NCPEDP

Contents

About the Base Line Study

The aim of the Study was to understand the current scenario vis-à-vis '**Accessibility to Built Environment and Means of Transport for People with Disabilities in India.**'

Specific Objectives of the Study

- To study the existing Policies/Programmes/Schemes of the Government of India on physical infrastructure facilities that could and should affect the lives of people with disabilities.
- To study the scope of these Schemes and to analyse their impact with respect to the actual needs of people with disabilities in the country.
- To study the relevant budget allocations and their utilisation especially in relation to people with disabilities.
- To list out emerging concerns and basic recommendations for further discussion/analysis by the subject experts and policy makers.

Methodology

In order to understand the current status and prepare a base line report, the following methodology was followed:

- Listing of all concerned Ministries and then narrowing it down to a few most relevant Ministries.
- Studying the Programmes and Schemes of the short-listed Ministries from their Annual Reports (2007-2008), websites, and advertisements in newspapers.
- Studying any other relevant document/report/paper prepared by Government/NGO/Individual.
- Extracting the relevant portions from the Eleventh Five Year Plan, Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- Taking relevant information from newspaper articles/websites that highlight the needs and concerns of disabled people with respect to accessibility.
- Taking into account the views of some people working on the issue of access through telephonic discussion or e-mail to get a better understanding of the ground realities.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

The Report only dwells on the issue of infrastructure accessibility and barrier-free movement. All those Ministries which are directly or indirectly involved in creating infrastructure in the country have been taken into consideration. The Report does not include information access, for example, web accessibility, computer software, captioning, etc. as these are being covered in detail in the Report on Information Technology. The rural scenario on this issue has been only touched upon in this report. However, for more information, one can refer to the Rural Development Report.

Many disabled people face discrimination, exploitation or abuse due to negative attitudes, charitable perspectives, socio-cultural barriers and multiple discriminatory factors like gender, caste, religion or class. This Report has not covered these barriers or provided suggestions for them.

The Research Team

The Research Team for the project comprised of Rama Chari, Sakshi Broota and Priya Varadan.

Acknowledgements

Introduction

People with disabilities constitute 5-6% of the total population yet they are unseen, unheard and almost invisible in the public arena. One of the main reasons for their invisibility is the inaccessible infrastructure. An accessible environment is key to inclusion.

Accessibility for people with disability was recognised as a right with the passage of The Disability Act in 1995, which mandated barrier-free access in all public places and public transportation systems. However till 1998, there was no action on the part of Government to implement the Act.

Advocacy for Accessibility – NCPEDP's Pioneering Efforts A Public Interest Litigation (PIL) was filed by Javed Abidi in 1998, against the Indian Airlines and the Union of India, on the basis of the Act, with particular reference to access related clauses, which resulted in Supreme Court not only issuing strict order for ambulift and aisle-chairs in the Airports, but also sent notices to all the States to report on the steps taken by them to implement The Disability Act.

NCPEDP then worked with the National Institute of Design (NID) and the Council of Architecture, which made sure that the Design and Architecture curriculum included disability. NCPEDP drafted a Scheme for University Grants Commission in 1998, which has a specific sub-scheme for making universities accessible. NCPEDP also advocated with India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) and Hotel Association of India (HAI) for promoting accessibility in hotels. HAI announced guidelines for making hotels barrier-free for people with disabilities.

The issue of accessibility received a boost when Prof. Stephen Hawking visited India in 2001, which brought forth the fact that India does not have any vehicle which is accessible to a wheelchair user and the historical places that he wanted to visit were totally inaccessible. Due to the pressure created by NCPEDP and the media, Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) announced a policy to make all historic places including heritage sites disabled friendly. NCPEDP then promptly launched a National Access Campaign and organised Access Audits of post offices, restaurants, cinema halls, public toilets, museums, hospitals etc. Access Campaign was organised countrywide in all the States and Union Territories by the National Disability Network (NDN) Partners. Disability activists across the country started taking on State Authorities for promoting accessibility.

Another major campaign was the 'Access to polling booths for disabled voters during the General Election 2004, which resulted in ramps getting built even in the remote corners of the country and EVMs became accessible with Braille numbers for visually impaired people.

There are now some individuals and organisations across India that are focussing exclusively on accessibility issues.

It won't be wrong to say that much of the Government action came from the result of pressure from the disability sector. As a result, there are now a few disabled friendly buses, some accessible public places and comparatively greater awareness about the issue.

However, if one looks at the larger picture there is still a lot more to do. More action is required from policy makers and implementing agencies.

The knowledge and expertise in the field of accessibility is limited even within the NGO sector. Accessibility issues are not part of any national or state level developmental plans. The measures that are being taken for providing accessibility are tokenistic and not comprehensive. Disabled people are not being seen as consumers of services.

1. Government Machinery, Structure and Role

The main Ministries/Departments concerned with the issue of Accessibility in Built Environment & Transportation are:

- Ministry of Urban Development
- Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation
- Department of Road Transport & Highways
- Ministry of Railways / Indian Railways
- Ministry of Civil Aviation
- Department of Shipping
- Ministry of Tourism
- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (as the nodal Ministry for disability)

1.1 Ministry of Urban Development

The Urban Development Ministry is responsible for policy formulation and monitoring of programmes in the area of urban development, urban water supply and sanitation. These are essentially State subjects but the Government of India plays a co-ordinating and monitoring role and supports through Centrally Sponsored Schemes. The Ministry addresses several issues of urban sector through policy guidelines, legislative guidelines and sectoral programmes. The Ministry is also entrusted with the responsibility of planning, policy-making and coordinating matters related to urban transport.

Under its administrative control, the Ministry has four attached Offices:
- **Central Public Works Department (CPWD)**: This is the principal agency of the Government of India for construction as well as maintenance of all Central Government buildings and projects excluding those belonging to Railways, Defence, Communication, Atomic Energy, Airports and All India Radio. CPWD has well documented 'Specifications & Standards and Schedules of Rates', which are updated from time to time, to keep pace with latest technologies and market trends with a definite 'Quality Assurance Plan'. These publications are followed by various construction organisations both in public as well as private sectors. The CPWD has been entrusted with the task of upgrading existing infrastructure for the five major stadiums of the Sports Authority of India in Delhi where Commonwealth Games are to be held in 2010. It is also involved in projects for building structures for public utilities around the country.
- **The Directorate of Printing**: It caters to the various printing requirements of various central government ministries and departments.
- **The Directorate of Estates**: It is mainly responsible for the administration of government estates and hostels.
- **The Land & Development Office**: It administers *nazul* (type of land) and rehabilitation leases in Delhi, in addition to managing the Central Government lands in Delhi.

There are three subordinate offices working under the Ministry:
- **The Town and Country Planning Organisation (TCPO):** The technical arm of the Ministry in matters of town planning, regional planning and urban development.
- **The Government of India Stationery Office**: The organisation caters to the stationery requirement of the Central Government Offices.
- **Department of Publication:** It stocks and sells Government publications.

There are five statutory/subordinate bodies under the Ministry:
- **Delhi Development Authority (DDA):** It is responsible for the overall development of National Capital Territory of Delhi. Whether it is about constructing commercial complexes, residential houses, or developing building infrastructure for the upcoming Commonwealth Games 2010, DDA has a key role to play.
- **National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB):** It is responsible for proper growth and development of infrastructure in the National Capital Region.
- **Delhi Urban Arts Commission:** It has the statutory mandate to preserve and develop aesthetic qualities and environment in Delhi.
- **National Institute of Urban Affairs:** An autonomous body under the Ministry has the task of conducting research and dissemination of information on urban affairs.
- **Rajghat Samadhi Committee:** The administration of Rajghat and the Samadhi of Mahatma Gandhi comes under the Committee.

There is one public sector undertaking under the Ministry: National Buildings Construction Corporation: It is a civil construction agency spread all over the country. Its main line of business is execution of civil engineering projects, rendering of project management consultancy services and development of real estate projects. It is involved in highly specialised works like power plants, water supply pipeline network, roads, hospitals, bridges, flyovers, sewage treatment plants, etc.

1.2 Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation is the apex authority of Government of India at the national level for formulation of housing policy and programme, review of the implementation of the plan scheme, collection and dissemination of data on housing, building materials/techniques and for adopting general measures for reduction of building costs. In addition, it is entrusted with implementation of the specific programmes of urban employment and urban poverty alleviation.

The Ministry also plays a nodal role in addressing various issues of housing, urban employment and poverty alleviation by formulating policies, providing legislative guidance and through sectoral programmes. The National Policy issues are decided by the Ministry which allocates resources to the State Governments through various Centrally Sponsored Schemes. In addition, this Ministry supports various external assistance programmes for housing, urban employment and poverty alleviation in the country as a whole.

Under its administrative control, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation has the following offices and autonomous bodies:

- **The National Buildings Organisation (NBO)** has been functioning as an apex organisation in the country for collection, tabulation and dissemination of statistical information on housing and building construction activities. Having regard to the changing requirements under various socio-economic and statistical functions connected with housing, construction, slum development, urban poverty alleviation and related activities, and also to ensure that the schemes of the Ministry are supported with appropriate database Management Information System (MIS) and knowledge inputs.
- **The Housing & Urban Development Corporation Ltd. (HUDCO)** was set up as a fully owned government company with a view to provide loans and technical support to states and city level agencies and other eligible organisations for various types of housing activities and infrastructure development.
- **The Building Materials and Technology Promotion Council (BMTPC)** undertakes the task of extension, dissemination and application of innovative technologies and low-cost building materials based on industrial and agricultural wastes, developed by research institutions. It also encourages development of appropriate standards for the new materials and their adoption in the schedule and specifications for the public housing and construction agencies.

- **The National Cooperative Housing Federation of India (NCHF)**, set up in 1969 is a national level organisation (registered society) spearheading the entire cooperative housing movement in India and is supported by the Ministry to encourage cooperative housing societies in the country.
- **The Central Government Employees Welfare Housing Organisation (CGEWHO)** has been set up as a registered society under the aegis of the Ministry for construction of houses for Central Government employees.

1.3 Department of Road Transport and Highways

The Department of Road Transport and Highways is under the Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport and Highways. It is entrusted with the task of formulating and administering policies for Road Transport, National Highways and Transport Research with a view to increasing the mobility and efficiency of the road transport system in the country.

The Department has two wings: **Road Wing** and **Transport Wing.**
Road Wing deals with development and maintenance of National Highways in the country. **Transport Wing** deals with matters relating to Road Transport.

Main responsibilities of Road Wing:
- Plan, develop and maintain National Highways in the country
- Extend technical and financial support to State Governments for the development of state roads and the roads of inter-state connectivity and economic importance
- Evolve standard specifications for roads and bridges in the country
- Serve as a repository of technical knowledge on roads and bridges

Main responsibilities of Transport Wing:
- Motor Vehicle Legislation
- Administration of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988
- Taxation of motor vehicles
- Compulsory insurance of motor vehicles
- Administration of the Road Transport Corporations Act, 1950
- Promote Transport co-operatives in the field of motor transport
- Evolve road safety standards in the form of a National Policy on Road Safety and prepare and implement the Annual Road Safety Plan
- Collect, compile and analyse road accident statistics and take steps for developing a Road Safety Culture in the country by involving the public and organising various awareness campaigns
- Provide grants-in-aid to Non-Governmental Organisations in accordance with the laid down guidelines.

The Department has four associated offices:
- Indian Road Construction Corporation Limited
- National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)
- National Institute of Training For Highways Engineers
- Indian Roads Congress (IRC)
- Indian National Group of the International Association for Bridge and Structural Engineering (IABSE)

1.4 Ministry of Railways / Indian Railways (IR)

Indian Railways (IR) is one of the largest and busiest rail networks in the world and important form of public transportation in the country. Since its inception 153 years ago, the Railways in India has been contributing significantly to the growth of national economy. The social and economic development of the country also depends to a large extent, upon IR's own development.

The apex management organisation is the **Railway Board**. The Board is headed by the Chairman, who reports to the Minister of Railways. The Board has five other members in addition to the Chairman.

Indian Railways is divided into 16 Zonal Railways. Each Zone, headed by a General Manager, is semi-autonomous and this creates a matrix organisation where the functional branches are under dual control viz. Operational Control at Zonal level and Functional Policy & Guidance from the Railway Board.

Apart from these zones and production units, a number of Public Sector Undertakings are under the administrative control of the Ministry of Railways. These units are:

- Indian Railways Catering and Tourism Corporation
- Konkan Railway Corporation
- Indian Railway Finance Corporation
- Mumbai Rail Vikas Corporation
- Railtel Corporation of India – Telecommunication Networks
- RITES Ltd. – Consulting Division of Indian Railways
- IRCON International Ltd. – Construction Division
- Rail Vikas Nigam Limited
- Container Corporation of India
- Rail Land Development Authority, which is a statutory authority formed through an amendment of the Railways' Act, 1989 for commercial development of vacant railway land.
- Centre for Railway Information Systems is an autonomous organisation under the Railway Board, which is responsible for developing the major softwares required by Indian Railways.

(Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian_Railways)

1.5 Ministry of Civil Aviation

The Ministry is responsible for the formulation of national policies and programmes for development and regulation of civil aviation and for devising and implementing schemes for orderly growth and expansion of civil air transport. Its functions also extend to overseeing the provision of airport facilities, air traffic services, carriage of passengers and goods by air, safeguarding civil aviation operators, licensing of aerodromes, air carriers, pilots and aircraft maintenance engineers. The Ministry also administratively controls the institution of Commission of Railway Safety, which is responsible for safety in rail travel and operations in terms of the provisions of Railways Act.

It has under its purview the following organisations:

Attached/Subordinate Organisation:
- Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)
- Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS)
- Commission of Railway Safety (CR)

Autonomous Bodies
- Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Academy (IGRUA)

PSUs and Joint Ventures
- National Aviation Company of India Ltd.
- Air India (AI)
- Airports Authority of India (AAI)
- Indian Airlines Limited (IA)

- Pawan Hans Helicopters Limited (PHHL)
- Hotel Corporation of India

1.6 Department of Shipping

The Department of Shipping comes under the Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport & Highways. It encompasses within its fold, shipping and port sectors, which also include shipbuilding and ship repair, major ports and inland water transport. The Department of Shipping has been entrusted with the responsibility to formulate policies and programmes on these sectors and their implementation.

The following organisations fall under the Ministry:

Subordinate/Attached Offices
- Directorate General of Shipping
- Directorate General of Lighthouses, & Lightships, NOIDA

Autonomous Bodies
- Port Trusts at Kolkata, Kochi (Cochin Port Trust), Kandla, Chennai, Mormugao, Mumbai, Nhava Sheva, (Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust), Paradip, Tuticorin, Visakhapatnam and New Mangalore.
- Dock Labour Boards at Kolkata and Visakhapatnam
- Inland Waterways Authority of India
- Tariff Authority for Major Ports, Mumbai
- Seamen's Provident Fund Organisation, Mumbai

Societies/Associations
- National Maritime Academy (formerly National Institute of Port Management), Chennai
- Indian Institute of Port Management, Kolkata
- National Ship Design and Research Centre, Visakhapatnam
- Seafarers Welfare Fund Society, Mumbai
- Indian Institute of Maritime Studies, Mumbai
- Indian Ports Association, Delhi

Public Sector Undertakings
- Shipping Corporation of India, Mumbai
- Hindustan Shipyard Limited, Vishakhapatnam
- Cochin Shipyard Limited, Kochi
- Central Inland Water Transport Corporation Limited, Kolkata
- Dredging Corporation of India, Limited, Visakhapatnam
- Hooghly Dock & Port Engineers Limited, Kolkata
- Ennore Port Limited, Ennore
- Sethusamudram Corporation Limited, Chennai

1.7 Ministry of Tourism

The Ministry of Tourism is the nodal agency for the formulation of national policies and programmes for the development of and promotion of tourism sector in the country. The Ministry coordinates of activities of various Central Government agencies, State Governments/UTs and the private sector for the development and promotion of tourism in the country.

This Ministry is headed by the Union Minister for Tourism. The administrative head of the Ministry is the Secretary, Tourism. The Secretary also acts as the Director General, Tourism. The Office of the Director General of Tourism provides executive directions for the implementation of various policies and programmes.

The Ministry of Tourism has under its charge a public sector undertaking, the India Tourism Development Corporation and autonomous institutions, namely, Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management, National Institute of Water Sports, National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology and the Institutes of Hotel Management. (Source: http://tourism.gov.in/)

1.8 Ministry of Culture

The mandate of the Ministry is to preserve and promote all forms of art and culture. The Ministry of Culture undertakes the following activities:

- Maintenance and conservation of the country's heritage, ancient monuments and historic sites
- Promotion of literary, visual and performing arts
- Administration of libraries, museums and institutions of anthropology
- Maintenance, preservation and conservation of archival records and archival libraries
- Research and development in the conservation of cultural property
- Observation of centenaries and anniversaries of important national personalities and events
- Promotion of institutions and organisations of Buddhist and Tibetan studies
- Promotion of institutional and individual initiatives in the field of art and culture
- Entering into and implementation of cultural agreements with foreign countries

The functional spectrum of the Ministry is rather wide, ranging from generating cultural awareness at the grassroots level to promoting cultural exchanges at an international level. Along with programmes for the preservation of India's ancient heritage, the activities of the Ministry are to encourage and support a variety of contemporary creative arts as well. The activities are carried out through the following attached, subordinate and autonomous institutions under the Ministry:

Attached Offices
- Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), New Delhi
- National Archives of India, New Delhi

Subordinate Offices
- Anthropological Survey of India, Kolkata
- National Museum, New Delhi
- National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), New Delhi
- National Library, Kolkata
- Central Reference Library, Kolkata
- National Research Laboratory for Conservation of Cultural Property, Lucknow

Archaeological Survey of India (ASI): There are at present more than 3650 ancient monuments and archaeological sites and remains of national importance. These include temples, mosques, tombs, churches, cemeteries, forts, palaces, step-wells, rock-cut caves, and secular architecture as well as ancient mounds and sites, which represent the remains of ancient habitation. In addition, there are 41 site museums under ASI.

National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA): The NGMA helps people to look at the works of modern art with greater joy, understanding and knowledge.

National Museum: The Museum, today, has in its possession over 2,00,000 works of exquisite art, both of Indian and Foreign origin covering more than 5,000 years of our cultural heritage. Its rich holding of various creative traditions and disciplines, which represents a unity amidst diversity, an unmatched blend of the past with the present and strong perspective for the future, brings history to life.

Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti, New Delhi: Since 1984, the GSDS is functioning under the Ministry of Culture as an autonomous body. The Prime Minister of India is its Chairperson and it has a nominated body of senior Gandhians and representatives of various government departments to guide. The basic aim and objective of the Samiti is to propagate the life, mission and thought of Mahatma Gandhi.

1.9 Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MSJE)

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is entrusted with the welfare, social justice and empowerment of disadvantaged and marginalised section of the society viz, Scheduled Caste, Backward Classes, Persons with Disabilities, Aged Persons and victims of Drug Abuse, etc.

The Ministry is the nodal agency in matters related to disability. The Disability Division in the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment facilitates empowerment of persons with disabilities.
There are statutory bodies like the National Trust, Office of the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD), national organisations like National Institute of Visually Handicapped, National Institute of Mentally Handicapped and Public Undertaking like ALIMCO, under the Disability Division.

2. Current Scenario and Emerging Issues

2.1 Urban Development

Highlights of the Eleventh Five Year Plan and Annual Report 2007-2008 of Ministry of Urban Development:

The Eleventh Plan document states that urbanisation is a key indicator of economic development and should be seen as a positive factor for overall development. Also, as an economy grows, its towns and cities expand in size and volume and the contribution of the urban sector to the national economy increases. For instance, the contribution of urban sector to India's GDP has increased from 29% in 1950–51 to about 62%–63% currently, and this is expected to increase to 75% by 2021.

The time is ripe to formulate a long-term National Urbanisation Policy indicating the emerging pattern of urbanisation and measures to channelise future urban growth in an equitable and sustainable manner. It should encompass the changing economic scenario.

The Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) launched on 3rd December 2005 is expected to give focused attention to integrated development of urban infrastructure service in select 63 cities. The emphasis is on provision of basic services to the urban poor including housing, water supply, sanitation, slum improvement, community toilets, etc. A provision of Rs. 50,000 crore has been made available as reformed linked central assistance over the mission period of seven years beginning from 2005-2006. The Planning Commission document states that JNNURM has a great potential to transform infrastructure and improve civic amenities in select cities and so it needs to be pursued with vigour.

The Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme for Small and Medium Towns (UIDSSMT) aims at planned improvement in urban infrastructure in towns and cities. The scheme will cover all cities and towns except those covered under JNNURM.

National Urban Information System (NUIS) on pilot basis is proposed to develop GIS (Geographical Information System) databases in 137 towns at an estimated cost of Rs. 66.28 crore. Town and Country Planning Organisation (TCPO) is the nodal agency to implement the NUIS.

National Urban Transport Policy (2006) recognises that people occupy centre-stage in our cities and all plans would be for their common benefit and well-being. From allocation of equitable road space to campaign on awareness for 'green travel habit', the policy dwells on issues related to urban transport. The policy objective is to "ensure safe, affordable, quick, comfortable, reliable and sustainable access for the growing number of city residents." Additional objective is "Encouraging integrated land use and transport planning in all cities so that travel distances are minimised and access to livelihoods, education, and other social needs, especially for the marginal segments of the urban population is improved."

National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB): The Government of Delhi in its Plan document has desired that NCRPB should contribute significantly in the development process of Delhi by initiating a number of inter-state projects in the NCR in the areas of power generation, water supply, sanitation, etc. It further says, "The projects identified for being financed during the Eleventh Plan involve a total cost of Rs. 15000 crore. Some of these projects will be taken up in collaboration with other stakeholders. Out of the total projected cost of projects, it is expected that the loan component will be above Rs. 11000 crore."

Commonwealth Games: Delhi Development Authority has been assigned the task of development of Games Village, competition venues for sports events, viz., Table tennis, Badminton, Squash, Billiards, Snookers, etc., for the forthcoming Commonwealth Games, 2010. For the development of requisite facility at sports complexes in Delhi, a provision of Rs. 80 crore has been made to the Ministry of Urban Development for 2007-08.

Regarding Accessibility and Barrier-Free Environment, the Annual Report of Ministry of Urban Development mentions:

Under the title 'Promotion of Non-Handicapping Environment for Disabled and Elderly Persons', it states: Effort will be made to ensure adoption of Bye-laws[1] and space standards by all States, municipal bodies, and Panchayati Raj Institutions in the country. These authorities will ensure that all newly constructed buildings for public-use are barrier-free.

It further goes on to add that the Ministry has prepared Model Building Bye-laws, which contain provisions for improving access to various public buildings by disabled and elderly persons. These building bye-laws have been sent to the State Governments, Union Territories, Delhi Development Authority, Municipal Corporation of Delhi, New Delhi Municipal Committee etc. for adoption. So far, Maharashtra, Tripura, Gujarat, Meghalaya, Karnataka, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, National Capital Territory of Delhi and Chandigarh have adopted the same. **All States have been asked to appoint an Officer in every District to bring to notice cases of non-compliance to the concerned authorities.**

Initiatives in the Eleventh Plan on Accessibility

In the Chapter, Social Justice, under the Section, 'Empowering Disabled People' the Eleventh Plan document states "a National Centre to facilitate and support the development of Universal Design and barrier-free built environment will be established". It also says, "A concerted effort would be made to make all public buildings and facilities such as schools, hospitals, public transport, and so on, compliant with the requirements of a barrier-free built environment. Towards this end, the building bye-laws, municipal and civic regulations, relevant codes for construction and design should incorporate the requirements of a barrier-free environment. Similarly, all shops/malls and similar places open to public, should be insisted upon to provide the facilities required for the disabled."

Emerging Issues

Bye-laws implementation
Based on the information given in the Annual Report, only nine States have adopted the Bye-laws. There seems to be very little effort being made for getting other States to adopt it. However, the Report does not specify as to how these State Governments have implemented them. The Annual Report also states that an Officer in each District would be appointed but gives no information regarding their appointment or the work they are doing.

Commonwealth Games
The Urban Development Ministry is responsible for upgrading the infrastructure for the city of Delhi in view of the upcoming Commonwealth Games in 2010. The Delhi Development Authority and CPWD

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[1] *Model Building Byelaws & Building Bye Laws: Model Building Bye Laws are prepared by central government (UD Ministry) that is adopted by various State Governments suitably as per the respective requirements of the States.*

have the task of constructing hotels cum accommodations and stadiums. The Commonwealth Games is envisaged to change the face of Delhi and make it a world-class city. However, there isn't any mention in any of the Reports, if the facilities are going to be disabled-friendly.

JNNURM & UIDSSMT
Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) and Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme for Small and Medium Towns (UIDSSMT), both are meant to massively upgrade infrastructure and civic amenities in cities and towns respectively. They address issues ranging from urban renewal to water and sanitation to e-governance related to city and town development, However, again there is no mention of accessibility and barrier-free environment.

National Urban Transport Policy
National Urban Transport Policy dwells on all issues related to urban transport but does not address issue of accessible transport to disabled people and elderly people. The policy states "accessing jobs, education, recreation and similar activities is becoming increasingly time consuming, but it forgets that an accessible transport system is the key to getting access to education and jobs for disabled people.
(http://urbanindia.nic.in/moud/programme/ut/TransportPolicy.pdf)

Lack of understanding about accessibility
There is little understanding about accessibility in the country. For many, providing access means construction of ramps that are many a times, just slopes! There are no standards that are followed in the construction of ramps, washrooms and other facilities for disabled people. Bangalore Airport has a separate washroom for disabled people but it is not disabled-friendly. Access for other disabilities (hearing, visual, mental disabilities) are not even known to majority of architects/designers/town planners.

