

SWABHIMAN *Blue file*



Anjali Felicitation 2003

From left, Smt. Sunila Rajendran, Bijaya Singhdeo, Mrs Nivedita Seudder

From the Editor's Desk

The world is focusing on new methods to vain straw its disabled population. One such effort is towards new researchers and advance technology to bring people with disability on the same footing with the non-disability. In chapter 1 you can read about the largest auditory research center set up in the United Kingdom to carry out research on disorders of hearing and balance.

Chapter 2 opens our eyes to the compulsory and political equations that have emerged to complicate the polio scenario in West Bengal.

Assistive devices are opening up an entirely new world by enabling disabled individual brake all barriers. In chapter 3 and 4 you will get to know about motorised wheel chairs and communicating devises for the next generation.

Networking people with disabilities is emerging as an effort, which will not only strengthen individuals but the movement as a whole.

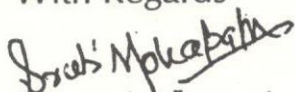
Disability has never deterred their determination nor diluted their talents; Shakti Swarupa Bir, Prakash Behera, Purnna Chandra Das, Kalpana Barik, Mahe-zabeen Jahan were the disabled scholars who got this year's Anjali Scholarship. The felicitation ceremony was held in an emphatic ambience at Red Cross Bhawan on 14th May 2003. The Lady Governor Smt. Sushila Rajendran graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. It was presided over by President of Swabhiman Ms. Nivedita Scudder.

The ministry of health has set up 2005 as deadline of polio irradiation - That the Govt. is committed is evident from the fact that apart from immunization campaigns enabling famous people it is also roping in parliamentarians in its programme. Along with it the Government of Orissa has set target to eradicate leprosy also by 2005 thus creating a occasion for double celebration.

Read more about people who have gone beyond their disabilities to create an indentity of their own. Prof. Bauri Bandhu Sethi - Working as the Chief of Sitar Department of Utkal Sangeet Mahabidyalaya, Ananda Sahu - owning a telephone booth, Vinod Kumar Bansal employed as an engineer with JK Industries, Hugh Herr-an expert climber.

Hope you enjoy this issue as you have done all the previous ones.

With Regards


(Sruti Mohapatra)

Editor, Blue file
Secretary General
Swabhiman

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From the Editor's Desk

Acknowledgments

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Global News & New Research

A ROBOT for old or disabled people to literally give them a helping hand with fetching and carrying, has been awarded a development grant from a United Kingdom science group, backed by the government. The money will pay for a full prototype of the machine - a high-tech artificial hand and arm on a mobile base that can be taught to navigate its way around a person's home.

The robot - from the Shadow Robot Company based in London - is being designed to bring a glass of water or pass a tissue or towel to someone unable to reach for one. Besides this, because the design closely mirrors a human limb, people could even ask it to scratch their backs, its creators say!

Fitted with a vision system and artificial intelligence, over a time, it will be able to learn more complicated tasks such as basic cocking and clearing and restoring privacy to thousands who dislike relying on home helps.

The Shadow Robot Company has been awarded 75,000 pounds sterling to turn its fledgling robot into a fully working prototype. At the moment, it is at an early stage in the company's London workshop.

The funding is from the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA), a group set up in 1998 by the government, with 200 million pounds sterling from the National Lottery to promote innovation. Since May 2000, NESTA has given out more than 17 million pounds in 250 awards.

Driven by air-powered artificial muscles, the Shadow hand and arm have as many degrees of movement as their human equivalents, making them among the most advanced robot limbs in the world.

To begin with, a user with a remote control would teach the robot to perform simple tasks which it would later do automatically.

Robot That Gives People A Hand

"The robot will help with the little things that most people take for granted. Getting a robot to bring you a glass of water may sound like using a sledgehammer to crack a nut but it's only the first step. We will go on to something more complex, like making and bringing a cup of tea, then a whole meal and so on."

One of the robot's designers, Mark Worsdall - who is a wheelchair user with spinal muscular atrophy - added: "A robot can be available 24 hours a day and will not give you that 'hovered over' feeling from a carer. You wouldn't need to keep saying 'please' and 'thank you', so it gives a lot more dignity and privacy."

"The award will enable us to demonstrate the feasibility of constructing a first working prototype of the assistive device. This will be a robot with hands similar to the hands of a human, with the potential of performing a range of tasks in the household. The award will also fund the background development of the next stage of such a project, bringing the device to the market. The award has a maximum duration of 18

months. We expect to be demonstrating prototypes before that point," says Richard Greenhill founder of the Shadow company.

"At present, there are two million people in the United Kingdom who receive disability living allowances, and 1.25 million who receive attendance allowances. This care allowance can never cover the full requirements of a person. We hope that the development of robot-assistive technology can provide some of these people with a

significant increase in the quality and dignity of their lives," said Richard Greenhill. For more details: Web: www.shadow.org.uk

Source : London Press Service



Success & ABILITY

New Doors of Communication for the Hearing Impaired

Interactive Solutions, Inc. (ISI), a subsidiary of Teltronics, Inc, USA, leaders in the mobile computing industry, have developed a breakthrough product, offering the MentisSoft(r) Communicator(m) system. The Communicator system, on which ISI has a pending patent application, makes verbal communications possible between the hearing world and a hearing-impaired or profoundly deaf person. This multi-sensory device improves comprehension of spoken language and teaches reading, speech skills and sign language. This could improve the quality of life for millions of people with hearing impairment.

The Communicator system converts speech into multiple streams of data for simultaneous presentation of text, video-

sign language, and computer-generated speech. The data is synchronized and delivered in a format that allows comprehension of the spoken word.

On an average, a deaf child leaves the school system at a sixth grade reading level. Statistically, over 90% of the families of hearing impaired persons do not understand sign language. The Communicator system will help bridge this gap by allowing hearing parents to communicate directly with their deaf child. Other applications for the Communicator system include its use in medical facilities, emergency service vehicles, and government facilities.

"For the first time in history, a computer is opening new doors to communication between the severe or profoundly hearing-impaired and the hearing world," said Dr. Herbert Silverstein, MD, FACS, President and Founder of the Ear Research Foundation of Sarasota. For more details visit the website : www.teachthedeaf.com

Contributed by Vikash Agarwal

More on the Jaipur Limbs

The Artificial Limb Research Centre, Kasturba Hospital, at Gandhigram in Tamilnadu makes artificial limb with rubber material produced by TVS Rubber factory and sells them at prices affordable by the poorer sections of society. It is thus that a number of amputees, belonging to the lower income group, have been able to resume their professions. This has been developed with the help of Dr. Sethi of Jaipur who invented the rubber foot pieces. Till Jaipur foot was introduced in 1970, only a Western model of limb was available. This needed a western way of life-sitting on a chair-using a Western model toilet, etc., which nobody in rural India or the lower middle classes could use. The new design developed by Dr. P.K.Sethi has not only taken into account the functional demands of floor sitting and barefoot walking culture of the majority of our population but has also added new dimensions to a much more flexible foot piece, with more freedom of movement than is currently available in any prosthetic foot anywhere in the world. The fact that it has a cosmetic appeal of resembling a natural foot and is resistant to water as well as the rugged terrain of our countryside, is an additional bonus.

Funds provided by M/S Foundation Here of Spain have helped to give an infrastructure to produce a large number of foot pieces of standard quality. Prices vary from Rs. 380 to Rs. 450 for different sizes. Adapter attachments can be made to order at additional rates. The amputee is required to stay for a week or two for gait training depending upon the patient's general condition. Patients are admitted for fixation of artificial limb only after 90 days from amputation.

Success & ABILITY

Move to Reverse Deafness

A NEW centre for auditory research will now have a mission to restore hearing to the deaf and to prevent deafness in those at risk. Loss of hearing affects hundreds of millions across the globe - making it the second most common disability.

The Centre – the largest auditory research centre in the UK and founded by University College London (UCL) – will carry out latest collaborative research into disorders of hearing and balance. It is being funded by an award of nine million pounds sterling from the Wellcome Trust. Based next to the Royal National Ear, Nose and Throat Hospital in London, the Centre will work closely with the hospital, enabling fast and easy transfer of research into clinical practice.

Bringing together for the first time, a group of the UK's best auditory research teams, the Centre aims to take a fully interdisciplinary approach to try and understand exactly how the ear works and how it goes wrong. The approaches used will be molecular, genetic, neuroscientific, biophysical and psychophysical – studying the auditory system as a whole from the molecular level up to the functioning of the auditory neural system as a whole.

Professor Andrew Forge of UCL says: "We really think this new centre will be able to make a big difference to people with hearing problems. Our mission is to try and understand the ear from every angle – the molecular, the mechanical – and how everything fits together. There's a good chance that in the near future we could begin to restore hearing to the deaf and to prevent it in those who are at risk." For more details; E-mail: d.reid@ucl.ac.uk V/eb: www.ucl.ac.uk/

Source : London Press Service

Ministry advised to introduce sign language in primary schools

The Ministry of Education, Botswana, Africa, has been advised to introduce sign language in primary school curriculum to facilitate learning to children with hearing impairment. This was in response to a complaint made recently by Segale Mongale, the head of Ramotswa Centre for Deaf in Ramotswa, that children with hearing impairment always lagged behind in learning because of the exclusion of sign language from the curriculum.

Mongale also suggested that the lessons that are now broadcast over the radio be converted to video format. This would enable teachers to spread awareness on HIV and AIDS to hearing impaired students, he said. He also advised parents of children with hearing impairment to learn sign language in order to help their children with their studies.

Ramotswa Centre for the Deaf has 106 pupils and intends to admit more students in future following the completion of its hostels.

Source : Botswana Press Agency

Success & ABILITY

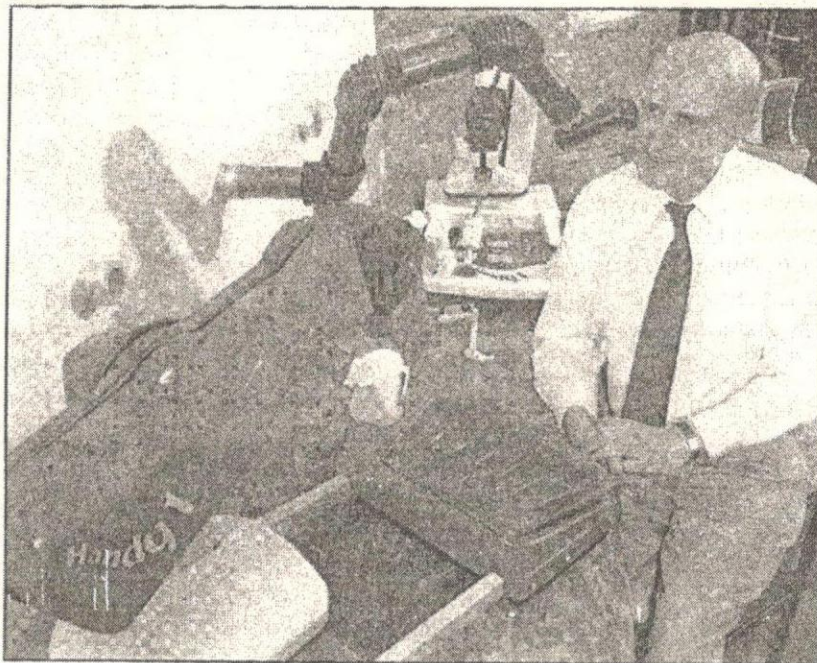
THE 'HANDY' ROBOT

A type of robot, primarily designed to give people with disabilities much more independence in their daily lives, could become a reality in the near future.

Developed by experts in the United Kingdom, the prototype robotic system Flexibot (the arm-like device plugged to the wall pictured above) has been designed to perform tasks such as preparing and cooking food, washing and drying dishes, and vacuuming floors. It can even shave its owner's face which is being demonstrated by Professor Mike Topping, the leader of the Flexibot development team.

Unlike other robots this one does not have a body that trundles around taking up floor space but instead – looking like a long, multi-jointed arm – it moves, caterpillar-like, around the walls or ceilings, clamping itself to series of prearranged, interconnected portals.

Each flexibot arm has a four-pronged gripper at each end that acts both as manipulators and as an electric plug. Either end of the arm can plug into the power supply via a wall socket. The



Shaving can be fun with Flexibot

arm, which is uniquely able to adjust its length automatically, can move by stretching a free end to the next socket and plugging itself in before pulling its other end out of the wall. The free end flips around to the next socket, and the arm crawls its way along the wall, socket by socket.

Professor Topping is a director of the company Rehab Robotics, and has been committed to this field of research for the past 15 years. He and his team have also developed another machine called Handy 1, an acknowledged world-leader which has changed the lives of some of its users.

One of them is Stephanie O'Connell who has cerebral palsy. She said: "I would be lost without it. It allows me to feed myself and it helps me with such things as make-up, drawing and playing games."

Flexibot takes the idea incorporated in Handy 1 further, and uses space-age technology to help the disabled. Professor Topping came up with the idea for Flexibot when he was trying to extend the capabilities of Handy 1. He was searching for a new type of arm that could move

about the house doing jobs that would not normally be within easy reach of someone in a wheelchair, such as washing dishes or changing a lightbulb.

Professor Topping has filed a patent on the system and hopes to have a working prototype by the end of 2001. He does not believe that scientists have realised the full potential of robotic technology but considers that the Flexibot system will provide a breakthrough.

E-mail: J.K.Smith@staffs.ac.uk

Website: www.staffs.ac.uk

Michael Boyd, LPS

Succes & ABILITY

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Types of Disabilities/Diseases Causing Disability/ Magnitude

How **SCHIZOPHRENIA GENES** are identified

FRESH understanding of the underlying components of schizophrenia has been made by a United Kingdom medical team that has identified two genes that contribute to the development of the disease.

This remarkable discovery was achieved after three decades of the study of a family by psychiatrists at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital, Scotland and researchers at the Medical Research Council Human Genetics Unit in Edinburgh, who found that most of the afflicted family members share two damaged genes located on the first chromosome of a human's 23 pairs.

Team leader Professor David Porteous, now of the University of Edinburgh, has named them the Disrupted-in-Schizophrenia (Disc) 1 and 2, after he found that half of the family with the damaged gene developed schizophrenia. Although other parts of the genome have been identified by the other researchers as being connected to the development of the disease, this is the first time a specific gene has been pinpointed.

Schizophrenia is a serious and debilitating disease affecting about one per cent of the population worldwide. Even before this breakthrough there was compelling evidence from a variety of sources – such as family, twin and adoption studies – to suggest that there was a significant genetic basis to the disease. There have been a number of searches directed at the identification of the genetic component involved using methods that include linkage analysis, association studies of possible candidate genes and mapping of inherited abnormalities in psychiatric patients.

"There is now an abundance of evidence pointing to genes being involved in increasing the risk of schizophrenia," said Professor Porteous, whose research has been published in the journal *Human Molecular Genetics*. "But these genes seem to be particularly important in this family with a high level of psychiatric illness."

With their hypothesis that inheritance was the cause of the disease through a direct disruption of the gene, team members originally looked at chromosome 11. Here, they found a dearth of genes and it was felt very unlikely that the expression of any genes on this chromosome has been affected by inheritance. In contrast, the corresponding region on chromosome 1 is gene-dense and here the researchers found the two new genes that are directly disrupted by inheritance.

Disc 1 encodes a large protein with no significant sequence relationship with other known proteins. However, it is believed that there are aspects of it that might have the potential to interact with as-yet-unidentified proteins. Similar structures are thought to be present in a variety of unrelated proteins that are known to function in the nervous system. On the other hand, Disc 2 specifies a non-coding ribonucleic acid (RNA) molecule embedded within and read in the opposite direction to Disc 1. This is an arrangement that has previously been observed at other locations where it is thought that such RNA is involved in regulating the expression of the opposing gene. Taken together this data indicates that Disc 1 and 2 should be considered as possible candidate genes that cause schizophrenia.

Professor Porteous said that there was irrefutable evidence that more than two genes were involved in schizophrenia. "What we don't know at the moment is whether we are looking for five or six genes, or 50 or 60," he explained.

