

## Sign Language Day

### Why in News?

International Day of Sign Languages was celebrated on September 23.

### What is International Day of Sign Languages?

- **Sign Language** - It is a natural visual-manual language that fosters communication within both the Deaf and hearing communities.
- **International Day of Sign Languages** - It was established through the 2017 UN General Assembly Resolution.
- **2024 Theme** - "Sign up for Sign Language Rights."
- **Indian Sign Language** - It is fundamentally different from Hindi, English, and other spoken languages in India.
- It possesses its own unique structure and is not merely a hand representation of any spoken language.
- **Significance of the day** - It underscores the vital role of sign languages in promoting the rights and recognition of deaf individuals worldwide.

*There are 70 million deaf people globally, with over 80% residing in developing countries and using over 300 different sign languages.*

- **Strengthen Development** - Highlights the importance of early access to sign language and quality education, growth and development of deaf individuals.
- **Preserve Diversity** - Serves as a reminder of the need to preserve sign languages as vital components of cultural and linguistic diversity.
- **Create Awareness** - Highlights the importance of creating positive awareness about Indian Sign Language (ISL) across all sections of society.
- **Fulfil Rights** - Ensures the full realization of human rights for deaf individuals.
- World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) was established on this day in 1951, further reinforcing the global commitment to recognizing and preserving the rich tapestry of sign languages.

### What are the initiatives launched?

- **New ISL Terms** - Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC) has introduced 2500 new ISL terms covering subjects like mathematics, science, and various academic fields.
- **New Concept Videos** - 100 Concept Videos were released for hearing-impaired children in the 6th grade explaining subjects like math and science.
- **ISL Dictionary Regional Languages** - ISL dictionary is now available in 10 regional

languages, making it easier for diverse communities to engage with ISL.

- **Educational Animated Videos in ISL** - These videos focused on moral values and provide a new learning experience for hearing-impaired children.
- **Deaf Role Model Videos in ISL** - It aims to inspire and motivate hearing-impaired children by showcasing successful deaf individuals who serve as role models.
- **7th Indian Sign Language Competition** - The event featured the winners of the 7th Indian Sign Language Competition.

*ISL Competition is a national-level contest showcasing the creativity and skills of students with hearing disabilities.*

### **What are the schemes available for helping persons with disabilities?**

- **Nodal Department** - Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD)
- **Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of Aids/Appliances (ADIP)** - It provides funds to various Implementing Agencies for distributing aids and assistive devices to eligible individuals with disabilities across the country like Cochlear Implant Surgery for children with hearing impairments.
- **Financial Assistance for Deaf Colleges** - DEPwD offers financial support to colleges specifically for deaf students.
- **Scholarships for Students with Disabilities (Divyangjan)** - It provides scholarships for students with disabilities including for deaf and dumb boys and girls.
- **National Institutes and Regional Centers**
  - Ali Yavar Jung National Institute for Speech & Hearing Disabilities in Mumbai.
  - Indian Sign Language Research & Training Centre (ISLRTC) in New Delhi.
  - 25 Composite Regional Centres (CRCs).
- **Diploma in Teaching Indian Sign Language** - ISLRTC offers a diploma course in teaching Indian Sign Language, with tuition fees waived for students registered with the Unique Disability ID (UDID).
- **Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act of 2016** - It emphasizes inclusive education as a fundamental right.
  - Educational institutions to ensure that children with benchmark disabilities including Deaf and Dumb children—those with a disability of 40% or more—have access to free, quality education in an inclusive environment until the ***age of 18.***
  - 5% reservation for persons with disabilities in government and aided higher educational institutions.
- **Samagra Shiksha Scheme** - It provides dedicated support for Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs (CwSN).
  - Financial support for aids and educational materials, alongside tailored interventions that foster their participation in schools from pre-school through class XII.
  - Stipend of ***Rs. 200 per month*** is provided to support girl children with disabilities.
  - Implemented by Department of School Education & Literacy.

## Reference

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