Tokenism
Due to pressure from the disability sector, there are now some initiatives that are being taken, however, much leaves to be desired. To give a few examples, some of the bus shelters are said to be disabled-friendly but are not fully accessible to wheelchair users. Delhi Metro's Phase 2 is not totally accessible for disabled people! There are now a few buses in Delhi that have a ramp but there seems to be no plan to make all buses accessible.

Access not a Priority
A research study, 'White Paper on Achieving Infrastructural Accessibility in India & Five-year Action Plan', done by Shivani Gupta (Co- Founder AccessAbility, an Access Consulting Agency) states that, out of the 82% architects who were aware of The Disability Act, 1995, only 42% knew its relevance in their sphere of work.

Accessibility and Barrier Free Environment is as important as Bijli, Pani, Sadak (Uninterrupted power supply, clean drinking water, and concrete roads free of potholes) for disabled people. A person with disability feels as harassed, as angry, with the lack of accessibility, as on issues of basic services and civic amenities.

Budget
There is no specific budget earmarked by the Ministry for creating a barrier-free environment for people with disabilities.

Public access for disabled remains a distant dream
Delhi Metro is touted as the only mass transport organisation that is providing all the facilities to disabled people. But ever since the opening up of the underground section, there are a few stations that are completely inaccessible to the disabled, especially for the wheelchair users.

A note prepared by an organisation working in the area of disability states that Stations like Chawri Bazar and Patel Chowk have no access points for disabled people. The Metro authorities refute this. "We are determined to provide access to all the disabled people at our stations. The problem that the disabled people face now is temporary as we are yet to fully operationalise the stations," says Anuj Dayal, the PRO of Delhi Metro.
http://www.dailyexcelsior.com/web1/05sep16/national.htm

2.2 Housing

Highlights of Annual Report 2007-08 of Ministry of Housing and Poverty Alleviation and the Eleventh Plan

National Urban Housing and Habitat Policy, 2007
The National Urban Housing and Habitat Policy, 2007, focuses on 'Affordable Housing for All' with special emphasis on economically weaker sections of the society such as SCs, STs, OBCs, Minorities, women-headed households and disabled people. The policy seeks to emphasise public sector partnering with private sector and also cooperative sector employees welfare housing sector, the industrial cum labour housing sector – all these playing an important role.

Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM)
The Mission comprises two Sub-Missions, namely, Infrastructure and Governance (UIG) and Basic Services to the Urban Poor (BSUP). These Sub-Missions are being implemented in 63 identified cities of national importance. The duration of the Mission is for 7 years beginning from the year 2005-06. Rs. 1501 crore were initially allocated for the year 2007-08 under BSUP.

Integrated Housing & Slum Development (IHSDP)
For cites/towns not covered under BSUP, the Integrated Housing & Slum Development (IHSDP) has also been launched for a period of 7 years beginning 2005-06. The key objectives of IHSDP is to strive for holistic slum development, with a healthy and enabling urban environment by providing adequate shelter and basic infrastructure facilities to the slum dwellers in the identified urban areas. An amount of Rs. 490 crore was initially allocated for IHSDP for the Year 2007-08. In view of the heavy demand from small and medium towns, a budget of Rs.300 crore has been transferred from Basic Urban Services Programme (BSUP) to IHSDP. It is expected that the Ministry would utilise the entire budget allocated under BSUP and IHSDP during the year.

Beneficiaries under BSUP and IHSDP
The targeted beneficiaries under BSUP and IHSDP are slum dwellers/urban poor. While a minimum 12% beneficiary contribution is stipulated under Basic Services to the Urban Poor (BSUP) and Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme (IHSDP), in the case of SC/ST/OBC and other weaker sections, it is 10%. Both BSUP and IHSDP envisage that the State governments and Urban Local Bodies draw a time bound action plan and implement the 7-Point Charter, namely provision of Security of tenure at affordable prices, Improved housing; Water supply; Sanitation; etc.

Two Million Housing Programme
In accordance with the National Housing & Habitat Policy 1998 which focuses on Housing for All as a priority area, with particular stress on the needs of the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) and Low Income Group (LIG) categories, the Two Million Housing Programme was launched during 1998-99. This is a loan-based scheme, which envisages facilitating construction of 20 lakh additional units every year.

The Integrated Low Cost Sanitation Scheme
It basically aims at conversion of individual dry latrines into pour flush latrines thereby liberating manual scavengers from the age old, obnoxious practice of manually carrying night soil.

The current scheme involves subsidy of 45% for the EWS beneficiaries and 25% for the LIG beneficiaries for construction of two-pit pour flush units up to the plinth level. The upper ceiling cost will be Rs. 10,000/- to enable construction of a complete unit of two-pit pour flush latrine with super structure. Suitable additions in cost for constructing a two-pit pour flush latrine in hilly areas would be provided.

HUDCO
Between April-December 2007, HUDCO has sanctioned 82 urban infrastructure schemes with a total project cost of Rs.14834.72 crore.

During the Eleventh Plan period, HUDCO proposes to extend a large quantum of assistance for supporting the housing and urban development requirements both in urban and rural areas. The proposals envisage a total sanction of Rs. 74596 crore during the Eleventh Plan period for both its housing and urban development programmes. Of this, an amount of Rs. 14919 crore has been tentatively identified for its housing operations.

Provisions of Basic Services to Urban Poor
To promote integrated city development and to enable the people living in slums to gain access to basic services, a number of schemes and programmes have been launched from time to time, for example Environmental Improvement of Urban Slums, National Slum Development Programme (NSDP), Integrated Low Cost Sanitation Scheme (ILCS), etc.

Considerable efforts were made during the Tenth Plan to enlarge the resource base and initiate innovative institutional mechanisms to augment housing delivery in urban areas. Focused efforts were also initiated to cover the poor and vulnerable groups of society to enable them to access basic shelter related services. Fiscal concessions, coupled with legislative measures were also initiated to encourage increased investments in housing by individuals and corporates. However, despite many policy measures and initiatives, the coverage of urban poor with these intended benefits has not been achieved to the desired extent.

Emerging Issues

Providing adequate shelter is a priority of the Indian Government. There are programmes under JNNURM to provide shelter and basic services to poor people. There is also a scheme for low cost Sanitisation programme, which provides funds for constructing latrines in homes. There are several other programmes focusing on building Economically Weaker Section (EWS) & Lower Income Group (LIG) homes. It is indeed appreciable that the National Urban Housing & Habitat Policy, 2007, underlines the need for housing among the economically weaker sections and disabled people. However, there is no information regarding the activities/programmes taken up by the Ministry to promote accessible housing for people with disability.

Lack of Accessible Housing is a major concern for people with disabilities. Generally, the designs of the houses do not meet the needs of persons with disability. It is almost impossible to get a house, which is accessible, particularly for a wheelchair user.

The principle of Universal Design for constructing houses would go a long way in making them comfortable for all. Accessible houses are not just useful for disabled people but also for non-disabled people who may experience temporary disability due to injury, etc. or may have elderly people in their families who need accessible facilities or to host a friend with disability. The houses should be constructed keeping long term in view.

Further, The Disability Act, 1995 mandates preferential allotment of land at concessional rates for people with disabilities. However, the Annual Report has not made any mention about the implementation of this provision. There were some court cases in this regard, following which, some schemes were developed by the States. But again, there is no report available regarding their implementation.

Lease of houses without proper access can be cancelled: Allahabad High Court
In a landmark judgment, the Allahabad High Court has ruled that the allotment of plots for a house built under any housing scheme, a development authority or housing development council in Uttar Pradesh without sufficient provision to access the building by disabled people, the provision for car parking, entry point, and an outlet for water drainage can be cancelled.

The High Court has said that even the layout, drawings and architectural design should not be passed by the authority concerned unless these facilities have been provided for the proposed residential buildings.

This order was passed by the Bench of Justice Yatindra Singh and Justice Shishir Kumar of the Allahabad High Court on a petition by Group Captain Sukh Deo Singh Sidhu and others of NOIDA, against the State of Uttar Pradesh and others.

The High Court has directed the Chief Secretary of Uttar Pradesh Government to "issue appropriate directions to all departments within three months from the date of receipt of copy of this order." The Chief Secretary is to direct the departments to issue the following directions to housing boards, local bodies, development authorities, industrial authorities and estate department to ensure that "no plan for construction of a building for residential purpose or non residential purpose (including commercial, shopping, etc.) be approved unless they adequately provide for (a) sufficient parking space (b) reserving place to be utilised by disabled persons (c) sufficient provision to access the building by disabled persons…"

The Court ordered that a copy of the judgment be made available to the Chief Secretary within a week for compliance. The Court has also ordered NOIDA Authority to comply with these orders and issue notices to all lease holders.
Source: www.dnis.org May 15, 2006

2.3 Roadways & Road Transport

Highlights of the Annual Report (2007-2008) of Department of Roadways & the Eleventh Plan

Road Network
India has one of the largest road network of 3.314 million km, consists of National Highways, Expressways, State Highways, Major District Roads, Other District Roads and Village Roads. The

rapid expansion and strengthening of the road network therefore, is imperative, to provide for both present and future traffic and for improved accessibility to the hinterland. In addition, road transport needs to be regulated for better energy efficiency, lesser pollution and enhanced road safety. The largest highway project ever undertaken by the country, **'National Highways Development Programme (NHDP)'** was initiated in a phased manner. Implementing agency for NHDP is National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).

Motor Vehicle Act

The Union Cabinet in its meeting held on 1st March, 2007 approved the proposal of the Department, to move the Motor Vehicles Amendment Bill, 2007 in the Parliament. The Bill seeks to achieve the objectives such as enhancement of penalties to ensure road safety and discipline, provision for civil liability in addition to the existing criminal liabilities, conferment of more powers to the States/UTs, making Regional Transport Authorities more responsive in discharging their duties, rationalisation of provisions for payment of compensation to road accident victims, provision for settling of compensation, claims directly by the insurers, etc.

Bus Design

The Department has notified the rules for accreditation of bus body builders on 23rd March 2007. The rules ensure uniformity in bus body designs, enhance safety and comfort features for the passengers.

Strengthening of Public Transport System/Traffic Management in the country

While the country has seen a rapid expansion in personalised modes of transport, there is a high demand for public transport that needs to be addressed. The public transport system in India mostly comprises of passenger bus transport service offered by the State. The passenger road transport service has not achieved the desired growth both in terms of quality and numbers. This has resulted in exponential growth of personalised mode of transport leading to enormous problems of traffic congestion, pollution, etc.

Keeping in view the financial position of various States, the Central Government proposes to assist them through the viability gap funding mechanism to improve their public transport system. The assistance would be provided subject to certain reforms to be undertaken by the State Governments.

Road Safety

The Department also recognises the need for improving the country's road safety record. The enforcement of road safety provisions/rules rests with the Governments of respective States/Union Territories. The mass public education relating to road safety is being taken care of, through campaigns in print, audio and audio-visual media, with the involvement of non-government organisations by the Ministry.

A Committee headed by S. Sundar, Former Secretary, the then Ministry of Surface Transport and Distinguished Fellow, The Energy and Research Institute (TERI) was set up to deliberate and recommend creation of a separate body on "Road Safety and Traffic Management". The nineteenth Road Safety Week was observed throughout the country from 1-7 January 2008, with the theme "Drive to Care! Not to Dare!"

A total of 121 NGOs have been provided grants-in-aid for administering road safety programmes entailing expenditure of Rs.1.72 crore.

The Annual Report mentions about the implementation of The Disability Act but it is about the jobs reserved in the Department for people with disability. Apart from this, there is nothing about disability or accessibility.

National Road Transport Policy (NRTP)
The endeavour of the National Road Transport Policy (NRTP) is to promote modern, energy efficient and environment friendly road transport with following objectives:

- Promote Road Infrastructure support for transportation of humans and goods to sustain high growth rate of GDP
- Promote public transport and requisite quality of service
- Promote quality and productivity of goods transportation and infrastructure
- Ensure availability of adequate trained manpower
- Promote road safety, traffic management and post - accident trauma care
- Promote sustainable road transport with special emphasis on energy efficiency, environmental conservation and social impact
- Promote increasing use of modern technology and research in road transport development; and
- Strengthen database collection and management system to assist in continued policy and performance evaluation
- Promotion of Road Infrastructure Support

Initiatives in the Eleventh Plan for Development of Road Transport and Highways
A good road network is a critical infrastructure requirement for rapid growth. It provides connectivity to remote areas; provides accessibility to markets, schools, and hospitals, and opens up backward regions to trade and investment. Roads also play an important role in inter-modal transport development, establishing links with airports, railway stations and ports. The main thrust is to create world-class road infrastructure, with the objective of improving mobility and accessibility while reducing the cost of transportation.

