

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

Review Of The Functioning Of National institutes Established For Different Types Of Disabilities

FORTY SECOND REPORT

The Report provided an analytical review of the functioning of the various national institutes, regional centres, and composite regional centres setup across India for different types of disabilities. It also provided an **analysis of the budgetary allocation and the corresponding beneficiaries from the scheme**. In the latter part of the report, the reader is conferred with the information about the availability and the **critical evaluation of the faculty** staff members. It presented the data on the available teachers for national institutes, regional centres and composite regional centres. It explained about the various **courses taught to the persons with disabilities** in order to provide rehabilitation and the sense of freedom of being on their own and be self reliant so that the physical disability does not become a hindrance of growth for the Divyangjan. Since mental health has been a topic of concern for the government, the report suggested **measures for continued efforts in the domain of mental health**.

CHAPTER-1 INTRODUCTION

As per the census of 2011 it was found that there were a total of 2.68 crore persons with disabilities in India who constitute 2.21% of the total population, including people with single organ disability, multiple disabilities and other disabilities.

A brief summary of the Legislations by the Government of India, for the welfare of the disabled :

(i) The Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992: A Rehabilitation Council of India has been set up under this act to regulate and monitor the training of rehabilitation professionals and personnel and to promote research in rehabilitation and special education.

(ii) The National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999: It extends support to registered organizations and promotes measures for the care and protection of persons with disabilities etc.

(iii) The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (RPwD Act, 2016): India has aligned its national law on Persons with Disabilities with various provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). Under the Act, 21 categories of disabilities have been recognized. This includes various categories of disabilities such as ...

The chapter further mentioned the number of established national institutes that focus on various kinds of disabilities.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES

As per their mandate, the institutes **develop human resources** in the field of disability, provide **rehabilitation services to PwD, conduct research, etc**

- A brief introduction of the 9 National Institutes :

| S.NO | NAME OF THE INSTITUTE | FIELD |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya National Institute for Persons with Physical Disabilities, New Delhi (est. 1975) | Locomotor disabilities like poliomyelitis, cerebral palsy, traumatic deformities, brain stroke cases etc. |
| 2. | Swami Vivekanand National Institute of Rehabilitation, Training and Research, Cuttack | Locomotor Disabilities. |
| 3. | National Institute for Locomotors Disability, Kolkata | Locomotors Disability |
| 4. | National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Visual Disabilities, Dehradun | Visual Disability |
| 5. | Ali Yavar Jeng National Institute of Speech and Hearing Disability, Mumbai | Speech and hearing disabilities |
| 6. | National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities, Secunderabad | Training, research and services in the field of Intellectual Disability in the country. |

| | | |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7. | National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities, Chennai | National resource centre for empowerment of persons with Multiple Disabilities. |
| 8. | Indian Sign Language Research and Training | Teaching and conducting research in Indian Sign Language and Bilingualism |
| 9. | National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation, Sehore, Madhya Pradesh | Promoting mental health rehabilitation. |

The figure of the total Divyangjan population of 2.68 crore, being based on the 2011 census might not be reflective of the current population as the data has not been revised since 2011, therefore the Committee suggested the actual number be evaluated by the Department for the efficient allocation of funds and resources for the optimal functioning of National Institutes.

CHAPTER-2 REGIONAL CENTRES AND COMPOSITE REGIONAL CENTRES

The Government of India (GOI), set up 11 Regional Centres of different National Institutes at various places to provide **rehabilitation services** in the field of specialization. Some conducted human resource development courses. Additionally in order to **promote skill development, rehabilitation and empowerment of persons with disabilities**, some National Institutes have Composite Regional Centres which function under their administrative control. Another objective of setting up these CRC's was to **provide rehabilitation to persons with different disabilities under one roof with limited use of infrastructure and manpower which also makes it cost effective.**

The Committee noted that 21 Composite Regional Centres had been approved to be set up under various National Institutes as Outreach and Extension Centres, the cost of establishment being borne by the Department. One provision stipulated that CRCs be established in States/UTs, if required land and temporary accommodation was provided free of cost by the concerned States/UTs. It was observed that the infrastructure of various Regional Centres and Composite Rehabilitation Centres (CRCs) failed to meet specific standards as their operations were being run in temporary or rental buildings.

Hence, the Department was advised to evolve a mechanism such that the approved CRCs could be established in a time bound manner, also it was suggested to utilise the premises of Government-run Senior

Citizen homes/Bal Vatikas/CGHS dispensaries as the augmentation of CRCs would be time consuming. The Committee's suggestions to the National Institute in Chennai for the implementation of mid-day meal scheme, construction of waiting hall for patients and establishment of Hydro Therapy Unit at the Institute had been accepted and implemented.