Ian Harper, of the National Schizophrenia Fellowship in Scotland, said that "There have been several claims of genetic developments before but this appears to be very sound research. We welcome any progress in the understanding of the disease but we will have to wait and see if it can improve treatment."

E-mail: david.porteous@ed.ac.uk

Paul Shepherd, London Press Service

Success & ABILITY

Does Sushma Swaraj know...

Bengal suburb has highest density of polio

By Aditya Ghosh
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Baneshwarpur (South 24-Parganas): Magrahat is barely 20 km from Kolkata. But it has the dubious distinction of having the highest density of polio cases in the country. This year, six cases have been reported so far from Magrahat I and II blocks. The South 24-Parganas district, too, is one of the worst affected in the country with 13 polio cases recorded this year.

The reason for the high incidence of the disease is not hard to see. Magrahat I has only one block primary health centre at Baneshwarpur, for a population of 2.28 lakh. The nearest hospital is 25 km away in Diamond Harbour. All the three cases of Magrahat II are from Mollarchak with a population over 12,000, which does not even have a health sub-centre.

Ali Akbar, a villager, is prepared to risk his children's health, but will not allow officials to administer polio vaccine to them. "One of my children has scales on his skin while another developed a lesion in the forearm after injection of the vaccine. My relative's son had high fever after one dose and died. How can I allow my children to be given polio drops after this?" he said.

Over 1,000 children in the two blocks have received

less than three doses of polio vaccine. Those without a single dose number 278 and 86 in Magrahat I and II respectively. These two blocks have about 60,000 children under five.

"For the last couple of years, complacency has crept in since no polio case was recorded," admitted BDO Achintya Kumar Mondol. State health secretary Asim Burman, too, said, "We lost momentum just after 2001 when only one case was detected."

Magrahat has been gripped by one controversy after another. One polio victim, Khateja Khatoun, daughter of Nasir Laskar of Amtoli village, has been buried. She died just four days after testing positive for polio early this year.

A section of doctors say the virus in her buried body might remain potent and mutate later to become virulent. The fear has led the minorities in Magrahat I to panic further.

Politicians exploit minority sentiments, complicating things. The recent panchayat polls have hindered the polio eradication programme in the state, admit the authorities. A stigma has developed. "Health workers told me I would face social boycott as I have a polio-affected daughter," said Tajuddin Molla, who changed his daughter's name after she was detected with polio.

ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ କୁଷ୍ଠରୋଗୀଙ୍କ ସଂଖ୍ୟା ବଢ଼ିଗଲିଛି

ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର, ୨୨।୫ (ବ୍ୟବସାୟ)- କୁଷ୍ଠ ରୋଗ ନିରାକରଣ ଦିଗରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ଅତ୍ୟୁତ ପରିସ୍ଥିତି ଦେଖାଦେଇଛି । ହ୍ରାସ ପାଇଥିବା କୁଷ୍ଠରୋଗୀଙ୍କ ସଂଖ୍ୟା ଏବେ ସମାପ୍ତ ପରେ ବୃଦ୍ଧି ପାଇଛି ।

ଜାତୀୟ ସ୍ତରରେ କୁଷ୍ଠରୋଗୀଙ୍କ ହାର ପ୍ରତି ୧୦ ହଜାରରେ ୪.୨ ରହିଛି । ୧୯୮୩ ମସିହାରୁ ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ କେନ୍ଦ୍ର ସରକାର ଓ ବୈଦେଶିକ ସଂସ୍ଥା ସହାୟତାରେ କୁଷ୍ଠ ନିରାକରଣ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୋଇଛି । ଚତୁର୍ଥ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟାୟ କୁଷ୍ଠ ନିରାକରଣ ଅଭିଯାନ ପରେ ରାଜ୍ୟରେ ପ୍ରତି ୧୦ ହଜାର ଲୋକସଂଖ୍ୟାରେ ୫.୧୪ କୁଷ୍ଠ ରୋଗୀ ଥିବାର ପରିସଂଖ୍ୟାନ କରାଯାଇଥିଲା । ବିଶ୍ୱ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ସଂଗଠନର ଧାର୍ଯ୍ୟଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ଅନୁଯାୟୀ ୨୦୦୫ ମସିହା ସୁଦ୍ଧା ରାଜ୍ୟକୁ ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ କୁଷ୍ଠରୋଗ ମୁକ୍ତ କରାଯିବ ବୋଲି ଘୋଷଣା କରାଯାଇଛି । କିନ୍ତୁ ଏବେ ହୋଇଥିବା ସର୍ବେକ୍ଷଣ ଜଣାପଡ଼ିଛି ଯେ, ଏହି ସଂଖ୍ୟା ୨.୧୨କୁ ବୃଦ୍ଧି ପାଇଛି । ଫୁଲବାଣୀ ଜିଲ୍ଲାରେ ଏହି ହାର ସର୍ବନିମ୍ନ ୨.୧୨ ଥିବା ବେଳେ ବରଗଡ଼ ଜିଲ୍ଲାରେ ସର୍ବାଧିକ ୨୦.୨୫ ଅଟେ । ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକାରୀ ହେଉଥିବା ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ଯୋଜନା ଅନୁଯାୟୀ ଫୁଲବାଣୀ, ମାଲକାନଗିରି, ଜଗତ ସିଂହପୁର, ଗଜପତି, ଦେବଗିରି, କେନ୍ଦ୍ରାପଡ଼ା, କେନ୍ଦୁଝର, କୋରାପୁଟ ଓ ରାୟଗଡ଼ା ଜିଲ୍ଲାରେ ୨୦୦୩ ମସିହା ଶେଷ ସୁଦ୍ଧା ପୁରୀ, ନୟାଗଡ଼, କରାଯାଇଥିଲା ।

ଯାଜପୁର, କଟକ, ଜଳାହାଣ୍ଡି, ବାଲେଶ୍ୱର, ନୂଆପଡ଼ା ଓ ଦେବଗଡ଼ ଜିଲ୍ଲାରେ ୨୦୦୪ ମସିହା ମାର୍ଚ୍ଚ ମାସ ସୁଦ୍ଧା ନବରଙ୍ଗପୁର, ଗଞ୍ଜାମ, ଖୋର୍ଦ୍ଧା, ଭଦ୍ରକ ଓ ମୟୂରଭଞ୍ଜ ଜିଲ୍ଲାରେ ୨୦୦୪ ଡିସେମ୍ବର ଏବଂ ଅନ୍ୟ ଜିଲ୍ଲାମାନଙ୍କରେ ୨୦୦୫ ମସିହା ଡିସେମ୍ବର ଶେଷ ସୁଦ୍ଧା କୁଷ୍ଠରୋଗୀଙ୍କୁ ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ନିରାକରଣ କରାଯିବାର ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟଧାର୍ଯ୍ୟ କରାଯାଇଛି । ଧାର୍ଯ୍ୟଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ଅନୁଯାୟୀ ୧୦୦୦ ଲୋକ ସଂଖ୍ୟାରେ ୧ ଜଣ ବା ତା ଠାରୁ କମ ରହିଲେ ତାହାକୁ କୁଷ୍ଠ ନିରାକରଣ ରାଜ୍ୟ ଭାବେ ପରିଗଣିତ କରାଯିବ ।

କୁଷ୍ଠରୋଗ ହ୍ରାସ ବଦଳରେ ବୃଦ୍ଧି ପାଇଥିବା ନେଇ ଏ ସମ୍ପର୍କରେ ସମାପ୍ତ କରିବାକୁ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ ପ୍ରଫୁଲ୍ଲ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ଘଡ଼େଇଙ୍କ ଅଧ୍ୟକ୍ଷତାରେ ଗତ ୨୦ ଚାରିଶ ଦିନ ଏକ ବୈଠକ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠିତ ହୋଇଥିଲା । ବୈଠକରେ କୁଷ୍ଠରୋଗ ନିରାକରଣ ନେଇ ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ଅଭିଯାନ ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱାପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ପରେ ରୋଗୀଙ୍କ ସଂଖ୍ୟା କମିବା ବଦଳରେ ବୃଦ୍ଧି ପାଇବା ନେଇ ଉଦ୍‌ବେଗ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରାଯାଇଥିଲା । ରୋଗ ମୁକ୍ତ ହେଉଥିବା ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିମାନଙ୍କୁ ସମାଜରେ ଏ ଯାଏ ଆଦର ମିଳି ନ ଥିବାରୁ ଏ ଦିଗରେ ବ୍ୟାପକ ସଚେତନା ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରିବା ଏବଂ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଅଲଥାନ ଉପରେ ମନ୍ଦା ଅଧିକ ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱ ଦେଇଥିଲେ । ରୋଗମୁକ୍ତ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିମାନଙ୍କର ଆତ୍ମନିୟୁକ୍ତି ସୃଷ୍ଟି ଓ ରାୟଗଡ଼ା ଜିଲ୍ଲାରେ ୨୦୦୩ ମସିହା ଶେଷ ସୁଦ୍ଧା ପୁରୀ, ନୟାଗଡ଼, କରାଯାଇଥିଲା ।

The number of leprosy patients in Orissa is alarming with 7.12 per population. As per the report Orissa will be called leprosy free when the number of leprosy patient will be 1 or less than 1 in 1000 population.

Fluoride - Boon Or Bane?

By DR SHASIDHAR ACHARYA

"THIS tooth paste contains fluoride!"; "Fluoride for long lasting protection!"

Our generation has been constantly bombarded with such messages by the mass media. So much so, that it has become fashionable to talk about fluorides. But how many of us really know about fluoride and its effects?

Fluorine with atomic number 9, is the most reactive element in the Nature, i.e., it has the ability to form a compound with almost every other element. Due to this property, it rarely exists in its pure form, but is always found as a compound, like fluoride.

Fluoride chiefly occurs as Fluorospars, Fluorapatite or Cryolite in the earth's crust. It is present in fresh sea water, vegetables, blood and milk. Food like dried fish and salmon, tea leaves, and turmeric are a good source of fluoride.

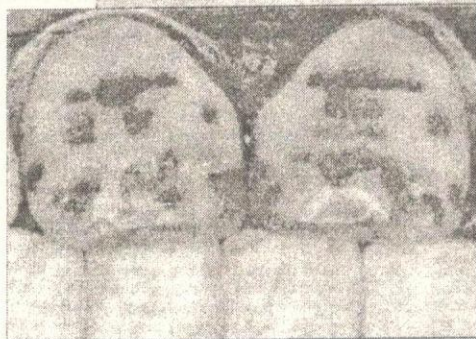
However, the main source of fluoride for the human body is drinking water and to a lesser extent fluoride tooth paste. A WHO expert committee on trace elements and human health has included Fluorine in its list of 14 elements recognised to be physiologically essential for the normal development and growth of human beings.

Fluoride tends to seek out and deposit itself in calcified and calcifying structures like bones and teeth. It is this property which is responsible for both the good and bad effects of fluoride.

The Good Effects

Numerous studies over the last 50 years have conclusively proved that fluorides do indeed reduce dental decay.

The enamel on the teeth is made up of a mineral called hydroxyapatite. Fluoride gets incorporated into this mineral by replacing certain ions and makes the enamel resistant to acid attack. It inhibits certain enzymes which are essential for the survival of cavity causing bacteria. Fluoride also reduces the surface energy of the tooth, thereby mak-



ing the tooth surface 'slippery' for bacteria to hold on to it!

The Bad Effects

You might have heard the saying "Too much is too bad" and the same unfortunately holds true for fluoride. The bad effects of fluoride have more significance than the good effects in India. This is because too much of fluoride can cause mild to severe dental and skeletal fluorosis. Dental fluorosis manifests as brownish discolouration or pitted and rough surface of the tooth. Skeletal fluorosis is a much more serious problem characterised by severe bone deformities, brittle bones susceptible to fractures, curved spine, calcification of tendons, loss of elasticity in the bone joints, and ultimately shortened life span.

Fluorosis is a pressing problem in

India and 15 states are officially classified as endemic high fluoride areas. The problem of acute toxicity caused by the ingestion of fluoride products like tooth pastes, mouth rinses is also of real concern. Symptoms of acute toxicity include, gastric, intestinal pain due to irritation, nausea, vomiting, gastro-intestinal bleeding causing anaemia, renal failure, excessive salivation, mucous discharge, headache, cold and wet skin and convulsions. Shock, coma and death may follow if emergency medical attention is not provided.

Children, especially very young ones, are at a greater risk due to acute toxicity. To prevent this, fluoride tooth pastes, mouth rinses and other fluoride containing agents should be kept out of children's reach. If your child accidentally consumes large amounts of tooth paste, or any other fluoride containing agent, vomiting should be induced immediately, and lots of milk or other calcium-rich fluid should be given as a first-aid before medical attention is provided.

De-fluoridation of public water supplies where fluoride level is high has to be done to prevent dental and skeletal fluorosis. All said and done, any amount of fluoride cannot replace the need for the maintenance of good oral hygiene and diet control. So don't reach out for that box of chocolates just yet!

Types of Disabilities/Diseases Causing Disability/ Magnitude

The New Indian Express, 29th April

'Mental patients get little concern'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, April 18: India accounts for a large number of mental patients, but the Government has shown little concern towards the issue. Most of the mental patients are having an animal-like existence in an insensitive society, opined speakers and participants at a seminar hosted here on Friday by the Kolkata-based NGO Sevak that has been working for the cause of mental patients with an emphasis on human rights. It has developed a mental health manual for the use of correctional and custodial institutions in India.

Sharing his findings as a special rapporteur from the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Chaman Lal, who has been visiting mental hospitals and jails throughout the country, stated that about 15 percent of the country's population are affected by mild mental diseases while one percent suffer from severe mental ailments. However, there are only 37 government mental hospitals in India with less than 10,000 beds, he pointed out.

While hospitals have literally become prisons

for mental patients, the jails have been like hell too. "There is lack of human touch which makes lives of about 40 percent inmates pathetic," he said. Most districts don't even have psychiatric specialists to cater to the needs of these suffering inmates, he revealed.

NHRC member and former director general of police A.B.Tripathy, observed that the jails in the State have a substantial number of mental patients but the facilities are abysmally poor. The Rourkela jail that houses the largest number of mental patients does not have a psychiatrist, he pointed out.

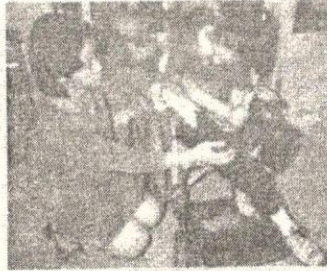
Utkal University vice chancellor Prof Pandav Nayak said the State neither has a Mental Health Act nor any authority to deal with the issue. Former chief justice of India and former NHRC chairperson Ranganath Mishra, who released the mental health manual, said the society does not treat the mentally ill as a part of it and hence a human approach to the issue is the need of the hour. This is a human rights issue, he admitted and suggested for a comprehensive strategy to sensitise the society, government and other agencies involved.

Success & ABILITY

SWABHIMAN - *Bule file*

Aids and Appliances

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This attractive, digital recorder/play back unit has enough recording time for 60 brief

messages such as "Good Morning", "I want to go to the playground". It can be recorded in any language with the appropriate male/female child or adult voices. And it can be re-recorded quickly and easily whenever needed.

FEATURES

NO LANGUAGE BARRIERS

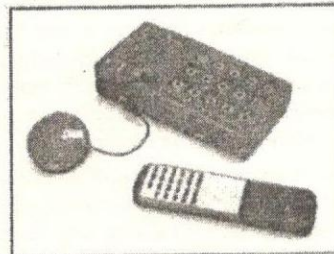
Because the recording feature allows the recording any voice (man, woman, or child), it will naturally record in any language.

OPAL V. 2.3, the handheld device, offers the user options of storing 60 messages, 15 each in four levels. Each key can record a message of four seconds. The user is able to operate a single switch with scanning function, and has complete access to any message stored at any level. It uses high capacity nickel-cadmium batteries to ensure extended operation (up to eight hours on a single charge).

