



RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
RAJYA SABHA

Member of Standing Committee on Finance
Member of Consultative Committee on Finance
Member of Parliamentary Forum on Youth
Co-Chairman, Vigilance & Monitoring Committee, Bangalore Urban District
Vice Chairman, National Military Memorial Management Trust, Bangalore

No. MP/RS/RC/24/2014

9th April 2014

Dear Shri Anil Kumar,

I write to you to draw your attention to a fundamental matter of importance regarding making polling stations more disabled-friendly.

Our Constitution guarantees Universal Adult Franchise and it is important to ensure every adult citizen gets a chance to vote to ensure this the Election Commission has made laudable efforts. However, the Election Commission's steps to ensure voting facilities for the 19 million eligible Persons with Disabilities have not been wholly satisfactory. This, despite the 2010 Supreme Court Order directing the Election Commission to make polling stations accessible for the voters with disabilities.

While your office has instructed polling officers to provide entry to Persons with Disabilities on priority and provide ramps where feasible and wheel chairs for disabled voters, as the initiative of the Chief Electoral Officer of Delhi has shown, there are other steps that must be taken to ensure better accessibility for Persons with Disabilities.

The Chief Electoral Officer of Delhi has carried out laudable initiatives to ensure voting facilities are made more accessible to Persons with Disabilities. These included providing for the registration of Persons with Disabilities and their nature of disability on a website. Sign language experts have been put on standby at each of the polling stations to aid the hearing impaired. They have also sought the help of NGOs and hospitals for providing wheelchairs for the voters with physical disabilities.

In addition to the facilities already initiated by your office, I urge you to replicate these steps in the state of Karnataka to ensure that we leave no stone unturned in providing easy access to Persons with Disabilities to exercise their franchise.

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Given that we are a democracy, the voices of our voters with disabilities are equally significant. In this regard I urge you to take the necessary and effective steps to ensure the fullest implementation of the directions as per the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India and Section 59 of the Persons with Disabilities (Equal opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, to enable voters with disabilities to exercise their vote and participate in the democratic process.

I look forward to your urgent action in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR

Shri Anil Kumar Jha, IAS
Chief Electoral Officer
Nirvachana Nilaya
Maharani's College Circle
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