



World Health Organization  
Collaborating Centre for  
Prevention of Blindness

Meera & L B Deshpande  
Centre for Sight Enhancement  
&

Dr P R K Prasad Centre  
for Rehabilitation of  
Blind and Visually Impaired

**L V Prasad Eye Institute**  
L V Prasad Marg, Banjara Hills  
Hyderabad, INDIA

## Contents

- Rights of the Visually Impaired
- Schemes and Concessions for Persons with Visual Impairment
- Rights of Persons with Disability under the Disabilities Act, 1995

## Rights of the Visually Impaired

It has been estimated that India has over 90 million people with disabilities. Of these 12 million are blind, 28.5 million have low vision, 12 million speech and hearing defects, 6 million are orthopaedically handicapped, 24 million mentally retarded, 7.5 million are mentally ill, and 1.1 million have been cured of leprosy (NSSO – 1991).

While disability can be prevented and controlled to some extent it cannot be totally eradicated. Today the expectations of the disabled people in India, like in other progressive countries of the world, are higher than ever before. Instead of pity and charity they demand and win their civil rights.

Planning and implementing a range of services aimed at making them independent in all respects can help restore the rights and dignity of the disabled people. The Government of India has developed national, regional and district level support centers to provide services to effectively meet their requirements for aids and appliances, education, training, employment and other suitable rehabilitation services. Both state and central Governments offer concessions and other facilities to these persons, such as integrated education schemes, scholarships and fellowships for education and vocational training, job reservation in the Government sector, and economic assistance like rebate in income tax, loans at soft interest rates, travel concessions, and poverty alleviation programs for disabled persons.



◀ Earning his own livelihood

A volunteer makes audio tapes ▶



## Guidelines for evaluation of visual disability and procedure for certification

Categories of Visual Disability (with correction)

| Category             | Better eye                                  | Worse eye                                   | Percentage impairment |
|----------------------|---|---|-----------------------|
| Category 0           | 6/9-6/18                                    | 6/24 to 6/36                                | 20%                   |
| Category I           | 6/18-6/36                                   | 6/20 to Nil                                 | 40%                   |
| Category II          | 6/40-4/60 or field of vision 10°-20°        | 3/60 to Nil                                 | 75%                   |
| Category III         | 3/60 to 1/60 or field of vision 10°         | F.C. at 1 ft. to Nil                        | 100%                  |
| Category IV          | F.C. at 1 ft. to Nil or field of vision 10° | F.C. at ft. to Nil                          | 100%                  |
| Persons with one eye | 6/6   | F.C. at 1 ft. to Nil or field of vision 10° | 30%                   |

Note: FC: Finger Counting

Source: No. 16-18/96-N.I.I, Government of India, **Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment**, New Delhi (India), Dated August 28, 1998

## Schemes and Concessions for Persons with Visual Impairment

### Railways

| Class                    | First | Second | Sleeper |
|--------------------------|-------|--------|---------|
| Percentage of concession | 75    | 75     | 75      |
| Season Ticket            | 50    | 50     | —       |

### Air Travel

Indian Airlines allows 50% concessional fare to blind persons on a single journey or a single fare for a round trip on all domestic flights. Escorts have to pay the full fare.

### Postage

'Blind literature' packets are exempted from payment of the following fees besides being exempt from payment of postage: registration fee, fee for acknowledgement and fee for the attested copy of the receipt.

### Telecommunication

Rental rebate - 50% of the normal rental  
Advance rental - 50% of the annual advance rental and bi-monthly rental as applicable to a private subscriber.

### Customs Concessions

The Central Government exempts goods from customs duty when imported into India by handicapped or disabled persons for their personal use. (Source: Ministry of Finance, Department of Revenue).

### Conveyance Allowance

Central Government employees on regular salaries would be granted conveyance allowance at 5% of the basic pay subject to a maximum of Rs 100 per month. (Source: Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure)

### Income Tax Concessions

Deductions in respect of expenditure incurred by an individual under sections (1) 80 DD, 80 V, and 88 B.

### Dealerships & Agencies from oil companies

Award of retail outlets, 2 or 3 wheeler outlets, kerosene-LDO dealerships and LPG distributorships.

