CHAPTER – III
WELFARE POLICIES, PROGRAMMES AND STRATEGIES

3.1. Introduction

The socio-economic situation in the country has been changing since the mid-eighties, especially as a result of the New Economic Policy. There is an increasing recognition that economic growth, although essential for dealing with many social problems, often is accompanied by acute social problems in the absence of deliberate social planning. A strategy of overall development should, therefore, include as an essential component, those social welfare activities that help to ensure that national plans and policies are fully responsive to the needs and aspiration of the people. While remedial measures still remain essential, high priority should be accorded to the developmental and preventive functions of social welfare.

Despite the twin objectives of planning, viz. economic growth with social justice, the fast changing socio-economic scenario in the country in the last few decades has had far reaching consequences on socio-economic, and psychological growth and development of the most marginalized, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups of our society. The problems of women, children, disabled, aged and infirm, and social deviants and others are not related to the individuals only but are also the concern of entire family and community. But it is a matter of concern that the growth of social welfare programmes has not been even when viewed in terms of inter-programme priorities or location. These tend to concentrate in urban areas. This is because the
main implementing agencies of welfare programme are NGOs who prefer to work in urban areas. Steps, therefore, need to be taken for balanced growth of services both in urban and rural areas. There are many states which have not been able to formulate/develop adequate social welfare programmes to commensurate the needs of the different target groups. The standard of physical services in various social welfare institutions being run by the state governments and voluntary organisations for children, women, disabled, aged and infirm etc is by and large below the required minimum standards and some are in such deplorable conditions that they violate even human fundamental rights.

The loss or impairment of a limb or deformity in one’s physical or mental capability is the worst that can happen to a person, whether it is because of nature’s foul play or as a result of an unexpected unfortunate accident. Welfare of the disabled and the handicapped is an extremely challenging task and it can be fulfilled only when all the citizens, voluntary organisation and Government realise their responsibilities in this respect collectively. The disabled are as much vital organis of society as the healthy persons. It is our moral duty to do our utmost for their rehabilitation and uplift. It has been observed that in most cases, the handicapped have a zest for life and desire to live and require only a chance to prove that they can be as effective as anyone else at the tasks assigned to them. With a little bit of help and the handicapped can tide over these misfortune. Their skills and talents can form an important input in national building activities. A sense of self-confidence, therefore, needs to be infused in them to enable them to join their brethren in the mainstream of life.
There is growing awareness both in the government and society about the need to reach out to the disabled people to enable them to become self-sufficient and independent. Towards this end, both government and voluntary agencies have undertaken measures for providing para-medical services, special education, support and care facilities, early intervention and family therapy, the development of techniques and new technology for improvement of quality of life of disabled persons. Today, there is a growing recognition that disabled persons must enjoy and have access to the same rights and opportunities that are taken for granted for the rest of the society. Towards achieving this goal, integration is of a paramount importance. It is not just enough to provide the disabled with physical and occupational therapy, special education or vocational training. The attitudes which create separation of society must give way to a new determination to strive for and achieve integration. For this it is necessary not just to rehabilitate the disabled but also the attitudes of the able bodies for the integration in its fullest sense depends on each and everyone of us.²

Today, Central Government and State Governments are making every effort to provide not only basic needs to the disabled persons but innovative and extra-conventional facilities. As per the latest news report Central government will provide Smart Card for the persons with disabilities inching closer to the ambitious project of issuing Unique Disability Identification Card for persons with Disabilities (UDID). The Department of Disability Affairs has released the draft detailed project Report in this regard.³
Therefore, to make the life of disabled persons comfortable, there is a need that the social legislation in this regard should be tuned to the current problems of the disabled persons. As the present study concerns to disabled sections of society, we will review the constitutional and other measures available with the disabled persons, before reviewing policies, programmes and strategies of the government dealing with this menace.

### 3.2. Constitutional Provisions Relating to the Disabled

As India has been for a long under British rule, feeling neglected in the social welfare area, therefore, a concept of social welfare was at forefront in the minds of our constitution framers. The very idea of equality was incorporated in the Preamble of the Constitution and it reflected in the Fundamental Rights. ‘Directive Principles of State Policy’ also extended it in certain extent. Further Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has been identified as the nodal Ministry by the Government of India for the welfare of the ‘Disabled’.⁴

The following constitutional and legislative measures can be cited for the welfare disabled ever since the establishment of Indian Republic.

