

Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan)

March 20, 2020

Source: *PIB*

Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan is the **nationwide campaign launched by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment for achieving universal accessibility for all citizens including Persons with Disabilities, to be able to gain access and live independently.**

Components

The Accessible India Campaign comprises of the following key components:

- **Built Environment Accessibility:** The campaign aims to provide an accessible physical environment for everyone. To achieve this, measures need to be undertaken to eliminate obstacles and barriers to indoor and outdoor facilities including schools, medical facilities, and workplaces.
- **Transportation System Accessibility:** The campaign focuses on providing persons with disabilities an **equal right to travel and use public and private transportation infrastructure** with dignity and independence.
- **Information and Communication Eco-System Accessibility:** Access to information refers to all information. This can range from actions such as being able to read price tags, to physically enter a hall, to participate in an event, to read a pamphlet with healthcare information, to understand a train timetable, or to view webpages. **The Accessible India Campaign aims to take measures to curb all societal barriers of infrastructure, and**

inaccessible formats that stand in the way of obtaining and utilizing information in daily life.

Targets

Under the campaign,

- At Least 50% of all the government buildings of the National Capital and all the State capitals will be made fully accessible for persons with disabilities by July 2018.
- Conducting audit of 50% of government buildings and converting them into fully accessible buildings in 10 most important cities/towns of all the States (July 2019).
- All the international airports in the country and railway stations of A1, A & B categories will be made fully accessible by July 2016.
- Conducting an accessibility audit of all the domestic airports and converting them into fully accessible airports(March 2018).
- Ensuring that A1, A & B categories of railway stations in the country are converted into fully accessible railway stations (July 2016).
- Ensuring that 50% of railway stations in the country are converted into fully accessible railway stations (March 2018).
- Ensuring that 25% of Government-owned public transport carriers in the country are converted into fully accessible carriers (March 2018).
- Conducting accessibility audit of 50% of all government (both Central and State Governments) websites and converting them into fully accessible websites (March 2017).
- Ensuring that at least 50% of all public documents issued by the Central Government and the State Governments meet accessibility standards (March 2018).
- Developing and adoption of national standards on

captioning and sign-language interpretation in consultation with National media authorities. (July 2016)

- Ensuring that 25% of all public television programmes aired by government channels meet these standards. (March 2018)

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

- **India is a signatory** to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).
 - **Article 9 of UNCRPD casts an obligation on all the signatory governments** to take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas.

The Convention also mandates that all the Governments shall also take appropriate measures :

- To develop, promulgate and monitor the implementation of minimum standards and guidelines for the accessibility of facilities and services open or provided to the public;
- To ensure those private entities that offer facilities and services which are open or provided to the public take into account all aspects of accessibility for persons with disabilities;
- To provide training for stakeholders on accessibility issues facing persons with disabilities;
- To provide in buildings and other facilities open to the public signage in Braille and in easy to read and understand forms;
 - To provide forms of live assistance and intermediaries, including guidelines, readers and professional sign language interpreters, to facilitate accessibility to buildings and other facilities open to the public;
- To promote other appropriate forms of assistance and support to persons with disabilities to ensure their access to information;
- To promote access for persons with disabilities to new information and communications technologies and systems, including the Internet;

The obligation on the states

All the States are required to follow the **Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995** under sections 44, 45 and 46 categorically provides for non-discrimination in transport, non-discrimination on the road and non-discrimination in built environment respectively

