CHAPTER V
THE DEAF

In the past the people who could not hear nor communicate like normal hearing people were referred to as ‘deaf and mute’ and this was socially acceptable, but as of now it is considered offensive, and the preferred term today is simply ‘deaf’. The term ‘deaf and mute’ first appeared in the code of Hammurabi, an ancient set of laws from the near east in 1700 B.C. It is also found in ancient Greek writings of the 7th century B.C. It continues to be used to indicate deaf people who can not speak, or have some degree of speaking ability, but choose not to speak because of the negative or unwanted attention atypical voices sometimes attract. The expression ‘deaf and mute’ is sometimes used to refer to other hearing people in jest, to chide, or to invoke an image of someone who refuses to employ common sense or who is unreliable. ‘Deaf and dumb’, ‘semi-deaf’, and ‘semi-mute’, are other historic references to deaf people. Of these latter examples, only ‘deaf and dumb’ prevails as a reference. There are connotations of insensitivity to deaf people concerning these
terms of reference and for this reason the prevailing terms are generally looked upon as insulting, inaccurate or socially and politically incorrect. From antiquity to recent times the terms 'deaf and mute' and 'deaf and dumb' were even considered analogous to 'idiot' by some hearing people.

As it has been highlighted in the table 2.4 of chapter II that the number of deaf and dumb in Kamrup district is 3837, and 4677 respectively. Against these considerable numbers, there is only one institution in Guwahati, which is the Government Bhawri Devi Sarawgi (B.D.S). Deaf and Dumb School, Kahilipara, dedicated entirely for the education of deaf children, not only from Guwahati and the Kamrup district but from other areas as well. The Government B.D.S. Deaf and Dumb School, Kahilipara was established in 1949 by a voluntary organization and later on in 1967 it was taken over by the Government of Assam. The school provides special education for the deaf from preparatory class to High School Leaving Certificate Examination of Board of Secondary Education, Assam. The medium of instruction in this school is Assamese. This institution has an intake capacity of 250 students and each student whose parents or guardian’s income does not exceed rupees 10,000 annually, receive a scholarship of rupees 200 per month from the government. The present enrolment (as on March 2009) shows that there are 253 students, which is more than the maximum intake capacity of the school and out of
these 54 are day scholars and the rest are hostellers. Out of 253 students 139 are male and 114 are female. Table 5.1 below shows the distribution of both male and female students in each class.

Table 5.1: Number of students according to the academic classes of Government B.D.S. Deaf and Dumb School, Kahilipara

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparatory I</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.76</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparatory II</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9.36</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.77</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9.09</td>
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<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8.63</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10.53</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10.07</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.65</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9.88</td>
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<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12.95</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14.04</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>13.44</td>
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<tr>
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<td>11</td>
<td>7.91</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.89</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>V</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10.07</td>
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<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.65</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8.30</td>
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<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8.63</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.89</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8.30</td>
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<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.02</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.47</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.02</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.76</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
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</table>

The teaching staff of this school consists of 36 academics and pre-vocational trainers. Of the 36 teachers, 24 of them have undergone training in either of the two training institute in Calcutta and Lucknow and 12 have undergone training in Tura. The method of teaching followed here is the oral method because the manual alphabet method has become obsolete now days, though not completely abandoned. The modern scientific instruments and aids used in this school for imparting special education to the deaf are
(a) Speech trainers
(b) Group hearing aids, and
(c) Audiometer for hearing training.

Beside general education, the school provides pre-vocational training to the students in carpentry, tailoring, weaving, knitting, embroidery, drawing etc. Training in carpentry is imparted to the boys while tailoring is imparted to both boys and girls and knitting, embroidery and weaving is imparted only to the girls. While discussing about various aspects of providing special education to the deaf students of this school, the authorities here have revealed some basic problems faced by this institution on a day to day basis, which are as follows-

(i) At the time of admission, there is no provision for ascertaining the degree of hearing loss of the pupil. But as it is a known fact that deaf fall into various categories according to the degree of hearing loss. The problem of education of the partially hearing disabled who have mild hearing impairment or those who have serious or severe impairment or those who are completely or totally deaf having a hearing loss more than 9db (decibel) in the better ear can not be same. All of these various categories of deaf students including those who may be benefited in ordinary schools with the
facilities of from benches and individual hearing aid etc., are placed together, with the result that efficiency of teaching is greatly hampered.