(a) The Preamble, providing the very wide ambit promises. It says, ‘We the people of India, having solemnly resolved to secure Justice, Social, Economic and Political, Equality of status and opportunity and fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual enact and give to ourselves this Constitution.’⁵

(b) The state shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of laws within the territory of India.⁶
(c) Nothing in this (Art 15) shall prevent the state from making any special provisions for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens. This is most important of the provisions.

(d) Nothing in this Article (Art 16) shall prevent the state from making any provisions for the reservation of appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens which in the opinion of the state, is not adequately represented in the services under this class.

(e) No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to the procedure established by law.

It is very important to note that no where in the fundamental rights specific mention has been made to physically handicapped or disabled persons but as they pertains to socially economically backward class of people, they are indirectly mentioned. The ministry of Social Welfare recommended that the disabled be treated equal to women and other weaker sections of the community.

As mentioned earlier, the Directive Principles of State Policy are also equally important in this regard though they are not legally binding on the government. Some of the Directives are reproduced below which has bearing on the disabled:

(i). The state shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may, a social order in which justice, social, economic and political shall inform all the institutions of the national life.
(ii). The state shall, in particular, strive to minimize the inequalities in income and to endeavour to eliminate inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities, not only amongst individuals but also amongst groups of people residing in different areas or engaged in different vocations.\textsuperscript{12}

(iii). The state shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing that the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so described as best to subsrvie the common good. That the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment that the health and strength of workers, men and women, and the tender age of children are not abused and that citizens are not forced by economic necessity to enter a vocation unsuited to their age or strength.\textsuperscript{13}

(iv). The state shall within the time limits of its economic capacity and development make effective provisions for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, and in other cases of undeserved want.\textsuperscript{14}

(v). The state shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.\textsuperscript{15}

3.3. Legislative measures for the Welfare of the Physically challenged.

Taking the spirit from the fundamental rights as guaranteed in the Constitution of India and Directive Principles of the State Policy, Government of India has made many laws concerning the physically
Challenged and mentally ill persons. Though some of them seem to be directly associated with the disabled persons, some deals them indirectly. Important among them are:

- The Indian Lunacy Act, 1912.
- Workmen Compensation Act, 1923.
- Hindu Marriage Act, 1956.
- Hindu Succession Act, 1956.

**Persons with Disability (Equal Opportunities, Protection Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995**

This Act needs detail discussion as this is the milestone in services relating to the physically challenged persons.

Broadly, the entitlements and commitments towards PWD under the Act can be divided into two main groups: (i) entitlements which are absolute and thus in nature of legal rights. Some of these existed as rights prior to the Act but were reiterated or strengthened in the Act itself and have in some cases been refined subsequently; and (ii) commitments that are given either in rather general terms or with the explicit proviso “within the limits of [governments’] economic capacity and development”. These can be described as “contingent entitlements” under the Act and are not unqualified rights. The division is not entirely clear-cut, as subsequent jurisprudence has in some cases
strengthened general commitments. In a number of cases, follow-up action is also anticipated by states or other relevant authorities.

The PWD Act has both binding entitlements and more general commitments. The key provisions are:

(a) Education:

The following are binding on Government (i.e. not subject to economic factors):

- Governments shall ensure that every CWD has access to free education “in an appropriate environment” until the age of eighteen.
- Governments “shall initiate or cause to be initiated” research by public and non-governmental agencies for development of both assistive devices and special learning materials for CWD in order to promote equal opportunity in education.
- Governments shall ensure teacher training that produces “the requisite manpower” for teaching of CWD both in special schools and integrated settings.
- All public educational institutions and other receiving aid from Government shall reserved not less than 3 percent of seats for PWD (i.e. for PWD over 18 years).
- government should prepare a “comprehensive education scheme” for CWD which includes transport or financial incentives, barrier free access, supply of book, uniforms and learning materials to CWD, adjusts the examination system as necessary, adapts curriculum for CWD.
(b) **Employment:**

The Government shall:

- Identify posts for PWD in public establishments and update the list every three years.

- Reserve not less than 3 percent of identified posts for PWD, with 1 percentage point reserved for people with blindness/low vision, hearing impairment, locomotor disability or cerebral palsy respectively (though any department or establishment can be exempted by notification).

- Every employer should have a record of all PWD employed in that establishment.

- Governments and local authorities shall formulate schemes for promotion of employment of PWD which *may* provide for training of PWD, relaxation of age limits in employment, measures related to OHS, provisions for financing such schemes etc.

- Reservation of not less than 3 percent in all poverty alleviation schemes.

