

Conference Proceedings
7th National Conference on Disability



7th National Conference on Disability

Digital Inclusion - Pathway to Empowerment of People with Disability

18th - 19th December 2020

#Empoweringlives

2-day brainstorming panel discussions with industry leaders, policy makers,
Government officials, Innovators, Researchers and Medical practitioners.

Digital and Outreach partner



Sarthak Educational Trust and **National Abilympic Association of India** organized its **7th National Conference on Disability**. Due to the **Covid-19 pandemic**, this annual national conference was held online through video conferencing (webinar) for the first time.

This event brought national and global experts together to bring knowledge and practical wisdom to our audience. These experts included senior politicians, bureaucrats, CSR leaders, Corporate, Champions with Disability and Senior Media Persons, who were extensively experienced with in-depth insights on the subject.

Eleven panel deliberations covered plans for bridging the physical, attitudinal and financial barriers in the line of inclusion of People with Disability through digital mediums were extensively discussed, to further accelerate the pace of inclusion led empowerment of Divyangajan.

Panel 1 - Available, Affordable & Accessible Services for PwDs - Thinking through the Digital Mediums
Panel 2 - Digital Inclusion – Pathway to Empowerment of People with Disability
Panel 3 - Physical, Digital & Attitudinal Access - Key to Inclusive & Equal Opportunity Workplace for PwDs
Panel 4 - Entrepreneurial Panel: Technology as Enabler for PwD Entrepreneurs
Launch of Mobile App CapSarathi
Panel 5 - International Panel: Catalysing the Empowerment of PwDs through Global-Local Partnerships & Role of Digitalisation
Panel 6 - Super Idol Panel: Leading by Example - Narratives by Champions with Disability
Panel 7 - RDSM Panel: Collaborative action towards empowerment of PwDs through Rashtriya Divyang Sashaktikaran Manch
Panel 8 - Early Intervention & Inclusive Education Panel: Digital Outreach and Physical Services for Intervention & Inclusive Education
Panel 9 - Media Panel: Leveraging Prime Time Stories to Trending Charts - Insights to create an Inclusive India
Valedictory Session

Panel 1- Available, Affordable & Accessible Services for PwDs - Thinking through the Digital Mediums

Speakers

- Smt. Shikha Banerjee, Ex-General Manager, HR. Shapoorji Pallonji And Co Pvt Ltd. and Advisory Member Sarthak
- Shri Anurag Pratap, Capgemini, Vice President Digital Inclusion & Sustainability Leader
- Smt. Rajashree Natarajan, CEO - Cognizant Foundation
- Shri Ashish Gupta, Managing Director, Credit Suisse
- Shri Lov Verma, Former Secretary, DePWD, Government of India and Advisory Member Sarthak & NAAI
- Shri Harveen Bedi, Head CSR, Infoedge
- Shri AK Kundra, Deputy Election Commissioner, Election Commission of India
- Shri Chetan Kapoor, Chief Operating Officer, Tech Mahindra Foundation
- Moderator - Shri Sandeep Bhargava, Leap Edtech, CEO & Founder and Advisory Member Sarthak & NAAI



The panel was directed towards brainstorming the present status and prospects of a digital eco-system for ensuring availability of basic services to people with disability in an accessible and affordable shape. It also included assessment of readiness of planners, implementers and people with disability for such an eco-system.

Key points –

1. More involvement of Corporate and PSUs through CSR needed, to support relief and support to PwDs severely impacted by the pandemic, including safety kits, rations, and a dedicated helpline number for them. There is a need for setting aside special budget for PwDs during Covid.
2. Covid-19 has provided new opportunities to PwDs through digitization such as – online learning support, higher engagement of beneficiaries owing to facility of learning from the comfort of their homes, active and frequent engagement with parents.
3. Tele-consultations has proved to be a very effective tool in healthcare sector, as current Covid-19 pandemic, which has restricted physical visits to medical facilities everywhere. This is the possible plan to minimize the challenges of PwDs for medical consultations and could be a possible employment opportunity as well.
4. There is a huge scope of Entrepreneurship and employment of PwDs in retails sector.
5. Election Commission of India (ECI) has under the accessible election campaign for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), has implemented various initiatives like 'PwD App', which was used by more than 7 million electoral PwD voters for getting assistance, like wheelchairs, pick & drop facilities, etc. However still more sensitization of booth staff to support PwDs is needed.