The Composite Regional Centres (CRCs), since 2020-21, have been merged with National Institutes, it was suggested any bottlenecks in their opening should be settled in coordination with the State Governments.

CHAPTER- 3 BUDGETARY ALLOCATION vis-a-vis BENEFICIARIES

The chapter provided a brief of Grants-in-Aid provided to National Institutes and Composite Regional Centres (CRCs), including the Budget Estimates, Revised Estimates and Actual Expenditure pertaining to National Institutes and CRCs from 2017-18 to 2021-22. The highest amount of Grant in Aid was provided in the year 2019-20 (Rs 254.69 cr) and maximum amount of aid was received by NIEPVD, Dehradun over the period of 5 years (Rs 298.21 cr).

The Department of Empowerment with Disabilities provided the number of beneficiaries of National Institutes and CRCs from 2017-18 to 2021-22. It was observed that over the period of 5 years a total of 90.71 lakhs Divyangjans benefitted from the National Institutes from all over the country.

The Committee noted with dismay the gap in complete utilisation of budgetary allocations. The total Grants-in-Aid (GIA) to National Institutes released in 2021-22 rose from ₹232.5 crores to ₹251.99 crores, an almost 20% rise . It was observed that the Grant-in-Aid released to most of the National Institutes had gone down in respect of the National Institute for Locomotor Disabilities in 2020- 2021 and 2021-2022. The Committee found that the situation was similar for Composite Regional Centres as expenditure of Composite Regional Centre, Guwahati had come down from ₹ 233.75 lakh in 2018-19 to ₹184.00 lakh in 2021-22.

The total number of beneficiaries in 2017-18 were 19.24 lakh which came down to 18.97 lakh in 2021- 22 even after the establishment of two new Institutes. According to the Committee the National Institutes and CRCs were not performing optimally which was displayed in the low allocation of funds.. Hence, the Committee suggested that there was an **urgent need to take effective measures to utilize budgetary allocation/ grant-in-aid fully by all the National Institutes / RCs/CRCs so that a large number of disabled persons could benefit from the facilities provided** to them by the Government. The Committee

would also like the Department to concentrate on North-Eastern States and ensure that it spends **at least one-tenth of the total expenditure in the North-Eastern states** and take suitable measures to establish CRCs in the region.

CHAPTER- 4 FACULTY/STAFF

The Committee noted that the faculty members in most of the National Institutes was lower in comparison to the sanctioned strength, and the situation was no different for the CRCs. For instance, the sanctioned strength for all the CRCs of National Institute for Locomotor Disabilities was 26, out of which 20 posts were vacant. Similarly, out of the sanctioned strength of regular posts of 20 and contractual posts of 106 at CRCs of Swami Vivekanand National Institute of Rehabilitation Training and Research, 8 regular posts and 58 contractual posts were vacant. Due to the abysmal situation in CRCs and National Institutes, the Committee suggested that the Department needed to thoroughly examine the reasons, address the same early and get the vacancies filled so that the students and beneficiaries did not suffer. It must also ensure that recruitment be conducted in a fixed time frame in future and not left to linger for years together. It was further observed that the information with regard to the sanctioned/actual strength was not available in the Annual Report of the Institutes and suggested the information be provided. It was noted that the proposal by the Staff Inspection Unit of the Ministry of Finance, for the creation of new posts hadn't been approved and as it was thus stated that for the smooth functioning of the Institutes, it was imperative that **number of staff and faculty be in consonance with the actual requirement so that the functioning of the Institutes was not hampered due to shortage of staff**. The Department was advised by the Committee to again pursue the matter of **creation of posts** in these Institutes with the Ministry of Finance because the establishment of the Institutes had no meaning if those were unable to perform/function due to lack of requisite personnel.

CHAPTER-5 TRAINING COURSES AND RESEARCH PROJECTS

The Committee was informed of the courses and research projects being conducted in the National Institutes

The Committee noted that the National Institutes including Composite Regional Centres (CRCs) mandated to conduct courses to train in various fields for the rehabilitation of disabled persons were unable to get the requisite number of candidates for the same, besides such courses needed specialized softwares and equipment with considerable cost, which must be utilized fully. The Committee was informed about a recent

initiative, wherein the Department requested the Rehabilitation Council of India to evolve courses, which are popular and are more inclusive so that the cases of multiple disabilities are taken care of. Lack of candidates for courses led to a direct impact on the availability of good trainers for the rehabilitation of Divyangjan.

