



# MANIFESTO

For and By  
**Citizens with Disabilities**

**WE ARE > 1,00,00,000 VOTERS**

**NOTHING WITHOUT US**



### **Envisioned by**

- National Disability Network (NDN)
- National Committee on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (NCRPD)

### **Editorial Team**

- Arman Ali
- Rajiv Rajan
- Rama Chari
- Smitha Sadasivan
- Sumeet Parikshit
- Akshay Jain
- Vamika Gupta

### **Curated By**

National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled people (NCPEDP)

### **Disclaimer**

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## KEY DEMANDS

1

### Budgetary Allocation

5% budgetary allocation for Disability.

2

### Health Insurance

Affordable and Accessible health insurance policies for all persons with disabilities.

3

### Accessibility

Accessible & Inclusive Public and private buildings, products, services, public transportation facilities and communication systems.

4

### Social Security

One Nation One Pension standard of Rs. 5000 per month for all persons with disabilities.

5

### Socio-political Inclusion

Amend Article 15 of the Constitution of India to include Disability.

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5% reservation at all levels of governance

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Appointment of Persons with Disabilities in Rajya Sabha nominated by the President of India

6

### Economic Participation

“Access to Work” for small, large and medium scale enterprises.

7

### Climate Change

National Mission on Climate Change for Vulnerable Communities, including people with disabilities.

8

### Gender

To incentivize early technology adoption, aligning with the Digital India initiative, we will establish a sub-scheme within ADIP to provide digital literacy and smartphone access for girls with disabilities upon completing secondary education/matriculation.

9

### Sports

Accessible & Inclusive Sports Infrastructure for Para Athletes across the country.

10

### Education

Enhance enrollment of children with disabilities, targeting a parity with National Average by 2029.



## INTRODUCTION

**Citizens with Disabilities form 2.21% of population of India i.e. 26.8 million people** as per Census 2011. There are **more than 1 crore** registered voters, as per the Election Commission of India. It is essential that voices of **persons with disabilities are heard** in the discussions around the discourse 2024 General Elections. This is not only because they represent sizeable votes but, more importantly, because they are a large consumer of goods and services and thus, contributors to socio-economic development and GDP of India. We, The Citizens with Disabilities of India **demand that all Political Parties consider us part of the development agenda**. They adopt the following points as a prominent part of their manifesto for the 2024 General Elections.

**India having one of the largest population of persons with disabilities worldwide**, has attained an important status in global scenario to set benchmarks for Disability Inclusion. We were one of the first countries to **sign and ratify the UNCRPD and have a strong legislation, the Rights to Persons with Disabilities Act** enforced since 2017 to work on measures promoting **Accessibility, Inclusive Education and Employment, Rehabilitation Measures, Reasonable Accommodation, Non -Discrimination, Equal Opportunity Policy etc.** Multiple Ministries within Central and State Government have worked towards setting standards of accessibility under Accessible India campaign; National Education Policy ensuring inclusive education. We, more than 1 crore voters **need affirmative action!**



### Budgetary Allocation

The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities has a proportional outlay of only 0.02% out of the total budget in recent years. A dedicated mission mode announcement in a scheme like for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) to the tune of Rs 24000 crores is need of the hour for an entire department having marginally less allocation. Every ministry must ensure disability inclusion in all kinds of procurement & shall be budgeted in their annual budget. Accessibility & Inclusion should be added to the key priorities for every ministry. Thus, we demand all the political parties to commit:

- **“We aim to earmark at least 5% of budgetary allocation for Disability Inclusion and release disability budget statement like Women’s and Children’s Budget Statement. In the next 5 years, we will raise this budgetary allocation to Rs. 50,000 crores by adding Rs. 10,000 crores to it every year.”**



### Health Insurance

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that the out-of-pocket expenditure on health in India is as high as 65% (percentage of the current health expenditure) compared to the world average of 32%. These numbers are even higher for persons with disabilities because of the **additional cost associated with living** with a disability. To this end, the health insurance services provided by private and government insurance companies don’t serve the purpose. Notwithstanding the directive issued by IRDAI, prevailing challenges persist within the insurance landscape, encompassing elevated pricing structures, insufficient training for insurance agents, and disparities in risk assessment methodologies. Further, there exists an acute lack of awareness for government insurance schemes including Ayushman Bharat and the NIRMAYA Scheme. Thus, we demand all the political parties to introduce a health insurance scheme in line with Ayushman Bharat Scheme for Persons with Disabilities.

- **“By 2029, we will ensure that all private and government insurance companies provide affordable and accessible health insurance policies with inclusive, relevant, and tailored health coverage for all persons with disabilities. Coverage will encompass rehabilitation, orthopedic, and paramedical expenses, as well as assistive technology devices.”**



## Accessibility

Despite the extensive **Accessible India Campaign** and existing legal frameworks, such as the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Guidelines, the Harmonized Guidelines and **Section 45 of the RPwD Act 2016** mandating disability-friendly infrastructure, both physical and digital, across urban and rural areas nationwide, effective implementation remains elusive. This shortfall erects barriers impeding the independence and mobility of the disabled community. Thus, we demand all the political parties to commit

- **“We will make sure that all existing public and private buildings, products, services, public transportation facilities and communication systems are made completely accessible within three years following the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model.”**
- **To include accessibility as part of mandatory compliances for all businesses.**
- **“By 2026, we will issue and enact comprehensive disability inclusive guidelines for all app-based cab aggregators across India as well as ensure that they are also integrated into the current Motor Vehicle Aggregator Guidelines, 2020.”**



## Social Security

The cost of living with Disability in India leads to additional household expense in the range of 12% - 26%. With 70% of disabled children excluded from schooling, only 34 lakh out of 1.3 crore eligible for employment, and diminishing support for self-employment, disabled individuals increasingly depend on welfare assistance. Thus, we demand all the political parties to commit:

- **“We will standardize the National Social Assistance program, by establishing a one nation one pension standard of Rs. 5000 per month in Direct Benefit Transfer Mode and eliminating the current wide-ranging monthly allowances from INR 100 to INR 3200 across states.”**
- **“We will ensure priority linkage of persons with disabilities in social security schemes like PM Awas Yojana, MGNREGA etc by all concerned ministries.”**



## Socio-Political Inclusion

The recent guidelines of Election Commission of India for political parties demonstrate the lack of sensitization in the society towards mainstreaming disability. Our heritage highlighting characters like “Dhritrashtra”, “Ashtavakra”, “Shakuni” or “Manthra”; irrespective of their portrayal were eminent participants of the society and so should be status of persons with disabilities in modern India. Thus, we demand all the political parties to commit:

- **“We will raise the issue of amending Article 15 of the Constitution of India to check discrimination against persons with disabilities as a Fundamental Right protected by the Judiciary ensuring social inclusion.”**
- **“We will provide 5% reservation at all levels of governance in India to further political inclusion of marginalized communities like 73rd and 74th amendment.”**
- **“We will promote inclusivity in governance by advocating for the appointment of at least one individual with a disability as part of the nominations outlined in Article 80 of the Constitution.”**



## Economic Participation

Half of the persons with disabilities in India are employable and yet only less than 1% form part of top 50 Nifty companies and highest proportion of intake in PSUs stand at 2.21%. The statistics are similar with private companies as well, implying that the representation of people with disabilities in the workforce is way below the mandated 4%. This has resulted in an untapped talent pool of disabled people who have potential to contribute to the economy. Thus, we demand all the political parties to commit:

- **“We will ensure that all backlog vacancies across ministries & departments shall be filled by 2027.”**
- **“We will introduce an incentive scheme called, “Access to Work” for small, large and medium scale enterprises that will support reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities.”**
- **“We will ensure inclusion of persons with disabilities in all the Schemes under the Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Programs of Ministry of MSME, MoRD including short term and long-term courses and fulfilment of 4% reservation in accordance with the RPwD Act 2016.”**