OPAL Big Key, the desktop version for easy access, offers 45 stored messages, nine each in five levels. Each key can record a message of 10 seconds. OPAL Big Key uses AC 220 volts power supply.

For more information, interested persons may contact:

Assistive Technology Center, National Electronics
and Computer Technology Center
National Science and Technology Development
Agency,
539/2 Gypsum Metropolitan Tower Sriyudhya
Road, Rajthevee, Bangkok, 10400 Thailand.
Email: wantanee@nectec.or.th Tel : 662 642-
5001-10 ext 320-322 Fax : +662- 642-5015



Succes & ABILITY

SWABHIMAN - Bule file

Access

The date : 18 May, 03. The place : The Fort Museum, Fort St. George, Chennai.

Visitors thronged in as usual. However, this time, there was a difference - they were not the usual kind of visitors. They were visually impaired. About 30 to 35 students from the Graduate Students Association for the Blind. They were allowed to touch and feel the exhibits. Lessons in history and Geography unfolding in front of them... on their hands. To hold, to delight in, and to experience the delight.

It was certainly an unforgettable experience for them. The enthusiasm was evident and infectious, as the students, who feeling and imagining, discussed and chatted animatedly. Relics from the Raj era, breast-plates, palanquins, canon balls, daggers, swords, head gears and knives on display thrilled them. It was the first time that such an opportunity was being made available to them, although museums in other parts of the world are accessible to disabled persons all the time.

How was this wonderful idea to invite visually impaired students conceived? Says Sriraman, assistant archaeologist, of the museum, "every year, we celebrate International Museum Day with a theme. This year, it was 'Museum and Friend'. To demonstrate how museums can be friendly to different sections of society, we invited visually impaired persons. Since words cannot effectively carry the message, we allowed them to touch and feel and experience some of the items."

Could this not be made a regular feature? Says Sriraman, "we have been considering this. But before we make this a regular affair, we have to work out the details. Many of the objects are fragile and the safety of these have to be taken into account. We have been working towards making replicas of the exhibits with durable material wherever possible. Our next project however, is to make brochures and boards in Braille. When this happens, visually impaired persons can visit the museum any time."

According to Sriraman, the museum officials are open to suggestions to make the museum friendly to orthopaedically disabled persons too. However, it is not easy since the museum is lodged in a three storey colonial building and has steep wooden steps. To make structural changes to this monument is next to impossible. "Most of the modern structures in the country which house museums are disabled friendly", he says. "For example, the museum at Lothal in Gujarat, has ramps and wheelchairs", he adds.

Early this year, The first National Seminar on Arts and Museums for Persons with Disabilities, entitled "*MUSEUMS FOR ALL*" was organised by the National Museum Institute at the National Museum from March 22 to 24. Here, a theory on *Visitor Behaviour*, which was first presented at Rio de Janeiro by Dr B. Venugopal, who has done extensive work in *Access Studies* at museums and zoos was adapted to suit *Museum Access Studies*.

This seminar was noted as the mark of a beginning of a new museum movement in the country. It was felt that some sort of guidelines or policy on a National level would go a long way in helping museums become socially relevant institutions.

Some of the recommendations, made at the seminar, to the Department of Culture, Govt. of India were: (1) A national policy on museum accessibility to be developed; (2) Financial grants to

A Voyage of Discovery



Learning by touch

museums to be linked to access audits of museums; (3) Regular national, regional, and state level workshops to be organised for access audits and sensitisation of museum personnel; (4) Museum camps on museum accessibility to be organised on a regular basis to sensitise museum personnel; (5) During the re-structuring of existing galleries, the developing of new galleries and the expansion of museums, due importance to be given to accessibility factors; (6) International conferences and workshops to be organised by the Department of Culture so that India can take a lead in the field of Museum Access Studies in Asia. For this, the help of professional bodies such as the ICOM (International Council of Museums) to be taken; (7) The Department to take a pro-active role in implementing the various suggestions as envisaged under law [such as the Persons with Disabilities (Equal opportunities, protection of rights and full participation) Act 1995], which suggests that public buildings like museums should be made barrier-free; (8) To undertake the above-mentioned activities, a National Centre for Museum Access Studies to be established. Also, the following recommendations were made to the Director General, National Museum / Vice Chancellor, National Museum Institute: (1) Sensitisation programmes for the staff of the National Museum to be organised on a regular basis; (2) Access audit of the National Museum to be undertaken regularly and the recommendations complied with; (3) Appointment of an Access Advocate for the National Museum be made; (4) Museum Accessibility to become a part of the MA Museology curriculum; (5) Research on Museum Accessibility to be given priority; (6) NMI to start courses on Museum Accessibility studies through open learning system to benefit museum personnel all over the country; (7) Since the NMI is the only museum university in the world, to link with other universities working in this field such as the IGNOU, New Delhi and MPBOU, Bhopal.

The Ministries of Tourism & Culture as well as Social Justice & Empowerment also assured all assistance in establishing a National Centre for Museum Visitor and Access Studies (NC-MVAS) to be established at the NMI this year.

PRATIMA SUNDARARAJAN

Success & ABILITY

SWABHIMAN - Bule file

disAbility Access Audit

ARE PUBLIC PLACES barrier free? Are people with disabilities able to use and enjoy the facilities offered at public places?



ABILITY FOUNDATION recently launched the Disability Access Audit survey in Chennai. Commencing the first audit on August 24, 2001, with a visit to the Head Post Office followed by a trip to Egmore Railway station, the Access Audit team comprises 10 – 12 members. Hand in glove with the Foundation, spearheading the audit is Vidya Sagar (formerly SSI, Chennai) and the Tamil Nadu Federation for the Welfare of the Physically Handicapped. The importance of networking towards a common cause has indeed been rewarding and is a step forward, highlighting the rights and the needs of people with disabilities.

Members of the team comprised persons representing different disabilities (a wheelchair user, persons with total and partial visual impairment, a hearing impaired person and a person using elbow crutches). The team evaluated the available services and facilities from the perspective of every disability. Accompanied by a photographer and an architect, the aim is to map the 'barrier free' environment in the city. After each visit the suggestions are documented, the recommendations are formulated and despatched to the concerned authorities and followup action suggested.

Over the next three months ABILITY FOUNDATION hopes to conduct such Access Audits for around 30 different public places within the city. The plan is to visit banks, government offices, hospitals, universities and colleges, theatres, restaurants, shopping malls, the High Court... in short any place that everybody needs to go to. With the sense of purpose and camaraderie within the team running high it is hoped that this ambitious project will soon yield substantial results in terms of a more sensitive, accessible Chennai.

Success & ABILITY

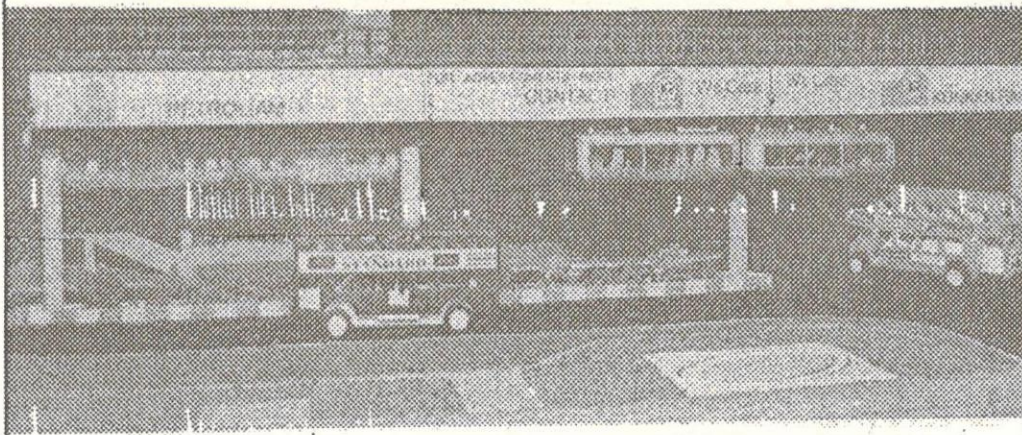
BARRIER FREE VICTORY

In a landmark decision the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has decided to make about 34 monuments, including the Taj Mahal and Khajuraho, accessible to wheelchair users by providing ramps at these heritage sites. This decision was taken by the Cultural Minister, Mr Ananth Kumar and the ASI Director General Ms Komal Anand in the first week of February. In the first phase 14 monuments are stated to be covered, followed by the rest in subsequent phases.

This decision comes in the wake of the furore over the Asi's decision to remove the ramps at the Red Fort, Qutub Minar, Humayun's Tomb and Jantar Mantar in Delhi. These monuments had been provided with wooden ramps to facilitate Professor Stephen Hawking's visit to these places during his recent trip to Delhi in fact before Professor Hawking's visit the ASI had initially refused to provide ramps, temporary or otherwise, at any of these places, citing the present law which states that no permanent structure can be built within 100 meters of a protected monument it was only after a concerted effort by Mr. Javed Abidi, Executive Director, National Centre Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP) that the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment directed the ASI to facilitate the construction of temporary wooden ramps for Professor Hawking's trip.

When the ASI tried to remove the ramps after Professor Hawking's visit, disability activists in was filed in the Delhi High Court. The Court responded favourably and stayed the move. Among other things the PIL demands the adaptation of toilets for wheel chair users in public places, braille symbols and auditory signals in elevators and ramps in hospitals and primary health centres.

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Success & ABILITY

The Statesman, June 11, 2003

Disabled boy keeps tryst with Delhi University

Yojna Gusai in New Delhi

June 10. — Pedaling away furiously on his wheelchair, 18-year-old Veer Pal set off early today from his home in north Delhi for what was his first glimpse of all admission seekers' El Dorado — Delhi University.

Except for the journey which was expectedly tough, he had hoped to wrap up the process within an hour. But the long drawn out registration procedures, the complicated application form and absence of any directions ensured that he spent over seven hours in the searing heat to submit a single form.

Veer's hectic day began at 7.30 am when he left his home in Malkaganj with his brothers. He pedaled the entire 2.5 km-stretch to the University while his brothers, in a demonstration of fraternal loyalty, accompanied him on foot.

Two hours later, he reached the University gate facing the northern ridge. "I first came to Dean of Student's Welfare office inside the university complex, but I was told that the new (Optic Mark Reader) forms are available at the sports complex," he said. There weren't any specific directions to the place. Veer reached the sales counter at the sports complex 20 minutes later after taking quite a few false turns.

His younger brother Rahul stood in the queue for the OMR form. To add to his problems, he had left behind his disability certificate, a necessary requirement for registration. So while Veer waited at the sports complex, his younger brother Rahul rushed back home to get the certificate. "I went in a cycle rickshaw to avoid the traffic congestion,"

said 16-year-old Rahul. Nonetheless, it took him over an hour to return with the document.

Cracking the new form — which has to be filled with only dots — took the brothers another half an hour. The trio had to meticulously go through each and every instruction and mark the answers "cautiously" to avoid any error.

With just 60 per cent marks in the CBSE examination from a government boy's senior secondary school at Roshanara Road and the high cut-off marks, Veer couldn't afford to make any mistakes. That he was the only student of his batch who managed to secure a first division is another matter.

Veer has come a long way after an attack of infantile polio. But there are other hurdles to be crossed. A science enthusiast, he now has to choose between B.A. (Pass) and Political Science (Hons.) for his undergraduate course. "I wanted to join the science stream but classes and labs are all on the first floor and it is not possible for me to go there."

Even if he gets admission in one of the colleges, it wouldn't be easy for him. He does not have a motorised wheelchair. He hopes a benevolent NGO which will give him one. "My parents encourage me to pursue studies but I know they cannot afford me a vehicle nor can I manage to roll the wheelchair everyday to college," said Veer, whose father is a tailor.

After completing the form and getting it vetted by officials at the sports complex, Veer had to return to the office of the Dean of Student's Welfare to submit it.

Time: 2.30 p.m. Veer finally received a strip of paper from the Dean's office acknowledging receipt of his form.

ABILITY FOUNDATION LAUNCHES TWO MORE PIONEERING ACTIVITIES

From what began with the publishing of India's cross disability magazine "Success & ABILITY" that aims to inspire, interest and inform all its readers from different sectors of society, ABILITY FOUNDATION has today expanded its operations to include education, employment, recreation, culture and advocacy. The idea being, to emphasise that the issue of disability is not one of pity or charity, but of human rights and providing equitable opportunities and full participation in every single aspect of life and also to promote a barrier free society for all.

We are now delighted to state that the magazine is available as an **Audio Magazine** on tape, in order that visually impaired people and those who have difficulty in reading print, get direct access to the contents of the magazine. For all of us at the Foundation, this is really a dream come true, as this is something we have been wanting to do for quite some time. We are really excited about the possibilities that this will open up for several disabled people. The Audio Magazine will be available on request, either on annual subscription basis or single copy basis.

Another path-breaking activity launched this month is the **Legal Aid Wing (L.A.W.)**, a long felt need, which will offer the much needed legal counselling and referral services on all matters relating to discrimination and disability. As we are all aware, a lot has been happening in the disability sector today. What was thought of as "not possible" as of just yesterday, is today being considered as a distinct possibility. While on the one hand, several laudable and positive events are happening, on the other, discrimination still remains

rampant. The fact also remains that, many disabled persons are themselves unaware of their rights or even the existence/clauses of the Persons With Disabilities Act of 1995, or even the fact that they are being discriminated against. The Foundation thus hopes that L.A.W. will provide a platform for all disabled people to seek legal counselling and advice.

Ability Foundation's other regular activities include:

- Computer classes and personality development classes leading to job opportunities for **hearing impaired persons**, and now for the **visually impaired too**.
- The country's first ever **Study Centre of the Indira Gandhi National Open University**, (India's premier distance education university,) for disabled students – the first time the University had tied up with an NGO – offering both diploma courses and graduate streams of any choice for all disabled persons.
- A **Placement Wing** for employment of qualified disabled people.
- "**SHARE**" an integrated social club, a forum for disabled and non-disabled people to meet, socialise and thus empathise.
- An **Information Wing** for information dissemination within the sector.

Those interested in availing of the services of Ability Foundation may get in touch: at Tel.: 044 - 4413013/4452400; Email: abilityindia@vsnl.net

Success & ABILITY

Tamil Nadu Leads the Way

ENGINEERING ADMISSIONS STREAMLINED

In a long-awaited decision, the Government of Tamil Nadu recently passed a G.O. stating that separate rosters will be operated for hearing-impaired and orthopaedically disabled candidates while processing admissions to engineering colleges. The G.O. specifies that the two categories will be separated from the common roster followed so far for disabled persons, while a third category (one eye) will be dropped. This will be applicable to all government engineering colleges (Category 1) and self-financing colleges (Category 2) and for free seats in colleges. While one-third of the seats reserved under this special category will be set aside for the hearing-impaired, the remaining will be allocated for orthopaedically challenged students.

More importantly the GO has finally removed the limitation of the less than 70 decibel loss of hearing necessary for securing admission to engineering colleges. Earlier, the eligibility was confined to candidates having pure tone average hearing loss between 56 and 70 decibels as it was felt that those with a higher hearing loss could not cope with instruction. However, with the advancements in deaf education today, it was contested that the restriction was no longer relevant since a number of deaf students with a hearing loss of well over 70 decibels have successfully pursued higher studies.

