

India's 11th Five-Year Plan — What about the Disabled?

Over the past few months there have been stirrings and disgruntlement amongst key figures in the Disability sector. The reason due to the Government Planning Commission wholly disregarding the disability sector whilst making plans for the 11th Five Year Plan in India (2007 – 2012). Under the aegis of Disability Rights Group, the disability sector came together to make a stand against the Planning Commission and to ensure that the voice of the Disability Sector is heard. In what seemed like a rushed and haphazard consultation process, DRG wanted the correct people present in key decision-making positions to ensure that issues concerning Persons with Disabilities are not neglected for the next five years in India.

As early as July this year, A. S. Narayanan, NAD's General Secretary, was included as an extra member on the Steering Committee for the Planning Commission along with 3 other D.R.G members. However this seemed to be simply a token effort taken by the Planning Commission in order to appease what was the start to DRG's questioning of the entire planning process. After several months of little or no response, members of DRG took it upon themselves to hold a Dharna outside the office of the Planning Commission at Yojana Bhawan, Parliament Street on 19th September 2006. DRG blocked the entrance of the Planning Commission and a huge number of disabled persons from several different organizations participated, blocking off Parliament Street for all oncoming traffic. Parliament Street Police officials attempted to clear the area, forcibly trying to move the protestors from the street, but to no avail.

The Dharna continued throughout the morning until delegates from DRG were given an appointment for the next day with Shri Montek Singh Ahluwalia, the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission process is still underway, and should be concluded in the early months of 2007. The Disability sector has thus far been successful in ensuring that issues concerning Persons with Disabilities have been pushed into the minds of all those concerned in the Planning Commission, and have successfully added prominent people from the disability sector into relevant working groups and sub-groups. The entire process however will continue to be monitored closely until it comes to its conclusion early next year.



International Day of the Deaf 2007





World Disability Day 2007— India Gate



National Awareness Workshop on UNCRPD And 11th 5 Year Plan:

The NAD was represented at the meeting by Zorin Singha, A.S.Narayanan, MamtaNagpal, Geeta Sharma, and Mr. T. Raghava was a special invitee. The 11th 5 year plan and the UNCRPD were discussed at length and the salient features of the 2 documents were outlined for action. The need for an action plan on advocacy was shared and work on the action plan was begun at the meeting. The work ahead will be taken up by the National Committee. National Awareness Workshop on UNCRPD and XIth5YearPlan September 30th to 1st, October, 2008 USI Residency , New Delhi.



1st National Committee Meeting, 2008

The Secretary of NAD, Mr. A.S.Narayanan, has been chosen to represent the deaf community of India on the National Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of the 11th 5 year plan and the UNCRPD. The Committee met

for the first time on 28th and 29th September to discuss the action plan for the future.

National Deaf Conference 2008 – Delhi



The first National deaf conference was held on 26-27th April 2008. The NAD invited delegates from all deaf organisations all over the country. The response was overwhelming. A huge number of delegates from 14 states swamped the convention center and an amazing synergy developed.

Deaf leaders from across India coming together to discuss advocacy and disability issues across the board was unprecedented. Various strategies for approaching the govt and tackling the problems faced by deaf persons were discussed. Notable speakers at the event included Mr Colin Gonsalves Supreme court advocate, Justice Zac Yacoob from the Constitutional Court of South Africa, Dr. Surinder Randhawa among others.

The 260 delegates were each given a package of material developed by the NAD for understanding legal process and the rights under law.

The entire proceedings are available in Sign language on video.

1st National Deaf Women's Empowerment Seminar 2008 – Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh



National Association of the Deaf organised first National Deaf Women's empowerment seminar at AICUF Ashram, Shahpura on Sunday from 9.30 am to 5.00 pm Around 172 women deaf participants of 16 states of the country took part in the programme.

The Special guest Shashi Nayak, social worker was inaugurated the seminar Arun . C. Rao, President of Association of Sign Language Interpreter. A.S. Narayanan, General Secretary of National Association of the Deaf, Saju Stephen, Joint Secretary, National Association of the Deaf, TKM Sandeep,

Treasurer, National Association of the Deaf was speech about the empowering to Deaf Women. Ms. Setina English and Seshane from USA were shown a presentation about Deaf Empowerment.

women also feel intimidated due to financial dependence and over bearing family. The reason for deaf women being unempowered is fundamentally poor education for the deaf community. Deaf men are ill equipped to cope with the stress of the modern life style with poor education and poorly paying jobs.

Financial insecurity, lack of understanding of mores and laws of society and no insulation in a sorry state of affairs for deaf women across the country. The National Deaf Women's Empowerment Seminar is the first attempt to address the issues and problems faced by deaf women on a national scale.

International Day of the Deaf 2008

Letters from MSJE to Ministries

NAD demands

Advocacy with the Ministry

The Secretary of NAD and Dr. Madan Vasishta were able to share the concerns of the NAD with Mr Ashish Kumar, JT Sec MSJE. We shared our concerns with him and asked him to support the deaf community by enacting and implementing the provisions in the 11th 5 year plan. He has taken up the issues we have raised with him and as such has issued letters to Secretaries of all States and also other Central Govt ministries.





