

## **Welfare of Persons with Disabilities**

10.77 During 2004-05, the allocation for Welfare of Persons with Disabilities (PWD) is Rs.225.54 crore out of which an expenditure of Rs.97.37 crore has been incurred upto 14th January, 2005. Action has been initiated to suitably emphasize disability concerns in Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and ensure that most of the children with disabilities are covered through inclusive education programme. Mostly, this involves getting the disabled children enrolled in the regular school where those with locomotor disability and mild hearing impairment can easily be educated.

10.78 The programmes are implemented through the National and Apex Institutes dealing with different categories of disabilities such as visual, hearing, orthopaedic and mental. These institutes conduct short term and long-term courses for various categories of personnel for providing rehabilitation services to those needing them. Till 14th January, 2005, Rs.13.57 crore (Plan) has been released to these Institutes.

10.79 Persons With Disabilities (PWD) Act, 1995 is under implementation. Five Composite Rehabilitation Centres (CRCs) have been set up at Srinagar, Lucknow, Bhopal, Guwahati and Sundernagar to expand facilities for manpower development and ensuring availability of rehabilitation services for all categories of persons with disabilities. Four Regional Rehabilitation Centres (RRCs) provide services to persons with orthopaedic and spinal injuries at Chandigarh, Cuttack, Jabalpur and Bareilly. 133 District Disability Rehabilitation Centres (DDRCs) have been sanctioned in the country for providing comprehensive rehabilitation services at the grass roots level. 107 DDRCs have started functioning.

10.80 Under the scheme of Assistance to the Disabled for Purchase/Fitting of Aids and Appliances, Rs.39.56 crore has been released to benefit 1.18 lakh beneficiaries during 2004-2005 (up to 14th January, 2005). Artificial Limbs and Manufacturing Corporation manufactures different types of aids and appliances for disabled persons at low cost and aims to develop new prototype aids and appliances. A scheme of Science and Technology Project in Mission Mode is also being implemented.

The objective of the Scheme is to coordinate, fund and direct application of technology in development and utilization of suitable and cost effective aids and appliances such as functional mechanical hand, interpointing braille slate, braille micrometer, safety devices for the chaff cutter and threshers, plastic aspheric lenses, ground mobility devices, training module for prevention and early detection of childhood disabilities, electronic guide cane, low cost STD/PCO speech card, software and Mentally Retarded children for learning and teaching, motorized wheel chair etc.

10.81 Deen Dayal Disabled Rehabilitation scheme (earlier known as Scheme to Promote Voluntary Action for Persons with Disabilities) provides financial assistance to voluntary organizations for running rehabilitation centres for leprosy cured persons, for manpower development in the field of mental retardation and cerebral palsy and establishment and development of Special Schools for the major areas of orthopedic, speech, hearing, visual and mental disability. During the year, Rs. 34.29 crore have been released to 502 voluntary organizations (up to 14.1.2005) for implementing the scheme. A project funded by UNDP for Support to Children with Disabilities was implemented for a period of 2 years until June 2004. The objective of the project was to sensitize, mobilize and empower the community to participate in the local school management and ensure that every child with disability in the project area has access to education in an appropriate environment. A Scheme of National Scholarship for Persons with Disabilities has been introduced from the year 2003-04. 313 awards each for male and female students in different categories of disabilities will be given for pursuing higher and technical education.

10.82 It has been decided that children with mental retardation, cerebral palsy and with severe hearing impairment will be provided scholarship for education in classes 9 and 10. This is a relaxation from the existing norm of providing scholarships to children with disabilities only in post-matric classes. An effort is being made to focus the activities in the backward and uncovered regions.