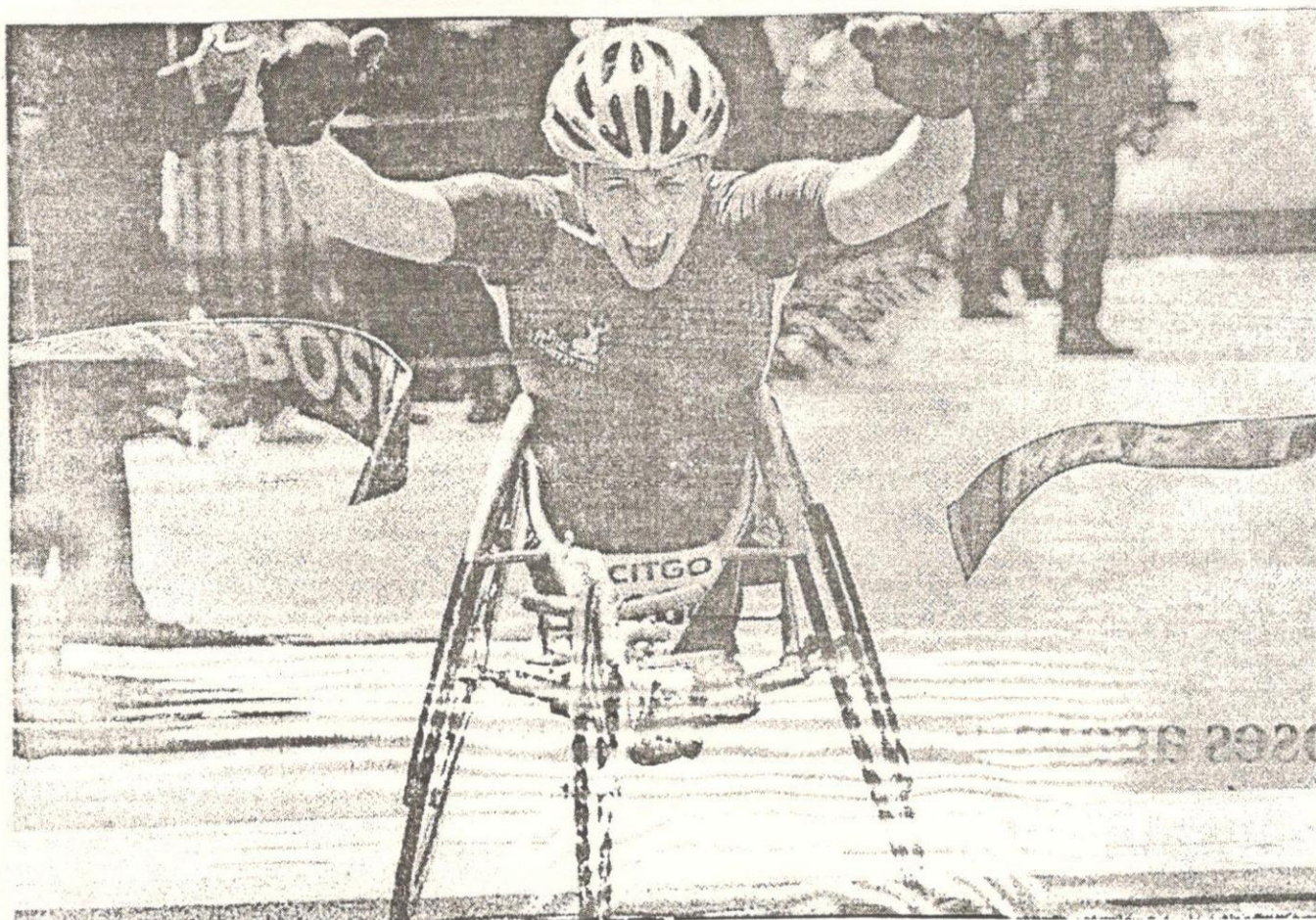
The Tamil Nadu Government has also raised the existing quota under special reservation for the physically disabled quota to 100 seats. Of these 32 seats will be reserved for the hearing-impaired this year, to be revised every year depending on the number of aspirants. Vacancies owing to non-availability of candidates may be rotated among the other disabled categories. The GO was passed after Mr. K. Shanmugam, a member of the State Executive Committee, Tamil Nadu (constituted under the Persons With Disability Act 1995), submitted a plea to the government detailing the difficulties faced by hearing-impaired persons in securing admission to engineering colleges.

GOVT. DEPARTMENTS ASKED TO IMPLEMENT 3% QUOTA

Recently the Tamil Nadu Social Welfare Department has written to all the government departments in the state to provide for three per cent reservation to the disabled, said Ms. B. Valarmathi, Social Welfare Minister. She said that since the maximum representations made by disabled persons were for jobs in various government departments, priority should be given to employment of persons with disabilities.

The Minister also said a government order making it mandatory for all buildings to have ramps, was in the final stages of drafting. She had also sent a proposal to all the departments to construct ramps in their offices to enable access by disabled people. She also added that the government would support all NGOs working in the disability sector.

Sports and Adventure



Christina Rippe of Savoy celebrates after winning women's wheelchair marathon in Boston on Monday. -AP/PTI

Special Programme

8th June 2003, The Sambad,

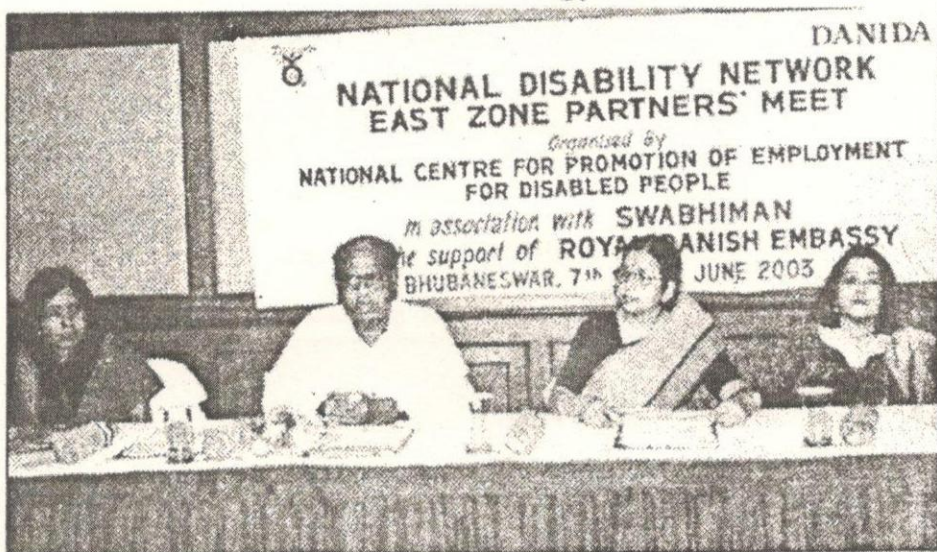
ସମ୍ବାଦ

ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ୮ ଜୁନ୍ ୨୦୦୩

ଅକ୍ଷମଙ୍କର ସାମୂହିକ ବିକାଶ ପାଇଁ ସରକାର ପ୍ରତିଶ୍ରୁତିବଦ୍ଧ: ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ

ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର, ୭ (ଇମିସି): ଜାତୀୟ ଅକ୍ଷମତା ନେଟୱାର୍କ(ନେସ୍‌ନେଟ୍)ର ଡିପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟ ନେଟୱାର୍କର ପୂର୍ବସୂଚକ ସହଯୋଗୀ ସମ୍ମିଳନୀକୁ ଉଦଘାଟନ କରି ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ଓ ପରିବାର କଲ୍ୟାଣ ମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ ପ୍ରଫୁଲ୍ଲ ଘୋଷା କହିଲେ ଅକ୍ଷମଲୋକଙ୍କର ସାମୂହିକ ବିକାଶ ପାଇଁ ସରକାର ସଂକଳ୍ପବଦ୍ଧ ।

ଆଜି ସମ୍ମିଳନୀକୁ ଉଦଘାଟନ କରି ଶ୍ରୀ ଘୋଷା କହିଲେ ଯେ ରାଜ୍ୟରେ କେତେ ଅକ୍ଷମ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ଅଛନ୍ତି ତାହା ଜାଣିବାକୁ ସରକାର ନୂତନ ପଦକ୍ଷେପ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିବାକୁ ଯାଉଛନ୍ତି । ଅକ୍ଷମ ଲୋକମାନଙ୍କୁ ଏକ ଅନୁକୂଳ ବାତାବରଣ ଯୋଗାଇ ଦେବା ପାଇଁ ରାଜ୍ୟ ସରକାର ପ୍ରୟାସ କରୁଛନ୍ତି । ରାଜ୍ୟର ସମସ୍ତ ଅଞ୍ଚଳରେ "ରାମସ୍" ନିର୍ମାଣ କରିବାକୁ ସରକାର ଯତ୍ନବାନ ହେଉଛନ୍ତି । ଅକ୍ଷମ ଲୋକମାନେ କିଭଳି ଏନ-ଏଚ-ଏଫ୍‌ସିବିରୁ ଅଧିକ ପରିମାଣରେ ଭଣ୍ଡ ଆଣିବାର ସୁଯୋଗ ପାଇପାରନ୍ତି, ସେଥିପାଇଁ ସେ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଗତ ଉଦ୍ୟମ କରୁଛନ୍ତି । ଚଳିତ ବର୍ଷ ଏହି ସଂସ୍ଥାରୁ ୫୭୦ ଜଣ ଭଣ୍ଡ ପାଇବା ପାଇଁ ଆବେଦନ କରିଛନ୍ତି । ଅକ୍ଷମପିଲାମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଛାତ୍ରବୃତ୍ତି



କିଭଳି ରାଜ୍ୟ ସରକାର ବୃଦ୍ଧି କରିଛନ୍ତି ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛାସେବୀ ସଂଗଠନ "ସ୍ୱାଭିମାନ"ର ସେକ୍ରେଟାରୀ ଜେନେରାଲ ତଥା ଡିପିଆଇ-ଇଣ୍ଡିଆ(ପୂର୍ବ)ର ରାମାଧ୍ୟକ୍ଷ ତ ଶ୍ରୁତି ମହାପାତ୍ର କହିଲେ ଯେ ଅକ୍ଷମ ଲୋକମାନେ କାହାର ଦୟାର ପାତ୍ର ହେବାକୁ ଚାହାଁନ୍ତି ନାହିଁ । ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଅଧିକାର ମିଳିବା ଉଚିତ ।

ସେ କହିଥିଲେ ଯେ ଅକ୍ଷମଙ୍କ

ପାଇଁ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ କରୁଥିବା ସଂସ୍ଥା ଓ ଲୋକମାନଙ୍କୁ ଏହି ନେଟୱାର୍କରେ ସଂଯୋଗ କରାଯାଇ ପାରିବ । ଜାତୀୟ ସ୍ତରରେ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ କରୁଥିବା ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛାସେବୀ ସଂଗଠନଗୁଡ଼ିକ ବୁଦ୍ଧ ଓ ଗ୍ରାମାଞ୍ଚଳରେ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ କରୁଥିବା ସଂଗଠନ ସହ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟକ୍ଷ ସମ୍ପର୍କ ସ୍ଥାପନ କରାଯାଇ ପାରିବ । ଏନସିପିସିବିର ନିର୍ବାହୀ ଅଧିକାରୀ ରାମା ଚାଟ୍ଟା କହିଲେ ଯେ ଏହି ନେଟୱାର୍କ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ଜାତୀୟ

ସ୍ତରରେ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରାଯାଇଥିବା ନୀତି ସମ୍ପର୍କରେ ଗ୍ରାମାଞ୍ଚଳ ଲୋକମାନଙ୍କୁ ଅବଗତ କରାଯାଇ ପାରିବ । ଅକ୍ଷମତା ସମ୍ପର୍କରେ ଲୋକମାନଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଏକ ସଚେତନତା ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରାଯାଇ ପାରିବ । ଅନ୍ୟମାନଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରେ "ସ୍ୱାଭିମାନ"ର ଅଧ୍ୟକ୍ଷା ନିବେଦିତା ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ଏକ "ଆକ୍ସନ ଏଜେଣ୍ଡା" ଆଞ୍ଚଳିକ ପ୍ରବନ୍ଧକ ଭାବେ ତାହା ଉପସ୍ଥିତ ଥିଲେ ।

National Disability Network's East Zone Partner's Meet was organized by NCPEDP, New Delhi in association with Swabhiman. The Chief Guest Sri Paraffulla Ghasai, Honorable Minister of Health, Government of Orissa said "Government is bound to work for the development of the disabled persons."

The sambad, 15th May - 2003

Her Excellency Smt. Sushila Rajendran is inaugurating the Anjali Report 2002. Anjali scholars 2003-2004 were felicitated by her in the ceremony at Red Cross Bhavan, Bhubaneswar. Anjali Scholarship is given to the disabled students to receive higher education or professional training in creative and performing arts.



ବୁଦ୍ଧିବୀର ବିନି ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ରେଜେନ୍ସ ଉପସ୍ଥିତିରେ ଅନାଲି ପଞ୍ଜିର ଆୟୋଜିତ ଅନାଲି ପୁରସ୍କାର ୨୦୦୩-୦୪ ପ୍ରଦାନ କରାଯାଇଥିଲା । ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ରେଜେନ୍ସ ଅନାଲି ରିପୋର୍ଟ-୨୦୦୨ ଉଦ୍ଘୋଷଣା କରୁଛନ୍ତି । ବାମରେ ଅନାଲି ପ୍ରୋଜେକ୍ଟର ମୁଖ୍ୟ ସଂଯୋଜକ ଶ୍ରୀ ମନମୋହନ ଓ ଡାହାଣରେ ବିଜୟା ସିଂହେଇ ଉପସ୍ଥିତ ଅଛନ୍ତି ।

The Statesman, 15th May



Mrs Sushila Rajendran, wife of the Orissa governor, gives away the award at a felicitation ceremony of Anjali Scholars 2003-04 at Bhubaneswar on Wednesday. — The Statesman

12th June 2003, The Samaj

ଅକ୍ଷମମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ 'ସକ୍ଷମ' ପକ୍ଷରୁ ବ୍ୟାପକ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ

ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ବର୍ଷ 'ସକ୍ଷମଶ୍ରୀ' ଉପାଧି ଦିଆଯିବ

କଟକ ଅଫିସ, ୧୧.୬ ଶାରୀରିକ ବିକଳାଙ୍ଗମାନଙ୍କ ସାମୁହିକ ଭିତ୍ତି ନିମନ୍ତେ ବାର୍ଷିକ ବିକଳାଙ୍ଗମାନଙ୍କ ସଂଗଠନ 'ସକ୍ଷମ' ପକ୍ଷରୁ ବ୍ୟାପକ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ହାତକୁ ନିଆଯାଇଛି । ସେଥିମଧ୍ୟରୁ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ବର୍ଷ ଜଣେ ଶାରୀରିକ ବିକଳାଙ୍ଗ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଙ୍କୁ ତାଙ୍କର ଉଲ୍ଲେଖନୀୟ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ପାଇଁ 'ସକ୍ଷମଶ୍ରୀ' ଉପାଧିରେ ଭୂଷିତ କରାଯିବ । ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ପକ୍ଷରୁ ନିଷ୍ପତ୍ତି ନିଆଯାଇଛି । 'ସକ୍ଷମ'ର ଏକ ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ବୈଠକ ଗତକାଲି କିଲ୍ଲାସିତ ହଜରତ ବାବା ଶେଖାବାଜ ପାଠରେ ସଭାପତି ସେକ୍ ରଘେମାନଙ୍କ ପ୍ରୋତ୍ସାହନରେ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠିତ ହୋଇଥିଲା ।

ନିଜର ଗାଠଜିଆ ଯାନରେ ବିକଳାଙ୍ଗମାନଙ୍କ ଉପେକ୍ଷା ଶାରୀରିକ ବିକଳାଙ୍ଗ ଶ୍ରୀ ରଘେମାନ ନିଜର ଅନୁକୃତି ବର୍ଣ୍ଣନା କରିବା ପରେ ଶାରୀରିକ ବିକଳାଙ୍ଗ ଲୋକମାନଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ପ୍ରେରଣା ଓ ସାହସ ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରି ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ସକ୍ଷମ କରାଇବା ଲାଗି ବୈଠକରେ ବିଭିନ୍ନ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରାଯାଇଥିଲା । ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ପକ୍ଷରୁ ନିଆଯାଇଥିବା ବିଭିନ୍ନ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମର ସଫଳତା ନିମନ୍ତେ କିଲ୍ଲାପାଳ ଅଶ୍ୱିନୀ କୁମାର ବୈଷ୍ଣବଙ୍କୁ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନର ମୁଖ୍ୟ ପୃଷ୍ଠପୋଷକ ଭାବେ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରାଯାଇଥିଲା । ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ଏକ ରାଜ୍ୟସ୍ତରୀୟ ସଂଗଠନ ଭାବେ