The 51st International Day of the Deaf was celebrated on 28th September 2008 in Delhi. A large gathering of 300 deaf persons met at the Indian Social Institute under the leadership of the President Zorin Singha and Secretary A.S. Narayanan. The work of NAD over the past year was shared with the assembled deaf persons. The new passage of the 11th Plan 2007-2012 and the provisions that are shared therein. The new NAD website was also shared with the group.

Mr. T. Raghava, Secretary, All India Deaf Bank Employees Association was honored with the NAD “Life Time Achievement Award”. His life of service to the deaf community in terms of preparing deaf persons to work in banks and creating training modules for the current deaf bank employees to work in their posts in a more efficient manner. He was a charter member of the DAD, AIFD and AISCD and set up AIDBEA after his selection by Indian Bank.

Breaking News — World Disability Day, 2008

National Association of the Deaf at World Disability Day 2008, India Gate, New Delhi





Occasion: World Disability Day
 Venue: India Gate, Delhi
 Date: 3rd December, 2008
 Organizers: NAD, DRG, The Deaf Way Foundation, NCPEDP

on Wednesday afternoon at 3pm we organized a massive rally of around 5000 disabled people. People from all over India got together at India Gate to demonstrate their strength and solidarity. The get together was a peaceful one and we also lit candles to mark our solidarity with the Mumbai attacks heroes and victims.

Apart from our host Mr. Zorin Singha (President, NAD), we had a wide array of speakers who had all gathered together for a common cause and that was the implementation of the 11th Five Year Plan where certain demands of ours were addressed unlike the other plans. Last year we thought was a momentous year as not only did our country ratify the UN Convention but also a distinct chapter was included in the 11th Five year plan on disability, but unfortunately no further action has been taken. All promises remain on paper only, its time we woke up the government to take some action, be it –

Creating a separate Ministry for the disabled.

- 3% allocation of funds for disabled in every Ministry.
- To make Sign Language Indian as one of the official languages of our country
- To appoint interpreters in various ministries.
- Implementation of the UNCRPD, to name a few.

We had cultural programmes put up like songs, mime plays; dance etc. to entertain all the attendees. The talented Ms. Benzi sang beautifully two patriotic songs. We also had a troop who came all the way from Hyderabad to perform for us.

Our representatives comprising of Mr. Javed Abidi, Mr.Arun.C.Rao, Mr.Zorin Singha, had gone to visit the Hon'ble Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, to place our demands in front of him but were unable to do so as he was not in town. But that did not dampen our spirits, as this rally was a great success. It provided an opportunity for all to meet and interact with each other. They were able to share with each other their problems and experiences. Also Mr. Sanjay Mitra, Joint Secretary of disability in PMO promised us that he shall brief Hon'ble Prime Minister about our demands and that some action will be surely taken .We shall all pray that things fall in place this time.

20th World Federation of the Deaf, 2008





A.S.Narayanan, Secretary, National Association of the Deaf, India , Sandeep TKM Treasurer of NAD, Anuj Jain , Secretary , The Deaf Way Foundation, Delhi (India), Umesh Grover, General Secretary, Uttarkhand Deaf Welfare Association, (UA). India. We attended for 20th WFD RSA/P Representatives meeting in Pokhara on December 10th to 12th, 2008 organised by National Federation of the Deaf and Hard of hearing (NFDH) for first time. We were happy and interested to learn our lesson from there program

DATE: 10th to 12th December, 2008

Venue : Pokhara (Nepal)

The 20th World Federation of the Deaf Regional Secretariat in Asia/Pacific Representative Meeting in Pokhara (Nepal). The Meeting had accepted the proposal proposed by NFDH. NFDH is fortunate with the successful WFD RSA/P approval to organize such a high level international meeting for the interest of deaf people in Nepal and the Asia Pacific Region. It will be the great opportunity to share and exchange the experience of 20 Asia Pacific countries, their delegates, observers and representatives. We hope with the presence of WFD, President Mr.Markku Jokinen and WFD RSA/P Mr. Ichiro Miyamoto, the

meeting will be more charming.

OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of the meeting are to discuss about the below mentioned Issues:

The Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

The Global Education Pre-Planning Project on the Human Rights of Deaf People.

The issue proposed by Oceania Countries.

The establishment of the WFD RSA/P Youth Section

The Nippon Sign Language Project

The APCD Phase II project

PARTICIPANTS:

The participants will be from 20 Asia Pacific countries of WFD Regional Secretariat. There will be 2 delegates from each member country. Along with this there will be participation of Observers, Interpreters and Deaf Youth. On 11th December there will be Meeting of Interpreters in the same hotel separately. From this perspective the conference will be very effective for the interpreters as well. Along with delegates, observers, interpreters and youth WFD, President Mr. Markku Jokinen and WFD RSA/P, Director, Mr. Ichiro Miyamoto will attend the meeting. The name of participant countries are as follows:

COUNTRY :- INDIA, JAPAN, KOREA, Macau, New Zealand, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Nepal