### Reservation of Jobs

As per the order of the Government of India, reservation of 3% in jobs has been made in Group 'C' and Group 'D' posts for physically handicapped persons; of this 1% is reserved exclusively for the blind.

### Assistance for Purchase or Fitting of Aids and Appliances

| Total income       | Amount of assistance       |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Up to Rs 1200      | Full cost of the aid       |
| Rs 1201 to Rs 2500 | 50% of the cost of the aid |

### Family Pension

Handicapped children shall be eligible for family pension even if they have been born after the retirement of the Government servant from a marriage solemnized after retirement.

### Unemployment Allowance

The State Government provides unemployment allowance to persons with disabilities.

### Assistance for Self Employment

All State Governments and Union Territories provide vocational training and loan with certain percentage of subsidy assistance to the target people for self-employment.

### Pension for Old Age

Most State Governments in India provide pension to the visually impaired in the range of Rs 60 to Rs 200 per month.

### Bank Loans

All nationalized banks are required to give loans to visually impaired persons at a differential interest rate of 4.5 percent for a value of up to Rs 7,500.

### Subsidies

The Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP) has provisions to give a subsidy of up to 67 percent on loans given by nationalized banks and Government institutions to visually impaired persons.

## Integrated Education

Visually impaired children studying in integrated schools are eligible for books and stationery allowance, uniform allowance, transport allowance, and reader allowance.

## Educational concessions in CBSE board examinations

Exemption from examinations in the third language; permission to use an amanuensis and an additional 60 minutes time for each external examination.

## Organizations for the welfare of the blind

1. LV Prasad Eye Institute, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh ([www.lvpei.org](http://www.lvpei.org))
2. National Institute for the Visually Handicapped, Dehradun, Uttaranchal ([www.nivh.org](http://www.nivh.org))
3. Aravind Eye Hospital, Madurai, Tamil Nadu ([www.aravind.org](http://www.aravind.org))
4. Blind People's Association, Ahmedabad, Gujarat ([www.bpaindia.org](http://www.bpaindia.org))
5. National Association for the Blind, Mumbai, Maharashtra ([www.nabindia.org](http://www.nabindia.org))
6. Sri Ramakrishna Mission, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu
7. National Federation of the Blind, New Delhi ([nfblindia\\_mlm@hotmail.com](mailto:nfblindia_mlm@hotmail.com))
8. All India Confederation of the Blind, New Delhi ([aicbdelhi@yahoo.com](mailto:aicbdelhi@yahoo.com))
9. Rehabilitation Council of India, New Delhi ([www.rehabcouncil.nic.in](http://www.rehabcouncil.nic.in))

## Sources

1. Kundu C K et al. (2000) Status of disability in India, Rehabilitation Council of India, New Delhi
2. Sobti R. A Handbook – Schemes for Children with Disabilities: Role of the Panchayati Raj Institutions; Government of India
3. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment ([www.socialjustice.nic.in](http://www.socialjustice.nic.in))



Staff try to stimulate motor skills of a child

## Highlights

- The Vision Rehabilitation Center has added a new component – a Braille Library for the visually impaired and blind.
- Mr Praveen Gottipalli, NRI from USA, has made a commitment to match his personal annual contribution of \$5000 with an additional \$5000 from his company every year.
- The National Orientation Module for optometrists program, organized by the National Institute for the Visually Handicapped, Regional Centre, Chennai, was held from January 20-21, 2005, in collaboration with LVPEI, Hyderabad. It was attended by 30 delegates.
- The 12th Low Vision Awareness (LAP) program supported by Sir Ratan Tata Trust, Mumbai, was organized from March 18-20, 2005. Sixteen persons from across the country participated in it.
- Dr Sarfaraz Khan and Ms Vijaya Kumari received the ISLRR travel fellowship award for Vision 2005 to be held in London from April 4-7, 2005.

## Low Vision Awareness Program

September 23 - 25, 2005

## Short term fellowship program in Low Vision Care

Two-month programs for ophthalmologists and optometrists begin on January 1, April 1, and July 1, 2005. The programs are supported by the Sir Ratan Tata Trust, Mumbai, India.