କୁଲାଇ ମାସରେ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ମାଗଣା ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ଶିକ୍ଷାମାନ ଖୋଲାଯାଇ ରୁଚୁ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ କରିବା ଲାଗି କରାଯାଇ ଗଭିର ଲୋକମାନଙ୍କୁ ମାଗଣାରେ ଉପସ୍ଥାପନ କରାଯିବ ।

ଯୁବଲେଖକ ତଥା ସମାଜସେବୀ ମହମ୍ମଦ ଆୟୁବଙ୍କ ସମ୍ମାନରେ 'ସକ୍ଷମ' ନାମରେ ମାସିକ ସାହିତ୍ୟ, ସାମାଜିକ ସମସ୍ୟା ଓ ଚେତନାଧର୍ମୀ ପତ୍ରିକା ଆସବା କୁଲାଇ ମାସରୁ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରାଯିବା ଲାଗି ବୈଠକରେ ନିଷ୍ପତ୍ତି ହୋଇଥିଲା । ଶାରୀରିକ ବିକଳାଙ୍ଗମାନେ ଅକ୍ଷମ ନୁହଁନ୍ତି ସେମାନେ ଦେଶର ଜଣେ ଜଣେ ସଫଳ ସୈନିକ ବୋଲି ଏହି ପତ୍ରିକା ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ପ୍ରେରଣା ଯୋଗାଇ ଦିଆଯିବ ।

ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନର କର୍ମକର୍ତ୍ତା ଜାହେଦ ଅଲ୍ଲୀ, ଗୁଲଜାର ମହମ୍ମଦ, ରାଜାବ ମହାରଣା, ମନୁଅ ନାଥ ଦେ, କେ.ଜେ.ଅପରିନ ପ୍ରମୁଖ ବୈଠକରେ ଯୋଗଦେଇ ଆଲୋଚନାରେ ଭାଗ ନେଇଥିଲେ । କୋଷାଧ୍ୟକ୍ଷ ସେକ ଅଞ୍ଜଳି ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ ଦେଇଥିଲେ । ପଞ୍ଜୀକୃତ ହୋଇଥିବାରୁ ଅଧିକ ସଭ୍ୟ ସଂଗ୍ରହ କରାଯାଇ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମର ପରିସରକୁ ବୃଦ୍ଧି କରାଯିବା ଲାଗି ବୈଠକରେ ନିଷ୍ପତ୍ତି ହୋଇଥିଲା ।

Voluntary Organisation Sakhayama has planned to honour physically disabled persons with Sakhyamashir Award every year for their excellence in their area of activities.

The New Indian Express, 15th May

Anjali scholarship for 5 disabled students

Bhubaneswar, May 14: For their exemplary achievements in certain fields despite disability, five individuals and an institution were awarded the coveted "Anjali" scholarships for the year 2003 at a felicitation ceremony at Red Cross Bhawan here on Wednesday. Governor's wife Susheela Rajendran gave away the awards.

City based NGO "Swabhiman" has been implementing "Project Anjali" for the last five years. Anjali scholarships have been instituted by the organisation to enable disabled students with limited means to receive higher education and professional training.

The awardees for the year are Sakti Swarupa Bir, a hearing impaired girl of Talcher for odissi dance, Mahezabeen Jahan and Prakash Chandra Behera, speech and hearing impaired students of Dhauli College of Art & Craft, Bhubaneswar and B.K. College of Art & Craft, Bhubaneswar for painting, visually impaired Kalpana Barik and Purna Chandra Das, both students of Utkal Sangeet Mahavidyalaya, Bhubaneswar for music and inmates of the girls' hostel of B.C. School for the Deaf for training in Odissi dance.

Rajendran said disabled people can be useful citizens while social activist Vijaya Singh Deo spoke on the need for developing a sensitive attitude. Project Anjali chief coordinator Dr. Sruti Mohapatra stressed the need for a change in the attitude towards the disabled. While in the West people have evolved their attitude from charity towards empowerment of the disabled, India is yet to adopt a sensitive attitude towards them, she added. • ENS

The Times Of India, 15th May

Six scholarships awarded

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: The smile on the face of Kalpana Barik spelt satisfaction. Getting an award from first lady Susheela Rajendran was an achievement for the visually impaired girl. "This is a memorable day in my life. I feel elated and encouraged to continue my activities", she said after receiving the Anjali scholarship, 2003-04 at a function on Wednesday. Kalpana, a student of Utkal Sangeet Mahavidyalaya, is specialising in Odissi vocal. She said that the loss of eyesight had hardly had any adverse impact on her activities. "I believe in an optimistic approach and I have always tried to come out of adverse situations. So the loss of eyesight has never posed a problem for me", she pointed out.

Not only Kalpana, there are scores of physically challenged persons, who prove themselves to be better than normal human being, overcoming their handicaps. Anjali, a project started for integration of disabled and able persons, has come to the help of the physically challenged.

"We think that the so called disabled People are the most able. They can do a lot. But they need inspiraion and encouragement. This project is dedicated for that purpose", said Sruti Mohapatra, chief co-ordinator of the project.

Five other physically handicapped persons were also awarded scholarships in the function. The project has also started a new programme this year to teach painting and music to the students of BBC school for the deaf.

The Sambad 7th June 2003,

ଜାତୀୟ ଅକ୍ଷମତା ନେଟୱାର୍କର ପୂର୍ବାଞ୍ଚଳ ସମ୍ମିଳନୀ ଆଜି

ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର, ୫.୬ (କ୍ଷିପ୍ତ): ଜାତୀୟ ଅକ୍ଷମତା ନେଟୱାର୍କ (ନେଡିଆର୍କ) ର ପୂର୍ବାଞ୍ଚଳ ସମ୍ମିଳନୀ ଆଜି ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରରେ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହେବାକୁ ଯାଉଛି । ଆଜି ଏ ସମ୍ପର୍କରେ ସୂଚନା ଦେଇ ସ୍ୱାଭିମାନ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠାନର ସେକ୍ରେଟାରୀ ନେଡିଆର୍କର ତଥା ଉପାଧ୍ୟକ୍ଷ ଡ. ଶ୍ରୀରାମଚନ୍ଦ୍ର (ପୂର୍ବ) ର ଉଦ୍ଘାଟନା କରୁଥିବା ପ୍ରସଙ୍ଗରେ ସେ ଏହି ସମ୍ମିଳନୀର ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ ଓ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ଉପରେ ଆଲୋଚନା କରିଥିଲେ । ସେ କହିଛନ୍ତି, ଯଦି ଗୋଟିଏ ଦେଶର ସମସ୍ତ ଲୋକ ଓ ସମାଜର ସମସ୍ତ ସଦସ୍ୟଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବ, ତେବେ ଦେଶର ସମଗ୍ର ସମାଜ ଓ ସମାଜର ସମସ୍ତ ସଦସ୍ୟଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବ । ସେ କହିଛନ୍ତି, ଯଦି ଗୋଟିଏ ଦେଶର ସମସ୍ତ ଲୋକ ଓ ସମାଜର ସମସ୍ତ ସଦସ୍ୟଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବ, ତେବେ ଦେଶର ସମଗ୍ର ସମାଜ ଓ ସମାଜର ସମସ୍ତ ସଦସ୍ୟଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବ ।



ଅକ୍ଷମତା ନେଟୱାର୍କର ପ୍ରମୁଖ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ହେଉଛି ଲୋକମାନଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବା । ସେ କହିଛନ୍ତି, ଯଦି ଗୋଟିଏ ଦେଶର ସମସ୍ତ ଲୋକ ଓ ସମାଜର ସମସ୍ତ ସଦସ୍ୟଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବ, ତେବେ ଦେଶର ସମଗ୍ର ସମାଜ ଓ ସମାଜର ସମସ୍ତ ସଦସ୍ୟଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବ ।

ସମ୍ମିଳନୀରେ ଉପସ୍ଥିତ ଥିବା ଲୋକମାନଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବା । ସେ କହିଛନ୍ତି, ଯଦି ଗୋଟିଏ ଦେଶର ସମସ୍ତ ଲୋକ ଓ ସମାଜର ସମସ୍ତ ସଦସ୍ୟଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବ, ତେବେ ଦେଶର ସମଗ୍ର ସମାଜ ଓ ସମାଜର ସମସ୍ତ ସଦସ୍ୟଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବ ।

ସମ୍ମାନ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର, ୬ ଜୁନ ୨୦୦୩

A Media interface was held in Bhubaneswar on disability. The aim of the Meeting was informing the press about the need and growth of State and national disability network. The effort is to cover all organizations working for disability in the 539 districts of the Nation.

The Dharitri, 7th June 2003

୭ ବର୍ଷ ପରେ ବି ରାଜ୍ୟ ସରକାର ଅକ୍ଷମତା ପାଇଁ ଅକ୍ଷମ

ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର, ୬.୬ (କ୍ଷିପ୍ତ): ଅକ୍ଷମତା ନେଟୱାର୍କର ପ୍ରମୁଖ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ହେଉଛି ଲୋକମାନଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବା । ସେ କହିଛନ୍ତି, ଯଦି ଗୋଟିଏ ଦେଶର ସମସ୍ତ ଲୋକ ଓ ସମାଜର ସମସ୍ତ ସଦସ୍ୟଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବ, ତେବେ ଦେଶର ସମଗ୍ର ସମାଜ ଓ ସମାଜର ସମସ୍ତ ସଦସ୍ୟଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବ ।

ଅକ୍ଷମତା ନେଟୱାର୍କର ପ୍ରମୁଖ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ହେଉଛି ଲୋକମାନଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବା । ସେ କହିଛନ୍ତି, ଯଦି ଗୋଟିଏ ଦେଶର ସମସ୍ତ ଲୋକ ଓ ସମାଜର ସମସ୍ତ ସଦସ୍ୟଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବ, ତେବେ ଦେଶର ସମଗ୍ର ସମାଜ ଓ ସମାଜର ସମସ୍ତ ସଦସ୍ୟଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବ ।

ଅକ୍ଷମତା ନେଟୱାର୍କର ପ୍ରମୁଖ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ହେଉଛି ଲୋକମାନଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବା । ସେ କହିଛନ୍ତି, ଯଦି ଗୋଟିଏ ଦେଶର ସମସ୍ତ ଲୋକ ଓ ସମାଜର ସମସ୍ତ ସଦସ୍ୟଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବ, ତେବେ ଦେଶର ସମଗ୍ର ସମାଜ ଓ ସମାଜର ସମସ୍ତ ସଦସ୍ୟଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବ ।

ଅକ୍ଷମତା ନେଟୱାର୍କର ପ୍ରମୁଖ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ହେଉଛି ଲୋକମାନଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବା । ସେ କହିଛନ୍ତି, ଯଦି ଗୋଟିଏ ଦେଶର ସମସ୍ତ ଲୋକ ଓ ସମାଜର ସମସ୍ତ ସଦସ୍ୟଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବ, ତେବେ ଦେଶର ସମଗ୍ର ସମାଜ ଓ ସମାଜର ସମସ୍ତ ସଦସ୍ୟଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବ ।

ଅକ୍ଷମତା ନେଟୱାର୍କର ପ୍ରମୁଖ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ହେଉଛି ଲୋକମାନଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବା । ସେ କହିଛନ୍ତି, ଯଦି ଗୋଟିଏ ଦେଶର ସମସ୍ତ ଲୋକ ଓ ସମାଜର ସମସ୍ତ ସଦସ୍ୟଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବ, ତେବେ ଦେଶର ସମଗ୍ର ସମାଜ ଓ ସମାଜର ସମସ୍ତ ସଦସ୍ୟଙ୍କର ସମାନ ଅଧିକାର ଓ ଉପଯୋଗିତା ହେବ ।

ଧରିତ୍ରୀ ୭.୬.୦୩ ୧୦୦୩ ଶିଶୁ ଶିକ୍ଷା

A media interface was held in Bhubaneswar on disability. The aim of the meeting was informing the press about the need and growth of State and national Disability network. The effort is to cover all organizations working for disability in the 539 districts of the nation. "Even after 7 year of the passage of PWD Act 1995, it has not been implemented in Orissa" said Dr. Sruti Mohapatra, in the interface

The Times of India, 9th June

Experts lament lack of facilities for the disabled

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: Of the 70 million persons with disabilities (PWD) in India, four million are in Orissa. Most of them face the problem of access and there are no facilities for them. This was revealed by speakers at the meet on Disability Networking here.

Around 21 participants from New Delhi, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhatisgarh, West Bengal and Andaman & Nicobar Islands and 20 from Orissa attended the two-day programme organised by the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP) in association with Swabhiman.

"Despite the country having progressed post-independence, the situation remains grim for the disabled. Due to lack of equal opportunities and prevalent environmental and attitudinal barriers, they continue to live as invisible minority," speakers remarked. They also added that there was an urgent need to make public places like banks, railway stations and post-offices disabled-friendly.

Networking among the

disabled aimed at a dynamic exploration of how people and the community can address key issues where governmental apathy was causing immense harm both to the disabled population and to the state's economy. Through networks PWDs could seek to achieve self-representation and self-advocacy in local, block, district and state-level decision-making process.

Prafulla Ghadei, state minister for health inaugurated the programme and said the state government had done precious little for PWDs. He added that a survey on the disabled was being done in Orissa by the Anganwadi workers, scholarships for the disabled had been increased, and they were being encouraged to avail loans. Besides, 49 schools had been constructed for the special children by the state government till date.

Nivedita Scudder and Sruti Mohapatra, president and general secretary of Swabhiman respectively, Rama Chari of NCPEDP, and Umi Daniel, regional manager of Action Aid, Bhubaneswar were present on the occasion.

SATURDAY,
JUNE 7, 2003

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS
BHUBANESWAR

5

Disability network meet for representation in decision making

Bhubaneswar, June 6: As part of the National Disability Network launched to empower 70 million disabled citizens of India, the two-day East Zone Partners' Meet covering Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa and West Bengal will be underway in the city on Saturday.

Sruti Mohapatra, secretary general of 'Swabhiman', which is hosting the event, pointed out

that its objective is to strengthen networking among disabled people for representation in the decision making process and evolve a strategy to achieve this. Besides 21 participants from the five participating states, a delegation from the New Delhi-based National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDA) will deliberate on the issue. •ENS

Awareness and Sensitization

The Statesman, 8th June

'Wings of Fire' to the aid of the disabled

By Our Staff Reporter

HYDERABAD, JUNE 7. The President, A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, has said the money raised by the sale of his autobiography, 'Wings of Fire', would go for the benefit of the visually and mentally challenged.

Dr. Kalam, who received the 2,00,000th copy of the book at Raj Bhavan here on Saturday, noted the book had caught the imagination of people in the country and abroad. "It's a pleasant surprise. We did not expect such a response," he said.

Three visually challenged children, Swati, Shanta Kumar and Govind Reddy, read out from the Braille version of the book on the occasion. The Governor, Surjit Singh Barnala, and the Chief Minister, N. Chandrababu Naidu, were also present on the occasion.

Earlier, spotting press photographers waiting to click him, the President asked them, if they read books. When one of them said no, he advised them to start reading books. "This will help you click better pictures," Dr. Kalam told them.