- “Within the limits of their economic capacity and development”, Governments *shall* provide incentives to both public and private sectors for employment of PWD with a target of at least 5 percent of their workforce to be PWD.

(c) **Prevention and early detection of disabilities**

All commitments in this area are given with the proviso “within the limits of their economic capacity and development”. With proviso,
Governments should:

- Undertake surveys on causes of disability.
- Promote “various methods” for preventing disabilities.
- Screen children at least once a year for identifying at-risk cases.
- Provide facilities for training PHC staff.
- Conduct or sponsor awareness campaigns on hygiene, health and sanitation, and on causes and prevention of disabilities.
- “Take measures” for pre-, peri- and post-natal care of mother and child.

(d) **Affirmative Action**

Governments shall frame schemes for:

- Provision of aids and appliances to PWD.
- Preferential allotment of land for housing, business, recreation centres, special schools, research centres, and factories run by PWD entrepreneurs.

(e) **Non-discrimination in access**

All commitments in this area are given with the proviso “within the limits of their economic capacity and development”. With proviso, Governments should:

- Adapt all forms of transport to make them accessible to PWD.
- Provide for a variety of assistive devices in the built environment, including auditory signals, ramps in public buildings and health facilities, Braille signage.¹⁶
3.4. Five Years Planning and Disabled Persons.

Without referring to the Five Year Plans, no analysis of social welfare programmes is complete. Five years plans were started in India to achieve adequate living standards and to secure social justice to its citizens. Accordingly, it included welfare of Women and Children, Family Welfare, Welfare of the Physically and Mentally Disabled.

Main machinery and measures adopted under Five Years Planning to safeguard the interests of Disabled persons are described below:

3.4.1. First Five Year Plan:

The Central Social Welfare Board was set up with the object especially of assisting voluntary agencies in organizing welfare programmes for Women and Children and the Disabled Groups. In September, 1955, the Ministry of Education constituted a National Advisory Council for the education of the physically disabled. The functions of this Council were to advise Central Government on problems concerning the education, training and employment of disabled persons and to formulate new schemes and to provide liaison with voluntary organisations working in the field.

3.4.2. Second and Third Five Year Plans

The Central Bureau of Correctional Services (CBCS) was set up in 1961 for collection and compilation of national statistics and preparation of guide books and model schemes. Social Defence programmes under the Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act, and probation of Offender’s Act, were organized. The
Central Institute of Research and Training in Public Cooperation was set up in 1966 for research and training on popular participation. Under these two plans states were involved in the sphere of statutory enactment and organization of basic services for education and rehabilitation of the disabled and the extension of welfare services for women and children in rural areas.

### 3.4.3. Fourth Five Year Plan

Under this plan, the activities of Central Social Welfare Board were further strengthened. In addition to the three National Institutes for the Blind, the Deaf and the mentally retarded, a National Institute of Orthopaedically Handicapped was set up. For the placement of Disabled persons in employment, special employment exchanges were set up.

### 3.4.4. Fifth Five Year Plan

Under this plan, major thrust was on the expansion of preventive and developmental programmes. During this period, child Welfare was given the highest priority. The Central and State Governments provided scholarships to the physically disabled persons. The state governments expanded institutional and non-institutional services for the socially and physically disabled. The CBCS was raised to the status of an apex agency and given the title ‘National Institute of Social Defence’ to be model organisation at the national level with specialized services of training, research and developing alternative models for innovative experiments, field testing etc.
3.4.4. Seventh Five Year Plan : The Most extensive for Disabled

It was during the Seventh Five Plan that a significant expansion of programmes and services for the welfare of the Disabled persons took place. For education of the Disabled almost all the states implemented programmes to provide stipends and other incentives to the disabled at the elementary school stage. The Scheme to award scholarships to physically Disabled students to pursue general, technical and professional courses from Class IX onwards on the basis of means-cum-merit test, was continued.

To provide technical support to 11 District Rehabilitation Centres for the disabled, 4 Regional Rehabilitation Training Centres were set up for developing training material and the manuals and for providing material. In addition to the existing four National Institutes for the Disabled, two other Institutes for the Physically Handicapped (Delhi) and the National Institute of Rehabilitation Training and Research (Cuttack) also offered a wide range of services for the rehabilitation of the Disabled and organized manpower training.

Additionally, The Science and Technology Project in the Mission of Application of Technology for the Welfare and Rehabilitation of the Disabled was launched in 1988. Voluntary organization were also assisted to provide services to the physically handicapped in the areas of education, training and rehabilitation.