For details contact :

**Dr Sarfaraz Ali Khan**  
Director

**VISION REHABILITATION CENTRES**

**Ph: 91 40 3061 2820, 2354 2790**

**email: sarfaraz@lvpei.org**

## Rights of Persons with Disability under the Disabilities Act, 1995

1. Right to equal opportunities on par with the non-disabled
2. Right to protection of their legal rights
3. Right to full participation in the daily affairs of life at par with the non-disabled
4. Persons with disability have been statutorily recognized by this Act and the various forms of disability have been given legal definition.
5. Persons with disabilities have the right to be taken care of and rehabilitated in the mainstream of life, and the Government and other authorities and establishments covered by the Act have an obligation to fulfill their duties towards them.
6. It is the duty of the Central and State Governments to take preventive steps so that the occurrence of disabilities is arrested. They should provide training to the staff at primary health centers, improve hygiene, health and sanitation measures, screen children at least once a year, identify those at risk, provide prenatal, perinatal and postnatal care of mother and child, and create awareness among people on the causes and measures to prevent disability.
7. Every child with disability is entitled to free education in an appropriate environment up to the age of 18 years. The Government should set up special schools for imparting education to children with disabilities, promote their integration into normal schools, and provide them opportunities for vocational training.
8. Children who have studied up to the fifth class can continue their education as part-time students through open schools or open universities, and are entitled to special books and equipment free of cost from the Government.
9. It is the Government's duty to develop new assistive devices, teaching aids and special teaching material so that these children have equal opportunities in education. The Government should set up teacher training institutions for teaching children with disabilities, prepare comprehensive education schemes, provide transport facilities for attending school, provide books, uniforms and other material, give scholarships, restructure the curricula and provide amanuensis for blind students.
10. There should be reservation of posts for persons with disability up to one percent each for people with blindness, impaired hearing or cerebral palsy. These posts will be identified by the Government every three years. Unfilled vacancies can be carried forward to the next year.
11. A Special Employment Exchange for persons with disability seeking jobs shall be set up by the Government.
12. All Government educational institutions and aided institutions shall reserve up to 3% seats for persons with disabilities. Vacancies are to be reserved in poverty alleviation schemes. Employers are also to be given incentives to ensure that 5% of the workforce is composed of persons with disability.
13. Persons with disabilities will also be entitled to preferential allotment of land at concessional rates for housing and for rehabilitation purposes.
14. There shall be no discrimination towards them in transport facilities, traffic signals, or built-in environments. Neither shall there be any discrimination in matters of government employment.
15. The Government will regulate recognition of institutions for persons with disability, especially those with severe disabilities.
16. The Chief Commissioner and the State Commissioners will look into complaints with respect to matters relating to deprivation of rights of such persons.
17. The Government and local authorities shall undertake rehabilitation of persons with disability, grant aid to non-Government organizations; devise insurance schemes as well as provide unemployment allowance for them.

Those who avail or attempt to avail benefits meant for persons with disability in a fraudulent manner are punishable with imprisonment of up to 2 years with payment of fine up to Rs 20,000.

**You can help the Vision Rehabilitation Centres of L V Prasad Eye Institute in several areas, such as discovering basic causes and treatment strategies for eye disease through research, restoring the vision of a poor patient, or helping to expand the frontiers of ophthalmology.**

**Contributions to the Hyderabad Eye Institute or the Hyderabad Eye Research Foundation are tax deductible. Donations above Rs 250 are exempt under Section 80G of the Income Tax Act, 1961 for Hyderabad Eye Institute and under section 35(i) (ii) for Hyderabad Eye Research Foundation.**

**You Can  
Make A  
Difference**

**For more information please contact :**

**VISION REHABILITATION CENTRES**

**L V Prasad Eye Institute**

**L V Prasad Marg, Banjara Hills**

**Hyderabad 500 034, India**

**Ph: (091) 040 3061 2821, 2354 2790 Fax: (091) 040 2354 8271**

**email: sarfaraz@lvpei.org Web Site: www.lvpei.org**