

WORLD DISABILITY DAY

Physically challenged protest govt apathy

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Members of the All J&K Handicapped Association held protests here today against the apathetic attitude of the government for not fulfilling their demands despite assurances on numerous occasion.

The association has decided to continue the agitation until all demands were fulfilled.

A spokesman for the association said the police prevented the demonstrators from highlighting their problems. He said while there were lakhs of differently abled persons in the state, successive governments had failed to fulfil their needs and demands despite assurances.

The association had also submitted a 22-point list of demands to the Social Welfare Minister recently, but no steps had been taken to resolve the issues, the spokesman said. The demands include three per cent reservation in jobs for the differently abled, an increase in monthly pension from Rs 400 to Rs 1,500, education

from nursery to the university level free of cost and 50 per cent subsidy on loans on minimum interest rates.

Members of the Humanity Welfare Organisation Helpline, an NGO, organised a rally here this evening carrying candles to highlight the issues of the differently abled. They also carried placards in support of their demands.

Javed Ahmad Tak, chairman of the organisation, said while the day in other parts of the country was being observed to review existing policies, the differently abled in the state were being treated as a liability. He demanded concrete programmes for their rehabilitation with a school imparting Braille education.