



Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Dr. Virendra Kumar Reaffirms Commitment to Inclusive Development and Empowerment of Marginalised Communities

NAMASTE, SEED and PM-AJAY Schemes Strengthen Safety, Livelihoods, Education and Opportunities for Vulnerable Communities

Dr Virendra Kumar Conducts Exhaustive Interaction Session With The Beneficiaries Of The SEED, NAMASTE & PM-AJAY Schemes; Also Administer 'Pledge Against Drug Abuse'

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Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Dr. Virendra Kumar today reaffirmed the Central Government's commitment towards ensuring that no citizen or community is left behind in the country's development journey. He emphasised that the true meaning of social justice lies in ensuring that the benefits of development reach those at the margins and that every citizen receives equal opportunities, dignity and respect.

Addressing the beneficiaries of SEED, NAMASTE and PM-AJAY schemes of the Ministry at a function at Dr Ambedkar International Centre in National Capital, Dr Kumar highlighted the continued efforts of the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment towards the empowerment of disadvantaged, vulnerable and needy sections of society.

Secretary, Shri Sudhansh Pant, Additional Secretary Smt Mona A Khandar, Joint Secretary Dr Sandeep R Rathod, MD, NSKFDC Shri Prabhat Kumar Singh, Other Senior Officers and officials of the Ministry were present on the occasion.

Dr Kumar said that through initiatives such as SEED, NAMASTE and PM-AJAY, the Government is working not merely to provide assistance but also to create sustainable opportunities in education, livelihood, social security and dignified living.



The Minister said that under the **NAMASTE scheme**, the Government is working towards ensuring the safety, dignity and sustainable livelihood of sanitation workers while promoting safe and mechanised sanitation practices. He highlighted that the measures including profiling of sewer and septic tank workers, provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits, health insurance, safety training and Emergency Sanitation Response Units are being undertaken. He added that the Scheme also cover waste pickers with the objective of integrating them into the formal solid waste management system while ensuring safer and dignified livelihood opportunities.

The Minister said that the Government is also committed to the rehabilitation of persons engaged in manual scavenging and elimination of hazardous manual cleaning. The Minister stressed that every sanitation worker deserves a safe workplace, social security and a dignified life.





The Union Minister flagged the commitment of the Government to work towards the social and economic empowerment of **Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic (DNT, NT and SNT) communities** adding that the **SEED (Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNTs)** Scheme is one of the landmark initiatives of the Ministry. He added that the initiative seeks to go beyond financial assistance by creating opportunities for sustainable livelihoods, skill development, self-reliance and a dignified life.



Dr Kumar said that special emphasis is being placed on the empowerment of women from DNT communities wherein a broader objective of the SEED initiative is to create an empowered woman, an empowered family, an empowered community and, ultimately, an Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Dr Kumar highlighted the importance of **Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM-AJAY)** which is another key initiative aimed at the social, economic and educational empowerment of Scheduled Caste communities. He said the Scheme focuses on reducing poverty and expanding

employment and livelihood opportunities, developing infrastructure in Scheduled Caste-majority areas, and increasing the participation of Scheduled Caste students in school and higher education.



The Minister also highlighted the launch of the **PM-AJAY mobile application and portal in May 2026**, which is aimed at moving scheme implementation from paper-based processes towards real-time digital workflows, thereby strengthening monitoring, transparency and accountability.

On the occasion, the Union Minister administered '**Pledge Against Drug Abuse**' in which all the participants pledged to work against the drug abuse and welfare and rehabilitation of the victims of substance abuse, to make India a drug free country.

Dr Virendra Kumar had an exhaustive interaction session with the beneficiaries of the SEED, NAMASTE & PM-AJAY Schemes. The Minister emphasised that the Government's objective extends beyond the implementation of welfare schemes to expanding opportunities and enabling communities to become self-reliant. He said that empowered women, families and communities constitute the strong foundation of a self-reliant and developed India.

On the eve of Independence Day celebration, the Minister extended greetings to all beneficiaries and stakeholders associated with these initiatives and acknowledged their hard work, talent and confidence as important strengths of the nation.

The Minister called for collective efforts to build an India where every citizen has equal opportunities and every community can contribute to nation-building to its full potential. He reiterated the Government's resolve that no person should be left behind in the journey towards **Viksit Bharat @2047**, and that every citizen should have access to dignity and equal opportunity.

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