6. Cognizant is actively engaged in inclusion, healthcare, education & livelihoods of marginalized communities, by providing digital textbooks for high schools, vocational trainings for OH and HI and better enrolments has been observed of students due to digital mode of education.
7. Inclusive education for diverse disabilities and financial inclusion are key factors in digitization for PwDs.
8. Infoedge has helped create a separate section for PwD job aspirants in naukri.com job portal and look forward for the need of special educators or online therapies and educating PwDs.

Panel 2- Digital Inclusion – Pathway to Empowerment of People with Disability

Speakers

- **Chief Guest: Mr. Thawarchand Gehlot**, Hon'ble Cabinet Minister, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
- **Guest of Honour: Mrs. Shakuntala D. Gamlin**, Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice Empowerment
- **Guest of Honour: Mr. Edgard D. Kagan**, DCM, Embassy of USA, New Delhi
- **Dr. Jitender Aggarwal**, Founder & CEO, Sarthak
- **Mr. Devender Singh, ACS**, Government of Haryana, Agriculture & Family Welfare, Irrigation & Water Resources and Public Health Engineering Department
- **Padma Bhushan Dr. MB Athreya**, Mentor & Guru, Sarthak
- **Mr. Ranjan Chopra**, MD, Team Computers & Advisory board Member, Sarthak
- **Prof (Dr.) MP Poonia**, Vice Chairman, AICTE & Advisory Member, Sarthak and NAAI
- **Moderator: Mr. Krishan Kalra**, Advisory Board Member- Sarthak & NAAI



The inaugural panel set the context for the 7th National Conference aimed to deliberate and plan for bridging the Physical, Attitudinal and Financial Barriers in the line of inclusion of People with Disability through digital mediums and, further accelerate the pace of their inclusion led empowerment.

Key points –

1. Hon'ble Minister for Social Justice lauded and highlighted Sarthak's achievements with special reference to switching over to digital accessibility to activities for PwDs. The Minister also highlighted the progress made in the implementation of RPwD Act, 2016, during the recent years, disbursement of 1.24 crore financial aid provided by MSJE for skilling of PwDs. A dedicated sports facility for PwDs is coming up in Gwalior, MP, for PwDs by 2022.
2. Secretary DEPwD highlighted in detail the achievements of RPwD Act 2016, that has enabled the stakeholders to switch over to the rights based model from the welfare model practiced earlier. She also informed about starting a Central University for PwDs and restructuring of RCI Act. 31 States and UTs in India have notified the RPwD Act, 2016. DEPwD is also making sign language audio text books with the support of the Education Department.

3. The US Embassy dignitary informed that in the US, it is still a long way to go since only 20% PwDs have got employment till 2018. Sarthak's model of working with corporates used in India can be replicated in the US.
4. There is a need to utilise the PwDs as Capital workforce, creating a huge database of PwDs in future census 2021. Involvement of PwDs in special Atmanirbhar Bharat campaign, engaging more rural PwDs through digital inclusion.
5. Through Sarthak's upcoming Global Resource Centre in Gurugram, Haryana, there is huge scope of cross learning from other countries.
6. Sarthak is working on skill model rather than charity model for creating job opportunities in Corporate for PwDs. Now digitization of activities has reduced physical limitations of PwDs, which includes development of a Mobile Application for people with disability – CapSarathi in collaboration with Capgemini.
7. Ten thousand technical institutes are being made barrier free by AICTE. Scholarships for PwDs have been started by 50 Govt. Polytechnic Colleges.
8. During the session, two annual reports were released –
 - Sarthak Educational trust Annual report 2019-20
 - National Abilympic Association of India (NAAI) Annual report 2019-20.
9. Video messages by Mr. Eric Halt, Director UNESCO representative to Bhutan, India, Maldives and Srilanka and International Cricketer Mr. Virender Sehwag, endorsing Sarthak's initiatives were played.

