

Media Release

**Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD)  
& Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII)  
Ahmedabad, partner with Corporates to empower 3000 Persons  
with Disabilities (PwDs) to secure promising livelihood  
opportunities...**

**New Delhi, September 21, 2023:** The Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII), in collaboration with the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India, organized a Roundtable Meet for Corporates to 'Support, Activate and Build Assured Livelihoods (SABAL) for Persons with Disabilities under CSR Actions'.

Shri Rajesh Aggarwal, IAS Secretary – DEPwD, Dr. Sunil Shukla, Director General, EDII, Dr. Raman Gujral, Director, Department of Projects (Corporate) at EDII, senior officials from DEPwD as well as National Institutions under DEPwD and CSR leaders from leading corporate entities including PNB, XIAOMI, NHPC, Delhi Metro, BHEL etc attended this ground breaking Meet. The 'Meet' took up the agenda of sensitizing society at large and instituting interventions and measures that ensure establishment of 3000 new enterprises by Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), including 1500 technology driven and 1500 general enterprises.

This pivotal Roundtable Meet brainstormed on creating a better world for PwDs through an effective synergy between Government, Corporates and Institutions. The discussions revolved around the specific objectives of ensuring empowerment of PwDs through sustainable enterprise creation; creating a set of best practices in the context of infrastructure, perception, environment, security and other facilities to promote their complete inclusion in society; floating ways to ensure an integrative working environment; deciding on an inventory of business opportunities that PwDs could tap into to create own enterprises; aligning the project and its interventions with sustainable development goals and breaking the professional segregation in society that relegates disableds to lower paying jobs.

Based on the tangible discussions and takeaways, the participating Corporates identified some primary areas of cooperation. Some of the activities identified to achieve the goal of creating 3000 PwD led enterprises included: Awareness Campaign to Ensure Community Integration of PwDs; Immersive Life Skills for Adolescents with Disabilities; Sourcing Business Opportunities for PwDs; Sensitization workshops for PwDs; Credit Linkage Support; Entrepreneur Growth-cum-Counselling Programme (EGCP) to Support PwD-led Enterprises and Micro Skillpreneurship Development Programme (MSDP) to enable unemployed PwDs to set up their business

Secretary, DEPwD Shri Rajesh Aggarwal started his speech with the message that India has reached the moon but there are many challenges that persons with disabilities are facing today. In India, our attitudes are inclusive but infrastructures are yet to be inclusive. He opened up the conversation for supporting Divyangjan through various initiatives including donations through CSRs in providing aids and assistive devices, upskilling, providing loans and mentorship to PwDs, mapping of jobs following the 'coolability factor', providing

reasonable accommodation, providing leaves for health issues and spreading the message across distribution networks of the companies and hiring PwDs. He also stressed upon the attitudinal changes of the society at large towards Divyangjan.

Shri Kishor B. Surwade, Deputy Director General DEPwD spoke about various initiatives and schemes of the Department including National Action Plan for Skill Development of PwDs, Assistive devices, Scholarship to Divyangjan and rehabilitation services .

A video was screened explaining the features of newly launched DEPwD PM Daksh portal for skilling and employment of Divyangjan.

Dr. Sunil Shukla, expressed, "It is high time that we, as a society, think about inclusive development wherein empowering PwDs must be high on our priority. On a regular basis, we need to curate sustainable business opportunities, viable entrepreneurial prospects and ensure that the PwDs get suitably trained and hand held. It is also important to establish best practices at workplaces and at various levels of the social framework to foster equality and inclusivity at all levels.

Dr. Raman Gujral, discussing the various projects undertaken by corporates to empower PwDs, said that EDII has so far 8,533 PwDs through 266 skill training programs, leading to the establishment of 1,247 enterprises. EDII houses the Centre for Empowerment of the Differently Aabled (CEDA), supported by the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment, Directorate of Social Defence, Gujarat State Handicapped (Divyang) Finance & Development Corporation, Government of Gujarat, on its campus.

A brainstorming session was held between the officials and corporate leaders present in the conference room. The one hour long round table discussion included topics related to accessibility, aids and assistive devices, AI for PwDs, Job mapping, entrepreneurship opportunities and disability sensitization.

The meeting ended with vote of thanks and group photo.

### **About Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII)**

The Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII), Ahmedabad was set up in 1983 as an autonomous and not-for-profit Institute with support of apex financial institutions - the IDBI Bank Ltd., IFCI Ltd., ICICI Bank Ltd. and State Bank of India (SBI). The Government of Gujarat pledged twenty-three acres of land on which stands the majestic and sprawling EDII Campus. EDII has been recognized as the CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Govt. of India. The Institute has also been listed as the Institute of National Importance by the Education Department, Govt. of Gujarat. EDII operates across the country through its seven regional offices and PAN India project offices. It has international affiliates in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar Vietnam, Uzbekistan and Rwanda. For more information visit: [www.ediindia.org](http://www.ediindia.org)

### **About Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Govt. of India**

Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), under Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, GoI was set up in May 2012 with the aims to facilitate empowerment and inclusion of the persons with disabilities and acts as a nodal agency to look after all development agenda of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan). Empowerment of persons with disabilities is an inter-disciplinary process, covering various aspects namely, prevention, early detection, intervention, education, health, vocational training, rehabilitation and social integration. The vision of the Department is to build an inclusive society in which equal opportunities are provided for the growth and development of Persons with Disabilities so that they can lead productive, safe and dignified lives.