The New Indian Express, 22nd May

ଶାରୀରିକ ଅକ୍ଷମ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ କର୍ମଶାଳା

କଟକ ଅଫିସ, ୧୯୮୪ - କେନ୍ଦ୍ର ସରକାର ତଥା ରାଜ୍ୟ ସରକାରଙ୍କ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ସ୍ୱରୋଚ୍ଚାର ଯୋଜନା ଦ୍ୱାରା ଶାରୀରିକ ଅକ୍ଷମ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିମାନଙ୍କୁ ଅର୍ଥନୈତିକ ସ୍ୱାବଲମ୍ବୀ କରିବା ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟନେଇ ଏକ ଉଦ୍ୟୋଗିକ ଉନ୍ନୟନ ପ୍ରକ୍ରିୟା ଶିବିର ଆଜି ପୂର୍ବାହ୍ନରେ କଟକ ଜିଲ୍ଲା ସମ୍ମିଳନୀ କକ୍ଷରେ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠିତ ହୋଇଯାଇଛି । ଜିଲ୍ଲା ପ୍ରଶାସନ ଓ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରସ୍ଥିତ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଧର୍ମାନ୍ୱଳ ଅଭିଯାନ କେନ୍ଦ୍ରର ମିଳିତ ଆନୁକୁଲ୍ୟରେ ଆୟୋଜିତ ଏହି ପ୍ରଶିକ୍ଷଣ ଶିବିରକୁ ଜିଲ୍ଲାପାଳ ଅଶ୍ୱିନୀ କୁମାର ବୈଷିକ ଉଦ୍‌ଘାଟନ କରି କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମର ଆଶିର୍ୱାଦ ତଥା ସଠିକ ରୂପାୟନ ସମ୍ପର୍କରେ ଆଲୋଚନା କରିଥିଲେ । ଧର୍ମାନ୍ୱଳ ଅଭିଯାନ କେନ୍ଦ୍ରର ବିଭିନ୍ନ କର୍ମକ୍ରମର ଉପାଦାନକରଣ ବ୍ୟାଙ୍କ, ଜିଲ୍ଲା ଶିକ୍ଷକେନ୍ଦ୍ର, ଜିଲ୍ଲା ଶ୍ରାମ୍ୟ ଉନ୍ନୟନ ସଂସ୍ଥା, ମହିଳା ବିକାଶ ସମବାୟ ନିଗମ, ଉଦ୍ୟାନ ବିଭାଗ, ହସ୍ତତନ୍ତ ବିଭାଗ ଓ ଅନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ ସଂସ୍ଥା ଦ୍ୱାରା ପ୍ରାୟୋଜିତ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଯୋଜନା ସମ୍ପର୍କରେ ଶିକ୍ଷିତ ଆଲୋଚନା

କରିଥିଲେ । କେଉଁ ବର୍ଗର ଶାରୀରିକ ଅକ୍ଷମ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି କେଉଁ ପ୍ରକାର ଯୋଜନା ପାଇଁ ଉପଯୁକ୍ତ ତାହାର ଏକ ନମୁନା କରି ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଯୋଜନାର କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକାରୀତା ପାଇଁ ପରାମର୍ଶ ଦେଇଥିଲେ । ଅନ୍ୟମାନଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଜିଲ୍ଲା ଶିକ୍ଷକେନ୍ଦ୍ରର ପରିଚାଳକ ଇଂ ସରୋଜ କୁମାର ଦାସ ଯୋଜନାର କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକାରୀତା ତଥା ସଫଳତା ପାଇଁ ବୈଷୟିକ ଜ୍ଞାନକୌଶଳ ସମ୍ପର୍କରେ ଆଲୋଚନା କରିଥିଲେ ।

ଅନ୍ୟମାନଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଜିଲ୍ଲା ସମାଜ ମଙ୍ଗଳ ଅଧିକାରୀ ପ୍ରଶ୍ନା ଇନ୍ଦ୍ରା ଦାସ, ସହକାରୀ ଜିଲ୍ଲା ସମାଜ ମଙ୍ଗଳ ଅଧିକାରୀ ଶ୍ରୀକାନ୍ତ ମହାନ୍ତି, କଟକ ବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟର ମ୍ୟାନେଜର, ଜିଲ୍ଲା ଉନ୍ନୟନ ପ୍ରକଳ୍ପର ପ୍ରକଳ୍ପ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶକ, ଚୌଦ୍ୱାର ମ୍ୟୁନିସିପାଲିଟିର କାର୍ଯ୍ୟନିର୍ବାହୀ ଅଧିକାରୀଙ୍କ ସମେତ ସମସ୍ତ ବୁଦ୍ଧ ଓ ମ୍ୟୁନିସିପାଲିଟିର ଶାରୀରିକ ଅକ୍ଷମ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିମାନେ ଏହି କର୍ମଶାଳାରେ ଯୋଗ ଦେଇଥିଲେ ।

A workshop on "Economic Empowerment of Disabled Persons" was held at Cuttack by the District collectors, Cuttack and VRC, Bhubaneswar for economic empowerment of disabled persons through the National and State Govt's self-employment schemes.

'Leprosy to be eradicated by 2005'

Bhubaneswar, May 21: The State Government has set a target to eradicate leprosy by December 2005. The progress in the programme was reviewed by Health and Family Welfare Minister Prafulla Chandra Ghadei at a high-level meeting on Wednesday. Ghadei underscored the need for rehabilitation of the cured.

Though the National Leprosy Elimination Programme (NLEP) is in operation in the State since 1982-83, the prevalence rate in Orissa at 7.12 per thousand is one of the highest in the country. The prevalence rate at the national level now is 4.2 per thousand.

During discussion, it came to the fore that Bargarh district has the highest prevalence rate of 20.15 while Phulbani district has the lowest at 2.17.

NLEP is aided by Government of India, the World Bank and donor agencies like DANIDA, Lepa India and the German Leprosy Relief Association.

TIME-BOUND PLAN: As per programme, leprosy will be eradicated from Phulbani, Malkangiri, Jagatsinghpur, Gajapati, Kendrapara, Keonjhar, Koraput and Rayagada by December, 2003. By March 2004, the it will be eradicated from Puri, Nayagarh, Jajpur, Cuttack, Kalahandi, Balasore, Nuapada and Deogarh. Target to eradicate the disease from Nabarangpur, Ganjam, Khurda, Bhadrak and Mayurbhanj districts is December, 2004 and from the rest 2005. •ENS

The Hindu, 15th May

It is now 'polio Sunday'

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, MAY 14. In a bid to make the national polio eradication campaign more popular, the Centre has proposed to give it a new identity. It will now be called 'polio Sunday' or 'polio ravivar'.

Announcing this, the Union Health Minister, Sushma Swaraj, said the new name was thought of since the current term "national pulse polio immunisation day" sounded highly technical. Consequently, the common man was unable to associate with it.

The new simpler name, on the other hand, is expected to make it a popular movement as it should be. The appellation 'Sunday' or 'ravivar' was thought of since the immunisation programmes were conducted on Sundays and subsequently it would help in

better public recall.

The idea was mooted at a meeting convened here today to review the preparedness for the sub-national immunisation day slated for June 1 in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Uttaranchal, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh which had witnessed a resurgence of polio cases last year. The meeting was attended by the Health Ministers of three States and Health Secretaries of seven States.

Ms. Swaraj also announced that she would go to Kolkata for the launch of the June 1 immunisation programme considering that there was a resurgence of polio cases in West Bengal even while the State was on the verge of becoming polio-free. In the last three months, West Bengal had accounted for 11 cases of

the national total of 26, followed by Uttar Pradesh with 8, Bihar 3, Rajasthan 2 and one each in Delhi and Orissa.

To a question, she said it was true that Muslims in some areas, particularly Uttar Pradesh, had been refusing to let their children be given polio drops because of some misapprehensions. Efforts were on to overcome the problem with the help of leaders from the community, including MPs and MLAs.

Pointing out that a new slogan had been coined to ensure 100 per cent coverage on immunisation days, she said that even if one child was left out it could jeopardise the entire effort to eliminate the crippling disease. The new slogan is: "yadi ek bacha bi choota, to samjo pura chakra tuta (even if one child is missed, consider that whole cycle has been broken)".

The Hindu, 15th June

Vizag tops in welfare schemes for physically challenged

By Our Staff Reporter

VISAKHAPATNAM, JUNE 4. Visakhapatnam tops in the implementation of welfare schemes for the physically challenged among the districts. The Collector, Sunil Sharma, congratulated the Assistant Director of the Department for Welfare of Physically Handicapped, K. Jeevan Babu, for taking special care in implementing the welfare schemes and helping Visakhapatnam achieve the top place, at a meeting held on Wednesday to review the development programmes and performance indicators for employees.

The district had achieved good results in conducting vocational training, identification camps for issuing multi-purpose identity cards, implementing welfare schemes of the department and also the schemes of other departments benefiting the handicapped.

The Collector also appreciated the Executive Director of the District B.C. Welfare Corporation, D. Jagannayakulu, for achieving good results. Visakhapatnam achieved 413 per cent target in the issue of educational loans and stood first in the State. It was second in the issue of term loans with an achievement of 1,500 per cent and third

in implementation of the Aadarana scheme. The District B.C. Corporation had achieved 113 per cent in implementation of micro-credit.

Mr. Sunil Sharma told the District Medical and Health Officer, D. Narayana Rao, to achieve substantial results in the implementation of family welfare and Sukheebhava scheme, and the District Tribal Welfare Officer, Parthasaradhi, to improve implementation of financial schemes for tribals.

The Collector told the officials to put online, without delay, reports on the results achieved by them since the good results achieved by the departments were not reflected in the reports submitted by them.

The Rural Water Supply wing had implemented 247 schemes in the plain area but a lesser number was noted in the report and the District Training Centre had not mentioned in its report that it was conducting training programmes every day, Mr. Sunil Sharma pointed out.

The Joint Collector, M.T. Krishna Babu, the District Revenue Officer, M. Ramakrishna Rao, the Chief Planning Officer, J. Vijayalakshmi, the Additional Commissioner, K. Siva Parvathi, and others participated.

The New Indian Express, 15th May

Health Ministry sets 2005 target, revamps polio eradication scheme

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, May 14: Not only has the Ministry of Health set 2005 as the fresh deadline for polio eradication in the country, but the Government is also expecting to stabilise the zero number for at least two more years to get a clean chit from the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Apart from immunisation campaigns, the Government has decided to involve Parliamentarians in its outreach programme. The Ministry has formed a committee called "Polio Killer Manch", comprising MPs (mostly Muslims) from the affected areas who would in turn involve the legislatures of their province to generate awareness among the people.

Announcing this, Union Health Minister Sushma Swaraj assured that the Government is taking special measu-

res to reach the goal like new media campaigns, which would focus on banishing the myths regarding immunisation among a certain community. The Government would also be involving local religious leaders in their campaign.

Rechristened as polio ravivar, the additional rounds have been announced

The new strategy further involves increasing the number of immunisation days to six rounds instead of the previous three to four. These six rounds include two national days all over the country and four sub-national days in 10 states. The policy is likely to be continued till 2004.

In the following three years, there would be three rounds, said Swaraj. If zero level (no polio cases) is maintained for two years after reaching eradication goal, the country would get the certificate from WHO by 2007.

Rechristened as *polio ravivar*, as the pulse polio days are mostly held on Sundays, the additional rounds have been announced following the surge in polio cases last year and the consequent criticism that followed. According to Swaraj, the name has been chosen as it can register easily with the masses.

"We are renewing focus on polio in order to be free from the disease. I am confident that we will be able to lower the number of cases by next year and eradicate polio by 2005," Swaraj told reporters here after a meeting with representatives of ten states where polio has resurged in the past year.

Issues of Apathy an Exploitation

11th May 2003 Dharitri,

୨୦ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିହୀନ ଓ ୫୦ ମୂଳ ବ୍ୟବସାୟ ପିଲାଙ୍କ ଅବସ୍ଥା ଦୟନୀୟ

୪୨ ମୌଜା, ୧୦୫ (ଡି.ଏନ.ଏ.)- ଦୈନିକ ମାତ୍ର ସାତ ଟଙ୍କାରେ ଦୁଇଓଳି ଲଙ୍କା ଓ ଦୁଇଓଳି ମୁଖ୍ୟ ଭୋଜନ ଯୋଗାଇ ଦିଆଯିବା ଆଦିର ମହଙ୍ଗା ଯୁଗରେ ଅସମ୍ଭବ ବୋଲି ମନେ ହେଉଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ କଟକ ଖପୁରିଆ ନୂଆପଡ଼ାଠି ଉତ୍କଳ ବାଳାଶ୍ରମ ନିରାଶ୍ରୟ ଅନ୍ଧବାସୀମାନଙ୍କୁ ଏହି ଅର୍ଥରେ ଦୈନିକ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ଯୋଗାଇ ଦିଆଯାଉଛି । ଏଥିରୁ ଏହି ଲଙ୍କା ଓ ମୁଖ୍ୟ ଭୋଜନର ପରିମାଣ ଓ ମାନ କିଭଳି ହୋଇଥିବ ତାହା ସହଜେ ଅନୁମେୟ । ଦୀର୍ଘ ଦିନ ଧରି ଖୋଦ୍ ରାଜ୍ୟ ସରକାରଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟକ୍ଷ ଚକ୍ରାବଧାନରେ ପରିଚାଳିତ ହୋଇ ଆସୁଥିବା ଏହି ବାଳାଶ୍ରମ ଓ ଏହାର ପରିସର ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଚାଲିଥିବା ଦୃଷ୍ଟିହୀନ ବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ଓ ମୂଳ ବସିର ବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟର ଅବସ୍ଥା କର୍ତ୍ତୃପକ୍ଷଙ୍କ ଚରମ ଅବହେଳା ଯୋଗୁ କୁମ୍ଭେ ଶୋଚନୀୟ ହୋଇପଡ଼ିଛି । ମାତ୍ର ତାରୋଟି କ୍ଷୁଦ୍ର କୋଠା ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଲାଙ୍ଗିତପାଳିତ ପ୍ରାୟ ୬୦୦ ଟଙ୍କା ଦୃଷ୍ଟିହୀନ ପିଲା ଓ ମାତ୍ର ତିନିଟି କ୍ଷୁଦ୍ର କୋଠା ମଧ୍ୟରେ ରହୁଥିବା ପ୍ରାୟ ୫୦୦ ଟଙ୍କା ମୂଳ ବସିର ପିଲାଙ୍କର ଅବସ୍ଥା ପ୍ରଶ୍ନକର ଖାଦ୍ୟ ଓ ଅନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ ଆନୁଷ୍ଠାନିକ ସୁବିଧା ସୁଯୋଗ ଅଭାବରୁ ଦୟନୀୟ ହୋଇପଡ଼ିଛି ।

ତିନା ବସିର ବିକାଶ ପରିସରକୁ ଚକ୍ରାବଧାନରେ ଏହା ପରିଚାଳିତ ହୋଇଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଏହି

ଅନ୍ଧବାସୀମାନଙ୍କର ଶାରୀରିକ, ମାନସିକ ଓ ବୌଦ୍ଧିକ ବିକାଶ ପାଇଁ ଯେଉଁଭଳି ଧ୍ୟାନ ଦିଆଯିବା କଥା ତାହା ହେଉ ନ ଥିବାରୁ ଅନେକ ପ୍ରତିଭାବାନ ଛାତ୍ରଛାତ୍ରୀ ଅସମର୍ଥ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ଛାଡ଼ିବାକୁ ବାଧ୍ୟ ହେଉଛନ୍ତି । ସଂପୃକ୍ତ ପରିସରର ବୈଠକ ନିୟମିତ ଭାବରେ ବସୁନ ଥିବାରୁ ଏହି କୋମଳମତି ବାଳକ ବାଳିକାମାନଙ୍କର ପ୍ରକୃତ ସମସ୍ୟା ସଂପର୍କରେ ଅନଧ୍ୟାନ କରାଯାଇ ସରକାରଙ୍କୁ ଅବଗତ କରାଯାଉନାହିଁ ।