Panel 3 – Physical, Digital & Attitudinal Access - Key to Inclusive & Equal Opportunity Workplace for PwDs

Speakers

- **Mr. Subhor Khanna**, Founder & CEO, Vodox Global Services & Advisory Board Member, Sarthak
- **Mr. Prithwish Bose**, Associate Director, Flipkart
- **Ms. Shobha Ratna**, Chief Operations Officer and Head, HR and Training, Aditya Birla Sun Life Insurance Co. Ltd (ABSLI).
- **Mr. Rahul Shekhawat**, HR Head for NCR, Big Basket
- **Ms. Aradhana Lal**, Vice President - Brand, Communications & Sustainability Initiatives, Lemon Tree Hotels Limited
- **Mr. Ankur Shukla**, Head-HR (Store Ops), Reliance Retail
- **Ms. Anuradha Bhavnani**, Former Regional Director, Shell Foundation & Sarthak Advisory Board Member
- **Moderator: Dr. SM Gupta**, GCPO, Startek



Panel discussions delved into the three pillars of Inclusive & Equal Opportunity Workplace for PwDs namely, Physical Accessibility, Digital Accessibility and Attitudinal Accessibility across sectors. The idea was to come up with Industry best practices specific to different sectors as well as those cross cutting across sectors.

Key points –

1. During COVID 19, retail sector benefitted by using digital platform and special involvement of PwD delivery boys (Wish-masters) were highly appreciated by customers of Flipkart. Very low absenteeism and attrition rates amongst the PwDs were observed during Covid-19 pandemic.
2. Strong family support system is very important for improving their confidence and willingness to move forward in life.
3. Commitment to inclusion and providing equal opportunities clearly lies with top management.
4. Companies like Big Basket ensured, it provided flexi work hours and pick & drop facilities to its PwD employees during Covid-19 pandemic.
5. With technology, work from home helped reduce physical challenges and opened many possibilities for PwDs in organization like Aditya Birla Insurance.
6. In Lemon Tree Hotels, PwDs have worked as frontline workers, even staying in the hotel to avoid their families getting infected with Covid and they also ensured that no PwDs lost their jobs, despite the hospitality sector being worst affected by the pandemic.
7. Top-Down approach for engagement and sensitisation alongwith job-mapping is the key to engaging more PwDs in the work-force

Panel 4 – Entrepreneurial Panel: Technology as Enabler for PwD Entrepreneurs

Speakers

- **Mr. Rajive Gulati**, Sr. Program Officer Incubation UNTILabs, United Nations & Advisory Board Member Sarthak and NAAI
- **Mr. Arvind Bali**, CEO, Telecom Sector Skill Council
- **Dr. Rajeev Kandpal**, JS & CFO, GeM
- **Dr. Bhushan Punani**, Executive Secretary, BPA
- **Mr. Dilip Loyalka**, India's first visually impaired Chartered Accountant
- **Mr. Bhavesh Bhatia**, CEO, Sunrise Candles
- **Mr. Ajay Gupta**, CEO, Bachpan Play School
- **Moderator: Mr. Atul Bhatnagar**, Former COO, NSDC & Advisory Board Member Sarthak



The panel was directed towards brainstorming on effective use of technology for enabling and empowering PwD entrepreneurs.

Key points –

1. PwDs do not suffer due to disabilities but due to lack of opportunities.
2. Youth entrepreneurs can take more risks than businessman, they only need supportive platform. Hartron in Gurugram, acted as incubator by providing them infrastructural support.
3. Enhancing accessibility in schools is very important. There is lack of awareness about technologies available for PwDs in schools and colleges. Many technical institutes like IIT are working on improving technologies and assistive devices for PwDs. There is immediate need to explore possibilities of making them affordable for all PwDs, which BPA is pushing, for enhancing employment opportunities.
4. Govt E-Marketplace (GEM) platform will help PwD entrepreneurs to sell their products to Govt organisations directly, which will be a big step forward towards Atmanirbhar Bharat.
5. Telecom sector is the biggest employer and contributes to 6.5% towards GDP. For entrepreneurship there is a huge scope for PwDs in running WiFi PCOs and handset repair facilities in smaller towns and rural areas.

Launch of Mobile App CapSarathi –

Speakers

Ms. Pallavi Tyagi – Chief Human Resource Officer, Capgemini

Ms. Radhika Ramesh – Executive Vice President, Cloud Infrastructure Services (CIS) India

Ms. Pramodini Kulkarni, Senior Director, Mentor and sponsor CapSarathi App

Dr. Jitender Aggarwal, Founder & CEO Sarthak

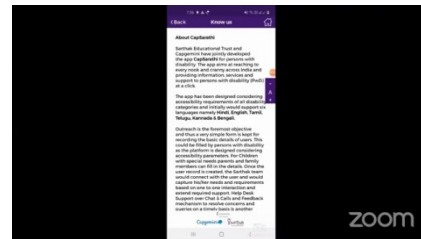
Padma Bhushan Dr. MB Athreya, Mentor & Guru, Sarthak

