



## Disability Rights

### What is the issue?

\n\n

\n

- The International Day of Persons with Disabilities is being observed on December 3.

\n

- In this context, it is imperative to assess the progress of legal protections in place and their actual effect in the society.

\n

\n\n

### What are the legal protections?

\n\n

\n

- **International** - The disability rights movement gained momentum in the 1970s when disability was started to be seen as a human rights issue.

\n

- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), 2006 was a significant step in this regard.

\n

- The Convention gave way to the perception of considering differently abled persons as “subjects with rights” and not “objects of charity”.

\n

- Further, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development mentioned that persons with disabilities must be both “beneficiaries and agents of change”.

\n

- **India** - India is a signatory to the UNCRPD and ratified it in 2007.

\n

- In 2016, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act was moved forward, replacing the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995.

\n

- The Act recognises 21 kinds of disabilities compared to the previous seven.

- \n
- It includes a wide range of categories such as dwarfism, speech and language disability, and three blood disorders.
- \n
- It also increased the quota for disability reservation in higher educational institutions from 3% to 5%.
- \n
- And reservations in government jobs from 3% to 4%.
- \n

\n\n

## **What is the state of the differently abled?**

\n\n

- \n
- Despite legislations, the differently abled continue to face difficulties with an abysmal implementation record.
- \n
- E.g. Around 85% of seats for persons with disabilities lie vacant in top universities.
- \n
- Attitudinal, institutional, and infrastructural barriers remain as roadblocks for a disability inclusive society.
- \n
- Evidently, World Bank has stated that 15% of the world's population experience some form of disability.
- \n
- And that they "on average, as a group, are more likely to experience adverse socioeconomic outcomes than persons without disabilities".
- \n
- In India, according to the 2011 Census, 2.21% of the population has one or multiple types of disabilities.
- \n
- This makes India home to one of the largest disabled populations in the world.
- \n
- However, disability activists see this as a low count and say that in Indian culture there was a tendency to hide disability.
- \n

\n\n

## **What could possibly be done?**

\n\n

\n

- **Inclusive workplace** - Solutions to enable people with disabilities to seamlessly interact with their environment and colleagues in workplace can increase their participation.

\n

- Some of them include:

\n

\n\n

\n

- i. having braille labels and audio support in lifts for visually and hearing impaired people

\n

- ii. providing disabled-friendly restrooms

\n

- iii. conducting sensitisation training for leaders and managers

\n

- iv. hiring a sign language interpreter

\n

- v. designing the entrance, attendance and access machines, dimensions of passageway and tables, etc in a disabled friendly manner

\n

- vi. facilitating assistive hardware solutions like screen readers, magnifiers, adaptive keyboards and mouse, etc in technology driven workplaces

\n

- vii. ensuring accessibility guidelines and standards in web-based technologies. E.g. Web Content Accessibility Guideline 2.0 by the World Wide Web Consortium.

\n

\n\n

\n

- **Public amenities** - Government should ensure that facilities at bus stops, railway stations and airports are disabled friendly.

\n

- Steps to make them conform to the accessibility standards relating to parking spaces, toilets, ticketing counters and machines should be taken.

\n

- Also, there should be accessible roads to address mobility needs for persons with disabilities, as prescribed in the disability rights act.

\n

- It is also highly essential that the currency is made disabled friendly for easy identification, in terms of size and other features.

\n

- While there is a long way to go in implementing the laws, it must be kept in

mind that a one-size-fits-all approach is less relevant for disabled persons.

\n

- The differences in levels and types of disabilities should be acknowledged while offering protections and taking measures.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

**Source: The Hindu**

\n



**IAS PARLIAMENT**

*Information is Empowering*

A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative