

Sensitization Workshop on Accessibility & Inclusion at Workplace: Rights of Persons with Disabilities ACT 2016

8 December 2017, New Delhi: FICCI Aditya Birla CSR Centre for Excellence organized Sensitization Workshop on 'Accessibility & Inclusion at Workplace: Rights of Persons on December 8, 2017 with Disabilities Act, 2016' in collaboration with The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Govt. of India at Federation House, New Delhi.



The objective of the workshop was to sensitize private sector, about the recently enacted Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 which came into force from 19.04.2017 in place of earlier PwD Act, 1995. The Act expands the horizon of the rights and entitlements of persons with disabilities and caste responsibilities on the

establishments to take measures to fulfil certain obligations for empowerment and inclusion of Persons with Disabilities. The workshop also included the discussion on 'Popularization of Accessibility Index', 'CSR Funding and Employability of PwDs' and 'Incentives to Private Employer Scheme'.

Inaugurating the session Secretary, DEPwD, **Smt. Shakuntala Doley Gamlin** emphasized the need of private sector to make their environment and workplace accessible and inclusive. Also, she highlighted that fact that self-realization and self-actualization would be achieved only if we take rights of persons with disabilities seriously. We look forward to scaling up the productivity and employment opportunities of the PwDs as a tool for empowerment.

Joint Secretary **Smt. Dolly Chakrabarty** said that the need of hour is to work in tandem with private establishment to ensure access to livelihoods, education, health and ensuring accessibility.

Addressing the session on National and International Best Practices on Accessibility and Inclusion at the Work Place, **Smt. Shanti** from V-Shesh said that " PwD- it is an untapped pool of talent, which is slowly recognizing to bring them on the mainstream. This talent pool is very capable, and we should not hire them thinking it is social responsibility or it is charity. It is truly as business imperative."



Speaking about the Skill Training of Persons with Disabilities, **Mr. Nipun Malhotra**, Executive Director, Nipman Fastener Industries underlined the fact that apart from accessible and inclusive

workspaces, the connectivity link i.e. Transport system including walkways, bus stops should also be made accessible. And workshops like these, reinforce the idea of inclusivity and develops insight among the employers.

Further **Mr. Ashutosh Chaddha**, Group Director, Government Affairs and Public Policy, Microsoft India, put forth the very important fact that moment persons with disabilities are seen as tax payers and not tax absorbers, the field will witness tremendous change. Also, the accessibility and inclusivity should be in the DNA of the organization and employers should be dutifully work together to share the experiences.

Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan) was launched by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) on International Day of Persons with Disabilities, 3rd December, 2015.

DEPwD launched 'Inclusiveness and Accessibility Index' in collaboration with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) on 30th March, 2016.

The 'Inclusiveness and Accessibility Index' helps the industries and corporate to participate in the Accessible India Campaign (AIC) by voluntarily evaluating their readiness for making the workplace accessible for Persons with Disabilities. The Prime Minister made a call to the Corporate Sector to come forward and support the Campaign during his speech on the occasion of the launch of AIC on 3rd December 2015, which also marked the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

Improving vocational training and employment opportunities for Persons with Disabilities for enhancing the quality of life for individuals and their families and involving them into the broader economy the country, the DEPwD has launched National Action Plan for Skill Development of Persons with Disabilities on 21st March 2015 for providing quality skill training to 2.5 million Persons with Disabilities in next 7 years with high employability and extensive urban and rural coverage.

To encourage Private Sector to Employ Persons with Disabilities, a scheme of incentives to the employers in private sector for providing employment to PwD is run by the DEPwD wherein the EPF and ESI contribution of employer is paid by the Department apart from other benefits.

Among other panellists, **Ms. Uma Seth**, Director & Team Lead, FICCI CSR and **Ms. Akansha Sharma** Head, CSR & Sustainability, Jubilant Food Works Ltd were also present in the panel.