ଉତ୍କଳ ବାଳାଶ୍ରମ

ଏହି ପିଲାମାନଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଅନେକ କେବଳ ପାଠପଢ଼ା କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ସଙ୍ଗୀତ, ଅଭିନୟ, କ୍ରୀଡ଼ା, ଚିତ୍ରାଙ୍କନ ଓ ହସ୍ତଶିଳ୍ପ ପ୍ରଭୃତି ବିଭିନ୍ନ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ପାରଦର୍ଶିତା ପ୍ରତିପାଦିତ କରୁଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଏ ଦିଗରେ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଉତ୍ସାହିତ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ସେଭଳି କୌଣସି ଆଖି ଦୃଷ୍ଟିଆ ପଦକ୍ଷେପ ନିଆଯାଇ ନାହିଁ । ଯଥେଷ୍ଟ ପରିମାଣର ଉନ୍ନତ ମାନର ପାଠ୍ୟପାଠ୍ୟପୁସ୍ତକ ଯୋଗାଇ ଦେବା ତ ଦୂରର କଥା; ମାତ୍ର ସାତଟଙ୍କାରେ ପିଲାମାନଙ୍କୁ ପେଟପୁରା ଖାଦ୍ୟ ଯୋଗାଇଦେବା ଅସମ୍ଭବ ହୋଇପଡ଼ିଛି । ଏହା ଫଳରେ ପିଲାମାନଙ୍କର ରକ୍ଷଣା ବେକ୍ଷଣ ଦାୟିତ୍ୱରେ ଥିବା କର୍ମଚାରୀମାନେ ନାହିଁ ନ ଥିବା ଅସୁବିଧାର ସମ୍ମୁଖୀନ ହେଉଛନ୍ତି । ଏହି କର୍ମଚାରୀମାନଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରୁ ଅଧିକାଂଶ

ସାମୟିକ ହୋଇଥିବାରୁ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଚାକିରି ଚାଲିଯିବା ଉପରେ ସ୍ୱର ଉତ୍ତୋଳନ କରିବାକୁ ସାହସ କରିପାରୁ ନାହାନ୍ତି । ସେମାନେ ଦିନରାତି ୨୪ ଘଣ୍ଟା ବାଳାଶ୍ରମ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ପଡ଼ିରହି ପିଲାଙ୍କର ଦେଖାଶୁଣା କରୁଛନ୍ତି । ଅଥଚ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ପେଟପାଟଣା କଥା ବୁଝିବା ପାଇଁ କେହି ଦୃଷ୍ଟି ଦେଉନାହାନ୍ତି । ଦୃଷ୍ଟିହୀନ ଓ ମୂଳବ୍ୟବସାୟ ପିଲାଙ୍କର ବିତାନାସୀରେ ବୀର୍ଯ୍ୟଦିନ ହେଲା ଜମି ଯୋଗାଇ ଦିଆଯାଇଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଏ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ସେଠାରେ ନିର୍ମାଣ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହେଉନାହିଁ । ଏହାଫଳରେ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ସମୟରେ କ୍ଷୁଦ୍ର ପ୍ରକୋଷ୍ଠଗୁଡ଼ିକ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ରହୁଥିବା ଏହି ଦୃଷ୍ଟିହୀନ ଓ ବ୍ୟବସାୟ ପିଲାମାନେ ଘୋର ଅସୁବିଧାର ସମ୍ମୁଖୀନ ହେଉଛନ୍ତି ।

ସୂଚନାଯୋଗ୍ୟ ଯେ, ନାନା ଅଭାବ ଅସୁବିଧା ଓ ବ୍ୟାଧିଗ୍ରସ୍ତ ସତ୍ତ୍ୱେ ଏହି ସବୁ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନରୁ ଉତ୍ତୀର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଛାତ୍ରଛାତ୍ରୀମାନେ ସମାଜର ବିଭିନ୍ନ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ନିଜ ଦକ୍ଷତା ପ୍ରଦର୍ଶନ କରିପାରିଛନ୍ତି । ଏହି ପରିପ୍ରେକ୍ଷାରେ ମାନବିକତା ଦୃଷ୍ଟିକୋଣରୁ କଟକ ଜିଲାର ଉଚ୍ଚ ପୁରାତନ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନର ଉନ୍ନତି ତଥା ପିଲାମାନଙ୍କର ଉତ୍କଳ ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ ପାଇଁ ଜିଲାପାଳ ତଥା ଶିଶୁକଲ୍ୟାଣ ପରିଷଦର କର୍ମକର୍ତ୍ତାମାନେ ଧ୍ୟାନ ଦେବେ ବୋଲି ଆଶା କରାଯାଉଛି ।

The Government's apathy is clearly visible in the disability sphere. In Uttkal Balashram, both visual impaired, and speech and hearing impaired children suffer from lack of basis facilities and nutritious foods.

The Times of India, 16th April

Silent demand for more benefits

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: Over a thousand deaf and mute youths braved the scorching sun to lodge their protest and submit a charter of demands to the government here on Tuesday. It was a rally sans mikes, slogan shouting and fiery speeches. Yet the demonstrators were hopeful of being "heard" by the government.

Organised under the banner of

Orissa Unemployed Association of the Deaf, the youths submitted a memorandum to the Health Minister Prafulla Chandra Ghadei. They alleged that those who had been registered as unemployed for the last seventeen years are still waiting to get a call from the Vocational Rehabilitation Centre (VRC) and the Special Employment Exchange (SEE).

The protesters also alleged that the VRC was not functioning prop-

erly. There have been instances of people not being deaf and mute, who arranged for semi-deaf certificates through the VRC and availed benefits. Rajesh Kumar Agrawal, who had come all the way from Kalahandi, explained in sign language that for 20 years he has been trying for a job but in vain. "I have come here today with a hope that the government will pay heed to our demands for better employment opportunities."

Success Stories

The Telegraph, 23rd June

MAN WHO STARTED IT ALL

● If there is a word that prompts instant recall in Kota, it is Bansal. Everyone acknowledges that Vinod Kumar Bansal not only put Kota on the India coaching centre map but also made it a premium brand. Employed as an engineer with JK Industries, Bansal developed muscular dystrophy, a condition which restricted movement in his lower body. Doctors advised him to look for a job that required limited mobility.

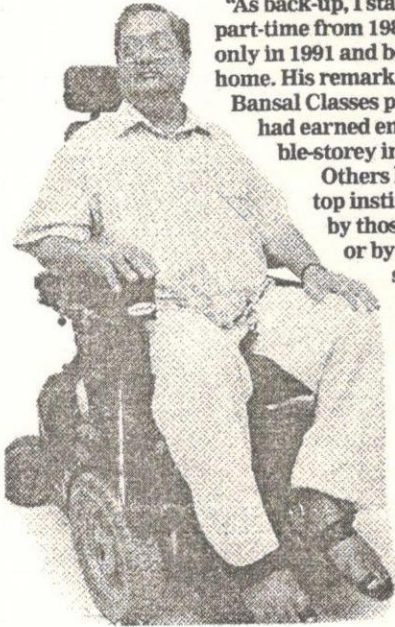
"As back-up, I started taking private tuitions part-time from 1981," he says. But he quit JK only in 1991 and began operating out of his home. His remarkable success created the Bansal Classes phenomenon. By 1996, he had earned enough to build a plush, double-storey institute in Vigyan Nagar.

Others have followed suit. "Most top institutes in Kota are either run by those who have worked with me or by my former students," he

says. Both Resonance director R.K. Verma and Shishir Mittal of Insight were earlier associated with Bansal Classes.

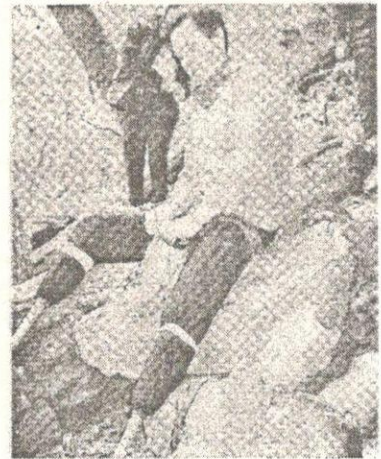
Now 54, Bansal operates his own computerised wheel-chair and still teaches mathematics. "My brain is active as ever," he says. His students couldn't agree more.

BIG IDEAS:
Vinod Kumar Bansal



The Telegraph

Braving life



In The National Geographic Channel's *Truth Files: Hugh Herr*, airing today at 8 p.m., meet Hugh Herr. An expert climber he lost both his legs at the age of 17. It was while hiking up New Hampshire's Mount Washington that Hugh made the tragic mistake that was to change his whole life. Today, Hugh is one of the leading designers of ultra-sophisticated prosthetic devices and is largely considered to be at the forefront of a technical revolution.

The Telegraph, 23rd June

**Thanks to the design engineer who changed
the life of a group of highly vulnerable people**

They're mentally challenged, but they live in style

By ULLEKH N.P.

Chennai, April 15: Brand passionate and obsessive devotion to a noble cause as madness, and then you have to call D.J.K. Cornelius mad. But there is an impeccable method and purity of romance in being insane like him: He has designed machines for the mentally challenged to do 'eration' on brake adjusters (for Brakes India Ltd - which is part of the TVS Group) used in Maruti cars, and to assemble various

the 'Trust has come a long way to train the mentally challenged to assemble components supplied by companies like M.K. Electricals Ltd., T.I. Cycles of India, Aztec Auto (P) Ltd., Aishwarya Enterprises Ltd. and others besides Brakes India Ltd.

Go around the work areas at the Trust on a guided tour and it requires no uncommon intelligence to comprehend that it is the Midas

***Many of the mentally challenged trainees
have attained the status of skilled workers
and earn higher remuneration than their
mentally sound counterparts***

other components used in trucks and heavy vehicles.

At The Navjyoti Trust Institute of Mental Retardation in Ambattur, many of the mentally challenged trainees have attained the status of skilled workers and earn similar or higher remuneration than their mentally sound counterparts outside. Thank the machines, thank the man who made them purposefully to meet the needs of the extraordinary people he is training and working for. What a perfect balance of idea and action!

Conceived in 1969 under the indomitable leadership of Cornelius, a designer engineer by profession,

touch of Cornelius which is at work. However, such an observation should not lead to underestimation of the enduring training one of the most vulnerable groups in the world - the mentally challenged - have undergone to draw income on a par with the skilled workers and also to rediscover themselves.

Evidently, for the 'eration' work they do (which is normally done manually with the help of a machine by two people at a time), per brake adjuster, they share 80 paise and the Trust makes around 500-600 of such 'eration-done' brake adjusters for Brakes India daily for six days a week.

କିଛି ସଫଳ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିହୀନ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି

କାହାଠାରୁ ଏମାନେ କମ୍ ନୁହଁନ୍ତି

ରାଧାମାଧବ ମିଶ୍ର

ବୟସ ସେତେବେଳେ ତାଙ୍କୁ ମାତ୍ର ପୂର୍ବ ବର୍ଷ ହୋଇଥିଲା ତାଙ୍କରିଆରେ ଆକାଶ ହୋଇ ଆଣି ଦୁଇଟି ବନ୍ଦ ହୋଇଗଲା । ବାପା ମା' ବହୁତ ଭେଦରେ । ଭେଲେ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ପ୍ରକାର ଚିକିତ୍ସା ପଡ଼େ ଆଣି ଆଉ ଖୋଲିଲା । କାବନ ଡୋମିନ ଆଗରୁ ହିଁ ପଦ୍ମବିଜି ଅନ୍ଧାର ହୋଇଗଲା । ମାତ୍ର ଯେ ଯେଣି ପୁରାଇଲେ । ସାଧାରଣ ମଣିଷଟିଏ ପରି ବଞ୍ଚିବାକୁ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ନେଇ ଆଗେଇ ଚାଲିଲେ । ଫଳ ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ, ହୃଦୟୋହନ ଉପାୟ ଆଦି କରେ ସଫଳ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି । ସ୍ଥାନୀୟ ଡାକ୍ତର ମାଧୁସୂଦନ ବାଲେଶ୍ୱର କଲେଜ ଉପକରେ ସେ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟରତ । ଆସିବୁଲେ ତାଙ୍କୁ ଜାଣ କରୁଥିବା ଲୋକେ କେହି କହିଦେଇ ଯେ ସେ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିହୀନ । କେମୋସ୍ତାଟି ପଡ଼ିତ ଉନ୍ମୁକ୍ତ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ମଧ୍ୟ ସେ ଚିକିତ୍ସା ପ୍ରଣାଳୀ ଖୋଜିଛନ୍ତି । ଶିକ୍ଷାପଦ ଉପାୟ ତାଙ୍କର ଚିନ୍ତା, ବସ୍ତ୍ର, ପଲେ ଛା (ମି. ଡି. ଗୋପାଳାକ୍ଷି), ଗୋଟିଏ ପୁଅ ଓ ଗୋଟିଏ ଝିଅ । ଏଣୁ ଜଣେ ପାଖାପାଖି ମୂର୍ତ୍ତିର ପରି ସେ ଅତି ମୁଖରେ ନନ୍ଦନ ଶିଳାଛନ୍ତି । ତାଙ୍କ କହିବା ଉନ୍ମୁକ୍ତ ଅନ୍ଧାର ଅନ୍ଧାର ପିଲା ପୁରଣ ବଞ୍ଚିବୁଲେ, ହେଲେ ଆଣି ବିନା କାବନ ଉପକରେ ପିଲି ।

ଠିକ୍ ଖୋଜିପଡ଼ି ଖୋଜିବାକୁରେ ଉନ୍ମୁକ୍ତି ଆମର ଗାୟ । ମାତ୍ର ୫ ବର୍ଷ ବୟସରେ ତାଙ୍କର ଏହି ଉନ୍ମୁକ୍ତି ହୋଇଗଲା । ତାଙ୍କୁ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟକ୍ଷମି ନୁହେଁ । ଉନ୍ମୁକ୍ତ ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟର ସମାଜତତ୍ତ୍ୱରେ ଏମ୍.ଏ., ଏମ୍.ଫିଲ୍ ପରେ ଏବେ ପି.ଏଚ୍.ଡି ପାଇଁ ଶାବେଷଣାକ୍ତ । ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ଆୟୋଜିତ ଦ୍ୱାରା ଅଧ୍ୟାପନା ପାଇଁ ନେତୃ ପାଣିଆରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ସେ ସଫଳତାର ସହିତ ଉତ୍ତୀର୍ଣ୍ଣ ହୋଇଛନ୍ତି । ତା' ସହିତ ଭାବଧାରୀ କଳା ସଂସଦରୁ ହେଉଛାରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ସେ ବିଶ୍ୱାସର ଶ୍ରେଣୀ ଉତ୍ତୀର୍ଣ୍ଣ ହୋଇଛନ୍ତି । ଜୀବନରେ କଣେ



ସଫାପକ ପାଇଁ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ରଖିଥିବା ଆନନ୍ଦ କିନ୍ତୁ ତେଣୁ ଦିନ ବାପା ମା'ଙ୍କ ଉପରେ ବୋଧ ହୋଇ ରହିବାକୁ ବାହିଲେ ନାହିଁ । ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ କର୍ତ୍ତୃପକ୍ଷଙ୍କ ପହାଘାତ ଓ ବାଣଦିହାର ଶାଶୁ ଶ୍ୱେତ ବ୍ୟାଙ୍କରୁ ଉଶ ନେଇ ସେ ଗତ ନୟମୁରରେ ଖୋଲିଛନ୍ତି ଆନନ୍ଦ କମ୍ୟୁନିକେସନ ନାମକ ଡେଭିଡ଼ୋନ ବୁଥ । ନିଜେ ଗୋଟିଏ ଛିଡ଼ା ହେବା ପଡ଼ିତ କଣେ ପିଲାକୁ ବି ସେ ନିମ୍ନସ୍ଥି ଦେଇପାରିଛନ୍ତି ଏଥିରେ ଏବେ ବିବାହ କରିବାକୁ ଚିନ୍ତା କରୁଛନ୍ତି ଆନନ୍ଦ । ସ୍ଥାନୀୟ ଉନ୍ମୁକ୍ତ ସଙ୍ଗୀତ ମହାବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟରେ ପାଟାଲ ଡିଭିଜନର ମୁଖ୍ୟ ଥିବା ପ୍ରଫେସର ବାବୁବିହାରୀ ଯୋଗୁଁ ତ ସମସ୍ତେ ଜାଣନ୍ତି । ରାଜ୍ୟ ତଥା ଜାତୀୟ ସ୍ତରରେ ସୁଖ୍ୟାତି ଅର୍ଜନ କରିଥିବା ଏହି କଳାକାର ଜଣକ, ବିଦେଶରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଗୀତାର ପରିବେଷଣ କରି ପୁରସ୍କାର ଅର୍ଜନ କରିଛନ୍ତି । ଗୀତାର ବାଦନରେ 'ସଙ୍ଗୀତ ପ୍ରଗତି' ବା ଦ୍ୱାରକୋଇଲ ଅଧ୍ୟାୟନ ପରେ ସେ ୧୯୯୯ରୁ ଗୀତାର ମହାବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟରେ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟରତ । 'ସୀତାର ସୁରମଣି' ଉପାଧିପ୍ରାପ୍ତ ବାବୁବିହାରୀ ବାବୁ ବୁକନେଶ୍ୱରରେ 'ସଙ୍ଗୀତ ଭାରତୀ'ର ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠାତା ସଭ୍ୟ ତଥା ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସଂଗୀତ ମହାବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟର ମଧ୍ୟ କଣେ ସଭ୍ୟ ଅଟନ୍ତି । ମାତ୍ର ୫ ବର୍ଷ ବୟସରେ