3.4.5. Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97)

Main thrust of this five year plan was Human Development, that so why policies and programmes relating to survival, protection and
development of all sections of population especially those of the Disabled and Disadvantaged were implemented. Focus of attention was towards enabling the disabled to become active, self-dependent and productive members of the nation by expending opportunities for education, vocational training and economic rehabilitation etc. Efforts were made to integrate the services for the Disabled covering the entire range of activities from prevention to rehabilitation.

One very important and very comprehensive legislation, namely, ‘The Persians with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 was a landmark in the history of welfare of the Disabled. The Rehabilitation Council of India was set up as a statutory body under RCT Act of 1992 with the objective of upgrading and standardizing the syllabus and ensuring uniform standards of training of professionals for the welfare of Disabled. Voluntary Organizations which have been playing a key role in the organization of services for the Disabled and Social defence were encouraged with necessary financial support and technical guidance. Simultaneously, efforts were also made to make the services community based.


This Five Year Plan sought to adopt a three fold strategy specific to each individual group namely, i) Empowering the persons with Disabilities, ii) Reforming the social deviants and iii) Caring the other disadvantaged through preventive, curative, rehabilitative and developmental policies and programmes.
Empowering the Persons with Disability

The Ninth Plan re-affirmed the earlier commitment of making as many disabled as possible active, self-reliant and productive contributors to the national economy. Accordingly, it laid special emphasis on adopting an integrated, multi-collaborative approach to empowering the Disabled and thus mainstream them. The main strategy adopted in this plan for Empowering the Disabled included the following:

- Reaching the rural disabled and those who had been neglected so far.
- Convergence of existing services in welfare of related sectors to gain optimum benefits.
- Provision of enabling environment for persons with disabilities to exercise their full right for equal opportunities and participation through the efforts of both the central and the state governments.
- Special strategy of family/community based rehabilitation by pooling resources of both financial and manpower of all concerned.
- Prevention of disabilities through supplementary nutritional feeding for both the mothers and the children.
- Positive discrimination through ear-marking not less than 3 percent benefits under various programmes of poverty
alleviation like IRDP, JRY, DWCRA, NRY, PMRY, EAP DWCRA and

• Setting up of a National Trust to ensure total care and custodianship of those with Mental Retardation and Cerebral Palsy

3.4.7.Eleventh Five Year Plan (1997-2002)

The Eleventh Five Years Plan speaks of the following interventions for the Disadvantaged groups:

“Young learners from socially marginalized sections experience education in a distinctly different form than those who occupy mainstream positions of power and privilege. They face overt and covert forms of rejection in schooling. The Eleventh Plan will lay special focus on disadvantaged groups and educationally backward areas. This focus will include not only higher resource allocation but also capacity building for preparation and implementation of strategies based on identified needs, more intensive monitoring and supervision, and tracking of progress. Specific measures relating to the disabled persons include special intervention for physically challenged children and integrated education for the disabled children.\(^{17}\)

The scheme ‘Integrated Education for the Disabled Children (IEDC)’ is being implemented with a view to integrating children and youths with mild and moderate disabilities in the formal school system. It provides 100% financial assistance to States/UTs and NGOs. About 2.84 lakh children from 1.0 lakh schools were benefited under the scheme. The scheme of Inclusive Education for the Disabled at
Secondary Stage (IEDSS) will enable all students with disabilities completing eight years of elementary schooling an opportunity to complete four years of secondary schooling (classes IX–XII) in an inclusive and enabling environment. The IEDSS will also support the training programmes for general school teachers to meet the needs of children with disabilities. 18

3.5. Policies and Programmes for the Disabled Persons.

History of rehabilitative services in the government sector is fairly recent. Historically the services delivery for the disabled was concentrated in the voluntary sector. As a result, a large number of societies in non-governmental sectors were established, depending mainly on public support and donations, who will look after the sick and the infirm, destitute and the disabled.19

But, in recent years these services have gained importance and government has stepped in to make these services standardised, professional and at par with such services offered all over the world. The government has since independence been focussing attention on the preventional of disabilities, provision of physical restorative services, development of personnel and resource persons through training of professionals, research etc. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is the sole agency in the Government of India through which all the welfare policies and programmes for the Disabled are made and executed. It also guides and provide support to he state governments and NGOs in implementation of these policies and programmes. The state government further make their own policies and
programmes for the disabled persons, additionally. But they are not so much extensive.