The Eleventh Plan recognises the fact that Urbanisation has lead to corresponding increase in demand for transportation. The growth in transport infrastructure has not kept pace with the increased demand and so the share of public transport vehicles has declined. A large investment of Rs. 38000 crore has been identified for the introduction of modern buses in the country during the Eleventh Plan. The government aims to replace all the existing urban buses with 'truck chassis body' with low floor/semi low floor ultra modern buses on Private Public Partnership (PPP) basis. The financial allocation for this in the Eleventh Plan would be Rs. 132590 crore.

Rural Road
To boost the rural connectivity, a Rural Roads Programme, the PMGSY (Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana) was launched as a 100% CSS (Centrally Sponsored Schemes). It aims to provide all-weather roads by 2003 to habitations with a population of 1000 and above, and by 2007 to those with a population of 500 and above. In respect of hilly/desert/tribal areas, it aims to link habitations with a population of 250 and above.

Ensuring a balanced development of the total road network across the country would continue to be an important objective of the Eleventh Plan. This includes thorough widening of roads, improvement in riding quality and strengthening, road safety measures, and providing world-class wayside amenities to cater to the growing demand for road services. In particular, 100% rural connectivity with all-weather roads to habitations with a population of 1000-plus (500-plus in hilly/tribal areas) is a priority objective under the Bharat Nirman Programme.

State Roads (SR)
Greater focus should be given to augment the capacity and quality of roads rather than any large-scale expansion. There is a need to identify and develop a core network of major arterial routes covering State highway which are either already experiencing high volumes of traffic or have such potential in the light of industrial and other growth strategies by the public and/or the private sector.

The core network would include expressways, four-laned roads, strengthened pavements, and pavements with good riding quality, bypasses, bridges, etc. for a length of about 71500 km, with a financial outlay of about Rs. 80000 crore covering the States. This network could be based on the 'corridor concept', such that a commercial vehicle can cover about 500 km on this network in one day (800 km or more on expressways) with adequate road safety.

Plan Outlay in Road Sector
The Eleventh Plan budgetary support for central sector roads is Rs. 72530 crore (Rs. 82032.97 crore at current price). In addition, the sector is expected to generate Internal & Extra Budgetary Resource (IEBR) amounting to Rs. 34829 crore and private sector investment of Rs. 86792 crore during this period.

Road Transport
The share of road transport in passenger movement has also witnessed a quantum jump from 15% in 1950–51 to an estimated 87% of the total traffic by the end of the Tenth Plan. However, the growth of vehicular traffic on roads has been greater than the growth of the highways.

The number of accidents has quadrupled from 1.1 lakh in 1970 to 4.3 lakh in 2004, with 92,618 persons killed in accidents (one fatality per 4.6 accidents) and 464521 persons injured in 2004. The social cost impact of road accidents is 3% of the GDP.

In order to assess the magnitude of road traffic injuries and fatalities in India and to suggest measures for rescue and relief of accident victims, an Executive Committee of India was constituted. The Committee has recommended setting up of a National Road Safety and Traffic Management Board to lay down standards and guidelines as well as to oversee and coordinate all activities pertaining to road safety at Centre as well as State level for promoting and improving traffic management in India. The Report is under active consideration.

Plan Outlay in Road Transport Sector
The total projected outlay for the Eleventh Plan for Department of Road Transport and Highway is Rs. 108359 crore at 2006–07 price Rs. 122557 crore at current price .

Initiative by the National Trust (a statutory organisation under MSJE)
National Trust (January 2008) and Samrathya (a Delhi based NGO) had initiated a pilot study, **'Road Safety Aspects & Right of Way for Persons with Disabilities'** around the National Trust office (KG Marg, Cannaught Place, New Delhi). Questionnaires were distributed among road users of different age groups. A total of 100 responses were collected through email and personal visits. The sample population comprised persons with diverse disabilities such as Autism, Mental Retardation, Cerebral Palsy, Deafblindness and Others. Recommendations were made to Indian Road Congress (IRC), New Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC), Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), Transport Research and Injury Prevention Programme (TRIPP), IIT Delhi, Delhi Traffic Police, Central Public Works Department (CPWD), Public Works Department (PWD), concerned Ministries / Departments, NGOs and other stakeholders. We could not find information about the current status of the project.

Emerging Issues

Roads (Accessibility & safety)
Roads are quite unsafe for people with disability in the country. There are hardly any footpaths in the country. This is problematic for pedestrians in general, and even more for persons with disabilities. Crossing a road is next to impossible for people with visual disabilities. There are also difficulties faced by people with hearing disabilities and other disabilities in walking, crossing or driving on the roads. Most of the subways, foot-over bridges, etc. remain inaccessible for people with disabilities. The Disability Act, 1995 mandates disabled-friendly roads, streets, etc. It talks of audio signals for

visually impaired people at the crossings. However, there is no mention about any initiative in this regard in the Annual Report or the Eleventh Plan.

There seems no plan to make roads accessible and safe for people with disabilities. One initiative that was planned in Bangalore for making roads safe for visually impaired people was to give them whistles, which they can blow to stop the vehicles while crossing!

> **Blowing whistle to lead the blind**
> The Indian Disability League (IDL), which helps the blind persons rediscover their natural skills for music, have come out with the idea of handing over a whistle along with the white cane, which the blind can use when confronted with a dangerous situation.
>
> "Most of the roads in the City are clogged with traffic and footpaths are crowded with pedestrians. So, people can't instantly notice a (blind) person walking with a white cane," said P K Paul, Trustee of IDL."
>
> To have a whistle and blow it in such situation will help them attract attention of people walking by. A cop who may be standing nearby would also find it easier to come to their rescue." Though he acknowledged that an electronic white cane may allow a blind person to operate with sophistication, Paul is also aware that they cost a fortune for many of them who are poor and depend on their family or charity for survival. "More over, this is an easy self-help mechanism," Paul added.
>
> Commenting on the idea, Eswar Prasad, DCP traffic of Bangalore city, said whistle blowing would not only protect the blind, but also help create awareness amongst the public on the need to extend a helping hand to the blind. "I have had an initial discussion with IDL," Prasad said.
> *Source: Deccan Herald*
> *http://www.deccanherald.com/CONTENT/Jun242008/city2008062475067.asp;*
> *June 24th 2008*

Such plans are not just short sighted and impractical but also bring forth the fact that policy makers do not consider human dignity while planning initiatives for people with disability. Moreover, such plans are focussed on the individual with disability and not on making the environment disabled-friendly.

There are Guide Blocks for visually impaired people in some stations of Delhi Metro. It was a welcome move. However, in the 2nd Phase of the Metro, the Guide Blocks have not been put at the stations!! While there were angry articles from the disability sector lamenting the Delhi Metro for not providing ramps / lifts for orthpoeadically impaired people, there was no report about the Guide Blocks which have not been provided in the stations. It would be important to get the user perspective and have a comprehensive plan for making roads safe and accessible for all disabilities.

There are also some technological solutions like GPS software that are being developed, which could help visually impaired people in mobility. Service-dogs too are very helpful. These have to be explored to make access to places easier for persons with visual disabilities. This should be in addition to efforts towards making the environment itself accessible and safe for all.

Road Transport

Road transport is largely inaccessible to people with disabilities. Buses, cars, auto rickshaws, etc. are inaccessible. As a result of Public Interest Litigation (PIL) and activism, a few 'disabled-friendly' buses have been introduced in the country in a few cities. However, even these few buses are not friendly to visually impaired commuters. Most disabled people travel in regular buses, which have

better connectivity and frequency. It can be dangerous but there is little choice. The National Road Transport Policy does not take into account the concerns of disabled people. The Motor Vehicles Act has no mention of wheelchair accessibility as a condition for manufacturing of public transport vehicles.

The city of Bangalore has low floor buses (Volvo) but the disability concession is not valid in these buses and the fare/rate is higher, making them again inaccessible for majority of disabled people!

Not only those with orthopaedic disability, but also persons with visual disability, hearing impairment find it difficult to use public buses in the country. The route number of the bus may not be visible, communication with the conductor may be difficult, the bus stop itself may be inaccessible, the driver may not stop the bus at the bus stop, bus terminals may not have sign boards, display boards or announcements for latest updates. The toilets at bus stations/terminals also are not disabled-friendly. Out of the few disabled-friendly buses being introduced, not all are accessible for wheelchair-users. The concerns of people with visual/hearing/multiple disabilities have not even been considered while modernising/upgrading the public buses.

Experience of bus transport in Chennai

"Rajiv Rajan, Coordinator of Disability Legislation Unit, South - Vidya Sagar, was charged additionally for taking his wheelchair by the Metro Transport Corporation, Chennai - 21G route.

This is not the only incident but one of the many that is happening on a day-to-day basis. We feel that there is an urgent need for stringent rules in place.

The issues are manifold: 1. Charging for wheelchair 2. Lot of hue and cry on the part of conductors when disabled people are travelling with escorts. 3. Verbal abuse and stare at the very presence of people with severe disabilities. 4. Not stopping the buses at the bus stops even when there is one. 5. Not waiting for disabled people to get into the bus and take proper seat, etc.
E-mail from Meenakshi, Disability Law Unit, Vidya Sagar, 11th February 2009

"Why are there no disabled-friendly cars on Indian roads?" asks NHRC

According to a news report, a wheelchair user had filed a complaint with National Human Rights Commission **(**NHRC), arguing that car manufacturing companies and the Government have the social responsibility to manufacture disabled-friendly vehicles. Taking cognizance, the Commission asked the Government to comment on it.

Maruti Udyog Limited used to make a Maruti 800 automatic and sell it only to certified disabled people. However, since the car was subsidised, its black-marketing became rampant. The state-owned company instead of working with the government in strengthening the system against malpractice, decided to stop production of the car itself. In the ongoing International Automobile Exhibition, Solio, a variant of Maruti Wagon R, with special disabled-friendly features like provision to carry wheelchairs and rotating driver's seats, is on display. But as any disabled driver would tell, space in the boot for wheelchair is not the only requirement of a disabled-friendly car.

According to a media report, Ford officials have said that the company was "looking" at launching disabled-friendly car models in the coming years. The company has about 15 percent market share in the mid-size segment in India, and sold around 27,000 Ford models here last year.
Source: www.dnis.org 15th January 2006

> "**Dial a Bus Service**"
>
> It is interesting to note that in a letter from, Shri. R. Ramachandran (Secretary, UD Ministry) to all Chief Secretaries of states, dated 27 May 2008, suggests "As far as making all buses physically challenged friendly (!) is concerned, the whole issue may perhaps be dealt with in two ways; either to design a special bus service for physically challenged persons on the lines of "Dial-a-Bus" service in USA or making all the buses physically challenged friendly.

Instead of making urban transport system universally accessible to all, a special bus service for disabled people is being suggested. This goes against the very essence of inclusion! And, this is also quite impractical.

2.4. Indian Railways

Highlights of the Annual Report and Accounts- 2006-07
The year ended with an excess of Rs. 10,206.32 crore, out of which Rs. 1880.00 crore were appropriated to Development Fund and Rs. 8326.32 crore appropriated to Capital Fund. Gross traffic receipts of the Railways went up from Rs. 54,491.38 crore in 2005-06 to Rs. 62,731.50 crore in 2006-07. Total working expenses increased from Rs. 45,573.53 crore in 2005-06 to Rs. 49,046.53 crore in 2006-07. After taking into account the miscellaneous transactions, the net revenue receipts stood at Rs. 14,453.13 crore.

Passenger Business
During 2006-07, the number of passengers carried was 6,219 million compared to 5725 million in 2005-06 thus registering an increase of 8.6%.

Indian Railways (IR) constitutes an important mode of passenger transportation for long distance and suburban commuter traffic. In 2006- 07, despite operational and resource constraints, IR introduced 172 trains (single), extended the run of 126 trains (single) and increased the frequency of 39 trains (single) in non-suburban sector. For suburban/local passengers, 88 trains (single) were introduced and run of 26 trains (single) were extended. Besides, during the year, IR also introduced 24 Diesel Electric Multiple Unit/Mainline Electric Multiple Unit, (DEMU/MEMU) and Rail Bus services.

Rail Tourism
Ministry of Railways has started several important initiatives to promote tourism. These include introduction of new tourist services on popular circuits in different regions of the country and offer one week's fully packaged rail travel itinerary inclusive of travel, accommodation, on-board/on-ground catering and conducted sight seeing tours at destinations.

Customer Care
IR initiated training for its frontline staff like Assistant Station Masters, on-board support staff, for those manning Enquiry, Reservation, Booking, Parcel Office, Telephone Enquiry and "May I Help You" counters for improving their inter-personal skills and to equip them to deal with the rail customers in a better manner. The programme is also meant to help increase the performance level of employees by sensitising them to the needs of the customers, thereby solving passengers' problems more effectively.

Passenger Amenities
The allocation under the Plan head "Passenger and Other Railway Users' Amenities" was Rs. 400.98 crore in 2006-07.

In order to provide upgraded passenger amenities at stations, 587 stations have so far been selected as Model Stations for provision of upgraded amenities of which 166 stations have already been developed. Out of the 334 stations selected for modernisation during 2006-07, 271 stations have already been developed. Integrated Train Enquiry System consisting of both Interactive Voice Response System and Manual enquiry provisions is being set up for dissemination of information on train running status, reservation status, availability of accommodation and other value added services.

Train Indication Boards at 1055 stations, Public Address System at 3081 stations and Coach Guidance Boards at 141 stations have been installed. In addition, Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) has also been provided at 509 locations.

Research and Development
Research, Designs & Standards Organisation (RDSO), the Research and Development organisation of IR, functions as the technical advisor and consultant to the Ministry, Zonal Railways and Production Units. Its diverse activities for modernisation of IR and noteworthy achievements in evolving new designs and adopting new technologies to cater to various needs of IR have attracted world-wide attention.

Some of RDSO's work includes development of crashworthy design of coaches and modification of specifications for fire retardant coach furnishing materials used in flooring, roof ceiling, side panelling, cushioning, windows, vestibules, etc., to match international norms. Many other such initiatives are credited to this organisation.

Central Board of Railway Research
The Board recommends and reviews Railways' research programmes and also ensures coordination and assistance from other research laboratories. Apart from RDSO members, representation is also given to non-railway members like eminent scientists, engineers, other Government departments, industry, etc.

Public Relations
During 2006-07, wide publicity campaign was launched by the Ministry of Railways to highlight new initiative in freight and passenger services, freight discount schemes including discounts on loading in empty flow directions, privatisation of running of container trains, increase in Railway's market share, installation of ATMs at railway stations, internet booking, e-ticketing, automatic up-gradation, tatkal scheme, etc.

In 2006-07, 5762 press releases were issued, 162 press conferences were organised, 127 publicity broadcast were telecast. IR also participated in 51 exhibitions and conducted 23 press party tours to highlight the benefits to rail users due to introduction of new facilities/new projects in their region.

Initiatives with reference to People with Disabilities
What is noteworthy is that there is a chapter titled 'Facilities for Persons with Disabilities' in the Annual Report (2006-07) of Indian Railways. Apart from explaining various concessions on train travel available to disabled people, the Annual Report states, "For better facilities to make stations user-friendly to handicapped/older persons, an action plan has been drawn up. All 'A' and 'B' category stations have been provided with (i) standard ramps for barrier free entry, (ii) parking lots for vehicles used by disabled persons, (iii) non slippery walkway, (iv) wheelchairs, (v) signages, (vi) 'May I help you booth'. In the long term, Railways have planned to provide facility of inter-platform transfer and engraving on edges of platforms.'

About 1,250 specially designed disabled friendly coaches with all requisite facilities are available on Indian Railways to cater to the needs of disabled persons. Research Design and Standards

Organisation is evolving a suitable design of air-conditioned compartments for wheelchair-using passengers.

Initiatives in the Eleventh Plan
Indian Railways is at the threshold of a major change at the beginning of the Eleventh Plan. The key challenge before it is not attracting additional traffic, but rather meeting the accelerating demand for the high quality services imposed by a vibrant economy for which it has to take immediate and appropriate steps to augment capacity and deploy it optimally through new investment and tariff policies.

The Eleventh Plan strategy is to consolidate the share of Railways in passenger business, particularly, in long-distance and medium-distance segment by increasing the commercial speed of passenger trains, and introduction of fast services between metropolitan cities with peak speeds up to 150 km per hour from the present speed of 110-130 km per hour. The development of high-speed corridors, which are an environment-friendly solution for high-speed passenger transport, will be explored on selected routes. This will be done through PPP route. Speeding up delivery of passenger services by utilising Mainline Electric Multiple Unit (MEMU) and Diesel Electric Multiple Unit (DEMU) rakes would also be pursued with greater vigour. Trains would be augmented to 24 coaches on all important sectors.

The sub-urban services would require separation from main line systems in places like Mumbai. The emphasis in sub-urban services would be to increase peak time services and augment trains to 12 car rakes (coaches). The Mumbai Sub-urban services are severely strained and will be augmented with the capacity additions as part of the Mumbai Urban Transport Project (MUTP) works. The introduction of air-conditioned sub-urban coaches/trains will also be considered, if possible, through PPPs.

Most of the railway stations and passenger terminals on the Indian Railway network were built several years back and are suffering from severe infrastructural inadequacies in handling the passengers. As the stations occupy the prime land in the heart of cities, they offer promising possibilities for their re-development by leveraging a part of the real estate development potential. A total of 22 stations have been identified which are located in metropolitan cities and major tourist centres for development through PPP route. The preparatory work for New Delhi and Patna stations through appointment of consultants has already been taken in hand.

Information Technology applications hold the key to the Railways' sustained improvement in services and efficiency. Internet ticketing was introduced in August 2002 with the objective of providing tickets at the doorstep of the customer. Initially it was started in Delhi, which is now extended to over 200 cities. Further, in September 2005, e-ticketing was started as a pilot project in two trains, which is now extended to all trains. Booking of Tatkal tickets was also started through Internet in December 2005.The concept of 'ticket at doorstep' will have to be further developed for reserved, unreserved, and sub-urban tickets. An integrated Railway information system on real-time basis would be developed and implemented to provide information of train movement, ticketing, facilities on display systems on stations and trains, as well as through diversified media.

Coach toilets are the main source of poor sanitation in railway premises. In order to prevent discharge from the toilets while the train is in railway station premises, speed actuated controlled discharge toilets and biodegradable toilets will be introduced in passenger coaches. In collaboration with IIT, Kanpur, efforts are already on to develop indigenous technology to produce fully environment-friendly toilets to suit Indian conditions, so that the discharge from coach toilets does not create unhygienic conditions all along the railway track.

Eleventh Plan with reference to accessibility and barrier-free environment
It states, all mail and express trains would be provided with specially designed coaches which have separate compartments and suitably designed toilets for the physically challenged and senior citizens. In addition, trains having air-conditioned accommodation would also be provided with air-conditioned compartments for physically challenged persons. (Eleventh Plan, Volume 3 , Chapter 5- "Physical Infrastructure", pg 288-289)

Emerging Issues

"Travelling by regular long distance trains can be an ordeal for physically disabled people because their doors, seats and toilets are simply not designed for them." (TOI, 20th August 2008).

Action Plans
The Annual Report says that Indian Railways has drawn up an action plan to make railway stations disabled-friendly. However, the Plan was not available for us to analyse.

Passenger Amenities
Providing passenger amenities is being planned at several railway stations**.** There is no mention of amenities for disabled passengers.

Infrastructural Woes
The ticket counters, the stalls, toilets, etc., all are uniformly disabled-unfriendly. In the name of a ramp, there is a slope (resembling a ramp), which is often used for pushing luggage trolleys. Wheelchairs come for a price and are not easily available. Toilets – not all are accessible, perhaps one in the entire station would be disabled-friendly and one would have to go to that particular platform to use that toilet.

Disabled-Friendly coaches
The disabled-friendly coaches, which have been placed at the either end of the train (near the engine), defeats the very purpose of convenience and accessibility for people with disability. Very often, these coaches are occupied by non-disabled people. Moreover, they are unreserved. There is no railway official to take care of the passengers travelling in this coach. The coach is totally disconnected from all other compartments. There is no vestibule to move from one compartment to another. It is not connected to the pantry car. Only 8 passengers along with the escorts can travel.

> **Suburban Trains**
> "In a bid to make suburban services safer, southern railway has sanctioned works to eliminate the gap between trains and edge of the platforms at Guindy, Chetpet and Nungambakkam Chennai suburban stations. "However, design change of coaches will have to wait. A new design will be time-consuming for Mail and Express trains," an official said (TOI, Chennai edition, 20 August, 2008).

Reservation woes and staff insensitivity

Online Booking
A disabled person cannot book a rail ticket online. Each time he needs to show his disability consession form at the booking counter and then only buy his ticket. Although IR website allows issue of concessional tickets to senior citizens subject to their producing age proof during travel, no similar arrangement has been worked out for people disabled people.

On counter booking
There are experiences and examples that clearly show staff insensitivity and ignorance.

"I went to the railway reservation counter to reserve tickets with the railway concession form for blind people. I asked the person sitting in the counter to give me a ticket in the disabled quota which he refused saying that visually impaired are not given tickets in the disabled quota. On being reminded that in the past, he had booked under quota, the booking clerk refused saying "I don't know how that person (previous booking clerk) gave you that time" and shouted at me to leave the counter." (Source: accessindia@accessindia.org.in**)**

Disabled people (orthopedically disabled) who travel in regular coaches, at best, ask for a lower berth, as it would be convenient. But despite showing valid documents, the booking clerk would allot an upper or middle berth.

2.5. Civil Aviation

The Highlights of Annual Report (2007-08) of Civil Aviation Ministry:

Development of Airport Infrastructure
Development of airport infrastructure has been undertaken through the Public Private Partnership (PPP) route in major metro cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Hyderabad. Modernisation of the Kolkata and Chennai airports are being undertaken by the Airports Authority of India (AAI). The aim of the Government is to transform these airports into world-class facilities through the hybrid mechanism.

Modernisation of Delhi and Mumbai airports
The international airports in Delhi and Mumbai have been restructured and are being modernised through private sector participation. The construction of first phase of Delhi airport started in January 2007 and is likely to be completed by March 2010. The cost of first phase of development is about Rs.8890 crores approximately. The construction work of Mumbai airport also started in January 2007. The airport will be saturated by 2014 with capacity of 40 million passengers per annum. The cost of development is Rs.7000 crore approximately.

Other major projects
These include construction of an international airport in Navi Mumbai which has been given an 'in-principle' approval by the Government; modernisation of Kolkata airport; expansion/modernisation of Chennai airport; construction of Bangalore international airport, which is being implemented on a Build Own Operate and Transfer (BOOT) basis for 30 years with Public Private Participation (PPP) at cost of Rs.2470 crores.

Development of a Greenfield airport in Shamshabad, near Hyderabad on BOOT basis with Public Private Partnership (PPP) by the Government of Andhra Pradesh, approximate cost of the project is Rs. 2478 crore.

An ambitious project of modernisation of 35 non-metro airports has been undertaken. As per a decision taken by the committee on infrastructure, airside work, including construction of terminal buildings, would be undertaken by the AAI.

Initiative for People with Disabilities

[2]**DGCA revises Civil Aviation Requirements (CARs) guidelines for disabled people**
Following protest from activists from the disability sector, Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR), has been revised by DGCA. The airlines and airport operators have been directed to ensure the presence of wheelchairs, stretchers and ambulifts to enable passengers with special needs boarding or de-boarding an aircraft. Disabled passengers will not be charged for using wheelchairs, ambulift etc. They have also been directed to train and sensitise their staff to meet the special needs of disabled people.

Initiatives in the Eleventh Plan

With the opening up of domestic skies to private carriers in the second half of the Tenth Plan, air services have become affordable and are now effectively competing with other modes of transport. Propelled by growth of the economy and liberalisation, the sector experienced an unprecedented growth during the Tenth Plan, accelerating particularly in its last three years.

The main objectives of the Civil Aviation sector for the Eleventh Plan would be to provide world-class infrastructure facilities, safe, reliable, and affordable air services so as to encourage growth in passenger and cargo traffic and air connectivity to remote and inaccessible areas with special reference to north eastern part of the country.

Plan Outlay
During the Tenth Plan an outlay of Rs. 12928.00 crore was provided to the Ministry of Civil Aviation, out of which 60 percent was spent. The total projected outlay for the Eleventh Plan for Civil Aviation Ministry is Rs. 43560 crore at 2006-07 price (Rs. 49267 crore at current price).

Initiatives for People with Disabilities (Annual Report 2007- 2008)
Following facilities are provided to the disabled persons/passengers:
1. For smooth functioning of the disabled persons, barrier-free access in the office building has been provided and lift facility has also been provided at all these buildings.
2. All assistance is extended to such passengers on arrival and departure as well as on board during the flight. Advance message is sent to the station of embarkation.
3. Aisle wheelchairs are positioned at all the domestic stations of Air India Network.
4. Ambulift is provided at some of the airports and provision of ambulift at other major airports is in the process.
5. Kerb side counters at all metro stations has been set up to extend special facilitation to such passengers. Boarding of such passengers is also ahead of other passengers.
6. Reserved parking space is provided in major airports. Ramps have been provided at terminal buildings for easy movement of disabled persons.
7. Special adapted toilets for disabled persons are provided at all the airports/international airports terminal buildings and also action is in hand for providing such toilets at the other locations/ Airports.
8. Aero bridges for international/domestic airports along with provision of elevator/escalator have been provided in international and some of the major airports. Special lifts at some of the international airports and wheelchairs at all airports have been provided for use of persons with disabilities.