Mr. Ashwin Yardi, CEO Capgemini

Ms. Shobha Meera, Chief CSR Officer, Cloud Infrastructure (CIS)

Mr. Sreejith Natarajan, Senior Director and Head of Operations CIS India

Moderator: Ms. Shibopriya Chatterjee - Capgemini



Key-Points

1. The CapSarathi App was officially launched, and has been designed by Capgemini in collaboration with Sarthak, which will have all information on disability for all stakeholders.
2. Speaking on the occasion Ms. Radhika Ramesh informed technology today is a great solution provider and helpful in creating social impact in both urban and rural areas. This App will serve as big resource in reaching out to rural PwDs, parents, NGOs, service providers.
3. Smt. Promodhini spoke about the journey of the APP right from its inception was based on exclusive research and analysis, followed by creating its design & covering its functional and technical framework.
4. Mr. Ashwin Yardi spoke about the importance of digital inclusion.
5. Mr. Yardi further presented the app as demonstration of unleashing impact of technology among wider community members of the society for up-liftment of PwDs, improving STEM education in rural marginalized communities, who would surely benefit from it.
6. The app will help reduce and bridging inequities in the society through this digital revolution and in partnership has helped this project a success mentioned Ms. Shobha Meera.
7. Dr. Aggarwal appealed to all stakeholders, including state and central government, media, corporate and NGO's, to promote and ensure outreach of this APP on a large scale.
8. This APP will be a game changer for both rural and urban India, will definitely help every Divyang to lead a normal life have a job and socially fulfilling life. Through Sarthak RDSM NGO group, will help outreach rural Pwds in a big way, and will be a 'sarathi' to billions mentioned Dr. Athreya.
9. A demo of how the App would work was also given by the Capgemini team.

Some of the salient features of the App were also highlighted such as –

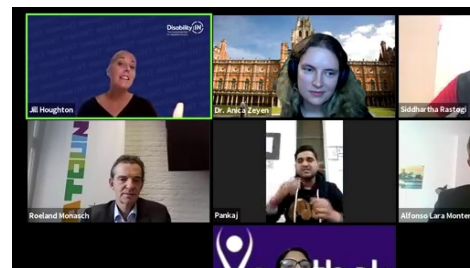
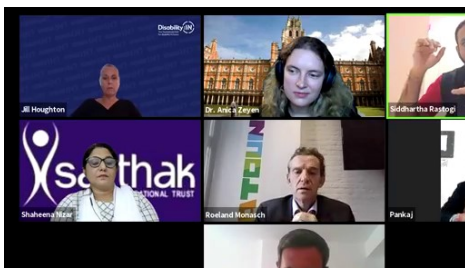
- **One Stop Solution for Information such as Government Schemes and Supports, Online/Offline Training courses, Assistive Devices, Scholarships and Financial Assistance for Education and Career**
- **Online Screening and Counselling Support**
- **Online Parents Interaction Forum to get connected with other parents**
- **Inside Stories and Experiences from Parents of Special Children**

- **Online Training & Employment guidance and support**
- **Guidance material for Special Education at Home**
- **Online guidance for Home Based Activity sessions**
- **Online resources such as Braille-Online-Audio Books**

Panel 5 - International Panel: Catalysing the Empowerment of PwDs through Global-Local Partnerships & Role of Digitalisation

Speakers

- **Ms. Shaheena Nizar**, Advisory Board Member, Sarthak Educational Trust
- **Mr. Roeland Monasch**, CEO, Aflatoun International
- **Mr. Alfonso Lara Montero**, Chief Executive Officer, European Social Network
- **Ms. Jill Houghton**, President & CEO, Disability IN
- **Dr. Anica Zeyen**, Senior Lecturer in Entrepreneurship and Sustainability, Royal Holloway School of Business and Management
- **Moderator: Mr. Siddhartha Rastogi**, MD, Ambit Investment Advisors Pvt Ltd & Advisory Board Member, Sarthak



The panel discussion aimed to come up with Global Local Partnership ideas to catalyse change at grass-root levels. The idea was to blend global knowledge and local understanding to speed up the pace of Empowerment of PwDs.