Despite more active role played by the government organisations for the services of the disabled persons, the role of voluntary organisations is no less in any respect. In fact, they have become more important for the disabled persons. There are over 1000 voluntary organisations in India working in the field of welfare of the handicapped. Out of these about 350 receive grants from the Government of India. The state governments have their own schemes of financial assistance to he NGOs.20

In the following sub-sectons various programmes for the disabled persons are surveyed. While some of them provide them physical aids depending upon the nature of their disability, some provide financial assistance. There are many programmes which are relating to their education and vocational training.

3.5.1. Scheme of Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP)

Popularly known as ADIP, this scheme has a direct visible impaction the lives of indigent disabled persons through supply of durable, standard sophisticated aids and appliances. These reduce the debilitating impact of disability and enhance the possibility of learning and economic potential of the disabled persons. Voluntary organisations, Red Cross societies, National Institutes under the Ministry and ALIMCO are provided grant-in-aid for purchase, fabrication and distribution of aids and appliances. The scheme also
includes under its ambit, surgical and medical corrections. The usual method of its implementation is through camps in district and taluka headquarters that are preceded by intensive surveys for screening and assessment. The camps are organised with the active assistance of the local administration. They also include ancillary activities such as issuance of disability certificate, confessional bus passes and the like.\textsuperscript{21}

Under the Scheme, if a person has an income below Rs 6500 per month, full cost of the appliances is reimbursed. For persons with income between Rs 6501-10,000, 50\% of the cost of the appliances/aids is reimbursed. The scheme is implemented through implementing agencies such as the NGOs, National Institutes under this Ministry and ALIMCO (a PSU).

3.5.2 Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme to promote Voluntary Action for Persons with Disabilities (Revised DDRS Scheme)

The umbrella Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry called the "Scheme to Promote Voluntary Action for Persons with Disabilities" was revised w.e.f. 01.04.2003 and was renamed as the "Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS)". However, while revision of the scheme took place in 2003, the cost norms of 1999 had remained unchanged. The revision of the cost norms has become imperative to compensate for the price rise. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) for Industrial workers has risen by 38\% from 1999 to 2007. It has been decided to revise the cost norms for honoraria, recurring items and nonrecurring items of expenditure. The scheme has also been revised to
the extent that there has been widening of the scope of the model projects. The revised Scheme now has two parts viz. part-A consisting of the Scheme and the Documents required for consideration of a proposal of Grant-in-aid under the Scheme and Part-B (Model Project Profiles) which elaborates the various model projects and cost norms for honoraria, recurring and non-recurring items of expenditure there under. The revised Scheme shall be effective from 01.04.2009.

3.5.3. Employment in Government Sector through Reservations

Government has been promoting the self-employment of persons with disabilities by providing vocational training and loan on concessional rates through National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDC). Employment of persons with disabilities in the Government is promoted through reservation. Section 33 of the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 provides for a reservation of 3% in the vacancies in identified posts (1% each for persons with blindness or low vision, hearing impairment and locomotor disability or cerebral palsy) in the Government establishments including the Public Sector Undertakings. For implementation of this policy of reservation, strict vigilance is necessary and due to this every department of the government has to maintain a reservation roster showing the details of recruitment made so that no violation is made by the departments with regard to the reservations to the handicapped persons.
3.5.4. Incentives to Employers in the Private Sector for Providing Regular Employment to Persons with Disabilities

To promote employment of persons with disabilities in the expanding private sector, it has been decided by the government to provide incentives to the private sector employers. The National Policy for Persons with Disabilities, which was adopted in 2006 also lays down that pro-active measures will be taken to provide incentives, awards, tax exemptions etc. to encourage employment of persons with disabilities in private sector. Accordingly, after consideration the government has approved the scheme of providing incentives to the employers in the private sector where the physically challenged persons are working.

Under the scheme, the employees with disabilities covered under the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 and the National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999 and working in the private sector, with monthly wage up to Rs.25000/- per month would be covered. The scheme would be applicable to all the employees with disabilities, who are appointed on or after 1.4.2008. Under the Scheme, the Government will make payment of the employer's contribution to the Employees Provident Fund and Employees State Insurance for the first three years, as an incentive, in return of employment of persons with disabilities with monthly wage up to Rs 25000/- per month.
3.5.5. Scheme of National Scholarships for Persons with Disabilities

Under the Scheme of National Scholarships for Persons with Disabilities, every year 500 new scholarships are awarded for pursuing post matric professional and technical courses of duration more than one year. However, in respect of students with cerebral palsy, mental retardation, multiple disabilities and profound or severe hearing impairment, scholarship are awarded for pursuing studies from IX Std. onwards. Advertisements inviting applications for scholarships are given in leading national/regional newspapers in the month of June and also placed on the website of the Ministry. State Government/ UT Administrations forward such applications to the Ministry and they also give wide publicity to the scheme.