## Climate Change

Persons with disabilities, despite contributing the least and being most vulnerable to climate change, are at the forefront of climate change impacts and are subject to eco-ableist climate action that often overlooks their disability-specific needs in accordance with Sustainable Development Goal 13. The best way to protect people from climate change is by tackling inequities and understanding climate change acts as a “threat multiplier” having a domino effect on disabled people due to greater exposure, higher sensitivity and lower ability. Thus, we demand all the political parties to commit:

- **“We will form a dedicated National Mission on Climate Change for Vulnerable Communities, including people with disabilities under the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC), 2008 for umbrella protection.”**
- **“We will ensure District Disaster Management Authority undertakes real-time disaggregated data collection for persons with disabilities across all districts in India in accordance with Section 8 of the RPwD Act 2016.”**



## Education

Inclusive education and healthcare are integral components of a dignified life for individuals with disabilities. The absence of inclusivity in these areas disproportionately impacts people with disabilities, particularly those facing intersectional challenges, leading to increased vulnerability to marginalization. Thus, it is crucial to formulate policies that acknowledge and address these factors during the design and implementation of schemes. Thus, we demand all the political parties to commit:

- **“We will execute a data-driven strategy to enhance enrollment and facilitate the successful completion of mainstream schooling for children with disabilities, targeting to bring it in line with National Gross Enrollment Rate which was 28.4% in 2022.”**



## Sports

The current trends reveal that the Interim budget allocation for 2024-25 has witnessed the lowest allocation in recent years to INR 25 crores. This is despite the marvellous show put up by para athletes in the recent paralympic 2023. With sports being a powerful medium to support inclusion by transforming social behaviours and promote well being of persons with disabilities, it is imperative that adequate investment is made in it. Thus, we demand all the political parties to commit:

- **“Set up a policy to recognize para at par with nondisabled athletes and ensure that all the sports infrastructure is made accessible on the universal design.”**
- **“We will establish an international level state of art Centre for Disability Sports for sportspersons with disabilities in 5 major districts of India, accessible as per the RPwD Act.”**



## Gender

Women in highly populated states like Uttar Pradesh face significant barriers in accessing technology, particularly mobile phones. The digital exclusion among women with disabilities in Low and Middle-Income countries is exacerbated by their perceived low utility of mobile phones, impacting awareness and ownership. Key barriers include literacy, skills, safety, security, and affordability. Achieving the impetus for e-governance requires addressing these challenges to empower tech-enabled “Naari”. Thus, we demand all the political parties to commit:

- **“To incentivize early technology adoption, aligning with the Digital India initiative, we will establish a sub-scheme within ADIP to provide digital literacy and smartphone access for girls with disabilities upon completing secondary education/matriculation.”**
- **“To develop & implement policies that promote equal participation, access to health, primary as well as higher education & protection from violence against women with disabilities.”**



**NATIONAL CENTRE FOR  
PROMOTION OF EMPLOYMENT  
FOR DISABLED PEOPLE**

Developed by

**National Disability  
Network (NDN)**

**National Committee on the Rights of  
Persons with Disabilities (NCRPD)**

National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP)

E - 150, East of Kailash, New Delhi 110 065.

Phone: 011-26221275/76; 011-49122868 Mobile: 7303944839

E-mail: [secretariat.ncpedp@gmail.com](mailto:secretariat.ncpedp@gmail.com)/ [secretariat@ncpedp.org](mailto:secretariat@ncpedp.org)

[www.ncpedp.org](http://www.ncpedp.org) [@ncpedp\\_india](https://x.com/ncpedp_india) [f @NCPEDP](https://www.facebook.com/NCPEDP) [in @ncpedp](https://www.linkedin.com/company/ncpedp)