Key points –

- Identifying PwD champions and adopting the approach - By the differently-abled, for the differently-abled and to the differently-abled, without making assumptions about disabilities of PwDs will help create a more responsible inclusive society.
- Positive self esteem and social group support for PwDs are key to empowerment of PwDs.
- Shared learning, speaking out and empathising will benefit the PwDs.
- Giving fair chances and acknowledging their rights and practicing implementation of partnerships are key steps for their empowerment.
- Involvement of families, Govt, NGOs and including social and financial education as an inclusive element is very important.
- Sarthak's video of participation in Karamveer Series of Kaun Banega Crorepati (KBC) on a very popular programme hosted by Mr. Amitabh Bachchan, aired in the month of November, 2020, on national television channel was shown.
- Day 1 deliberations ended with the rendition of National Anthem.

Panel 6 – Super Idol Panel: Leading by Example - Narratives by Champions with Disability

Speakers

- **Dr. Jasmer Singh Saini**, Retd. Professor, NITTTR & Advisory Member, NAAI
- **Ms. Preethi Srinivasan**, Founder, Soulfree
- **Mr. Dhanya Ravi**, Indian Glass Women
- **Mr. Rahul Gupta**, Head - Financial Sponsors Coverage, Axis Bank Ltd.
- **Mr. Akashdeep Arora**, Dy. Director, Indira Gandhi Panchayati Raj Sansthan, Jaipur
- **Ms. Abha Khetarpal**, President- Cross the Hurdles, National Award Winner & 100 Women Achiever Awardee
- **Moderator: Mr. Niranjn Khatri**, Advisory Board Member, Sarthak



This session witnessed the stories of real life struggles and indomitable spirits of champions with disability in their own words.

1. Ms. Preethi Srinivasan –

- She is a former captain of the under-19 Tamil Nadu women’s cricket team, held the record of being the youngest to have played for a junior state team.
- She is a quadriplegic and is founder of the organization Soulfree.
- She advocated ‘every individual is a person with disability in one way or the other’ and accommodating all PwDs in the society will help bridge the gap of inclusion.
- Women PwDs are more affected in our society due to lack of family support, accessibility and educational opportunities, which needs rectification at the earliest to create a level playing field for all.

2. Mr. Rahul Gupta -

- A successful Corporate Banker, with an accelerated career of over 13 years, with rich experience in building and managing multiple businesses across Wholesale Banking, both in India and the UK.
- Born with low vision in one eye and a non functional other eye,
- He shared that generally in childhood many parents do not accept disability in their children, which delays medical interventions, thereby leading to more severe conditions, which needs to be addressed.
- He further advised that every individual has to believe in his/her capabilities and the world will support, but every opportunity has to be cashed upon and every battle has to be fought individually by every PwD to be successful in life.

3. Mr. Akashdeep Arora –

- He is a successful Rajasthan Administrative Services Officer currently.
- Despite being totally blind because of the disease Retinitis Pigmentosa, He further completed his Ph.D. with JRF (UGC) and has also done two years Master of Science degree in counselling and psychotherapy from IPMS Mumbai.

- He mentioned that nothing can stop any PwD to succeed, as disability is merely lack of access and are mainly physical or mental barriers which they can overcome very easily. Now with many game changing technologies available in computers and mobiles today, have opened many more vistas for PwDs to explore.

4. Ms. Abha Khetrapal –

- Despite suffering from polio at age of 3 years has completed her three Masters degrees in English, Economics and Psychotherapies through distant learning, due to inaccessible facilities in universities.
- She is currently President, Cross the Hurdles, is a counsellor for persons with disabilities and a disability rights activist, providing free online counselling to PwDs since 2011.
- She categorically suggested that, PwD girls are no less than any other individual and there is a clear need to break the myth that, they cannot do anything worthwhile in their life, or contribute to the society.

5. Ms. Dhanya Ravi –

- Born with a rare genetic disease called Osteogenesis Imperfecta (OI), a rare disease related to bone disorder. She is one of the Founder Trustee of Aasmaan Foundation Trust and one of the facilitators for an inclusive dance group called “The Invincible”.
- She advocated for genetic and early diagnosis of this disease through public talks, fundraisers and awareness programs.
- She shared a very valuable point that, the environmental stigma which PwDs face in the society is much worse, than disability itself. There is a dire need for every PwD to grow amongst these challenges to be successful.