Students with 40% or more disability whose monthly family income does not exceed Rs. 15,000/-are eligible for scholarship. A scholarship of Rs. 700/- per month to day scholars and Rs. 1,000/- per month to hostellers is provided to the students pursuing Graduate and Post Graduate level technical or professional courses. A scholarship or Rs. 400/- per month to day scholars and Rs. 700/- per month to hostellers is provided for pursuing diploma and certificate level professional courses. In addition to the scholarship, the students are reimbursed the course fee subject to a ceiling of Rs. 10,000/- per year. Financial assistance under the scheme is also given for computer with editing software for blind/ deaf graduate and postgraduate students pursuing professional courses and for support access software for cerebral palsied students.
3.5.6. Scheme of National Awards for Empowerment of Persons with Disability

Empowerment of persons with disabilities is an inter-disciplinary process, covering various aspects namely, prevention, early detection, intervention, education, vocational training, rehabilitation and social integration etc. Apart from resources, it requires dedicated efforts of persons and institutions involved in the process of empowerment. In order to recognise their effort and encourage others to strive to achieve excellence in this field, separate awards are being presented to the most efficient/outstanding employees with disabilities, best employers, best placement agency/officer, outstanding individuals, outstanding institutions, role models, outstanding creative disabled individuals and for outstanding technological innovation and adaptation of innovation to provide cost effective technology. Awards are also given to Government Sector, Public Sector Undertakings and private enterprises for creating barrier free environment for the persons with disabilities, the best district in the field of disability rehabilitation, best Local Level Committee of the National Trust and to the best State Channelising Agency (SCA) of the National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation(NHFDC). Preference is given to the placement of women with disabilities, particularly, from the rural areas and self-employed women.

3.5.7. Technology Development Projects in Mission Mode

With a view to provide suitable and cost effective aids and appliances through the application of technology and to increase their
employment opportunities and integration in society of the physically disabled, the above scheme was started during 1990-91. Under the scheme, suitable R&D projects are identified and funded for developing aids and appliances. The scheme is implemented through the IITs, Educational Institutes, Research Agencies and Voluntary Organisations etc. Financial assistance is provided on 100% basis. The four Technical Advisory Groups monitor the selection of the projects and also their progress at different stages in areas of disabilities, namely, Orthopedic (including Cerebral Palsy), Visual, Speech and Hearing and Mental. All the projects those are recommended by the respective Technical Advisory Groups.

3.5.8. Grant in Aid to Voluntary Organisations

The ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has two major schemes for giving grant-in-aids to voluntary organisations. These are the schemes of assistance under which grants are given for recurring and non-recurring expenditure upto 90 percent of the budget of the grantee organisation. The grantee organisation is expected to meet the balance of 10 percent by raising its own resources. Assistance is given under that scheme for developing services for the disabled for the prevention of disability, special education and vocational training, training of resource persons, therapy, placement services etc. Grants are also given for the construction of buildings and purchase of equipments.

The second major scheme under which grants are given for voluntary organisations is the scheme of assistance to disabled persons
for purchase and fitting of artificial aids and appliances. Under this scheme, needly physically handicapped persons are assisted in procuring durable and sophisticated standard aids and appliances to promote their physical, social and psychological rehabilitation. Aids and appliances are given to all categories of disabled persons. These include orthotic and prostetic aids for the orthopaedically handicapped, hearing aids for the hearing handicapped and educational kits such as Braille slates and Braille measuring devices, Braille prone boards for spastics. Tricycles and wheel chairs and orthopaedic shoes are also provided in deserving cases to physically handicapped persons. The aids and appliances are given free of cost to those persons whose income is between Rs 1200 per month to Rs 2500. Aids and appliances costing between Rs 25 to Rs 3600 are covered under this scheme.

3.5.9. National Information Centre on Disability and Rehabilitation.

Since access of information play a major role in rehabilitation, The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has set a National Information Centre on Disability and Rehabilitation (NICDR). This Centre will collect, document and disseminate comprehensive information on facilities and services available to the disabled persons, maintain a data bank of professionals and services available in the field and all other information pertaining to disability rehabilitation. The data bank will be fully computerized and provide information to anybody interested in getting this information. A biannual journal called the Indian Journal of Disability and Rehabilitation is also brought out by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
3.5.10. Integrated Education Programme

The Union Ministry of Human Resources Development (Department of Education) had initiated the integrated Education Programme for the disabled. But, as any as 12 states and union territories have not implemented it. Four states have not even acknowledged the Ministry’s letters on the subject. Among the defaulters are Haryana, Punjab and Chandigarh. Lack of interest on the part of the state government is evident from the fact that the centre was compelled to slash from Rs 15 crores to Rs 5 crores the funds for the programme in the seventh plan. The Failure to implement the programme is proving disastrous to the endeavour to bring disabled persons into the mainstream of life.

3.5.11. Awareness Generation Programme

A pilot project for creation of awareness on prevention and early detection and intervention of various types of disabilities has been taken up. The project envisages dissemination of information in rural areas through Anganwadi workers and covers 30 districts (17 in Uttar Pradesh and 13 in Bihar). Recently a pilot project has been taken up in 13 districts of Assam also. The programme is under implementation.

3.5.12. Other benefits available for the Disabled

- **Air Travel Concessions**: Indian Airlines allow 50% concession fares to blind persons on single journeys. Postage Payment of postage, both inland and foreign, for transmission by post of 'Blind Literature' packets is exempted if sent by surface route. Customs/Excise Braille paper has been exempted from excise and
customs duty provided the paper is supplied direct to a school for the blind or to a Braille press against an indent placed by the National Institute for the Visually Handicapped, Dehradun. All audiocassettes recorded with material from books, newspapers or magazines for the blind are exempt from custom duty. Several other items have also been exempted from customs duty if imported for the use of a disabled person. All central government employees who are blind or orthopedically handicapped are granted conveyance at 5 per cent of basic pay subject to a maximum of Rs 100 per month.

- **Rate of Interest**: Keeping in view the social objective the interest will uniformly be charged 4% p.a. Physically Handicapped persons are eligible under DRI scheme for loan to purchase artificial limbs, hearing aids, wheelchairs etc., subject to maximum of Rs. 2500/- per borrower provided such assistance is given alongwith the advances for productive activities and self employment ventures and all other requirements under DRI scheme are fulfilled.

- **Income Tax Exemption**: The amount of deduction from total income of a person with blindness, mental retardation or permanent physical disability has been increased to Rs 40,000. Apart from this they are eligible for exemptions under various sub-sections of Income Tax Act on treatment, for artificial limbs purchase and for their insurance policies.

3.6. **Haryana State Government Schemes for the Disabled**

As was mentioned earlier, some small schemes are also run by the respective state governments for the handicapped persons. Though they are a bit small schemes, yet they are very supportive in nature and provide relief to the needy disabled persons. The schemes relating to
the welfare of orphan/destitute children, widows and destitute women and their dependents, old and aged persons, physically handicapped and mentally retarded children, the blind and deaf and dumb is being implemented by the District Social Welfare Department. Some of these schemes are mentioned below:

**Pension to Handicapped Persons**

Under this scheme, physically handicapped persons aged 18 years and above whose handicapped percentage is 70 or above and having income not more than Rs 10,000 per annum are given pension at the rate of Rs 300 per month. Presently a total of 4496 persons are being given this pension.

**Scholarships to Physically Handicapped Students**

Under this scheme he students whose handicapped percentage is 40 or above and studying in government or recognized schools are given scholarship at the rate of Rs 100/-, Rs 120/-, Rs 200/-, or Rs 250/- per month class-wise. No scholarship will be admissible if the combined monthly income of the parents or guardian of the candidate is more than Rs 4000/- per month.

**Unemployment Allowance to Educated Physically Handicapped Persons**

All educated unemployed applicants shall be eligible for grant of unemployment allowance who are physically handicapped and are enrolled on the line register of Employment Exchange in Haryana at the rate of Rs 150, Rs 200/-, Rs 250/- per month according to the class or Diploma. Financial assistance will be given for a period of six years from the date of application or registration in the Employment Exchange, whichever is later.
Financial Assistance to Voluntary Organisation

There are various NGOs and other social organisations working in the states. These also receive grant in aids from the respective state governments. The voluntary organisations which work in the field of old, widow/destitute women and children, handicapped persons, orphan children get 90 percent Grant-in-aid by the state government.