(ii) The teacher student ratio in this school is 1:14 and hence the inadequate number of teachers is a serious issue in this school. In an ideal school for the deaf, one teacher can teach only 6 students at a time. But here one teacher has to teach more than double the prescribed number. Again, an ideal school class room should have semi-circular seating arrangement, so that all the students can sit encircling the teacher and follow the instructions without any difficulty. But such a class room is not found in this school.

(iii) In a school for the deaf, various kinds of models, charts, maps, colour chalk are required to make the students understand better. But unfortunately in this school the number of equipments and special aids for educating the deaf students are inadequate. Therefore, the lack of suitable and sufficient teaching aids has become a major hurdle in the way of imparting effective education to children.

(iv) In this school for the deaf, there is no provision for extra curricular activities in the form of sports or other recreational activities. The deaf excel in sports and those activities that require physical strength. The exuberant
energy present in these children especially during the adolescence period needs to be properly channeled through activities like gardening or well-organized outdoor games. But sadly enough, the students of this school do not get to indulge in any such activities.

(v) The nature, extent and quality of pre-vocational training in this institution fall far short of actual requirements. The nature of pre-vocational training is conventional and limited only to carpentry, tailoring, weaving, knitting, embroidery etc. With such training it will be very difficult for the students to make an independent living after passing out from the school. What is lacking here is the modern approach towards imparting skills for vocational purposes.

(vi) There is no medical unit attached to the institution for regular medical check-up and assessment of the students. What is most needed in this school is a setup consisting of doctors, nurses, audiologists, speech specialists', psychiatrists, and psychologists for making regular evaluation and assessment of progress made by each child. Under the present setup of the school, such multidisciplinary approach is absent. The following case studies put focus on some aspects concerning the deaf students, and
especially of those studying in Government B.D.S. Deaf and Dumb School, Kahilipara.

Mr. Bhagaban Thakuria, aged 60 years is a senior teacher in Government B.D.S. Deaf and Dumb School, Kahilipara. He is basically from Hajo in Kamrup district and now permanently settled in Kahilipara area of the city. Mr. Thakuria is a highly motivated teacher of this school but unfortunately he is going to retire from service in three months time. According to him, he is a satisfied person as far as his teaching career is concerned, and he expressed his desire to work for the deaf children even after his retirement. Mr. Thakuria is of the view that deaf children are second to none as far as intelligence is concerned but due to their difficulty in hearing and expression they are not able to do exceptionally well in studies. If they are provided with right training and at right age, the deaf children would have no problem to excel in life. Mr. Thakuria is an expert in the field of speech training and therefore he proudly informed that the school has never sought the service of any speech therapist as he and his colleagues are quite capable of doing the job very competently, and along with that they have also been able to innovate some new techniques in speech training method for the deaf students. According to him, apart from training in speech and academics the atmosphere at home plays an
important role in the development of a deaf student whether in studies, sports or social skills. He said that the day scholars tend to show relatively better results than the students staying in the school hostel, and this may be because of the fact that those staying with their parents get the opportunities to fine tune the skills learnt at school with the hearing members of the family; whereas the ones staying in the hostel have only their deaf mates for company and therefore have no one to guide them to hone their skills when not with their teachers. It was also informed that all the students of this school have at least 5 to 6 hearing devices given to them free of cost by various organizations, and just recently a foreign organization has provided an expensive hearing device costing around rupees 22000 each to every student. But it is surprising that only a handful of the students wear these devices and others prefer to leave them at home.

