

IDPD 2024: Disability Leadership for a Sustainable Tomorrow

Category: Business

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The Association of People with Disability (APD) observed the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) 2024 with a 'Mela' (fair) on Monday, December 9, at the India Campus Crusade for Christ, Hennur Main Road, Bengaluru. The

Mela, themed “Championing Disability Leadership for a Sustainable Tomorrow,” focused on the role of persons with disabilities (PwDs) in creating an inclusive society.



Students participating in the IDPD Mela, promoting awareness and inclusion on the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Shri Krishnamurthy. K, District Disabled Welfare Officer, Bangalore Urban District, Dept for the Empowerment of Differently Abled and Senior Citizens, Govt of Karnataka, attended as the chief guest. In his address, he said, *“Events like these reveal the incredible potential of persons with disabilities when given the right opportunities to thrive. The holistic approach to disability and rehabilitation showcased today paves the way for an inclusive and sustainable future.”*

Participants had the chance to explore the **Yes To Access** app, a tool that uses computer vision to map accessible spaces. By

using the app, they identified barriers and contributed to a growing database aimed at improving accessibility in public areas.

APD showcased its comprehensive support programs, including Early Intervention, Spinal Cord Injury and Rehabilitation, Inclusive Education, and Livelihood programs. These initiatives are designed to support individuals with disabilities and their caregivers in rebuilding their lives, fostering skill development, community integration, and long-term independence. Attendees interacted with individuals who shared personal stories about their recovery journeys.

The event showcased a range of assistive devices, including wheelchairs, hearing aids, splints, and artificial limbs which help individuals with disabilities and improved mobility. Visitors also learned about other adaptive tools that enable PwDs to address everyday challenges and enhance independence.

A key feature of the event was the **Experience Zones**, where attendees immersed themselves in activities designed to simulate the experiences of PwDs. These zones provided insight into the daily challenges faced by PwDs and offered a platform to interact with individuals living with disabilities. Through these interactions, participants gained an understanding of the measures and tools that support an inclusive lifestyle.

Help desks at the event facilitated enrollment in the **Niramaya Health Insurance Scheme**, a government program offering financial support for medical and rehabilitation needs. This initiative ensured that eligible participants could access essential benefits.

At the conclusion of the event, **Dr. Senthil N.S. Kumar**, CEO of APD, stated, *"The remarkable success of our IDPD event underscores the strength of unity and collaboration. By creating experiential zones that cover the entire life cycle- from pediatrics to geriatrics- we raised awareness about*

holistic disability services, including inclusive education, livelihood, health, assistive aids, and entitlements. As a society, it's time to transform awareness into action for true inclusion"

The event underscored the importance of accessibility, leadership, and collective efforts in advancing an inclusive society.

