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## RS passes Disabilities Bill with more benefits

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**NEW DELHI:** The Rajya Sabha on Wednesday passed the Disabilities Bill with the list of 'disabilities' expanded from seven to 21 and the quantum of reservation increased for people suffering from disabilities from three per cent to four per cent in government jobs.

In higher education institutions, the quota has been increased from three per cent to five per cent.

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2014, moved in the Upper House earlier this month by Social Justice Minister Thaawar Chand Gehlot, also gives effect to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and related matters.

It provides for imprisonment ranging from six months to two years,

along with a fine ranging from Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 5 lakh, for discriminating against differently abled persons.

"If the Bill becomes a law, it will benefit millions. It recognises that persons with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities like autism and Down's Syndrome also have a right to education and employment. We are thrilled that the Bill has been passed after a three-year wait. This is a huge victory for us but we still have to go through the Lok Sabha tomorrow. I hope the same urgency is shown by the government and the opposition there," said Javed Abidi, director of the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP).

(With inputs from PTT)

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NOIDA/DELHI

THE HINDU • THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2016

## Disabilities Bill passed with more benefits

In the Bill, disability has been defined based on an evolving and dynamic concept and the types of disabilities have been increased.

The disabilities in the expanded list include mental illness, autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, and chronic neurological conditions.

The Bill strengthens the office of chief commissioner and state commissioners for persons with disabilities. They will act as regulatory bodies.

In a break with disruptions in the Rajya Sabha for almost the entire session, the Opposition itself agreed to get the Bill passed for the benefit of persons with disabilities.

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