Mrs. Monika Choudhury is a teacher in Government B.D.S. Deaf and Dumb School, Kahilipara. She is 58 year old and is a permanent resident of Kahilipara. Mrs. Choudhury said that she is very lucky to have got the opportunity to work in this school and render her services for the betterment of the deaf children. On the topic of teaching methods for the deaf students, she seems to feel very strongly regarding the introduction of sign language (finger spelling) as a mandatory part of the academic
curriculum. The school though relies on oral method of teaching, English language is taught through finger spelling method along with oral method which includes lip reading as well. Mrs. Choudhury informed that till date nothing has been done to develop finger spelling method for Assamese language, and therefore she has on her own taken the initiative to do something about the matter. On the subject of sign language she also informed that the students those who stay in the school hostel have developed their own sign language to communicate with each other. Even the ones who have speaking ability are also bound to communicate with their fellow hostel mates through signs as they seem to avoid wearing any hearing aid. She also clarified that though everyone tends to refer to their way of communication as sign language, but the fact is that their way of communication is by making gestures and postures and which is technically can not be termed as sign language. Mrs. Choudhury was pleased to inform that there are many students in this school who have come not only from various places of Assam but from other parts of Northeast region and even as far as from Bihar. She commented that though the awareness among the people regarding deaf persons is increasing but there is still lot to be done to improve their overall conditions; and emphasized on having regular awareness programmes specially for parents of deaf children as they are the ones whose positive attitude and active involvement is of utmost
importance in the endeavour to provide these special children a better future.

The study among the students of Government B.D.S Deaf and Dumb School, Kahilipara brought to notice the reluctance of the students to wear hearing aids. Their unwillingness to wear hearing aids is probably enough to shed off the notion that all deaf want to hear. It has been observed that these students are much more comfortable with lip reading and sign language than trying to hear with the help of devices which they feel is annoying at times while interacting with others. The students said that they do not like to wear the hearing devices because it makes them hear all the noises around them, which they feel very irritating. The teachers of this school informed that they observe on a daily basis, the students keeping aside their group hearing aids in the classroom and concentrating more on lip reading and the gestures and postures made by the teachers. As the opinion of the deaf students has already suggested that they do not like to hear unwanted sounds, and therefore, it is very important to have sound proof classroom to prevent noises coming from outside, and it is almost a basic requirement in a class where group hearing aids are extensively used as a device for communication between the teachers and the students. Such
sound proof classrooms are part of the standard setup of any school for the deaf in other parts of the world, but here it is conspicuously missing.

It is an undeniable fact that there has been a certain stigma surrounding the deaf people in our society, and may be it was much more in the past than it is now. Many people believe that just because the person is deaf makes him or her slow. But this perception is not endorsed by the people who are in constant touch with the deaf persons, as they are totally aware that the only disability a deaf or hard of hearing person has is not being able to hear others speak and there is no wrong with the person’s brain as they have normal intelligence. It has been observed that people in the society have the strong belief on meeting a deaf person for the first time that the louder they shout, the person with hearing disability will somehow be able to magically hear them. It is so humiliating for the deaf and can cause much anguish. There are still others who regard the deaf as handicapped, and someone to be pitied, as they believe them to be incapable of looking after themselves. These people, who have the perception that deaf people are always dependent on others, are unfortunately not aware of the fact that most deaf persons are totally independent and a productive part of the community they live in. They are well able to join in a conversation and enjoy laughing, talking and joking
just as much as the next person. It is the hearing person that puts strain there and feels awkward and unsure when in the company of the deaf. There are several ways that the society can make life a little easier for the deaf. It has been found that, a person with hearing disability like the people to accept him as just a person and not as a deaf individual. It is no doubt true that the deaf need some patience on our part when first striking up a conversation, but it is all just a matter of using a little common sense and thoughtfulness. There is a common notion among the people that if a deaf individual is asked outright as to how much he can hear or if he needs to read the lips when one talks, it might hurt his feelings. But it was found that most deaf persons appreciate the straight forward approach much better then seeing the other person trying to hide his awkwardness.

There are a number of difficulties faced by the deaf people in the society and much of these are the results of ignorance among the people. To add to the already murky scenario are the misconceptions regarding deafness which are definitely not helping the situation get any better for the deaf population. Some of these misconceptions which are prevalent in the society are as follows-

(a) All deaf people can not hear

(b) All deaf people want to hear

(c) All deaf people are mute
(d) All deaf people can speak

(e) All deaf people can lipread

(f) All deaf people who can speak can hear the speaker

(g) All deaf people know sign language

(h) If you can sign, understand sign, then you must be deaf

(i) Deaf people can hear if one talks loud enough

(j) Deaf people have low intelligence

(k) All deaf people are just like the one, the hearing person has met.

