advocacy raised awareness on the intersection of climate change and disability, influencing policy discussions.

Amit Kumar Yadav: Addressed accessibility issues in schools and polling booths, filed RTIs to gather information on school accessibility, and prompted local authorities to take actionable steps for accessibility improvements. His efforts led to tangible improvements in school and polling booth accessibility, ensuring better inclusion for persons with disabilities.

Anjali Vyas: Conducted baseline studies and employer sensitization sessions on invisible disabilities, facilitated the installation of accessibility features in local governance buildings, and engaged with multiple companies to bridge the awareness gap on invisible disabilities. Anjali's work increased awareness about invisible disabilities and improved accessibility in her community.

SIGNIFICANT INITIATIVES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Cross-Disability Network and Training by Fellows: Fellows built networks comprising over 2310 members and conducted training sessions for over 3150 participants. Examples include Abhishek Kumar's network of 500 members and Saurabh Prasad's training for 795 participants.

Online Awareness Program on Understanding Banking Systems and Safe Banking Practices: Conducted by the RBI in November 2022, this program educated disabled individuals about their banking rights and facilities, with active participation from fellows and community members.

International Visitors Leadership Program (IVLP): Hosted by the US Embassy in March 2023, this program trained fellows like Anjali Vyas, Alice Abraham, and Amit Kumar in research-based advocacy skills.

National Disability Network (NDN) Vision Meeting: Organized by NCPEDP in March 2023, this meeting prioritized areas of intervention for the disability sector, with fellows like Abhishek Kumar contributing insights and recommendations.

Impacting Change in Policy Document: Fellows documented significant policy changes through their advocacy work, such as Abhishek Kumar's lexicon for climate change and disability and Amit Kumar Yadav's advocacy for accessible school toilets in Etah district.

Baseline Reports: Fellows like Aarti Batra and Kumar Mahavir prepared baseline reports on accessible healthcare and UDID certification outreach, respectively.

Media Campaign Tracker: Fellows conducted media campaigns to raise awareness and inspire action on disability issues, utilizing social media, blogs, and other online mediums.

Online Session on Media Campaign: In 2022, sessions focused on media report presentation, effective use of social media, and humanizing content through case studies, facilitated by Dipika Rangachari Kaura.

Workshop on Advocacy for Disability-Inclusive Budget: Held in December 2022, this workshop enhanced fellows' understanding of budget allocation and utilization, focusing on disability-inclusive budgeting.

In conclusion, the NCPEDP-Javed Abidi Fellowship on Disability has demonstrated significant progress in fostering leadership and advocacy in the disability sector. Through detailed planning, strategic

execution, and continuous support, the fellowship has made notable impacts on policy and community development. It continues to be a beacon of hope for youth with disabilities, aiming for continued progress and achievements in the coming years.

AWARDS AND CAMPAIGNS

MISSING MILLIONS CAMPAIGN

World Disability Day (December 3rd)

The International Day of Persons with Disabilities has been celebrated every year on 3rd December since 1992. Proclaimed and promoted by the United Nations, this international observance is marked the world over to intensify efforts aimed at sustained effective action with a view to improving the situation of persons with disabilities. In 2022, NCPEDP took the initiative to promote awareness and provide symbolic recognition of this day in India, marking a significant effort to highlight the importance of disability advocacy.

The event featured cultural activities performed by children and artists with disabilities, engaging a diverse audience and showcasing the talents and contributions of individuals with disabilities. NCPEDP's conceptualization of the event involved a collaborative network and advocacy with key organizations, including the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), the President's office, and the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPWD). This collaboration aimed to enhance awareness and recognition of disability issues through symbolic acts.

A primary objective of the event was to promote awareness about disability using symbols of democracy. This objective was realized through the illumination of significant heritage sites in India. Notable landmarks such as India Gate, Rashtrapati Bhavan, Parliament (north and south block), and the Secretariat were lit up in purple, a color symbolic of the disability movement. This illumination effort, solely driven by NCPEDP, underscored the importance of inclusivity and the need for sustained advocacy to improve the lives of persons with disabilities.

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

- Vidhya Y (Karnataka) - Founded Vision Empower and Vembi Technologies for accessible STEM education.
- Lalit Kumar (Delhi) - Promoted disability rights and created a free Braille translator.
- Soundarya Kumar Pradhan (Odisha) - Developed a website for accessible chess and won blind chess medals.
- Teresa Antony Alappatt (Chennai) - Created inclusive storybooks at Chetana Trust.
- Robin Tommy (Kerala) - Developed technology for neurodivergent citizens and founded Inclusys Org.