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[2] *(http://www.hindu.com/2007/09/07/stories/2007090761741500.htm)*
http://www.hindustantimes.com/StoryPage/StoryPage.aspx?sectionName=NLetter&id=42aec8dc-b1fb-43b3-8a4f-a1d955102324&&Headline=Uplifting+note+for+the+disabled

9. For smooth functioning of disabled persons, barrier-free access in the office buildings has been provided and lift facility has also been provided at all buildings.
10. The report also mentions concessions to disabled people on air tickets and reservation of certain seats for them.

Information from the media: The Indira Gandhi International Airport will now be more friendly towards people with special needs as well as unaccompanied minors who need assistance while travelling by air. At the international terminal T2, the Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) has launched a special service, known as the 'Contact Zone', to provide assistance to the physically challenged and unaccompanied minor passengers. The Contact Zone is aimed at bridging this gap and will guide the passenger through the airport till airline officials take charge.

In addition, two parking bay slots have also been reserved for vehicles at the zone for passengers requiring wheelchair assistance. (6 Feb.2009, Delhi News Line). It was also announced that people with disability and people with reduced mobility need not pay for wheelchair and ambulift at the airports. DGCA is going to amend rules to this effect soon (HT, Delhi, 8 Feb. 2008).

Emerging Issues

Up-gradation of Airports & Accessibility
Several airports are being modernised and upgraded. However, these plans do not follow the accessibility standards.

> **Bangalore International Airport toilets not user-friendly for physically challenged**
> Mahesh, a physically-challenged person who is the Advocacy Coordinator, CBR Forum, said he visited the new airport on May 25 and was shocked to see the way the door opened, the way the grab-bars were designed and fitted, and other fittings in the toilet situated in the arrival lounge. "The design of the toilets does not meet any national or international standards prescribed for barrier-free access for persons who are physically-challenged," the complainant stated. Mr. Mahesh told *The Hindu* that the grab-bar in the toilet blocks, the wash basin, the door knob was round in shape and the physically-challenged might not be able to turn it, and there was not enough space for wheelchair movement inside the toilet.
> *http://www.hindu.com/2008/05/31/stories/2008053161910800.htm*

Insensitivity Galore
The Ministry has underlined its efforts in creating facilities for disabled passengers/people. However, experiences suggest otherwise. A disabled passenger is handled insensitively by both, the airline and airport staff. Quite often, they have been asked to de-board or deplane, if they are not escorted.

Indemnity Bond!
In many airlines, disabled passengers are asked to sign an indemnity bond or deplane.

Pay six times more!
People who use stretchers have to pay six times more. The idea is that stretcher occupies space of six seats.

Directorate General of Civil Aviation's (DGCA) CAR Guideline on Carriage by air of Passengers with Disability:

Based on the complaints received and the pressure from the disability sector, DGCA has prepared Guidelines for Passengers with Disability and Reduced Mobility.

DGCA's CAR Guideline on Carriage by air - finally enforced but with qualifications Wednesday, May 14, 2008

Dear Friends

Finally the 8th draft dated 24th April 2008 has seen the light of the day after the Ministry of Civil Aviation cleared it to become the new CAR Guideline on Carriage of People with Disabilities (PwD) and People with Reduced Mobility (PRM) effective 01st May 2008.

Here is a brief assessment of the New CAR viz. Good Points and Issues that still needs to be addressed (Loop Holes). There might be few other areas that I might have left and you may be able to point them out.

I would request you to kindly provide your inputs so that we jointly can fight for rectifying the shortcomings together.

Good Points included in the DGCA's New CAR

1. To remove confusion between People with Disabilities/People with Reduced Mobility and Sick/medically ill passengers, the new CAR has defined the Incapacitated Passengers as those with medical condition and Persons with Reduced Mobility (PRM) and Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) as those whose mobility is impaired/reduced when using transport (Ref Section 3).
2. It mandates that no airlines will refuse to carry PwD/PRM and their assistive aids/devices, escorts & Guide Dogs.
3. Emergency Evacuation procedures and Training on handling PwD/PRM shall be included in Airline's Training & Safety manuals.
4. Only trained persons shall be assigned to assist and handling the passengers with disabilities.
5. All Airlines will assist those who wish to travel alone without an escort (Ref. para 4.8)
6. Barrier Free Access, accessible toilets and Assistance Booths close to the entrance (within visible proximity at arrival/departure terminals) with International symbol of Disability at the Airport are mandated in 4.10
7. No limit on number of PwD on a flight. Equal choice of seat allocation.
8. No medical clearances of special forms shall be insisted from PwD/PRM.
9. All assistive aids shall be provided without any extra costs to the passengers.
10. PWDs/PRMs including Blind passengers shall not be restricted to any particular cabin or seating areas. Guide Dogs are allowed in the Cabin with prior information.
11. Individual briefing to PRM/PwDs/their escorts before take off by senior cabin crew of airline. Blind passengers to be provided Braille brochures and large print brochures besides verbal briefing.
12. Once ticket is confirmed, no further enquiries shall be made (Para 9.5).
13. In case of loss or damage to the mobility equipment during storage and handling, the airlines shall be liable for providing suitable compensation.
14. Assistive Aids and Devices can be carried as hand baggage in the aircraft (Ref: note to para 7.5)
15. In-transit offloading- in case of overnight halt, the accommodation provided should be accessible and barrier free.

Issues that need to be addressed:

1. Para 4.6 "Passengers who declare independence in feeding, communication with reasonable accommodation, toileting and personal needs are allowed to travel without escort." This section is discriminatory against people who require some support in areas of feeding and personal needs, etc., and it gives a right to airlines to disallow the passengers to fly, if they don't declare independence. We feel that this para looses its relevance in light of para 4.8, which is an enabling and positive para. Thus in view of this para 4.6 should be deleted in toto.

2. Para 4.9 -People not holding any Disability Certificate also to be given all facilities but at a cost. – This is not acceptable since Government of India has so far failed to provide Disability Certificates to all the disabled population and many do not go to obtain one due to ridiculous and time consuming procedures. Hence, this condition will adversely affect them for no fault of theirs. Also the Airliners have been providing free services to the elderly people who seek much more assistance and support than what a blind passenger might seek. Thus this would amount to discrimination on the basis of disability and we strongly recommend that no additional fee should be charged from any one.

3. Provisions regarding charges for Human assistance are not acceptable as devised by 6.1 (a). By doing so the person with disability would be put at a disadvantageous position vis-à-vis his non-disabled counterparts and would amount to "Discrimination on the basis of Disability" and also against principle of "reasonable accommodation" thus contravenes Article 9 of UNCRPD.

4. There is an inherent contradiction in para 6 of the CAR Guideline: While opening words are "All assistive aids shall be provided without any extra cost to the passengers." The first sub para 6(a) provides a loop hole by declaring that "Any charges for human assistance, if required, may be levied by the Airlines." Similarly sub para 6.4 (b) seeks to charge for narrow wheelchair type aisle chairs which are without armrests and can be moved about in the passenger cabin and can be used for internal mobility by persons with reduced mobility. It says "Any nominal charge in this regard, if levied, shall be paid by the passenger." The narrow width of the passage in the aeroplane is a design fault and not the fault of wheelchair user. If the present passage could accommodate the personal wheelchairs then aisle chairs would not be needed in its first place. Thus the users should not be penalised /charged for the design fault. It is recommended that for all future procurements of aircraft, the passage, toilets etc having access features should be invariably provided. Till then the aisle chairs should be provided without any costs.

5. The above charges under 6,4(b) also contradict para 9.1 (Assistance on the plane), which provides that all airlines should assist a passenger with disability to get to the toilet. Any PRM would eventually need an aisle chair for internal mobility including reaching toilet. It also contradicts para 4.8 which says "All airlines shall provide necessary assistance to PwDs/PRM who wish to travel alone without an escort.

6. Charges for Assistance in Disembarkation at point of transfer and /or destination: In para 7.7 the airline seeks to charge a nominal amount for request for assistance in baggage delivery and getting out of the airport. This is absolutely unnecessary and not acceptable. Any charge for assistance in getting the baggage delivered to a blind person, for example, would put him to disadvantage just because he can not see and needs help to locate his/ her baggage! Doesn't this amount to discrimination?

7. Complaint Procedure – The role of an external agency has not been provided. No time limit for complaint redressal has been given. Earlier, the complaints used to go to the DGCA, CCPD. Now in case of any infringement of the CAR, the user can access the managing body of airlines/airports only who have never in past done any better thing than apologising-sometimes in person and sometimes in public! Thus we feel that there could be a Grievance Handling Body consisting of members from all scheduled and non-scheduled airliners at a single window as it would be difficult to chase different airlines individually and one would shift the blame on the other in case failure of interline coordination is being reported. Also there should be a time limit for redressal of complaint failing which appeal to DGCA and CCPD should lie.

Subhash Chandra Vashishth
Posted by SC Vashishth at 6:19 AM

Source: http://dignifiedflyingfordisabled.blogspot.com:80/2008/05/dear-friends-finally-8th-draft-dated.html

2.6 Shipping

Highlights of Annual Report 2007-08

Cruise Shipping
Cruise shipping is a fast growing sector globally. As a departure from the concept of cargo and passenger ships, cruise is like a moving township studded with all state of art facilities that include all types of recreational activities. The idea is fast catching because journey on a cruise is not only pleasurable, but also comparatively free from sea travel health hazards. The global scenario for cruise shipping is picking up very fast, with an annual increment from 10-20% in the cruise ship fleet and passengers carried. Experience in the Caribbean, Latin American and South-East Asian countries indicate that huge amount of foreign exchange can be earned by providing the right policy environment and infrastructure for the growth of cruise shipping. India with its vast and beautiful coastline, virgin forests and undisturbed idyllic islands, long historical and cultural tradition of architecture, theatre and performing arts can be a fabulous tourist destination for western cruise tourists. With a view to encourage cruise shipping in India, Government is considering bringing out a comprehensive Cruise Shipping Policy.

Passenger Ship Survey
All passenger ships are subjected to survey of hull, machinery, equipment etc., during the construction and thereafter annually. On completion of survey, Certificates such as Passengers Ship Safety Certificate, Space Certificate, Special Trade Ship Safety Certificate, Exemption Certificate, 'A' Certificate and Certificate of Survey are issued.

Initiatives for People with Disability
The Annual Report (2007-08) has a chapter on 'Implementation of Disability Act, wherein, the vacancies filled-in in the disability quota is provided.

Emerging Issues

Ship as a mode of transport has hardly been discussed in the disability sector. However, it is an important mode of transport, particularly for people living in Andaman & Nicobar Island and Lakshadweep. Boats and ferries are used extensively to cross rivers and ferry through inland waters on a daily basis at various places, e.g. to go to school or work place. Moreover, cruises, boating,

shikaras are becoming very popular among tourists. These have to be made accessible for people with disabilities. Disabled-friendly facilities need to be included at ports/stations.

2.7 Tourism and Culture

A. Tourism:

The Tourism Ministry has sanctioned 165 new projects and utilised Rs. 460 crore in the current financial year for up-gradation of infrastructure facilities at important tourist destinations and is focussing on the development of destinations/circuits of national importance.

Capital subsidy for 43 budget category hotels and interest subsidy for 86 budget categories were authorised by the Ministry. 146 new hotels projects with 12623 rooms were approved besides proposals for foreign technical collaboration along with new cases of foreign direct investments. 'Incredible India Bed & Breakfast (under Gold & Silver Scheme)'- the Scheme facilitates availability of rooms at affordable cost for the tourists. Other kind of accommodations includes Budget hotels, Star hotels, Guest houses, Resorts, Heritage hotels etc.

Atithi Devo Bhava
The Ministry has launched several international and national campaigns to promote tourism in the country. The 'Atithi Devo Bhava' campaign also focuses on sensitisation and creating awareness amongst stakeholders and general public about the value of preservation of monuments and places of tourist interest.

Commonwealth Games and Infrastructure
There is an urgent requirement to meet the demand for additional rooms in wake of the Commonwealth games in 2010. The goal would be to reach at least 1,50,000 rooms of approved quality by 2010.

Infrastructure development holds the key to India's sustained growth in the tourism sector. Therefore, the Ministry of Tourism has been making efforts to develop quality tourism infrastructure at tourist destinations and circuits. Attractive Centrally Sponsored Schemes are offered to various players in this regard.

Tourism Products
The Ministry understands the potential that lie in medical tourism, adventure tourism, rural tourism, etc. It is taking all necessary steps to promote these in a major way.

Initiatives for Accessibility and Barrier-Free Environment
The Annual report (2007-08) lists the following work that it has done in the area of disability:

Guidelines
The Ministry has brought out Guidelines for the classification of apartments, hotels, timeshare resorts and guest-houses. The accommodation provider (applicant) needs to give information "if the accommodation has facilities for physically challenged people. The hotel guidelines clearly state that hotels and new projects have to adopt environment friendly practices and facilities for disabled people.

Hotel Classification
To conform to the expected standards for different classes of tourists, especially from the point of view of suitability of international tourist, the Ministry maintains a system of approval of hotel projects linking them to incentives and benefits. The classification under star system is undertaken by 'Hotel and Restaurant Approval and Classification Committee' set up by the Ministry.