In spite of these misconceptions the situation of the deaf in Guwahati cannot be termed as absolutely pathetic. It is very often highlighted in national and international media regarding ill-treatment and discrimination faced by the disabled people including the deaf in the hands of the non-disabled people of the society, but quite fortunately the situation here is far from being similar to that of the other parts of the country, where disabled people go through much more trouble in life than their counterparts in Guwahati as well as in the entire state of Assam. However, there is no denying the fact that the usual negative attitude towards the disabled does exist among the people of Guwahati but it is somewhat limited and generally do not seem to take the form of obvious discrimination. The society here is much sympathetic and comparatively more accommodating
than those which grab attention of the print and electronic media on a regular basis for dishing out not so friendly treatment to the disabled section of the society. The case studies below throw light on some of the experiences came across by the deaf individuals, and their families’ predicament while trying to give their special children a life of an equal.

Mrs. Anamika Bora, aged 38 years is a permanent resident of Dispur, Guwahati. She has two children, a son and a daughter. The son who is 8 year old is born deaf, and he is studying in class III in Government, B.D.S. Deaf and Dumb School, Kabilipara. Mrs. Bora said that she and her husband became suspicious of their child’s condition when he was just two months old, as he did not show any reaction to sounds, not even to those made close to his ears. They were very worried about it and went to the doctor to have the baby a proper check up. The doctor said that he found no problem in the child, and hearing that both Mrs. Bora and her husband went back home relieved and happy. But after three months when they revisited the doctor, he pronounced him to be hearing impaired. Mrs. Bora commented that, ‘When we were expecting it the least, the world seemed to close before us’. She said that her husband was very furious on the doctor for wasting three months of their son’s life. It is the lacks of awareness on the part of doctors that years were wasted for the children and
how helpless their parents were. After recovering from the initial shock, both the parents started to think about their son’s future and pondered over what to do to make him able to hear. Just a month after the first birthday the child was wearing a pair of hearing aids. Mrs. Bora informed that her son has a very good memory and very good at studies. She and her husband are seriously thinking of taking their son out of his present special school and admit him in to a normal school. But the difficulty in doing so is that the child has obvious hearing problem and it is not sure whether he would be able to cope up with the way things are taught in a class room with normal children. Another problem which has come to the forefront is to choose a school for the child. Out of a handful of schools in Guwahati which encourage admission of disabled children and have adequate infrastructure to deal with it are Maria’s Public School, Monfort Inclusive School, etc. but there is no Assamese medium school in the city with an inclusive system of education. The dilemma Mr. and Mrs. Bora are confronting is that their son has been studying in a school which is entirely for the children like their son and secondly, its medium of instruction is Assamese; and the school they are interested to get their child admitted, which is the Maria’s Public School is an English medium school and where majority of the students are normal. Mrs. Bora expressed that they want to give their son the best education possible and it would not be possible if
they let their child continue in his present school for too long and therefore they would like to take a risk by getting him in an unfamiliar condition for the sake of his future.

Mr. Digambar Das is a 72 year old retired teacher and a resident of Ganeshguri area of Guwahati. His grandson Sri Partha Pratim Das is studying in class VI in Government B.D.S. Deaf and Dumb School, Kahilipara, as he has hearing as well as speech disabilities. As informed by Mr. Digambar Das, everyone in the family was elated when this child was born, as there was no male child in the family before him. But the happiness did not last long as on a casual check up the doctor found the child to be deaf. Now at the age of 12 years Partha Pratim is quite an intelligent child and regularly does well in studies. Though he was pronounced deaf, there is some residual hearing ability in him, but as far as speaking ability is concerned it is conspicuously lacking. Mr. Das said that his son and daughter-in-law were totally shocked and there was a sign of grief on their faces for quite a long but eventually they accepted the reality. The child is so cute and intelligent that sometimes everyone tends to forget that he has any disability. Mr. Das commented that the biggest hurdle in the life of the children like his grandson is the negative attitude of the society. The tendency of making fun of people with limited abilities is not new, and
disabled people have been a source of amusement for centuries. It is a common notion that disabled people are helpless and must be cared for by the non-disabled people; but it is generally not realized that with proper support the disabled people are able to achieve the same level of independence as non-disabled people. Mr. Das did confess that earlier he never used to think about these issues very seriously, but since he has started taking serious interest in his grandson’s life his view towards the problems faced by the disabled people are no longer the same as it was before. According to him, he now analyzes and understands the problems much more clearly. He was totally confident when he said that inspite of the disabilities his grandson would be very successful in life.

