



12th WFDRSA Youth Camp inaugurated in Goa; Deaf Youth Leaders from Across Asia come together for Leadership and Empowerment

Posted On: 05 OCT 2026 5:21PM by PIB Mumbai

Goa/ Panaji : 5 October 2026

The 12th World Federation of the Deaf Regional Secretariat of Asia (WFDRSA) Youth Camp was inaugurated today in Goa, bringing together young Deaf leaders and participants from across Asia for five days of leadership, learning, cultural exchange and networking.

The Chief Guest was Hon'ble Minister for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Shri Subhash Phal Dessai. Also present were Shri Guruprasad Pawaskar, State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities; Smt. Varsha Naik, Director, Department for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities; Shri Taha Haaziq, Secretary, State Commission for Persons with Disabilities; Shri Shrikant Pednekar, Deputy Director, Department for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Shri Babloo Kumar, President, WFD Regional Secretariat for Asia Youth Section; and Shri Roshan Kumar, Chairman, Organising Committee.

The Youth Camp is being organised by the Office of the State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities and the Department for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Government of Goa, in association with the All India Federation of the Deaf and the Goa Association of the Deaf.

Participants from around 10 countries, including India, South Korea, Japan, Thailand, Indonesia, Bhutan, Nepal, the Philippines, Mongolia and Laos, are participating in the various programmes.

The Youth Camp will continue from 5th to 9th October, with various activities lined up for young Deaf participants focusing on leadership, advocacy, communication, cultural exchange, networking and knowledge sharing. The closing ceremony of the Youth Camp will be held on 9th October.

Addressing the participants, Hon'ble Minister Shri Subhash Phal Dessai said that young people are not merely the leaders of tomorrow, but important leaders of today. He encouraged the participants to interact, share experiences, build friendships across

borders and return to their communities with new ideas and greater confidence. He emphasised that persons with disabilities must be active participants in shaping policies and decisions that affect their lives.

Referring to Goa's Purple Fest, the Minister highlighted Goa's experience of bringing persons with disabilities, government, organisations and the wider community together. He stressed that inclusion must go beyond policy and become something that is experienced in communities, public spaces and everyday life.

State Commissioner Shri Guruprasad Pawaskar welcomed the participants to Goa and described the Youth Camp as a platform for learning, friendship, leadership and new possibilities. He encouraged the young participants to share their experiences, discuss challenges and build networks that continue beyond the camp.

Highlighting the journey of Purple Fest, Shri Pawaskar said that Goa believes in creating spaces where persons with disabilities can participate equally, lead and celebrate alongside everyone else. He emphasised that young Deaf persons must play an active role in shaping the future of their communities and highlighted the importance of sign language, education, employment, accessibility and equal participation.

The Youth Camp forms part of the larger Deaf Asia regional events being held in Goa from 5th to 11th October 2026. On 10th and 11th October, four major regional conferences and representative meetings will be held — the 38th WFDRSA Representative Meeting, the 15th WFDRSA Youth Section Representative Meeting, the 1st WFDRSA Women Section Representative Meeting, and the WASLI Asia Conference. These programmes will focus on Deaf leadership, youth and women's participation, sign language, professional development of interpreters and strengthening cooperation among Deaf organisations across Asia.

On 11th October, an Inclusive Run will be organised in the morning from Miramar Circle, with 3 km, 5 km and 7 km categories, in association with the Rotary Club of Bardez Coastal. The initiative aims to promote equal participation of persons with disabilities in sports and public life and encourage the wider community to celebrate inclusion.

The valedictory and closing programme of the Deaf Asia regional events will be held at Lok Bhavan on 11th October, bringing together the participants and delegates at the conclusion of the week-long programme.

The Government of Goa has extended a warm welcome to all participants from India and across Asia and expressed its commitment to strengthening Deaf leadership, accessibility, inclusion and equal participation.

The Deaf Asia regional events aim to leave behind stronger networks, new collaborations and a renewed commitment towards a future where every Deaf person has the opportunity to communicate, participate, lead and contribute.

Follow us on Social Media: [!\[\]\(cead67df4d82d6c83effe4f8699a7d8f_img.jpg\) @PIBPanaji](https://twitter.com/PIBPanaji) [!\[\]\(67433ad4a135c113d9a9c29aff5e5943_img.jpg\) /PIBPanaji](https://facebook.com/PIBPanaji) [!\[\]\(224f6e2d313753bf4040edb5ba29eeab_img.jpg\) /pib_goa](https://instagram.com/pib_goa) [!\[\]\(99c9b6d0687a24bf856becdf01ed0a35_img.jpg\) pibgoa\[at\]gmail\[dot\]com](mailto:pibgoa[at]gmail[dot]com) [!\[\]\(3899dbaf2f8d56cd2336b6d9ec3bae81_img.jpg\) /PIBGoa](https://youtube.com/PIBGoa)

(Release ID: 2319241) Visitor Counter : 41

Read this release in: Marathi
