

## **UN Guidelines for PwD**

### **Why in news?**

The United Nations has released its guidelines on access to social justice for people with disabilities (PwD).

### **What are the guidelines?**

- All persons with disabilities have legal capacity and, therefore, no one shall be denied access to justice on the basis of disability.
- Facilities and services must be universally accessible to ensure equal access to justice without discrimination of persons with disabilities.
- PwD, including children with disabilities, have the right to appropriate procedural accommodations.
- PwD have the right to access legal notices and information in a timely and accessible manner on an equal basis with others.
- PwD are entitled to all safeguards recognized in international law on an equal basis with others, and States must provide the necessary accommodations to guarantee due process.
- PwD have the right to free or affordable legal assistance.
- PwD have the right to participate in the administration of justice on an equal basis with others.
- PwD have the rights to report complaints and initiate legal proceedings concerning human rights violations and crimes, have their complaints investigated and be afforded effective remedies.
- Effective and robust monitoring mechanisms play a critical role in supporting access to justice for PwD.
- All those working in the justice system must be provided with awareness-raising and training programmes addressing the rights of PwD.
- These 10 principles would make it easier for the PwD to access justice systems around the world.

### **How does the UN define a person with a disability?**

- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adopted in 2007, has defined PwD.
- Persons with Disabilities are those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments.

- These impairments along with various barriers may hinder the person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

### **What does discrimination on the basis of disability mean?**

- The UN states that the 'Discrimination on the basis of disability' means any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the basis of disability.
- These discriminations have the effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal basis with others, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in any field.
- It includes all forms of discrimination, including denial of reasonable accommodation.
- Reasonable accommodation means the modification and adjustment in a particular case so that PwD can exercise human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis.

### **How many people are disabled in India?**

- As per the UN, in India 2.4% of males are disabled and 2% of females from all age groups are disabled.
- Disabilities include psychological impairment, intellectual impairment, speaking, multiple impairments, hearing, seeing among others.
- In comparison, the disability prevalence in the US is 12.9% among females and 12.7% among males.

**Source: The Indian Express**