Mrs. Rimu Das is a 25 year old lady residing in the Kahlipara area of Guwahati with her family. Mrs. Das was born with hearing impairment and as such she could not speak at all. She was admitted to the Government B.D.S. Deaf and Dumb School, Kahlipara, by her father, who himself runs a private English medium school in the city. Mrs. Das was only 3 year old when she started getting her speech training. As she had the opportunity to begin the training so early in life, her ability to speak developed quite significantly and as of now her speech is very close to what can be called as normal. She was always good in her studies as well as in other extra
curricular activities including sports. At the age of 17 years she appeared for the High School Leaving Certificate Examination and came out successful securing second division. After that she joined a normal school to pursue her higher secondary education. During this time Rimu Das’s parents received several marriage proposals for her, but she declined to give her consent for any of it. All the proposals came from persons who were normal as far as hearing ability is concerned, but her wish was to marry a deaf individual as she had witnessed several unsuccessful marriages where one of the partners is deaf and the other is normal. As the destiny would have it, a deaf person named Sri Hare Krishna Deka, an employee of the Indian Railways expressed his desire to marry her and she agreed. Mrs. Das expressed that she is leading a very happy life with her husband and two children. To add to it she has recently got a job of Junior Assistant in the Department of Water Resources, Government of Assam. Mrs. Das said that what ever she has achieved in life is entirely because of her father’s effort and his belief that his daughter has all the capabilities and even more than any other normal persons. The dedication with which she was brought up by her parents makes her feel that she owes everything to them. She also said that at times her parents used to pay much more attention to her than to their son who was younger to her.
In order to overcome the prejudice and ignorance regarding the deaf, there has to be a concerted effort on the part of the people who are familiar with the issue. It is also the responsibility of the parents to see that they are doing their bit to make the situation better for their disabled children. It is observed many a times that parents fail to play their role for the children with disabilities along with the state and the community which also close their eyes to them due to lack of awareness and the right attitude. The prevalence of superstition in the society is another stumbling block in the face of their development. It is generally seen that parents struggle to put their deaf children in a general school as the authorities express their reluctance in taking such child on the ground that they do not have the infrastructure or the expertise to provide education to these children. Such an approach on the part of the school authorities appears to be because of ignorance than unwillingness and more of apprehension than negligence. General people do not know about disability, and so they fear an encounter with it. This ignorance and fear of the unknown lead to a negative attitude. Once this barrier is overcome, things can be much brighter, and in the process, both the school authorities and the parents can develop a rational expectation of one another and can even complement each other. It is the attitude which matters the most. It is equally true for both schools as well as parents. Successful integration of a child with hearing disability in the
main stream education depends on various factors. Even before a child is educationally integrated, the child needs to be integrated within his or her own family, and as well as within the community. Inclusive education which is also a crucial factor for social inclusion of the deaf is an important part of deaf person’s life but it needs to be understood that it is not the whole in itself. Inclusion is an internationally established right today, but one has to accept it in correlation with our country, its resources, its system and its practices; which unfortunately still dwell on a charity model rather than considering it as an issue for development.

