

## ORGANISATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION IN INDIA

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### Abstract

*At the top most level of the country, two central ministries namely Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India are responsible for the organization and administration of the rehabilitation, care and education for the children with special needs (including disabled). As per the provision of the Persons with Disability (PWD) Act 1995, the organizational and administrative tasks carried out by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is helped by the two bodies, namely the Central Coordinating Committee and Central Executive Committee. Ministry of Human Resource Development stands for providing meaningful measures for the education of all types of children with special needs. Further at the State level, there is also a provision of State Coordination Committee and State Executive Committee for carrying out administrative and organizational functions for the welfare of the disabled.*

**Keywords:** *Central Ministries, Social Justice, Empowerment, Organization, Administration, Human Resource Development, Welfare, Disabled.*

### Introduction

Universal Primary Education by the year 2015 is one of the Millennium Development goals that has been set internationally, agreed upon by most of the countries of the world including India. The sarva shiksha abhiyan (education for all), campaign to deliver "useful and quality elementary education" to all children in the 6-14 age group by 2010 has been launched by Government of India not only for fulfilling its international commitment to the rights of the child but also for serving the needs of the many children who remain deprived of the right to education on one or the other reasons. Children with disability, no doubt, make up a quite sizable group among such educationally deprived children.

Internationally, as per UNESCO estimates, there are 150 millions disabled children in developing countries, out of which only 2% are found to attend schools. Indian condition is also quite gloomy. As per census 2001, there are 2.19 crore persons with disabilities in India who constitute 2.13% of the total population. This includes persons with visual, hearing, speech, locomotor and mental disabilities. If we add other disabilities group, then the figure will be multiplied more. The census 2001 data also reveal that 51% persons with disability are illiterate.

For providing proper educational access and care to its huge disabled population, Government of India has come up with a number of necessary legislative measures time of time mentioned like Persons with Disability (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999, Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992 and Amendment, 2000. It has also come up quite recently in February 2006 with a much needed over all policy in the name of National Policy for Persons with Disabilities.

The measures like the previous ones are quite indicative of the intention of the Government of India to make education accessible to all children (including the disabled). However, the task is quite gigantic. Moreover in keeping with the spirit of the Article 21 A of the Constitution guaranteeing education as a fundamental right and Section 26 of the Persons with Disabilities Act. 1995, Free and compulsory education has to be provided to all children with disabilities up to the minimum age of 18 years.

It makes sense, that for achieving the same, India has to gear up properly in terms of suitable planning and implementation of some of other appropriate programmes. In doing so, a well coordinated system of organization and administration of special/disabled education is very much needed.

Since policy matters and programmes are planned from the top and are taken shape at the grassroots level, it will be better for us to discuss, the organizational and administrative aspect of special education in India by discussing it at its three main levels, i.e. organization and administration at the central, state and ground level.

### **Organization and Administration at the Central Level**

At the top most level, two central ministries namely Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, New Delhi, are responsible for the organization and administration of rehabilitation care and special/disabled education in the country. Out of these two, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is the main nodal agency for carrying out the tasks connected with the rehabilitation, care and education of the children with disabilities. It is not concerned with the task of providing any programme, incentives to the other categories of exceptional children except the disabled.

The task of providing special consideration to the gifted and talented children is solely carried out by the Ministry of Human Resources Development. It also cooperates and coordinates with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment for implementing the programme and policies meant for the education of the children with disabilities in a number of ways.

### **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment**

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is entrusted with the welfare, social justice and employment of disadvantaged and marginalized section of the society viz. Scheduled Caste, Minorities, Backward Classes, Persons with Disabilities, Aged Persons, Street Children and Victims of Drug Abuse, etc. Hence, it is responsible for planning and implementation of the policies and programmes, law and institutions, for the purpose of establishing a welfare system in the country to bring the target group into the mainstream of development by taking all measures for making them self reliant through their education in general, all matters and functions related to the education, training, rehabilitation and welfare of all types of disabled children delinquents, street children are governed at the centre by the Ministry of Social Justice and empowerment.

**Central Coordinating Committee:** It is headed by the Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, GOVERNMENT OF India as a chairperson and the Minister of State of this ministry as vice chairman besides Secretaries to the Government of India in charge of social justice and empowerment, human resource development, health and other

ministries involved in the task of welfare ,chief commissioner,Director NCERT for disabled and several other elected and nominated members.The main functions of this committee as underPWD Act 1995 are:

To advice the central government on the formulation of policies,programme legislation and projects with respect to disability

To review the impact of policies and programmeee designed for achieving equality and full participation of persons with disability.

