



Empowering mother can enable early identification of disability in child: Dr Jitendra Singh

Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh calls for greater awareness among women to prevent avoidable disabilities

Mothers often the first to recognise child's developmental, health needs; timely awareness and screening during pregnancy can enable early intervention and prevention: Dr Jitendra Singh

Dr Jitendra Singh addresses Prabudh 'Matri Shakti Sammelan' on preventing avoidable disabilities and empowering Divyangjans

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Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences and MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh said here today that empowering mother can enable early identification of disability in a child.

Lauding the initiative of SAKSHAM in organising the Prabudh "Matri Shakti Sammelan" to educate and create awareness among women on the prevention of avoidable disabilities and the empowerment of Divyang persons, Dr Jitendra Singh said that mothers are often the first to come to know of a child's developmental or health-related concerns, making women's awareness an important part of the larger mission of Divyang Seva and empowerment. Dr. Singh said that with appropriate awareness during pregnancy, including regular antenatal check-ups and recommended screening, certain disorders can be detected at an early stage, allowing timely medical advice and intervention and helping reduce preventable risks.

The Prabudh 'Matri Shakti Sammelan' was organised with the objective of making educated, aware and socially responsible women active partners in the mission of Divyang Seva, empowerment and prevention of avoidable disabilities. The initiative places particular emphasis on the role of mothers, teachers, healthcare workers and community leaders, who are closely connected with the health, development and well-being of children and families.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said that the effort to prevent avoidable disabilities needs to begin as early as possible, even before a child is born. Awareness about maternal health, adequate nutrition, antenatal care, prevention of infections, safe use of medicines, regular health check-ups and timely consultation with

medical professionals can help families take informed decisions at crucial stages of pregnancy and early childhood. He said that where a condition can be identified during pregnancy, timely medical intervention and appropriate care can make a meaningful difference to outcomes.

He said that the experience of the last 12 years also demonstrates the importance of taking awareness and support systems to the family and community level, with women playing a particularly important role. The mother is often the first person to notice changes in a child's development or health and, therefore, equipping her with the right knowledge can lead to earlier identification, appropriate referral and timely access to available support.

The Minister said that awareness, however, must extend beyond prevention to the complete empowerment of Divyang persons. Women can become powerful champions of Divyang empowerment by ensuring that children and persons with disabilities receive timely access to identification, education, rehabilitation, assistive devices, skill development, employment opportunities and avenues for self-reliance.

In this broader effort, the Government has taken several measures over the last decade to strengthen support for persons with disabilities and create greater opportunities for their participation in society. These efforts complement community-level initiatives such as the Matri Shakti Sammelan, which seek to build awareness at the level of families and communities.

Dr. Jitendra Singh also referred to the expansion of sports and specialised infrastructure for Divyangjan. India's first high-tech Sports Training Centre for Divyangjan was inaugurated in Madhya Pradesh to provide elite coaching and systematic training support. Such dedicated infrastructure has helped create an enabling ecosystem for sporting excellence and contributed to India's record-breaking performance of 29 medals at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games.

The Government is also strengthening early intervention mechanisms for children with disabilities. Cross-disability early treatment centres are being set up across the country to facilitate identification and assistance for children with disabilities from infancy. Early identification, followed by appropriate treatment, rehabilitation and support, can help children realise their developmental potential and participate more fully in education and society.

Dr. Jitendra Singh also referred to measures available for Government employees having Divyang children, which seek to provide greater support to families managing the specialised needs of their children. These include exemption from rotational transfer, Children Education Allowance up to the age of 22 years, consideration for posting near medical facilities and two years of paid Child Care Leave, as applicable under the relevant Government provisions.

He said that such measures reflect the need for a support system that addresses the entire journey, from pregnancy and early childhood to education, rehabilitation, skill development and eventual self-reliance. While Government programmes provide institutional support, sustained awareness among women and families can ensure that these interventions reach children at the stage when they can make the greatest difference.

The Minister said that the purpose of the Prabudh Matri Shakti Sammelan is therefore not limited to supporting Divyang persons in the present, but also to create greater awareness today for a healthier, more inclusive and empowered generation tomorrow. Empowered mothers and aware families can become the foundation of early prevention, early identification and greater inclusion.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said the vision is simple: every mother aware, every family empowered, every child given the best possible beginning, and no one left behind.

MLA Rajeev Jasrotia appreciated the work done in the region during the Modi regime, particularly the continuous efforts of the Minister and local MP Dr. Jitendra Singh for having transformed the entire district of Kathua beyond imagination within 12 years.

On behalf of "Saksham", Abhay Pargal, National Secretary, Saksham, delivered the welcome address and spelt out the agenda and the various programmes undertaken by the Saksham organisation for the empowerment of Divyangs across the country. He also gave details of the earlier programmes held in J&K, including at Kathua.

Among other prominent figures who were present on the occasion were Swami Vishwanand, Principal, Government Degree College, Dr. Pragya Khanna, State President, Saksham, Mr. Shri Attri, Manjeet Singh and others.





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