

Report

International Day of Persons with Disabilities (3rd December 2024)



Organized by

District Level Committee for Persons with Disability Dimapur & Exodus Disable People's organization, Dimapur

In collaboration with,

ALIMCO, NCSCDA Dimapur, Angel Home Dimapur, Social Welfare Department, Blessed Bonding, Prodigals' Home, Nagaland State Rural Livelihoods Mission, DDRC Dimapur & DDLSA

International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Order of the programme

Leader: Ms. Initoli Zhimo
(Vice President, Nagaland Association for the Blind)

1. **Invocation: Mr. Puilinbou**
(Missionary to the Blind)
2. **Welcome Address : Mr. Abdu Saleem TK**
(Rehabilitation Officer NCSCDA Dimapur)
3. **Short Sharing :**
 - a. **Dr. Villo Naleo (Blessed Bonding)**
 - b. **President (Exodus DPO)**
 - c. **Mr. Itwapungbe (NSDF Member)**
4. **Special Presentation : Angel Home, Dimapur**
5. **Short Sharing :**
 - a. **DDLSA (RPwD Act)**
 - b. **Shri. Shikato Zhimo, Senior Inspector**
(District Welfare Office Dimapur)
 - c. **Ms. Nsungbeni Kinghen, BPM**
(RD Block Dhansiripar, NSRLM)
6. **Special Presentation:**
(Special Olympics Nagaland)
7. **Speech : Guest of Honour**
8. **Aids & Appliances Distribution:**
(PMDK Dimapur)
9. **Speech : Special Guest**
10. **Vote of Thanks : Ms. Inaholi Zhimo (NSDF Member)**
11. **Benedictions : Sr. Anna, Angel Home Dimapur**

(Followed by heavy refreshment)

1. **Leader:** Ms. InitoliZhimo (Vice President, Nagaland Association for the Blind)



Ms. Initoli, radiating joy, began by extending her heartfelt greetings on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. She introduced herself briefly and highlighted the theme: *"Amplifying the Leadership of Persons with Disabilities for an Inclusive and Sustainable Future."* She also expressed her gratitude to the event organizers and warmly acknowledged the special guest, along with all those present for the program.



Following this, she invited Mr. Piulinbou, (Missionary to the blind) to lead the invocation.

2. **Welcome Address:** Mr. Abdu Saleem TK (Rehabilitation Officer NCSCDA Dimapur)



Mr. Saleem began with greetings on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities and introduced the organizers of the event. He also highlighted the theme for the day, *"Amplifying the Leadership of Persons with Disabilities for an Inclusive and Sustainable Future,"* briefly explaining its significance. He touched on the challenges faced by Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), including societal inaccessibility and the social barriers that hinder their full participation. He then warmly welcomed all the

special invitees and presented the special guest with a bouquet of flowers as a gesture of honor. Concluding his remarks, he extended his welcome to everyone attending the program and expressed hope that this event would create a ripple effect, fostering positive and lasting change.

3. **Short Sharing:**

- a) **Dr. Villo Naleo (Blessed Bonding):** He began by sharing his heartfelt greetings and expressing gratitude for the opportunity to speak as a parent of a child with a disability. He acknowledged the challenges of living in a fallen world, where disabilities are an inevitable reality. Highlighting that disability is a social construct shaped by societal and political influences, he noted the difficulty of defining disability concretely and the struggles parents face in accepting their children with disabilities. Dr. Naleo emphasized that children with disabilities are not given to parents by accident or as a



form of punishment but are entrusted to those strong enough to care for and nurture them. He expressed gratitude for his child with a disability, describing his child as “different but not difficult.” He shared a brief account of the struggles his family endured during the early stages of their child’s survival and how their child has taught them to find contentment in simple things, becoming the heartbeat of their family.

He highlighted the importance of events like this, which serve as a beacon of hope to address neglect and emphasized that it is our responsibility to provide hope, security, and a future for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). Acknowledging the social stigma that prevents many from seeking support or registering, he called on churches and government agencies to become more inclusive and to advocate for the rights of PwDs. Dr. Naleo challenged fellow parents to overcome shame and isolation, urging them to seek support and stand united in solidarity for their children. He concluded his address by inspiring the attendees with a powerful poem by Marianne Williamson, leaving them with a message of hope and encouragement. “Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us.

