Society & Social Justice · GS - II

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 remains only a legal document without intense sensitisation of government functionaries and citizens regarding disability. Comment.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2022	GS - II	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 provides a rights-based framework for equality, accessibility, education, employment and non-discrimination. However, social stigma, inadequate awareness, inaccessible infrastructure and weak implementation prevent persons with disabilities from fully exercising their legal rights.

Model Answer

Introduction

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, replaced the earlier 1995 legislation and expanded recognised disabilities from seven to twenty-one. Its effectiveness depends on public awareness and institutional implementation.

Body

Why Sensitisation Matters

1. Changing Social Attitudes: Awareness can challenge stereotypes, discrimination and the belief that disability is solely an individual limitation rather than a social and accessibility concern.

2. Responsive Administration: Trained officials can implement disability certificates, reservations, grievance mechanisms and welfare entitlements more effectively.

3. Accessible Public Services: Sensitisation encourages inclusive schools, workplaces, transport systems and government offices.

4. Respect for Dignity: Citizens and institutions must recognise the autonomy, capabilities and equal rights of persons with disabilities.

Implementation Gaps

Physical and digital barriers, shortages of trained professionals, inadequate accessibility audits and limited awareness of legal remedies undermine the Act. Persons with disabilities may also face difficulties accessing education, employment and healthcare.

Way Forward

Disability-awareness training should be mandatory for public officials, teachers and service providers. Universal design, accessible digital platforms, effective grievance redressal and consultation with persons with disabilities must guide implementation.

Conclusion

The Act is an important legal foundation, but legislation alone cannot guarantee inclusion. Sustained sensitisation, accessible infrastructure and accountable institutions are necessary to convert legal rights into everyday equality.

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