ହାତୁପୁଡ଼ିରେ ଆକାଶ ହୋଇ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିଶକ୍ତି ହରାଇଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ହାବିଯାଇ ନାହାନ୍ତି ସେ । ଘା, ଗୋଟିଏ ପୁଅ, ଗୋଟିଏ ଝିଅ ଓ ଚାକାମାଙ୍କୁ ନେଇ ଗଡ଼ି ରହିଥିବା ତାଙ୍କ ପରିବାର ସହିତ ବେଶ୍ ଖୁସିରେ ଜୀବନ ଚଳାଇଛନ୍ତି । ଏପରି ସଫଳତା କାହାଣୀର ବିଶ୍ୱ ତ ବହୁତ ଲମ୍ବା । ମାତ୍ର ଏମାନଙ୍କ ପ୍ରୋତ୍ସାହନ ପାଇଁ ସରକାରଙ୍କ ପକ୍ଷରୁ କୌଣସି ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା ନାହିଁ କହିଲେ ତଳେ । ବିଭିନ୍ନ ପ୍ରକାରୀ ପଦବୀରେ ଶାସ୍ତ୍ରପଣେ ସଫଳତା ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା ଥିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ତାହା କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକାରୀ ହେଉନାହିଁ । ଏ ସମ୍ପର୍କରେ ଉନ୍ମୁକ୍ତ ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟର ସ୍ୱାତନ୍ତ୍ର୍ୟରେ ରାଜନୀତି ବିଜ୍ଞାନ ବିଭାଗରେ ଅଧ୍ୟାୟନରତ ସୁର୍ଯ୍ୟାଧର ନାହାକ ଦୁହେଁ 'ସାଧାରଣ ପିଲାଙ୍କ ଅପେକ୍ଷା ଆମ ପଢ଼ାରେ ଦଶ ଗୁଣ ଅଧିକ ଖର୍ଚ୍ଚ ହୁଏ । ମାତ୍ର ସମୁଦ୍ରକୁ ଶଙ୍ଖେ ପରି ମାସିକ ୯୦ ଟଙ୍କାର ଆମ ରାଜ୍ୟରେ ଏ ମନୋବୃତ୍ତି କାହିଁ ? ସରକାରୀ ସହାୟତା ମିଳେ । ଏଣୁ ଭବିତ ପ୍ରୋତ୍ସାହନ ଦରକାର । ଆମକୁ ପ୍ରୋତ୍ସାହନ ମିଳିଲେ ଆମେ ମଧ୍ୟ ବହୁତ କିଛି କରିପାରିବୁ' । ରାଜ୍ୟର କେତେକ ସ୍ଥାନରେ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିହୀନମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଧନ୍ୟାମୂଳକ ଶିକ୍ଷାର ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା ଓ କମ୍ୟୁନିଟି ପରି ସୁଶୋପଯୋଗୀ ଶିକ୍ଷାର

ମଧ୍ୟ ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା କରାଯାଇଛି । ସାଧାରଣ ଜନତାଙ୍କର ମଧ୍ୟ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିକୋଣରେ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ ଆବଶ୍ୟକ ରହିଛି । ଦୃଷ୍ଟିହୀନ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ମଧ୍ୟ ସବୁ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ପାଇଁ ସକ୍ଷମ, ଏହା ସମସ୍ତେ ଦୃଷ୍ଟି ଆବଶ୍ୟକ । ସ୍ଥାନୀୟ ଡି.ଏମ୍. ବାବୁଲେ ସଂସୀତ ଶିକ୍ଷକ ଭାବେ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟରତ ପ୍ରଶାନ୍ତ ରଥଙ୍କ ମତାନୁଯାୟୀ, 'ଦୃଷ୍ଟିହୀନମାନଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତି ସମାଜରେ ଥିବା ଦୃଷ୍ଟିକୋଣ ବଦଳିବା ପାଇଁ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ପିଆୟାରୁଥିବା ଶିକ୍ଷାରେ ମୌଳିକ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ ଆବଶ୍ୟକ । ସେଇଭଳି କେବଳ ସରକାରଙ୍କଠାରୁ ଆଶା ରଖିଲେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଚଳିବ ନାହିଁ । ରାଜ୍ୟରେ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟରତ ଶହ ଶହ ଏନଜିଓମାନେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଏ ବିଷୟରେ ଆଗେଇ ଆସିବା ଉଚିତ୍ । ତାମିଲନାଡୁ, କର୍ଣ୍ଣାଟକ, ଆନ୍ଧ୍ରପ୍ରଦେଶ, ଉତ୍ତର ପ୍ରଦେଶ, ରାଜସ୍ଥାନ ଆଦି ରାଜ୍ୟମାନଙ୍କରେ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିହୀନମାନଙ୍କୁ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଦୃଷ୍ଟି ଆଗୋର ପିଆୟାରୁଥିବା ବେଳେ ଶଙ୍ଖେ ପରି ମାସିକ ୯୦ ଟଙ୍କାର ଆମ ରାଜ୍ୟରେ ଏ ମନୋବୃତ୍ତି କାହିଁ ? ସେ କହନ୍ତି ଯେ କେବଳ ପ୍ରତିବର୍ଷ ବିଶ୍ୱ ଅକ୍ଷମ ଦିବସରେ ଲାଗଣବାସି କଲେ କିଛି ହେବନି । ବର୍ଷ ଜଣେ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିହୀନ ସାମାଜିକ ସ୍ତରରେ କିଭଳି ନିଜର ଯୋଗଦାନ କରିପାରିବ ସେ ବିଷୟରେ ସମସ୍ତେ ଚିନ୍ତା କରିବା ଆବଶ୍ୟକ ।

They are not less then from anybody. Both are visually impaired but bravely face all odds of life. Prof. Bauri bandhu Sethi is a famous Sitarist and now is the Head of the Sitar, Department of Utkal Sangeet mahabidyalaya, Bhubaneswar. Mr. Ananda Sahu as a Streno in the Punjab National Bank, Bhubaneswar. He is a Violinist.

Aids

The Hindu, 30th, May

'AIDS will be threat to social fabric of India'

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MAY 29. The United States and India have had a "long history of excellent cooperation" in combating the scourge of HIV/AIDS, even as the Bush administration is especially concerned with the situation in India, given that nearly four million persons are afflicted with the deadly disease, says Jack Chow, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Health and Science.

The current HIV/AIDS situation in India will, over a period of time, "present a threat to the social fabric of India" and the U.S. wants to extend its hand of "partnership to help confront" the threat, Dr. Chow told *The Hindu*. He was speaking about HIV/AIDS in the context of the President, George W. Bush's latest initiative, which tripled the American commitment to fight the scourge. The underlying message was that even if Mr. Bush's latest initiative was confined to the sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean, there was going to be no let-up in this administration's global programmes. Mr. Bush has allocated \$ 10

billions of additional funds for HIV/AIDS programmes with \$ 1 billion earmarked for the Global Fund.

One of the issues that Mr. Bush will be raising in a very serious and high profile fashion at the summit of the Group of Eight in France next month will be on the ways that the industrialised world will have to take on the challenge of the disease.

In the context of the U.S. initiatives in India, Dr. Chow said the anticipation right now would be to double the \$ 63 millions that is being spent in dealing with the malaise over the next five years, with the active involvement of the Agency for International Development and the Department of Health and Human Services. He also pointed out that the USAID had been working for several years now in Tamil Nadu, where there was a "high degree of cooperation". With this also came the judgment that "more needs to be done and more can be done," he remarked. "Our framework approach... of three pillars has been supported by a foundation", he said.

Global initiative sought to develop AIDS vaccine

The Hindu,
24th, May

By N. Gopal Raj

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JUNE 28. What is needed to bring the HIV/AIDS epidemic under control? More money for one thing, says the latest report from the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), which points out that the spending in low and middle-income countries during the current year was only half the amount required. A massive global initiative for the development of a safe and effective HIV vaccine is urgently needed, says a group of influential scientists, writing in the latest issue of the journal *Science*.

The HIV/AIDS problem is rapidly moving centrestage in India. HIV infections are said to be rising twice as fast in South Asia as in sub-Saharan Africa, currently the worst-affected region in the world. There could be 20-25 million new infections in India by 2010, according to some estimates.

Although it is 20 years since the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) was shown to be the causative agent behind AIDS, a vaccine has remained elusive. Earlier this year, the sole candidate vaccine to have made it to the final phase of clinical trials was found to be ineffective.

Although treatment methods for HIV/AIDS have made considerable progress, transferring concepts for HIV vaccines into

clinical application had lagged, points out the policy paper being published in *Science*. The paper is authored by well-known names from leading research institutions, funding agencies and international organisations. N.K. Ganguly, Director-General of the Indian Council of Medical Research, is among the authors.

"Tens of millions of lives are dependent on the development of a safe and effective HIV vaccine. It is essential that we aggressively explore all mechanisms that might expedite this process," they remarked.

They want to see the development of a roadmap for a Global Vaccine Enterprise, rather along the lines of the Human Genome Project, which sequenced the entire human genome. Its aim would be to create a large number of candidate vaccines using all possible routes and an efficient system of clinical trials to identify the effective vaccines.

Since diverse approaches have to be tried simultaneously in order to find the best vaccine, they have suggested setting up some six to 10 Vaccine Development Centres. Each centre will be devoted to the development of a particular HIV vaccine approach.

As many of the fundamental scientific questions impeding the AIDS vaccine development remained unsolved, these cen-

tres will have to be supported by "a series of coordinated HIV vaccine scientific consortia". Facilities are needed to produce the candidate vaccines in sufficient quantities for clinical trials as well as methods for verifying out "large, comprehensive, coordinated, international clinical trials".

But, even without so ambitious a project, alarm bells are being sounded over the inadequacy of worldwide funding to fight HIV/AIDS. Most recently, the UNAIDS has estimated that, even with the increased funding promised by the United States and the European nations, this year's anti-AIDS spending in low and middle-income countries will only be \$4.7 billions. That is far short of the \$10 billions annual spending required by 2005.

"We have come a long way in committing additional resources to fight HIV/AIDS, but much more still needs to be done," says Peter Piot, Executive Director of the UNAIDS.

A paper in a recent issue of the British Medical Journal pointed out that India was spending only Rs. 300 crores annually, much less than what was needed to fight the epidemic. Large investments at the outset of the epidemic would slow its progress more than those at a later stage, noted two scientists from the University of California at Berkeley.

The Hindu, 17th April

Indigenous AIDS vaccine trials by year-end

By Our Staff Reporter

CHENNAI, APRIL 16. The first clinical trials of a preventive AIDS vaccine developed in India will begin by the end of the year at the National AIDS Research Institute (NARI), Pune.

Announcing this at a press conference today, representatives of the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) said the first phase of the trial will involve 40 volunteers, healthy adults with low risk for HIV infections. The vaccine, which will counter the strain of HIV subtype C prevalent in India, has been developed by the Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) in collaboration with the National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) and IAVI.

The trial will follow standardised, codified procedures prescribed at the international level and will go on for 12 months, extendable

to 18 months from the date of the first injection. Volunteers will be split into two groups: while one group will be administered placebos, the other will be injected with varying doses of the vaccine at an interval of 0, 2 and 4 months. The immune responses will be studied over a period of 12 months and if necessary, an additional six months, according to Dr. Jean Luis Excler, medical director, IAVI.

If satisfactory immune responses are recorded in this phase, then the trial will progress to the second and third phases of the study, when high risk groups will be targetted for establishing 'efficacy'. In preparation, a new and independent laboratory exclusive for HIV vaccine trials will be set up. A behavioural study is being undertaken to determine the willingness of probable volunteers to participate in the trial. The clinical protocol will be finalised by a team of

NARI scientists by the end of May.

Dr. Excler said the medical director, ICMR, N.K. Ganguly, has extended support to the IAVI to set up a second clinical trial centre at the Tuberculosis Research Centre in Chennai to test another vaccine. A committee comprising experts will be formed to review the portfolio of potential new vaccines and include them in the trials, he added.

In this context, a state level meeting, 'Working together for an AIDS Vaccine for India' will be held at the IMAGE auditorium in the city tomorrow to interact with representatives of civil society on the vaccine trial preparedness. The meetings, which will be conducted in other parts of the country as well, aim at arriving at a broad consensus on the best way to take the AIDS vaccine trials forward in India, according to Mark Chataway, team leader, IAVI.

Court Rulings

The Hindu, 9th June

Benefit for the disabled

? Questions & Answers

TAX FORUM

QUESTION: What are the changes in the matter of deductions available for handicapped persons by the Finance Act, 2003?

ANSWER: The disability of leprosy-cured persons is defined under Sec. 2(n) reads as under:

"2(n) 'Leprosy cured person' means any person who has been cured of leprosy but is suffering from (i) loss of sensation in hands or feet as well as loss of sensation and paresis in the eye and eye-lid but with no manifest deformity; (ii) manifest deformity and paresis but having sufficient mobility in their hands and feet to enable them to engage in normal economic activity; (iii) extreme physical deformity as well as advanced age which prevents him from undertaking any gainful occupation; and the expression 'leprosy cured' shall be construed accordingly".

Hearing impairment is defined under Sec. 2(l) which reads as under:

"Hearing impairment' means loss

of 60 decibels or more in the better ear in the conversational range of frequencies". Locomotor disability is defined under Sec. 2(o) which reads as under:

"Locomotor disability' means disability of the bones, joints or muscles leading to substantial restriction of the movement of the limbs or any form of cerebral palsy".

Mental retardation is defined under Sec. 2(r) which reads as under:

"Mental retardation' means a condition of arrested or incomplete development of mind of a person which is specially characterised by subnormality of intelligence".

Mental illness is defined under Sec. 2(q) which reads as: "Mental illness' means any mental disorder other than mental retardation".

Severe disability for which larger deduction is provided under Sec. 80DD and 80U from AY 2004-05 incorporated by cross-reference to Sec. 56(4) of the Disabilities Act reads as under:

"56(4) For the purposes of this section 'person with severe disability' means a person with 80 per cent or more of one or more disabilities".

Disability has to be certified by medical authority as defined under Sec. 2(p), which reads as under:

"Medical authority' means any

—new law

hospital or institution specified for the purposes of this Act by notification by the appropriate Government".

The appropriate Government could be either Central or State government as is evident from the following definition in Sec. 2(a) of Disabilities Act.

"2(a) 'Appropriate Government' means: (i) In relation to the Central Government or any establishment wholly or substantially financed by that Government, or a Cantonment Board constituted under the Cantonment Act, 1924 (2 of 1924), the Central Government;

(ii) In relation to a State government or any establishment wholly or substantially financed by that Government or any local authority, other than a Cantonment Board, the State Government;

(iii) In respect of the Central Co-ordination Committee and the Central Executive Committee, the Central Government.

S. Rajaratnam

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SWABHIMAN

Orissa IAS Study Circle Campus

A-98, Bhubaneswar 751 006

Tel: 0674-2313310/12, Fax : 0674-2430931

E-mail: swabhiman_orissa@hotmail.com