**Central Executive Committee:** At present it is headed by the Secretary to the Government of India, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment as the chairperson, Joint Secretary for the Government of India of this Ministry (dealing with the welfare of the disabled) as Member Secretary and financial advisor of this ministry. The other members of the committee are the chief Commissioner, Disabled, Joint Secretaries of the other Central Ministries related to welfare, Director General of Health Services, general employment and training, and some other members nominated by the central and state governments. All functions related to the planning and implementation of the programmes and policies related to disabled fall under the purview of this committee.

At the central level, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, equipped with its two committees central coordination and central executive are looking after a number of schemes, programmes and projects related to education and rehabilitation of the disabled through its infrastructure network of the Disability Division in this Ministry. The infrastructure mainly includes the following.

1. National Institutes
2. Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI)
3. National Handicapped Finance and Development Cooperation of India (NHFDC)
4. Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO)
5. National Trust for welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities
6. Office of the chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities
7. Office of the Joint Secretary, Social Defense
8. Office of the Joint Secretary, Coordination.

### **Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India**

Ministry of Human Resource Development is very much associated with the adjustment and education of the disabled children a number of centrally sponsored schemes, programmes and provisions.

The schemes, programmes and functioning of the ministry of Human resource development is carried out at the central level through its well established organization infrastructure and autonomous organization like NCERT, CBSE, K.V.S. education and literacy) and U.G.C. network (all connected with the school education literacy) and U.G.C. network of regular of and open Universities, institutes of higher education including professional and technical education, etc. Let us

have a brief idea about some of these organizations in relation to their role played in providing education to the children with special needs.

**NCERT:** National Council of Education Research and training is an apex resource organization (a autonomous body) set up by the Government of India, with head quarters at New Delhi to assist and advise the central and state governments on academic matters related to school education. It provides the necessary academic and technical support for the improvement of school education the necessary academic and technical support for the improvement of school education and is instrumental in carrying out various schemes and programmes launched by Government of India in the field of school education, including the education of the children with special needs.

NCERT has a due provision for encouraging and helping the gifted children by providing scholarship under the Nation a Talent scheme (General) and National Talent Programme Scheme (for school dropout). It has also a separate department in the name of Department of special Education for looking after the education and adjustment needs of the special children including the disabled. Through its various well coordinated departments, NCERT is providing valuable help in carrying out research chalking out developmental activities, courses, activities and training schedules for the children and teachers of the special schools and inclusive set-up of the children with special needs.

**Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS):** NVS is an autonomous organization functioning under the administrative and financial control of the Ministry of Human Resource Department, Government of India with its head quarters at New Delhi. It was set up establish and manage co-educational, residential schools (course VI to XII) known as Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya as per recommendation of the National Policy on Education, 1986 in each district of the country. Education in these Vidyalayas is free for all enrolled students including lodging, boarding, textbooks uniforms, etc. The major objective of these vidyalayas is to promote and develop talented, bright and gifted children predominantly from rural areas, irrespective of their socio-economic conditions, who may otherwise be denied good educational opportunities. These vidyalayas are affiliated to the central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and impart the CBSE curricula. Admission to them is made at the class VI level through open test conducted at district level by CBSE.

**National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS):** National Institute of Open Schooling formerly known as National Open School was established in November 1989, as an autonomous organization in pursuance of National Policy on Education, 1986 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. It is partly funded by the Government of India. Keeping in view of the needs of its various target groups, the NIOS is also providing a number of vocational and community oriented courses besides general and academic courses to all types of school going students including the disabled.

So the open schooling system offers unique educational opportunities to the children with special needs free from the constraints of time, space, rigidity of curricula, etc. To enhance the access, retain them in the learning process and achieve development of the children with disabilities, NIOS established a cell for the Education of the Disabled (CED) in 2000.

**Integrated Education of Disabled Children (IEDC):** This scheme was initially launched in 1974 and revised in 1992 for providing educational opportunities to the moderately, disabled children in the general School system. The scope of the scheme includes pre-school training, counseling for

parents and community involvement. Implemented through state Governments, autonomous bodies and voluntary organizations, IEDC scheme provide 100% financial assistance for various facilities to the disabled children's education like allowance for books and stationary, uniform, transport, readers allowance for visually handicapped, hostel allowance, equipment cost, removal and modification of architectural barriers, financial assistance for purchasing/production of instructional material, training of general teachers and equipment for resource rooms.