We ask ourselves who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you *not* to be? You are a child of God.

Your playing small does not serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you.

We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; It's in everyone.

And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we're liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.

- b) **Mr. Rongsen Jamir**, President (Exodus DPO): He began by extending warm wishes to everyone on this special day and sharing a brief report on the work of the Exodus Federation. Highlighting their activities and achievements over the past year, he reported that the organization currently has 696 registered Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) across Dimapur and Chumukedima, comprising 427 men and 253 women. Since the majority of members live below the poverty line, providing essential support and benefits remains a critical priority. He shared some key achievements:



- Processed 185 Unique Disability ID Cards (UDID).
- Issued 77 Free Travel ID Cards for public transport under NST for PwDs.

- Assisted 200 individuals in obtaining AAY ration cards to meet their food needs.
- Provided a one-year Diploma Training in Computer Skills at CHSS, funded by the National Career Service Centre and linked to the Employment Exchange Office in Purana Bazaar.
- Currently working on processing railway concession cards in Lunding, Assam.

While celebrating these milestones, he also highlighted the challenges they face, particularly in Nagaland. One major issue is the lack of wheelchair ramps in most public places, churches, and government buildings, making mobility difficult for many PwDs. He earnestly appealed to churches, government departments, and public institutions to build ramps and make their spaces more accessible for all.

He also shared that the Federation is in discussions with the Chief Medical Officer of the District Hospital in Dimapur to establish a dedicated counter for disabled outpatients, especially those with mobility or visual impairments, to make healthcare access easier and more efficient. Concluding his report, he emphasized that while the Exodus Federation is committed to supporting and empowering PwDs, they cannot do it alone. He called on everyone present to extend their kindness, support, and assistance in any way possible to help create a more inclusive and accessible society.

- c) **Mr. Itwapungbe** (NSDF Member): He began by extending warm greetings on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Speaking as a voice for the disabled community, he shared a glimpse of his personal story—how he lost his left arm, how he prepared himself for the challenges ahead, and how he came to understand the discrimination and obstacles faced by PwDs. He described the inaccessibility of public spaces as a daily battleground for PwDs, emphasizing that disability is not a limitation. He explained that it is not solely about physical challenges but also about mental strength and resilience. He encouraged parents not to hold their children back but to support them in adapting to life's challenges without discouragement.



He stressed that differences can be a source of strength and inspired the PwD community to strive forward and work hard toward their goals. He concluded by posing thought-provoking questions to the government, the education system, and society at large, urging them to reflect on the inaccessibility of public spaces, the need for educational inclusivity, and the stigma and discrimination that continue to affect PwDs.

4. Special Presentation: Angel Home, Dimapur
5. Short Sharing:



a) **Mr. Sangto Longchar**, DDLSA (RPwD Act): He addressed the *Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016*, which was introduced to protect the rights of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and ensure they are treated without discrimination. He emphasized that the Act guarantees every disabled person the right to equality, protection, respect, and dignity. Additionally, he highlighted the special provisions made to safeguard women and children under this Act. The Act outlines several important rights, including:

- The right to live in the community
- Protection from violence, abuse, and exploitation
- Reproductive rights
- The right to vote as adults
- The right to financial independence

He stated that if the government fails to uphold these rights, PwDs have the right to raise questions and demand action. In his concluding remarks, he encouraged all PwDs to educate themselves about their rights to ensure they can benefit from the protections and opportunities provided by the Act.

b) **Shri Shikato Zhimo**, Senior Inspector (District Welfare Office Dimapur): He began by extending heartfelt greetings on the auspicious day and conveyed greetings on behalf of the Social Welfare Office. During his address, he highlighted several welfare schemes provided by the government through the department. These include the disability pension, scholarships aimed at supporting the education of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), and the blind pension scheme designed to assist individuals with visual impairments.