Felicitation

The Ministry of Tourism presents National Tourism Awards to various segments of the travel and tourism industry every year. Facilities made for the physically challenged people is one of the criteria for the selection of the awards. Under the segment 'Private and Public Enterprises', the award is given to the best hotel that provides facilities for the physically disabled people. (http://tourism.gov.in/events/nta2007.pdf)

The National Award in the Private-Public category (2006-2007) enterprise providing facilities for physically challenged was conferred on ITC Hotel Windsor, Bangalore. (Source: PIB, http://pib.nic.in/release/release.asp?relid=35700)

Initiatives in the Eleventh Plan

Against an outlay of Rs. 2900 crore in the Tenth Five Year Plan (Central sector) an expenditure of Rs. 2635.67 crore (91%) has been incurred. The total projected Gross Budgetary Support (GBS) for Eleventh Plan for the Ministry of Tourism is Rs. 5156 crore (current price)

During the Eleventh Five Year Plan, the strategy for infrastructure development should be to select only 10 major Destinations and 6 Circuits on an annual basis. One of the goals of the Ministry is to create world-class infrastructure in the Eleventh Plan. The target is to attract 725 million and 812 million tourists in the year 2010 and 2011, respectively.

Announcement made by the Ministry

The Ministry of Tourism wants to tap the potential of this group (disabled people) for promotion of tourism destinations in the country. The Ministry believes that physically disabled and older persons are becoming viable group of consumers of travel, sports and other leisure oriented products and services.

The Ministry has made it mandatory that all tourist facilities, which are being created with Central Government financial assistance, should be barrier-free, said the Tourism Secretary, Mr. Shilabhadra Banerjee at a Training Workshop for Government managers and engineers organised with SWAYAM, a Delhi Based NGO. (Source PIB, 25 October 2008). *(http://www.accessibletourism.org/?i=enat.en.news.521) http://www.tipsfromthetlist.com/article3327.html*

B. Culture

Since Indian Independence, the crux of all culture development plans has been the preservation of cultural heritage with emphasis on the thread of continuity binding the dissimilarities into a synergistic whole.

Achievements in the Plan Periods

Modernisation of museums involved laying emphasis on digitisation and documentation of artworks as part of Plan activities and on strengthening of networking among central museums. The scheme of financial assistance for strengthening of regional and local museums has been revised with a view to widening its scope for assisting smaller museums. Successive Five Year Plans focused on preservation and development of heritage sites and monument complexes.

The National Archives of India (NAI) has been the custodian of Central Government records of enduring value for permanent preservation and use by administrators and scholars. Preservation and conservation of rare books and other documents is one of the chief activities of the National Library and Central Reference Library (Kolkata), Central Secretariat Library and Delhi Public Library (New Delhi), State Central Library (Mumbai), Thanjavur Maharaja Serofji Saraswati Mahal Library (TMSSML) (Thanjavur) and Raja Ram Mohun Roy Library Foundation (Kolkata), which are engaged in digitisation

of old books and manuscripts and retro-conservation of catalogues. Developing a National Bibliographic Database in electronic format to encourage resource sharing, networking and to improve reader services is the hallmark of modernisation activities in the library sector.

Achievements of Plan schemes have been substantial under the education and research fields. viz. Buddhist and Tibetan Institutions, National Museum Institute, Centenary and Memorials, Centre for Cultural Resources and Training (CCRT), etc. Other initiatives included building projects and construction activities at National Museum (New Delhi) and at National Gallery of Modern Art (Bangalore and New Delhi).

Under National Culture Fund (NCF), projects were undertaken in collaboration with private houses, viz. Shaniwarwara (Pune), Jnana Pravaha (Varanasi), Humayun's Tomb (Delhi), Durgapur Children's Society (WB), five heritage sites in five States in collaboration with Indian Oil Corporation, Taj Mahal (Agra) in collaboration with Taj Group of Hotels, and Jantar Mantar (New Delhi) in collaboration with APJ Group.

The thrust areas during the Tenth Plan included implementation of a comprehensive plan for the preservation of archaeological heritage and development of monument complexes; modernisation of museums. and preservation of archival heritage; promotion of classical, folk and tribal art crafts, and oral traditions.

Computerisation of museums with the assistance of National Informatics Centre (NIC), digitisation of collections, micro filming of manuscripts and the introduction of equipment for audio tours received special focus. Networking amongst Central museums, undertaking in-service staff training and organising exhibitions were other priority areas.

Major works for conservation and integrated development in respect of 15 monuments were taken up by the ASI. Collaboration with the corporate sector such as Taj Group of Hotels and the World Monument Fund was also initiated. Initiatives undertaken by the ASI included protection of 3667 monuments. Under Archaeology, the plan expenditure of Rs. 304.11 crore exceeded the Tenth Plan outlay of Rs. 284.83 crore by 7%.

The National Museum paid increased attention on modernising its permanent galleries. Three new galleries, viz., Nizam Jewellery Gallery, Folk and Art Gallery and Central Asian Antiquities were set up.

Priorities in the Eleventh Plan

The upkeep and maintenance of museums and archaeological sites will be considerably improved with introduction of modern technology and redeployment of existing staff. The possibility for outsourcing in areas like consultancy and maintenance needs to be examined. Public Private Partnership (PPP) models may be explored for development of monuments not protected by ASI with the involvement of States. Delhi should be developed as a heritage city by making some of its monuments world-class, preferably before 2010 Common wealth Games.

In the Eleventh plan it has been stated that the Ministry of Culture has been facing recurrent cuts in outlay due to poor spending during the first two quarters. In the field of art and culture, several schemes are being implemented without assessing the process and impact. Therefore, all the schemes will be evaluated.

Reference in the Eleventh Plan with respect to People with Disabilities

The development of Public Libraries in the Eleventh Plan includes Rural Public Libraries and provision for handicapped and under-privileged people in District Libraries. National, State/District Libraries will develop special collections and technological support for visually challenged and hearing impaired people.

Emerging Issues:

The issue of disability tourism as a concept did not exist in our country, about a decade ago. When Stephen Hawking came to India (in 2001), the issue of disabled people as tourists was brought to light by NCPEDP and also the fact that majority of the historical places in India are not disabled-friendly.   As a result of the advocacy, Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) announced a policy to make all heritage buildings barrier free. It is nine years since the policy announcement was made! It is a disappointment that the Annual Report/Website of Ministry of Culture has no mention about disability. Even today, the issue is being taken up in a piecemeal manner. The Tourism Ministry has taken some measures for disability, but it leaves much to be desired.

Tourism Policy
The National Tourism Policy (2002) does not address the issue of Accessibility and Barrier-free Environment.

Tourism Products
The initiatives should not just be restricted to making hotels accessible but also the tourism products like rural tourism, medical tourism, adventure tourism, etc.

Hotel Classifications & accessibility provisions
The Ministry of Tourism has a voluntary scheme for classification of fully operational hotels in categories. These classifications are made so as to equip Indian tourism sector to meet international standards. The 4 star, 5 star and 5 star deluxe hotels have some basic accessibility requirements that they need to comply with, in order to get the star rating from the Ministry. They have left 1,2 or 3 star hotels and other tourist accommodations.

Culture
Culture Ministry has undertaken various projects for modernisation of museums; digitisation and documentation of artworks; preservation of archaeological heritage and development of monument complexes in private partnership, education and research. None of these have disability access as part of it.

As per the Ministry of Tourism's 'Hotel Classification System' all 4 star, 5 star and 5 star deluxe hotels should have incorporated accessibility by January 1, 2004. A research conducted by AccessAbility, a leading Universal design-consulting firm in Delhi in 2008 shows the reality far from being so. The report makes the following observation:

- Ambiguous and inadequate accessibility requirements in the present Hotel Classification System - Considering that design layout for disabled must meet some minimum space requirements, the lack of these specifications in the rating criteria opens the doors for subjective interpretation by hoteliers thereby resulting in the 'facilities for physically challenged' guests that are actually unusable by the very client group these facilities are supposed to cater.
- Also the Hotel Classification System does not include fitness and entertainment areas that are bundled into the room tariff. Additionally these classifications do not adequately address needs of people with sensory impairments.
- Lack of accessible budget hotels – Presently the accessibility requirement of the Hotel Classification system apply only to the 4 star and 5 star hotels. Budget hotels and other accommodations too need to follow accessibility standards.

- Poor enforcement by the Ministry – The evaluation and auditing committee deputed by the Ministry for checking against the said classification before a hotel gets its star rating have no knowledge of accessibility for people with disabilities and hence are unable to check the disabled-friendliness of the various hotels.
- The exemption mechanism not specified – There may be instances where the existing structural limitations, especially in heritage hotels, make it difficult to cater to the needs of persons with disabilities. There is no exemption mechanism specified by which hoteliers may apply for to get a waver in such instances.
Source : Shivani Gupta, Access Ability –*(http://www.tipsfromthetlist.com/article3376.html*

It's a long walk (by Reema Sisodia)

The unpaved path always seems longer and harder. So appear the roads of India for the differently-abled traveller, or simply tourists with 'special needs'. While many international destinations are friendly towards these travellers, India it seems has a long way to trudge before it can become more sensitive.

"India still has a long way to go when it comes to serving disabled travellers. Insensitivity, lack of awareness in terms of facilities required by this segment and negligence are major cause for concern." This is the voice of Neenu Kewlani, who uses a wheelchair and is an activist fighting for the rights of the disabled. This includes fighting to provide them with seamless travel facilities.

Another activist Sunita Sancheti, who is paraplegic and uses a wheelchair as well, has her own story. "My parents were travelling abroad and they wanted to take me along as well. I spoke to big tour operators in India who unfortunately could not cater to my request for designing a disabled-friendly holiday. There was lack of information on their side regarding coach facilities; they requested us to hire cars, which was exorbitant. Finally my parents travelled while I had to stay back."

Both women had a harrowing experience on one of India's private full-service carriers just a day before this story went into print. The staff was completely unprepared to handle wheelchair-bound travellers on its flight.

Prem Subramaniam of IDFC, "I'm afraid India is very poorly prepared to address the requirements of these special travellers unless they are a part of an organised tour. Firstly, there is a total lack of sensitivity. Second, there is very poor training and this is true even for airlines. Wherever there is an attempt to offer special facilities, the effort stops at offering ramp access in a very limited way as though maneuvering a wheelchair is all that is required. Outside this the facilities for normal tourists itself leaves a lot to be desired, let alone those with special needs."

Subramaniam informs that it is mandatory in Britain to provide appropriate facilities, failing which there are denial of grants, subsidies, funding and inclusion in primary literature. "In most countries the effort starts with better design to address the needs of this segment by defining the challenges and creating facilities so that they are able to do this without having to draw attention to themselves or their needs. Government funding is not offered unless this has been addressed satisfactorily. Tourist information includes details of facilities and limitations at attractions. For instance, how can those who have hearing problems, vision or speech impairment or are unable to walk normally still enjoy a destination?" he questions.
Express Hospitality, 16th -30th September 2008
http://www.expresshospitality.com/20080930/management01.shtml

free2wheel.co.in, a travel portal with a difference

An information service clicked off by Shivani Gupta and her partners at AccessAbility, it hopes to encourage wheelchair users to get out and about. It has over 1,600 listings of places in Delhi and NCR - budget and star hotels, shopping malls, historical monuments, cafes/ restaurants/bars/pubs/nightclubs, currency exchange counters, tourist information centres. Each listing has an accessibility overview of the site.
The Hindu - Metro Plus, 8th September 2008;
http://www.hindu.com/mp/2008/09/08/stories/2008090850230300.htm

Budget Analysis

At present, there is no specific budget for disability in any of the Ministries concerned with Accessibility.

Eleventh Plan

The projected Gross Budgetary Support (at current prices) or various Ministries related to Accessibility in the Eleventh Plan is mentioned below.

Ministry of Urban Development: Total Projected is Rs. 12442.5 crore; JNNURM (for seven years, starting from 2005-06) is 50,000 crore.

Department of Road Transport & Highways: Rs. 81842.69 crore, which includes Rs. 448 crore for Road Safety.

Railways: Rs. 45822 crore.

Ministry of Housing & Urban Poverty Alleviation: Rs. 3687 crore, which includes Integrated Low Cost Sanitation Scheme Rs. 1750 crore.

Extract from Interim Railway Budget (2008-09)

- The Annual Plan of Rs.37,500 crore is the largest ever Annual Plan so far.
- New Lines - Rs.1,730 crore, Gauge conversion - Rs.2,489 crore, Electrification - Rs.626 crore, Metropolitan Transport Projects - Rs.650 crore.
- Track renewal - Rs.3,600 crore, Bridges - Rs. 600 crore, Signal & Telecommunication works - Rs. 1,520 crore, Road over/under bridges - Rs. 700 crore and manning of unmanned level crossings - Rs.600 crore.
- Passenger amenities - Rs. 852 crore, the highest so far.

