Society & Social Justice · GS - II

Does the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 ensure effective mechanism for empowerment and inclusion of the intended beneficiaries in the society? Discuss

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2017	GS - II	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

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Answer Hint

Rights-based approach; disability inclusion; reasonable accommodation; reservation; accessibility; implementation gaps

Model Answer

Introduction

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, replaced the earlier 1995 legislation and aligned India's framework more closely with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Measures Supporting Empowerment

- **Expanded coverage:** The Act recognises 21 specified disabilities, widening legal protection.
- **Equality and non-discrimination:** It prohibits discrimination and requires reasonable accommodation.
- **Education:** It provides for inclusive education and safeguards for children with benchmark disabilities.
- **Employment:** It provides 4% reservation in government establishments for persons with benchmark disabilities.
- **Accessibility:** It requires accessibility standards for public buildings, transport and information.

- **Institutional safeguards:** It provides for disability commissioners and mechanisms for addressing violations.

Implementation Challenges

- Public infrastructure and digital services remain inaccessible in many locations.
- Awareness of rights and grievance mechanisms is limited.
- Shortages of trained teachers, support personnel and assistive technologies restrict inclusion.
- Enforcement and monitoring vary across States.
- Employment and social participation remain constrained by stigma and workplace barriers.

Way Forward

Improve enforcement, provide accessible infrastructure, strengthen inclusive education, expand assistive technology and involve persons with disabilities in policy design.

Conclusion

The Act provides a strong rights-based framework, but legislation alone cannot ensure inclusion. Adequate funding, effective enforcement and changing social attitudes are essential for meaningful empowerment.

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