He emphasized the importance of these schemes in improving the lives of PwDs and urged everyone present to actively support and assist them in availing these benefits. By raising awareness and providing guidance, he encouraged the community to work collectively to ensure that these resources reach those who need them most.

c) **Ms. Nsungbeni Kinghen**, BPM (RD Block Dhansiripar, NSRLM): She extended warm greetings on the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. She introduced the *Nagaland State Rural Livelihood Mission (NSRLM)* and shared insights into the initiatives and schemes they implement under this program. She explained that NSRLM works to empower communities by forming Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and promoting local products and produce. The mission also conducts awareness programs on hygiene, with the ultimate goal of enabling



individuals to become self-reliant.

For SHGs, she noted that NSRLM provides an initial fund of ₹2,000 to open a bank account, followed by a startup fund known as *seed money* amounting to ₹15,000. This is an inclusive initiative that actively involves Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), mobilizing them to form SHGs as well. The program also focuses on sensitization and awareness to ensure the participation of PwDs in these groups. She concluded by highlighting the success of several PwD-led SHGs operating in the Chümoukedima, Dimapur, and Niuland districts, showcasing the positive impact of this inclusive approach.

6. Special Presentations: Special Olympics Nagaland, angel Home and Christian Higher Secondary School



7. Aids and Appliances Distribution: (PMDK Dimapur)



8. Speech: Special Guest, Justice Songkhupchung Serto, Chairperson, Nagaland State Human Rights Commission



Justice Serto extended warm greetings on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. He began by affirming that we are all equal in the eyes of God and that everyone is differently abled in this world. He reminded the audience that God created each of us in His image, giving us equal worth and unique purposes. He encouraged everyone to focus on their abilities rather than their disabilities and to strive to give their best in everything they do.

He urged Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) to learn to take care of themselves and emphasized that becoming more independent is always beneficial. He encouraged them not to wait for others to include them but to take proactive steps toward inclusion from their end. Turning to parents, he asked them to always adopt an inclusive mindset, recognizing that every individual has talents and potential. He reminded everyone that PwDs are valued members of both the family and society and that no community is truly complete without their contributions.

He quoted Judy Heumann, known as the mother of disability rights, who said, *"Some people say that what I did changed the world."* He explained that the actions we take today may one day inspire a greater change in society. He also referenced Ed Roberts, one of the pioneers of the disability rights movement, who said, *"Ed knew he was not disabled by polio as much as he was disabled by the social response to his disability."* This, he explained, highlights the significant role that society's attitudes and responses play in shaping the lives of PwDs. Through these powerful messages, he encouraged everyone to work toward a society that values inclusion, respects diversity, and uplifts the potential of all its members.

9. Gift Distribution



10. Vote of Thanks: Ms. Innaholi Zhimo (NSDF Member)



Ms. Zhimo expressed heartfelt thanks to all the contributors, organizers, and volunteers who made the event possible. With deep appreciation, she acknowledged their dedication and efforts in supporting the cause. She then took a moment to remind the PwD community that today is not only a day of reflection but also a day of celebration. She encouraged them to embrace the hope that, together, they can look forward to a future filled with greater opportunities, inclusivity, and acceptance.

11. Benediction: Sr. Anna, Angel Home Dimapur





Organizers with the special Guest



Participants registering for the program



A section of the participants during the program

Print media report Links

<https://nagalandpost.com/index.php/2024/12/04/international-day-of-pwds-29631-persons-with-disability-in-nagaland/>

<https://morunqexpress.com/we-are-all-equal-international-day-for-persons-with-disabilities-in-dimapur>

<https://nagalandtribune.in/international-day-of-persons-with-disabilities-2024-a-pathway-to-inclusion-and-empowerment/>

Visual media report links

<https://youtu.be/GOlGM-A6Ksl?si=54sn-nqZnjpWcVqW>

<https://youtu.be/AUy04P637nQ?si=K9Sg0oJMIryit4ND>

<https://youtu.be/FkuThiHV9Kw?si=zBbv6julRCUGwCY3>

https://x.com/dipr_nagaland/status/1863913019375243658?t=sBf908ifeytcN5OKnP67HA&s=08

<https://x.com/MyGovNagaland/status/1863954425275994268?t=g8ZwnsIOmOOwK29OqUV1fA&s=08>

<https://youtu.be/73rA4IOfRtg?si=xpNzYEPRvfAMa4IA>

Attached : List of participants

Reported and compiled by

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