

Autism in the country

3053. SHRI BAISHNAB PARIDA:
SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM;

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the status of autism in the country;
- (b) whether there is a rising trend of this menace;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether Government is proposing to educate the parents with limited resources about such disabled children:
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the action plan of Government to set up facilities with professional community for intervention based help to help the above children?

THE MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI D. NAPOLEON): (a) to (c) There is no record of enumeration of autistic persons in the country as autism has not been covered as a separate category either for the purpose of census by the Registrar General of India or for survey by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO).

(d) and (e) National Trust, an autonomous body set up under the “National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999” is taking a number of steps to educate the parents of such children. A country-wide mass disability awareness programme ‘Badhte Kadam’ is being organized for the last four years to create awareness about Autism and other development disabilities. An Early Intervention Programme/Day Care Scheme ‘Aspiration’ is being run at 79 places in the country to train and educate parents of these children.

In addition, National Trust has been conducting Early Intervention Training Programme to train NGOs and other professionals working in this field. A multimedia tool kit to train parents of children with these disabilities has also been developed and distributed among the Registered Organizations of National Trust.

(f) National Trust has prepared an action plan to train all its Registered Organizations (around 850) in the country and establish Early Intervention Centres in all such Organizations to provide all types of help to these children and their parents.