Panel 7 - RDSM Panel: Collaborative action towards empowerment of PwDs through Rastriya Divyang Sashaktikaran Manch

Speakers

- **Mr. Ravi Peesapati**, Former President, Hyderabad Management Association (HMA)
- **Dr. Mahantesh G.Kivadasannavar**, Founder and Chairman, Samarthanam International
- **Dr. Arvind Kulkarni**, President, Kamayani
- **Ms. Poornima Nair**, Director- Health & Disability, Apnalaya
- **Ms. Radhika**, Deputy Director, Ability Foundation
- **Ms. Usha Pattabhiraman**, Lead for Mission 1000, Enable India
- **Moderator: Mr. SK Gupta**, Former DDG, DoT, GOI & Advisory Board Member, Sarthak



The panel put across the ideas and objectives behind Rashtriya Divyang Sashaktikaran Manch (RDSM) and developments, so far. RDSM is an initiative by Sarthak to bring different civil Society Organisations in disability sector together & catalyse the movement of empowerment of PwDs

Key points

1. This platform for like minded NGO's and individuals, ensures collaborative efforts to ensure sharing common knowledge, best practices, and help build capacities to ensure inclusion and empowerment of PwDs.
2. For sustainability of rural or smaller NGO's for a longer period, experienced or bigger NGO's can play key role through hand-holding them in terms of documentation, fundraising, and many other ways and means.
3. Bridging the gap between people with disabilities and without disabilities is the need of the hour, and making it a 'people's movement' is key of Ability Foundation.
4. Collective efforts and effective advocacy with Government agencies can help implementation of better policies and support system for PwDs,
5. Focus should be on livelihoods of rural PwDs and strengths of local NGO's should be harnessed, who are generally working in silos, which Enable India is focussing on.
6. Apnalya an NGO working in slums of Maharashtra is ensuring inclusion of Disability in every program. As a next level of advocacy, hiring companies are being sensitized to provide accommodation to good PwD employees. There is a huge need of creating a separate employment exchange for PwD job aspirants according to them.
7. Blind Cricket Association – CABI reaches out to large number of PwDs in different parts of the country, by connecting them as idols.
8. Many organizations like Samarthanam are sharing their database of donors and employers, with smaller NGO's.
9. CapSarathi App released by Sarthak on disability can act as a game changer for creating a wider network, across the country and scale up the programs, information, database and creating resources for NGO's and PwDs.

Panel 8 - Early Intervention & Inclusive Education Panel: Digital Outreach and Physical Services for Intervention & Inclusive Education

Speakers

- **Mr. Vikram Joshi**, CEO, Rangotri and Advisory Board Member- Sarthak
- **Ms. Nandini Rawal**, Executive Director, Blind People's Association
- **Dr. Arun Aggarwal**, President, Sound Hearing 2030
- **Dr (Brig) RK Gupta**, Paediatrics, Indian Army
- **Dr. Rajive Bhatia**, ENT Specialist
- **Ms. Beula Christy**, Associate Director, LV Prasad Eye Institute
- **Dr. Nagaratna V.**, Early interventionist, Dr. RML Hospital
- **Moderator: Mr. NV Chandramouli**, Advisory Board Member, Sarthak



The pandemic period forced us all to come out of our comfort zones and think outside the box to sustain. We started with the limited resources to come up with the best possible solution to our beneficiaries. This panel discussed such best practices across NGOs & Institutes to ensure continuance of services to PwDs and the role technology played.

Key points –

1. Identification and early interventions are most important at neo-natal stage, i.e. right from inception of pregnancy to the age of 3 years to screen for possibilities of a child getting any disabilities and reducing the severity. First 1000 days from inception to early childhood is the most critical period.
2. Awareness amongst parents and families of Children with Disabilities is key in improving the rehabilitation processes and to a great extent improving the survival rates.
3. Due to developmental delays, even inclusion of such candidates in schools get hampered, hence immediate actions whether it is acceptance of any disability by family, or dissemination of knowledge and creating awareness amongst the parents of CwDs acts as the catalyst in providing supportive ecosystem for them in tackling the challenges.
4. Increasing medical manpower, sharing best practices related to rehabilitation, nationally and internationally and investing in research, enhanced monitoring are other ways to improve status of early intervention and inclusive education.
5. Children with multiple disabilities are the most vulnerable lot, as there is huge gap in understanding ways to tackle them by parents and organizations working in the field of disability. Giving clear directions to children, parents and organizations can make a huge difference in supporting such cases.
6. Still a huge boost is needed at the lowest level, during current digital transformation happening across the globe, in the field of rehabilitation through technologies to provide treatment and therapies.