Recommendations

The State needs to treat accessibility and barrier-free environment, just like issues relating to civic amenities. Most Ministries are not looking at accessibility as a policy matter. They are looking at disability in isolation and it is welfare/charity approach that is driving their work, resulting in tokenistic efforts. Disabled people should be considered as a stakeholder/target group of all developmental plans. Access is a multi-sectoral issue. Coordination and stricter monitoring is the need of the hour to achieve desirable results.

Approach of universal design should be followed while making developmental plans which will help all people, including disabled people. Following are some recommendation for promoting Accessibility:

Implementation of Eleventh Plan & UNCRPD

The mandates given in the Eleventh Five Year Plan have to be implemented.

In the Eleventh Plan, a firm four-pronged approach is necessary to: (i) delineate clear-cut responsibilities between the concerned Ministries/Departments; (ii) concerned Ministries/Departments to formulate detailed rules and guidelines within six months of approval of the Eleventh Plan; (iii) ensure that each concerned Ministry/Department shall reserve not less than 3% of their annual outlay for the benefit of disabled persons as enjoined in the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995; (iv) set up monitoring mechanisms at various levels and develop a review system so that its progress can be monitored on a regular and continuing basis

In the Eleventh Plan, a concerted effort should be made to make all public buildings and facilities such as schools, hospitals, public transport, and so on, compliant with the requirements of a barrier-free built environment. Towards this end, the building bye-laws, municipal and civic regulations, relevant codes for construction and design should incorporate the requirements of a barrier-free environment. Similarly, all shops/malls and similar places open to public, should be insisted upon to provide the facilities required for the disabled.

In the Eleventh Plan, a **National Centre to facilitate and support the development of universal design and barrier-free built environment will be established.**

The mandates of UNCRPD, given in Article 9 (Accessibility), 19 (Living independently and being included in the community) and 20 (Personal mobility) have to be implemented. (Details of the Articles in Annexure).

Urban Development

The Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) and The Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme for Small and Medium Towns (UIDSSMT) should include disability as an essential mandatory component.

Research studies to be undertaken by Town and Country Planning Organisation (TCPO) on universal design in order in build accessibility issues in all infrastructural developmental plans.

Ministry of Urban Development should ensure that Building Bye-Laws are adopted by all the States & Union Territories.

The Annual Report states, "All States have been asked to appoint an Officer in every District to bring to notice cases of non compliance to the concerned authorities". These Officers should be well trained in Access issues and their names should be made known so that disability sector can closely work with them. These Officers could be people with disabilities.

The CPWD guidelines need to be updated and revised for creating accessible buildings & facilities. These should be disseminated widely.

The National Building Code of India, developed by Bureau of Indian Standards, a national instrument providing guidelines for regulating the building construction activities across the country, needs to be updated and revised to cover all aspects of accessibility.

The Commonwealth Games 2010 is a good opportunity to make Delhi infrastructurally accessible to all, which will serve as a model for other cities. Concerted effort should be made to achieve the above vision.

The States should endeavour to make the entire transport system, road network, accessible to all disabled people. Buses, ticketing system, bus sheds to pedestrian paths and traffic management, all need to be made disabled-friendly.

The State should initiate 'Dial a Cab Service' for disabled people.

Be it at village Panchayat or at Urban Local Bodies, all their infrastructural initiatives should be filtered through the lens of accessibility.

Housing and Poverty alleviation

All HUDCO housing projects should incorporate basic accessibility standards.

The National Housing Policy places special emphasis on the housing needs of disabled people. Specific measures to be introduced in housing projects for disabled people in terms of accessibility and affordability

All States should have a scheme for preferential allotment of the land at concessional rate for disabled people as mandated by The Disability Act, 1995.

There should be guidelines for all large private builders to ensure basic accessibility for people with disabilities.

JNNURM's Basic Services to the Urban Poor and Inegrated Housing & Slum Development Progamme focus on providing adequate shelter for poor people in slums. These schemes should include disability as a component.

3-5% reservation should be provided to disabled people in all Housing schmes.

The Integrated Low Cost Sanitation Scheme that funds construction of latrines should have measures to meet the needs of disabled population.

Road Transport

National Urban Transport Policy should be revised to include the concerns and needs of disabled people.

A detailed guidelines/standards should be prepared to make public transport disabled-friendly, which can then be followed by the States.

Roads, footpaths, crossings, signals, subways etc, have to be made disabled-friendly. There should be a comprehensive plan for this purpose.

The road safety is a major concern for people with disability. There should be awareness drives to create awareness amongst the drivers of public & private transport, traffic police, etc. to ensure people with disability are not only provided the required support but are also accorded respect. Road Safety Campaigns could be organised to create greater awareness.

Bus Terminals, which are very chaotic, cause a lot of problem for people with visual and orthopaedic disabilities. Specific initiatives can be taken up to make Bus Terminals disabled-friendly.

No extra charges should be levied for wheelchairs and other aids used by people with disabilities in buses.

Automobile manufacturers should be provided incentives to produce disabled-friendly cars, which are cost effective.

Indian Railways

Up-gradation and modernisation plans of railway stations should include accessibility as an essential component.

The Annual Report of Indian Railways has mentioned that "Action Plans have been created to make stations accessible for disabled people". These should be made public and the disability sector should review them.

Guidelines should be prepared to make Stations accessible (including the amenities).

It should be ensured that all passenger amenities provided by the railways are useful and accessible for people with disability (from the drinking water taps to toilets to the cloak rooms, to information service/boards should be made disabled-friendly).

Indian Railways are planning green toilets in 36,000 coaches in XI Plan period at a cost of about Rs.4,000 crore. Similarly, there is a plan for having High Speed ALSTOM-LHB Coaches in Shatabdhi trains. When such large modification plans are being made, disability access should be an inbuilt feature in them.

It makes business sense to make Indian Railways accessible to people with disabilities. This will make journey comfortable for senior citizens, pregnant ladies, ailing people, etc. Therefore, Indian Railways should look into the issue from Universal Design point of view rather than making separate coaches disabled-friendly, which is quite discriminatory.

The vision should be that all coaches should be designed based on the principle of universal accessibility within a certain time frame. Till that time, the coach meant for disabled people should be in the middle, which is accessible. This should be reserved compartment. The AC 1st, 2nd & 3rd tier should also be made disabled friendly.

Research Design and Standards Organisation should focus on making entry and exit door, the steps, the toilets, taps etc. in all coaches accessible to all.

Awareness should be created for publicising facilities available for disabled people.

Indian Railways should devise a method which will enable disabled people to book ticket online. (One can give ID details online, which can be cross checked by T.C. at the time of the journey).

All Railway staff should be regularly sensitised on disability issues. The Customer Training Programme of Railways should include modules for interacting with disabled travellers.

All Sub-urban trains and Metro Trains should also be made disabled-friendly. (Metro Phase 2 in Delhi was a disappointment for disabled people. (Many stations are not disabled-friendly). Steps should be taken to ensure such mistakes do not happen in next phases and in the planning of Metro projects in other cities.

Civil Aviation

The Ministry of Civil Aviation should have clear policy/guidelines for all private airlines to ensure that they are disabled-friendly.

Civil Aviation could set up a Cell to ensure that air travel is made friendly to disabled passengers.

Staff indifference and callousness is the biggest put-off anywhere. What is required is a massive and continuous sensitisation drive from all airport/ all airline staff to all policy makers and implementers of the policy.

The issues raised on the DGCA's CAR Guideline on Carriage by air of Passengers with Disability (see the section 'Emerging Issues' in this Report) should be looked into and necessary modifications have to be made.

Disabled people should not be asked to sign Indemnity Bond, which is being done by certain low cost airlines.

People who use stretchers have to pay six times more. The Government needs to take a more considerate view on this matter. This proves to be a disadvantage for people with disability who use stretcher for mobility.

All websites of airlines should be accessible, so that people with disabilities can book their tickets online.

Regular audit and assessment of facilities for disabled people in airlines and airports should be undertaken.

Shipping

All passenger boats, cruise, ships, ports, etc. should be made accessible to disabled people.

Tourism

The National Tourism Policy (2002) does not address the issue of Accessibility & Barrier free Environment. This should be revised to include the needs of disabled tourists.

Tourism Ministry should have a policy and guidelines for making budget hotels accessible.

The tourist buses and trains, which are designed specifically for tourists should be made accessible to disabled people.

The Ministry should also focus on including accessibility features as part of adventure tourism, rural tourism, etc.

Tourism related websites should be accessible, as many tourists use website to access information. Tourism offices should also have Information in accessible formats. Services like Interpretation and other services (like personal assistance service) should be available for disabled tourists.

The 'Atithi Devo Bhava' campaign should also focus on sensitising all tourism professionals (direct and indirect stakeholders) on disability and accessibility issues.

All national and international campaigns to promote Indian tourism should include the issue of accessibility.

Culture

ASI has a policy to make all heritage buildings accessible. There should be a comprehensive plan for the same. Accessibility feature should be included in all the modernatisation and other initiatives being taken to preserve and conserve heritage buildings.

Major works for conservation and integrated development of monuments are being taken by ASI in collaboration with the corporate sector. The agreement between ASI & Corporate bodies should include accessibility as an important aspect of conservation/development work.

In the Eleventh Plan, there is a mention of development of Public Libraries, including Rural Public Libraries and "provision for handicapped and under-privileged in District Libraries". It also states a National Library Mission will be set up. National, State/District Libraries will develop special collections and technological support for visually challenged and hearing impaired people. This needs to be implemented in a comprehensive manner.

References

- **Latest Annual Report (2007-08) of the following Ministries:**
    - Ministry of Civil Aviation
    - Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation
    - Ministry of Railways (Annual Report and Account 2006-07)
    - Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
    - Ministry of Tourism
    - Ministry of Urban Development

    - Department of Shipping (2007-08)
    - Department of Road Transport & Highways (2007-08).
    - Urban Transport Policy (2006)
    - National Tourism Policy (2002)
    - http://www.dda.org.in/(DDA website)
    - www.cpwd.nic.in (CPWD website)
    - http://urbanindia.nic.in (Urban Development Ministry)
    - www.incredibleindia.org (Tourism Ministry)
    - http://ccdisabilities.nic.in (CCPD)
    - http://planningcommission.gov.in/ (Planning Commission of India)

Annexure

ARTICLES IN THE UNCRPD RELATED TO ACCESS TO BUILT ENVIRONMENT & MEANS OF TRANSPORT

Article 9 - Accessibility
1. To enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas. These measures, which shall include the identification and elimination of obstacles and barriers to accessibility, shall apply to, inter alia:

   a) Buildings, roads, transportation and other indoor and outdoor facilities, including schools, housing, medical facilities and workplaces;
   b) Information, communications and other services, including electronic services and emergency services.

2. States Parties shall also take appropriate measures:

   a) To develop, promulgate and monitor the implementation of minimum standards and guidelines for the accessibility of facilities and services open or provided to the public;
   b) To ensure that private entities that offer facilities and services which are open or provided to the public take into account all aspects of accessibility for persons with disabilities;
   c) To provide training for stakeholders on accessibility issues facing persons with disabilities;
   d) To provide in buildings and other facilities open to the public signage in Braille and in easy to read and understand forms;
   e) To provide forms of live assistance and intermediaries, including guides, readers and professional sign language interpreters, to facilitate accessibility to buildings and other facilities open to the public;
   f) To promote other appropriate forms of assistance and support to persons with disabilities to ensure their access to information;
   g) To promote access for persons with disabilities to new information and communications technologies and systems, including the Internet;
   h) To promote the design, development, production and distribution of accessible information and communications technologies and systems at an early stage, so that these technologies and systems become accessible at minimum cost.

Article 19 - Living independently and being included in the community
States Parties to the present Convention recognise the equal right of all persons with disabilities to live in the community, with choices equal to others, and shall take effective and appropriate measures to facilitate full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of this right and their full inclusion and participation in the community, including by ensuring that:

a) Persons with disabilities have the opportunity to choose their place of residence and where and with whom they live on an equal basis with others and are not obliged to live in a particular living arrangement;
b) Persons with disabilities have access to a range of in-home, residential and other community

support services, including personal assistance necessary to support living and inclusion in the community, and to prevent isolation or segregation from the community;

c) Community services and facilities for the general population are available on an equal basis to persons with disabilities and are responsive to their needs

Article 20 - Personal mobility

States Parties shall take effective measures to ensure personal mobility with the greatest possible independence for persons with disabilities, including by:

a) Facilitating the personal mobility of persons with disabilities in the manner and at the time of their choice, and at affordable cost;
b) Facilitating access by persons with disabilities to quality mobility aids, devices, assistive technologies and forms of live assistance and intermediaries, including by making them available at affordable cost;
c) Providing training in mobility skills to persons with disabilities and to specialist staff working with persons with disabilities;
d) Encouraging entities that produce mobility aids, devices and assistive technologies to take into account all aspects of mobility for persons with disabilities.