It was suggested to **vigorously pursue with the Rehabilitation Council of India and take advice from experts as well to urgently design courses, which are attractive to potential students and meet the current requirement of trainers/counsellors for divyangjan.** The Committee recommended that the Department direct all the Institutes to take suitable measures to **publicize the courses well so that no seats in the courses are left vacant in future.**

The Committee observed the field of research in the disability sector was lagging behind and hence suggested more research projects be undertaken for indigenous development of technology, which would make the lives of Divyangjan comfortable and self-reliant. Hence, it was recommended to **focus more on the research activities of the Institutes and allocate adequate dedicated funds for this purpose so that research does not suffer for want of funds.**

It was found during committee interrogations that Leprosy cured but deformed persons (LPCs) constitute a category of disabled. But unlike others the nature and extent of deformity in such persons could not be fixed since Leprosy was a progressive disease. The Committee felt that the **expertise and wide outreach of National Institutes could be effectively utilized to provide services, treatment and rehabilitation of LPCs.** The National Institute for Locomotor Disabilities and Swami Vivekanand National Institute of Rehabilitation Training and Research have been at the forefront of treatment and rehabilitation of persons with Locomotor disabilities their funds could be effectively utilised to provide the customized aids and appliances required by such LPCs, who otherwise lead a miserable life with extreme poverty and social stigma. Further, research for betterment of quality of life of LPCs could be undertaken by the Institutes.

CHAPTER- 6 MENTAL HEALTH

The Committee acknowledged the efforts of the Department in tackling the issues relating to Mental Health as two National Institutes viz National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities at Secunderabad and National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation at Sehore were established in 1984 and in 2019 respectively to address the Mental Health issues. It was found that the National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities set up to build capacities for empowerment of persons with intellectual disabilities took several initiatives such as development of

Teaching learning material kits, conducted conferences/ training programmes, research etc. It was suggested that the Institute **gear up research activities to tackle the growing cases of intellectual disability in the country** and recommended increasing **the number of workshops** organized by them across the country so that adequate awareness about the intellectual disabilities/mental illness would be generated in the society.

The Committee recommended that the construction **work be completed in a time bound manner** as the slow progress of the execution of construction work of National Institute at Sehore affected its service. The Committee recommended that instead of employing faculty members on contractual basis, the required **faculty be recruited on a permanent basis** so that the Institute was able to give quality and continuous service to the ones in need.

The Committee noted the rising cases of autism in children and not much progress being made to deal with complex disability. The Committee was informed that autism was now being considered a disability which was not the case prior to enactment of RPwD Act, 2016 and that a tool to assess autism had been developed in India. It further noted that with the help of National Institute for the Empowerment of persons with Intellectual disabilities and National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation, the problems associated with autism would be taken care of. Necessary action needed to be taken for early **detection of symptoms of autism in children** so that treatment could start at the initial stage itself. As such children may have below or above average IQ level, the Committee felt that self help skills, communication skills, occupational therapy, speech therapy, counselling facility for family members and vocational training would be useful for the development of such children. The Committee therefore felt that the Institutions can play a major role to **assess the needs** of such children and also take necessary measures to provide **counselling and proper guidance to their parents so that they can understand the specific requirement of their child**

CHAPTER-7 MONITORING OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES

The National Institutes have a two tier governing structure i.e General Council and Executive Council to oversee the functioning of National Institutes and are headed by Director level officers in the Government of India. The General Council and Executive Council of Institutes being headed by Secretary and Joint Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities respectively whereas General Council and Executive Council of National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation, headed by an academician and Director NIMHR respectively. The Committee suggested the **appointment of Academicians/Experts of specific fields to effectively contribute in the growth of the National Institutes** and thus recommend that

a High powered Committee should be set-up to look into the issue and take a considered view in this direction.

It was noted that no evaluation study had been conducted in the recent past in most of the Institutes and was evident from the information provided to the Committee that the Institutes did not have a standard mechanism to evaluate the day-to-day functioning. The Committee advocated for the **periodical review of the performance of Institutes and Composite Regional Centres**. The Department needs to take a view on periodic evaluation of the Institutes and CRCs and establish an **in-house monitoring mechanism for day to day functioning of the Institutes/ Composite Regional Centres** to bring out their best. The Committee was notified of the steps taken to develop the portal with regard to distribution of assistive devices and equipment to the beneficiaries.