Panel 9 - Media Panel:Leveraging Prime Time Stories to Trending Charts - Insights to create an Inclusive India

Speakers

- **Mr. Ravi Garg**, Advisory Board Member, Sarthak
- **Mr. SN Jaitley**, Vice President, Jagran Prakashan Ltd.
- **Mr. Siddhartha Kak**, Indian documentary maker, television producer, and presenter, Doordarshan
- **Mr. Vijay Jodha**, Writer, Photographer & Filmmaker
- **Ms. Sonal Khetarpal**, Senior Assistant Editor, Business Today
- **Mr. John Dayal**, Secretary-General, All India Christian Council
- **Moderator: Mr. Supriyo Gupta**, CEO, Torque Communications & Advisory Board Member, Sarthak & NAAI



The panel discussed how the current culture of trending charts and prime time stories can be leveraged for creating an Inclusive India for People with Disability. How media can support change makers in disability sector to create a welcoming eco-system for all irrespective of their physical or sensory impairments.

Key Points –

1. Media's approach towards covering disability is merely being done as a duty which now needs to change, should be covered as a mission.
2. Sharing better stories of PwD idols, covering popular and meritorious subjects and important point of views on disability can be some important aspects for Media to make programs on disability.
3. Political sensitization and court cases have to some extent helped create better.
4. Media is still less sensitive to disability issues and Management and Senior Editors can help increase the media engagement
5. For sustainable and continuous engagement of popular media houses to cover disability as a important subject, top to bottom approach with revenue model (corporate sponsorship through CSR), is the best way forward to cover this aspect.
6. Running campaigns of success stories of high end idols, can lead to changing the attitude towards disability with empathy, rather than sympathy. To become more sensitized towards disability related issues, dominant media houses need to hire PwDs as any other non-disabled employees.

7. Social media, which now equally has widespread coverage, needs to be used as a primary source of creating disability awareness amongst the masses. Using influencers and super idols to promote disability related issues can help create better outreach.
8. Some organizations within media need to come forward and take up disability issues as social responsibility and produce series on disabilities.

Valedictory Session:

Speakers

- **Dr. Jatinder Singh**, Director, PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- **Mr. Dilip Chenoy**, Secretary General, FICCI
- **Mr. Guneet Sethi**, Director HRD & CSR, Gilard
- **Dr. Nuzhat Parveen**, Director, Altran
- **Mr. Raj Kapur**, Advisory Board Member, Sarthak % NAAI
- **Mr. Prakash Sharma**, CFO, NSDC
- **Mr. Ajay Kanchan**, Chief Editor & CEO, Media Today and Advisory Board Member, Sarthak
- **Mr. Pradyot Banerjee**, Visiting Professor, Premier Universities & B. Schools in India & Abroad & Management Consultant in MSMEs.
- **Dr. Dinesh Jain**, Trustee, Sarthak Educational Trust
- **Moderator: Dr. Sudhir Gupta**, Advisory Board Member Sarthak and NAAI



The session covered and consolidated the two days National Conference on Disability.

Key points –

1. Sarthak's APP –CapSarathi being launched will help outreach to millions of stakeholders and organizations like FICCI can help support its outreach and other employment and counselling opportunities with Sarthak.
2. For creating dignified opportunities by corporate for PwDs, recognizing their talent and capabilities, along with increased participation in skilling is key to improving quality of lives for them.
3. Organizations like PHD Chamber of Commerce have engaged with NGO's like Sarthak in organizing job-fests for PwDs to ensure inclusion and sensitization amongst corporate employers, as a business imperative which needs to be replicated a much larger scale. Creating start-up technology ecosystem in assistive technologies availability for PwDs, is also a major avenue being looked at by PHD Chambers.
4. Media perspective should now shift from plight to right of PwDs.
5. Shri Raj Kapur summed up the conference deliberations of both the days.
6. Dr. Dinesh Jain, Trustee, on behalf of Trustees and Management, appreciated the achievements of Sarthak and delivered vote of thanks to all supporters and stakeholders of Sarthak.
7. Video message by Star of the Millennium Mr. Amitabh Bachchan, endorsing the interventions of Sarthak in empowering PwDs was played.
8. The two-day online National Conference was organized with technical support of Smalt & Beryl, an IT consultancy firm, based in Noida, which leverages latest technologies to build innovative and viable solutions to pressing problems. The 2-day conference concluded with National anthem.