

Union Minister Shri Kiren Rijiju Highlights Transformative Janjatiya Initiatives Led by PM Narendra Modi

Bhartiya Janjatiya Samaj' Book Released at IGNCA

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The contribution of Janjatiya society to the nation is immense, yet for decades it did not receive the respect it deserved, Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Minority Affairs, Shri Kiren Rijiju, today underscored the importance of dignity, identity and authentic empowerment of Janjatiya communities. He was speaking at the release and discussion of the book 'Bhartiya Janjatiya Samaj' (Shikshit Evam Shashakt Bhoomika Mein Aatmanirbharta ki Oar) at the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA).



The Union Minister highlighted several initiatives undertaken under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for Janjatiya empowerment. He noted that for the first time, three members from Janjatiya communities have been inducted into the Union Council of Ministers. He also referred to the Prime Minister's emphasis on recognising the contribution of Janjatiya heroes to India's freedom struggle and the declaration of 15 November, the birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda, as 'Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas', describing it as a tribute to all Janjatiya communities across the country.



Shri Rijiju further remarked that while Janjatiya communities have played a significant role in nation-building, many within the community remain unaware of their own historical contributions and inherent strengths. In this context, he described the publication of such scholarly work as extremely important, praised the author, and assured his support in promoting the book.

In his address, Shri Rijiju observed that for nearly 60–70 years after Independence, the representation of Janjatiya communities remained largely symbolic. Recalling his student days at Delhi University, he noted that only a few organisations and individuals genuinely understood Janjatiya society and worked among them with sincerity, citing Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram as one such organisation that served while living alongside the communities. He cautioned against engaging with Janjatiya communities under the pretext of service for conversion, stating that such practices dilute their culture and erode their core identity. For Janjatiya society, he emphasised, identity and respect are paramount.

The book release programme was organised by the Janapada Sampada Division of IGNCA under its Gyanpath Series. Shri Rijiju attended the event as Chief Guest, while Shri Antar Singh Arya, Chairman, National Commission for Scheduled Tribes, was the Distinguished Guest. Dr. Asha Lakra, Member, National Commission for Scheduled Tribes, was present as Special Guest.

Shri Antar Singh Arya, Chairman, NCST, spoke on contemporary issues concerning Janjatiya society, policy interventions, and the need for sustained cultural preservation. Dr. Asha Lakra placed the themes of the book within the broader framework of social justice and inclusive development.

The book has been authored by noted sociologist and educator Dr. Sweety Tiwari, who, while speaking about her work, reflected on the historical, social, and cultural journey of Janjatiya society. She remarked that even in the darkest times, the flame of Janjatiya society has never dimmed. Drawing attention to societal neglect, she noted that while much is discussed about Ganga–Jamuni tehzeeb, little is said about Ganga–Damodar tehzeeb, pointing out that the Damodar River flows through Jharkhand, a state with a significant Janjatiya population. She also stressed that education is not merely literacy, but awareness of rights.

The welcome address was delivered by Prof. K. Anil Kumar, Chairman, Janapada Sampada Division, IGNCA, who elaborated on the concept of the Gyanpath Series as a robust platform for contemporary intellectual discourse. Shri Suresh Kulkarni of Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram was also present on the occasion.

The programme witnessed the participation of a large number of scholars, researchers, students, and culturally engaged audiences, and contributed to a deeper, multidimensional understanding of Bhartiya Janjatiya society.

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