On the occasion of World Mental Health Day 2025, Union Health Minister Shri J P Nadda Launches New Initiatives for the Tele MANAS App

Launches enhanced Tele MANAS App featuring Multi-lingual UI for enhanced accessibility, Chatbot feature for users to engage with the app and an Emergency Module for guidance and support during emergencies

A sound mind leads to a sound body and a healthy mind and a healthy body lead to a healthy nation: Shri J P Nadda

“With the launch of new features in the Tele-MANAS app, we are strengthening our preparedness to respond effectively to emergencies and expanding the reach of digital innovations to every corner of the country”

Ms. Deepika Padukone designated as the Mental Health Ambassador for raising awareness about access to mental health services

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On the occasion of the World Mental Health Day 2025, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Shri Jagat Prakash Nadda launched several new initiatives for the National Tele Mental Health Programme (Tele MANAS), here today.

The new initiatives include launch of Tele MANAS App Enhancements (Multi-lingual UI, Chatbot, Accessibility, Emergency Module). Tele MANAS App will now be available in 10 regional languages, in addition to the English and Hindi languages. These languages include Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Odia, Punjabi. This step is towards providing mental health support in regional languages for enhancing accessibility. In addition, recognizing that persons with disabilities and vulnerable groups face barriers in accessing digital health services, the app now includes accessibility features to make the interface more user-friendly for visually impaired users. A chatbot feature ('Asmi') has also been introduced, allowing users to engage with the app and seek information or help regarding mental health. Furthermore**,** emergency response content has been incorporated to ensure timely guidance and support during emergencies.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Nadda remarked that "a sound mind leads to a sound body and a healthy mind and a healthy body lead to a healthy nation." He said, "India is committed to ensuring equitable, affordable, and inclusive access to mental health services. With the launch of the new features in the Tele-MANAS app, we are strengthening our preparedness to respond effectively to mental health emergencies and expanding the reach of digital innovations to every corner of the country. Moving a step closer towards normalizing discussions around mental health is crucial to reducing stigma and highlighting mental health as an integral aspect of public health in India."

Shri Nadda also stated that Ms. Deepika Padukone has been designated as the Mental Health Ambassador for raising awareness about access to mental health services. He said that her involvement as a national advocate will help focus attention on mental health and encourage people to seek timely support through government-approved mental health resources. "The partnership with Ms. Deepika Padukone will help widely disseminate awareness about mental health issues in India, normalize discussions to reduce stigma, and highlight mental health as an integral aspect of public health", he stated.

On the impact of Tele MANAS towards providing mental health services to people, the Union Health Minister highlighted that "since its inception, it has handled around 28 lakh calls, with trained counsellors engaging in more than 20 different languages. Every day, about 4,000 people reach out for support, showing the effectiveness of the service in addressing mental health concerns. The almost equal number of men and women seeking help demonstrates that awareness is growing among all groups." He also stated that the Tele-

MANAS mobile app allows people across India to receive help anytime, anywhere.

Smt. Punya Salila Srivastava, Union Health Secretary highlighted that Mental Health is a special focus of this year's theme at the United Nations. She stated that India's digital initiatives including Tele MANAS is aimed at achieving universal health coverage. "Any self-destructive behaviour like suicides can be prevented and stigmas or stereotypes can be reduced by making use of timely, professional and empathetic mental healthcare and quality counselling services through the Tele MANAS app", she stated.

The Union Health Secretary urged all stakeholders to provide their feedback on the enhanced application so that issues, if any, can be mitigated by NIMHANS team in a timely manner.

Dr Pratima Murthy, Director & Senior Professor of Psychiatry, NIMHANS stated that through this expansion, Tele MANAS will help in covering a larger segment of people and enhance the accessibility of mental health support.

Prof. T K Srikanth, Principal Investigator, Tele MANAS, International Institute of Information Technology, Bangalore (IIT-B) highlighted that the enhancements will enable seamless flow of information. He also informed that data security and privacy is built-in the system and the modular design of the app will ensure that new features can be easily added over time.

Mental health is a critical public health priority in the National Health Policy. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has taken significant steps to address this challenge through various initiatives including the Ayushman Arogya Mandirs, National Tele Mental Health Programme (Tele MANAS) and the District Mental Health Programme.

Tele-MANAS continues to play a critical role in addressing a wide range of mental health issues, including severe cases, and has helped many individuals achieve positive outcomes. The Government of India reaffirms its commitment to build a resilient, inclusive, and accessible mental health ecosystem**.** By leveraging technology, capacity-building, and awareness initiatives, India continues to move towards bridging the mental health treatment gap and ensuring that no citizen is left behind.

Smt. Aradhana Patnaik, Addl. Secretary and MD, NHM, Union Health Ministry; Shri Vijay Nehra, Joint Secretary, Union Health Ministry; Dr C Naveen Kumar, Principal Investigator, Tele MANAS and senior officials of the Union Health Ministry were present at the event.

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