

Ministry of Information & Broadcasting

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DD News Conclave on 'Social Empowerment and Care for Divyangjan'

Keynote Address delivered by Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment, Dr. Virendra Kumar

Empowerment of Divyangjan and marginalized sections in line with call for 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' and 'Antyodaya': Dr. Virendra Kumar

DD News Conclave continues its series on facets of New India in connection with Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav

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The fifth Conclave in the DD News Conclave series was held on the topic 'Social Empowerment and Care for Divyangjan' with the keynote address delivered by Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment, Dr. Virendra Kumar. A panel of experts including Dr. Rajesh Kumar, Executive Director of Society for Promotion of Youth & Masses, Prof. Sushma Yadav, Former Prof. IIPA and Member, UGC, Dr. Jitendra Aggarwal, Founder & CEO, Sarthak Educational Trust and Shri S.K. Rungta, General Secretary, National Federation of Blind, was part of the Conclave. A studio audience comprising of social activists, school teachers and young students interacted with the panellists during the session.

In his keynote address, Dr. Virendra Kumar said that the Government's efforts were geared towards equitable and inclusive growth under the clarion call of Hon'ble Prime Minister - 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas'. Initiatives like Ayushman Bharat, provision of assistive devices and prosthetics to Divyangjan, early interventions like free cochlear implants, provision of grants to schools promoting vocational skills among Divyang children, have all been transforming lives. A Project Monitoring Unit has been set up in the Ministry to ensure grassroots level monitoring of these schemes. He added that the Ministry is providing scholarships to marginalized children through DBT that has helped families in the pandemic year to continue education.

Further, he said that the Ministry is working closely with states and NGOs on 'Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan' with a slew of awareness programmes and rehabilitation activities. He also enumerated initiatives for senior citizens like the National Helpline number '14567' and SACRED employment that were launched on the occasion of International Day of Elder Persons on 1st October.

f During the discussion, the experts agreed that initiatives for Divyangjan and the marginalized sections have shifted away from the charity mindset to the empowerment mindset. Dr. Jitendra Aggarwal said that in recent times, corporate sector is increasingly recruiting skilled Divyangjan and coming up with workplace solutions designed to facilitate their growth. **t** Shri Rungta said that the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act has helped in ensuring the Fundamental Right to Equality. He said that accessibility for Divyangjan is a right and all Government initiatives and portals are to be **o** audited keeping this in mind.

e Dr. Rajesh Kumar exhorted that the entire society has to come together in the fight against substance abuse and cautioned that sales of intoxicating substances are powering destructive elements. **m** Prof. Sushma Yadav highlighted how schemes like Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao, Sukanya Samriddhi, Ujjwala **i** Yojana and initiatives like JAM trinity, Prohibition of Triple Talaq etc are empowering women across the country.

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