Government Institute for the Blind Girls/Boys, Panipat

A residential school is being run at Panipat by this Department for blind boys and girls where the blind students in the age group of 6 to 18 years are being provided free education up to Matric standard with facilities of boarding and lodging, clothing, food and books free of cost. The blind students studying in 10+1 and 10+2 in other schools are also provided free residential facilities in this institute.

Training Centre for Adults at Panipat

For Adult blinds, a Training Centre is being run at Panipat where vocational training for 3 years duration in the trades of caning of chairs, weaving, candle making and music is imparted to the adult blinds in the age group of 18 to 45 years. A computer Training Cell has also been established here.

Reimbursement of the cost of Aids and Appliance/Artificial Limbs

100 percent cost of aids and appliances/artificial limbs are reimbursed to the District Red Cross Societies working in the state with a view to rehabilitate the disabled persons.

State Level Project/Home for Persons with Special Needs, Rohtak

A state level Home for Mentally Retarded has been set-up in Rohtak. This Home is being run by a Registered Government Society
i.e. Welfare Society for Home for Persons with Special Needs, Rohtak. At the initial stage, there is a target to accommodate 200 children in this home.

**Financial Assistance to Non-school going Disabled Children**

Under this scheme mentally retarded and multiple disabled children who are in the age group of 0-18 years who are not able to attend formal education, training etc due to their disability are given financial aid. They are totally dependent on their parents and relatives and need constant supervision and care of their families. Financial Assistance shall be admissible under the scheme at the rate of Rs 300/- per month to every such disabled child in the family of the applicant.

**Deployment of Care Givers**

On the pattern of old schemes of the care-givers training and deployment of the National Trust, the state government has formulated a scheme of Deployment of caregivers in the year 2008-09

Inspite of various schemes and programmes for the benefit of the disabled persons, the desired socio-economic status for them has not been achieved. The lacuna lies in failure to achieve employment opportunities for them. A report by the International Labour Organisation estimates that about 300 million persons in 50 countries of Asia and Pacific are physically handicapped and mentally disabled and observes that the ‘need to create more job opportunities for the disabled persons has never been more urgent. It further notes that vocational rehabilitation is the starting point of the path to social and economic independence for the disabled. According to the report, “the whole community must be induced to accept the disabled as members
who share the same human rights and aspirations.” Intensive public information is the best means of creating positive attitudes, overcoming stigmas and superstitions. The report note that ‘community involvement is vital’. 22

3.7. Appraisal

Thus, it has been found that the constitution of India provide enough for the disabled persons. In addition, various legislations have been enacted by the Government to provide them protection and economic and social justice. Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of the state policy are important in this regard.

With regard to the policies and programmes for the disabled, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is the main agency making and implementing various policies and programmes for the all categories of disabled persons. State governments make their own programmes for disabled persons although they are not so much extensive comparing to the central government policies and programmes.

The central government has launched many programmes for the disabled person. These programmes focus on different aspects of physically challenged persons. Some programs provide them aids and appliances through Red Cross and Voluntary Organisations like ADIP. There are programmes which enhance employment opportunities for the disabled persons like the provision of reservations in government jobs and providing incentives to the employers who employ disabled persons. Then there is a programme which recognises the achievements
of the persons with disability and the individuals and organisations that are working for the welfare of disabled persons. Since 1995, the International Day of Disabled Persons is celebrated on 3rd December, every year. There is a programme for providing access of information on persons with disability and Rehabilitation. To help the disabled persons in pursuing higher and technical education, Scheme for National Scholarship has been started. The awardees are reimbursed the course fee subject to a ceiling of Rs 10,000 per year. For economic empowerment of the disabled persons, National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation has been set up. An important scheme to promote voluntary action for persons with disability has been started which encourages the persons with disability and their parents to form their own organisations to provide rehabilitation services. Ministry of Human Resources and Development has started the Integrated Education Programme for the Disabled persons. Besides, there are various vocational training programmes for them which help them for their skill development.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the policies and programmes are numerous, though they lack integration. But keeping in view the past endeavours of the government and wholeheartedly involvement of Voluntary Organisations, the days are not far behind when every disabled person will be confident and self-reliant enough to live a life of dignity.
References:


2. Ibid p-23

3. The Tribune, Delhi, 5 Oct 2014.


6. Article, 14 of Indian Constitution.

7. Article, 15(4)

8. Article, 16(4).


11. Article, 38(1)

12. Article, 38(2).

13. Article, 39 (b,c& e clauses)


15. Article ,4

16. Compiled from Disability Act, 1995(Chap VII) from www.wbhealth.gov.in

18. Ibid, p-16.


21. Ibid, p-546