**Project Integrated Education for the Disabled (PIED):** This scheme was launched in 1987 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development along with UNICEF. In this scheme, there lies shift in strategy (in comparison to IEDC) from school based approach to a composite area approach. Accordingly in this scheme a cluster (usually a block of population) of schools is taken as the project area. All the schools in the area are expected to enroll children with disabilities. All the essential facilities pooled for a cluster or block, can be made available for all the included schools and disabled children in that cluster. This experiment has met with a significant success in the inclusive education of the disabled. It has been successfully running in many states and Union Territories of the country.

**District Primary Education Programme (DPEP):** District Primary Education Programme was launched, as a centrally sponsored scheme by the Ministry of Human Resource Development in 1994 in 42 districts of seven states for providing access to primary education to all children irrespective of their disability or non disability. It has been spread now to more states. This scheme has been funded jointly by the world Bank, European Commission (EC), UK Department of International Development, Government of Netherlands and UNICEF. This scheme has contributed a lot in providing a big boost to inclusive Education. On account of it, starting from a few hundred blocks in 1988, inclusive Education is currently being implemented in 2014 blocks of 18 DPEP states. Ten states of Gujarat Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and Uttaranchal have up scaled the inclusive education programme to all the blocks. Through its support services, DPEP is aiming to contribute in the manner as follows:

- Catering to community mobilization and early detection of disabilities
- Providing in service teacher training
- Making provision for resource support
- Making provision for educational aids and applications
- Making Provisions for the removal of architectural barriers

**Role of the Department of Higher Education, Human Resource Development:** The Department of Higher Education of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, through its infrastructure and network has been engaged in serving the cause of education to the children with special needs (including disabled). The children who need post school education are very much encouraged by this department through a number of means besides providing help in the preparation of teaching, health and other professionals in the field of special education. A few important measures of this sort may be summarized as follows:

All the institutes of higher education including the professional and technical have a provision or reservation of seats to the disabled children the other group of the children with special needs-gifted and creative has also been granted priorities for their admission in these institutions by following the practice of entry through merit basis. Besides this, there is also a provision of financial assistance and scholarships to these children with special needs.

It is obligatory on the part of every institution of higher education in the country to provide access to education without any discrimination, i.e. irrespective of their disability status.

Attempts are also going in providing financial assistance and incentives to the institutions for providing barrier free access and disabled friendly environment to their disabled students.

The open universities and distance learning departments of most of the Universities in India are doing a quite appreciable job in providing easy access to the higher learning for the disabled population of the country.

The services rendered by the Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi, and Bhoj University, Bhopal may be specially mentioned for this purpose. Bhoj University in collaboration with Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI), is making efforts in promoting and implementing education programmes for the empowerment of special target group of learners with disabilities.

Ministry of Human Resource Development stands for providing meaningful measures for the education of all types of children with special needs (including the disabled). It is mainly divided into two departments Department of School Education and Literacy and Department of Higher Education. Department of School Education and Literacy is looking after the working of the autonomous bodies like NCERT, CBSE, KVS, NVS, NIOS along with the implementation of the schemes and programmes like IEDC, DPEP, Janshala Programme and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. Department of Higher Education of the Ministry of Human Resource Development is helping the cause of children with special needs (including disabled) by providing them opportunities for higher learning through its network of autonomous bodies like UGC, Regular and Open Universities, College and Professional institutions of higher learning. The incentives like admission on priority basis of the meritorious ones including Scholarships, 3% reservations for the disabled, are proving quite advantageous to these children.

### **Organisation And Administration At State Level**

At the state level, the organization and administration of the task of care, education and rehabilitation of the children with special needs(including disabled) is carried out by the respective ministries of Social Welfare and Education. There is a provision of the **State Coordination Committee (headed by State Social Welfare Minister) and State Executive Committee** (headed by State Secretary in the Ministry of Social Welfare) for carrying out administration and organizational functions for the welfare of the disabled in the Ministry of Social Welfare of the States. The work regarding measures in the state for the children with special needs (including disabled) is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education headed by a full-fledged Ministry of

Education. Directorate of school Education is the real agency of organizing and administration the work related to inclusive education in the regular schools-government and non- government throughout the state. It is also a modal agency of the state for helping in the implementation of all the schemes and policies decided for education of the children with special needs

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