Category B: Working Professionals

- Nilesh Panchal (Gujarat) - Special Teacher at Navjeevan Training Center for disabled individuals.
- Joe John George (Kerala) - Advocated Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction and trained PWDs.

Category C: Companies/Organizations

- Accenture Solutions Private Limited (Karnataka) - Advanced accessibility and inclusion initiatives.
- NeoMotion Assistive Solutions (Chennai) - Created innovative mobility solutions NeoFly and NeoBolt.
- The Department of Social Welfare, Women and Child Development, Chandigarh Administration (Chandigarh) - Implemented RPwD Act schemes and distributed aids.
- Indian Spinal Injuries Centre (Delhi) - Provided comprehensive services for spinal injuries and promoted self-reliance.

Special Jury Award

- Diana Vincent (Kerala) - Increased enrollment of children with disabilities through Nanagu Shaale.
- Kerala School for the Blind (Kerala) - Enhanced education for visually impaired students with inclusive projects.

Javed Abidi Public Policy Award

- Merry Barua (Delhi) - Pioneered Autism movement in India through Action for Autism.

NCPEDP-LTIMINDTREE HELEN KELLER AWARDS 2022

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.

Here are the winners of the Helen Keller Awards 2022, categorized and with a brief description of their work or reason for winning the award:

Category A: Role Model Persons with Disabilities

- Prof. Anil Kumar Aneja excelled in education and disability advocacy.
- Tejalben Prakashchandra Mehta trains visually impaired employees at UCO Bank.
- Dr. Paul Muddha supports skill training for disabled youth through Snehadeep Trust.
- Ranjini Ramanujam, a Deaf employee at Infosys, improves deaf-friendly policies.

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

- C. Govindakrishnan empowers the visually impaired through Nethrodaya.
- Preeti Siwach provides vocational training for individuals with Autism.
- Dr. M.D Abul Hasan Sahani focuses on community development for disabled children.
- Faisal Ashraf Nomani supports diversity hiring at Randstad India.

Category C: Role Model Companies/NGOs/Institutions

- Amazon India Operations employs PWDs with inclusive practices.
- Union Bank of India promotes DEI initiatives for disabled employees.
- Noida Deaf Society provides vocational training to Deaf youth.
- Joygram Social Welfare Society empowers disabled individuals in West Bengal.
- National Association of Disabled's Enterprises offers vocational training in Mumbai.

Category D: Role Model Entrepreneurs with Disabilities

- Dr. Kalashri Barve, an artist and filmmaker, leads Kalavisharad Productions.
- Ajay Gupta, founder of Bachpan Play School, supports accessibility.
- Amit Sridar facilitates diverse recruitment at Qshield Technologies.
- Sooraj P.A. promotes eco-friendly entrepreneurship for disabled individuals.
- Meenu Mani Arora runs Yes Bakers to empower women with disabilities.

MEDIA COVERAGE

1. **Webinar on Education for Disabled Students** - The Times of India
2. **Disaster Management Webinar for People with Disabilities** - The Sikkim Chronicle, India Education Diary, Higher Education Digest
3. **Disability-Inclusive Disaster Management** - ET Healthworld (Op-ed), India News Republic (ET Healthworld pick up)
4. **Disability as a Political Issue Podcast** - *"Disability is a Political Issue" Asserts Disability Rights Crusader Arman Ali in a Special Conversation with All Indians Matter*
5. **Educational Information and Admissions** - The Hindu (Education Plus)
6. **Digital Census of People with Disabilities** - Outlook India, Devdiscourse, Navbharat Times, Yahoo News, Flipboard
7. **Job Quota Exemption for Disabled** - The Times of India, The New Indian Express, Maharashtra Times, News18, Yahoo News, India TV News, Udayavani, Orissa Post, Republic TV, New India Life, Devdiscourse, Navjeevan Express, ETV Bharat, NewsClick, Hindisip, Struggler King, Disability Law News, Naveen Bharat, Upright Media
8. **Disability Certificate for Medical Admission** - HimachalScape, The Wire, ETV Bharat, The Tribune India
9. **World Disability Day 2022** - *India Gate and Other Delhi Monuments Lit Purple on World Disability Day* - The Statesman