

President will Present National Award for Divyangjan Empowerment - 2017 on International Day of Persons With Disabilities

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On the occasion of 'International Day of Persons with Disabilities' i.e. 3rd December, 2017, the President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind will present the "National Award for Divyangjan Empowerment-2017" to Individuals, Institutions, Organisations, State/District etc for their outstanding achievements and work done towards empowerment of Persons with Disabilities at a function in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi tomorrow. The function will be organized by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. On this occasion, Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment, Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot, Ministers of State for Social Justice and Empowerment, Shri Krishan Pal Gurjar, Shri Vijay Sampla and Shri Ramdas Athawale will also grace the occasion.

On International Day of Persons with Disabilities i.e. 3rd December, the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment presents National Awards to Individuals, Institutions, Organisations, State/District etc for their outstanding achievements and work done towards empowerment of Persons with Disabilities.

The National Awards will be presented in 14 main categories as given below :-

- I. Best Employee/Self Employed with disabilities;
- II. (a) Best Employers & (b) Best Placement Officer or Agency;
- III. (a) Best Individual and (b) Best Institution working for the Cause of Persons with Disabilities;
- IV. Role Model;
- V. Best Applied Research or Innovation or Product Development aimed at improving the life of persons with Disabilities;
- VI. Outstanding Work in the Creation of Barrier-free Environment for the Persons with Disabilities;
- VII. Best District in Providing Rehabilitation Services;
- VIII. Best State Channelizing Agency of National Handicapped Federation Development Corporation;
- IX. Outstanding Creative Adult Persons with Disabilities;
- X. Best Creative Child with Disabilities;
- XI. Best Braille Press;
- XII. Best "Accessible" Website;
- XIII. Best State in promoting empowerment of persons with disabilities; and
- XIV. Best sports person with disability.

According to Census 2011, there are 2.68 crore persons with disabilities in our country who exhibit great diversity in terms of quantum of disability as well as types of disabilities. To give focussed attention to the schemes and programmes for empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, a new Department under the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment came into existence during the year 2012. Since then, a number of new schemes and programmes for the empowerment of persons with disabilities have been added. On the other hand, the financial outlay for the department is also going up every year. The existing schemes of the department have been reviewed and in case of many modifications have been made. Receiving of applications under two major scheme is on-line and the same are processed, funds sanctioned through the electronic mode.

The history of National Awards goes back to 1969, when Awards in only two categories were instituted by the Government of India with the objective to focus public attention on issues concerning persons with disabilities and to promote their mainstreaming in society. The National Awards for empowerment of persons with disabilities have been notified in the year 2013. Now there are 14 broad categories for individuals and institutions consisting of 58 awards. This year, an advertisement was issued by the Department in July 2017 with the last date up to 15th August. However, on receipt of representations the last date was extended up to 10th September. 984 applications were received which were shortlisted by Four screening committees constituted for the purpose. The National Selection Committee met on two dates i.e. 10th November, and 16th November, 2017 to finalise the list. This year, 52 awards to individuals and institutions are being conferred. The awards consist of a certificate to each, and medal or shield in some categories as also with cash component amounting to Rs. 43.50 Lakhs.

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