While continuing with the topic of education for the hearing impaired, there are two kinds of educational inclusion that have been observed here. One is, integrating a deaf child because the Act says so, knowing fully well that the child would not succeed due to lack of support structure; and for that neither the family, nor the school is bothered. The other is where a child with hearing disability can succeed with proper support structure along with having a supportive family and positive environment at the school. Both the pictures coexist, though the later exists in a microscopic form. Therefore, a lot of work needs to be done to bring more children from the former to the later group. A school can play a very important role in providing a deaf a better future. The children follow the teachers as their role models and this is the time when their characters,
personalities are being formed. In this study it has been noticed that the deaf students follow their teachers to such an extent that even their handwriting are surprisingly similar to that of the teacher who first taught them how to write. It is apparent that these children observe and follow a person very minutely with whom they are in constant association and that is why there is an utmost need to believe that if deaf students are given the opportunity to study, mingle and make friends with their normal hearing counterparts, they would imbibes much more than in a class room of a school with all deaf students. In this way, it is not only the children with hearing disability who would benefit from it, but the other children as well, who would receive valuable education through simply being friends with them. The normal children would also learn inclusion through a daily practice and grow up as socially responsible individuals. It is worth mentioning that special schools like Government B.D.S. Deaf and Dumb School, Kahilipara, has a major role to play as they are much more knowledgeable on various issues related to 'hearing and speech' disability. As such they have an added responsibility of guiding families towards inclusion of their disabled sons and daughters as also preparing general schools for accepting children with disabilities. But unfortunately, lack of awareness prevails in this quarter also. It has been found that, here in Guwahati special schools are still not oriented with the idea of inclusive
education. In the developed countries the special support structure to meet the special needs of students with disabilities is an integral part of a school set up. But here this facility is available only in special schools, which are highly insufficient in number. The fact that children with hearing disability do not succeed much educationally is because there is no little as far as infrastructure is concerned to provide them means to compensate their hearing loss. A child with hearing disability is just as educable as any other child of same age. Those who get the benefit of special support from an early age, succeed. But these successes have not come easy, as these have been achieved through tremendous toil and struggle behind it. The few successes that can be seen are because of endless sacrifices made by the families of disabled children, fighting all odds at every step. Helping the child with his studies and providing other necessary support including acquiring a good quality hearing aid is a challenging task, and difficult to fulfill for low-income families. The family needs to be able to meet the substantial cost of hearing aids, their batteries and maintenance. With the advancement of technology, better hearing aids are available today but their sky high cost put them beyond the reach of ordinary people. Maintenance of hearing aids is at times even more difficult owing to the high cost and lack of appropriate after-sale service.
Keeping in mind the obvious difficulties faced by the disabled persons, the Government of India has tried to ease some of these by taking various steps, which also includes the PWD (Persons With Disability) Act, 1996. This act had categorically directed the state governments to modify the examination system and the curriculum to meet the needs of the children with disability. It had also clearly spelt that the students with hearing impairment should have the facility to study through one language only. But it is unfortunate that none of the above have been implemented in quite a good number of states including Assam till date, adding to the handicap of these already struggling children. There have been a numerous welfare schemes for the children with hearing disability, but very often than not most of these fail to make any significant difference in their lives. For instance, the aid and appliances that the children from low-income families receive from different government and non-government agencies do not fulfill their needs. As a result, these are often discarded by the children and their families after sometime, since they bring no change in a child’s life. The government along with the NGOs needs to take a lot of initiatives to change the present state of affairs in order to successfully bring the deaf persons into the mainstream and to make people recognize them as potential productive force for the society and the country. The schools also need to view the issue of disability positively. A lot can be done for the
children with various disabilities including hearing and speech disabilities even in the given situation. A couple of decades ago it was a myth that children with hearing disability could speak like ordinary people, but now it has been possible. In Guwahati there are deaf children who are coming under inclusive education, but the number is very small, as there are not too many schools that have opened their doors to the deaf children of the society. In Guwahati the schools which have been welcoming children with hearing disability are Monfort Inclusive School, Maria Public School and Delhi Public School, Guwahati. Even though the numbers of such schools are very less, but they have been able to lit up the lives of some disabled children with the light of knowledge. It is extremely necessary to understand that every individual in the society can make a difference in the lives of the disabled people just by having a positive attitude towards them, and that would help them live a more meaningful life. A positive attitude on the part of the people would cost them nothing but it is the means which is capable of bringing an ocean of change in the lives of these somewhat segregated members of the society.