



PRESS-RELEASE

Delhi University Vice Chancellor Presides Over a Unique Webinar on 'Covid-19 and the Challenges of the Visually Impaired'

It was a one of its kind events on Monday, 27th April, 2020, when University of Delhi organized a unique three-hour long webinar on 'Covid-19 and the Challenges of the Visually Impaired' which was presided over by the hon'ble Vice Chancellor Prof. Yogesh Tyagi. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, Delhi University, which has nearly 3,000 students with disabilities, has been reaching out to such students through various initiatives. Based on the feedback regarding the challenges being faced by them, particularly the visually impaired, it was decided to organize a focussed webinar on various problems being faced by such students during the present unprecedented crisis.

In his presidential address, the hon'ble Vice Chancellor Prof. Yogesh Tyagi assured the visually impaired students and faculty members that the University will make all possible efforts to ensure that difficulties being faced by them with respect to academic and other issues due to change in content-delivery methods, are addressed with utmost sensitivity and commitment. He emphasized that in many ways, the visually impaired may be better equipped to deal with the present challenges because of their adaptability to the alternative methods of learning from an early age. He said, "there is no problem which can not be overcome with proper support and accessibility." He added that the University has a commitment to be considerate towards the weaker segments of students.

The webinar, attended by nearly 150 visually impaired students, faculty members, and others from Delhi and many other states representing several Universities, focused on a number of issues such as changing environments and innovative approaches: challenges & solutions in the context of the visually impaired, alternative modes of communication, teaching-learning strategies during the present times, assistive technology & access to e-resources, specific challenges of the visually impaired at the undergraduate level, the initiatives of the Covid-19 taskforce, medico-psychological aspects of Covid-19, etc.. Eminent Speakers of the webinar were Prof. Anil K. Aneja, Prof. Sanjeev H.M., Prof. Kusumlata Malik, Dr. Nikhil Jain, Dr. Bipin K. Tiwary and Dr. Sunil Thakur. Video addresses were received from Ms. Shakuntala D. Gamlin, Secretary, Disability Affairs, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India and Dr. Prabodh Seth,



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Joint Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India. Presentations were also made by Dr. Nachiketa Rout, Officiating Director, National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Visual Disabilities (NIEPVD), Dehradun and Mr. Dipender Manocha, President, National Association for the Blind (Delhi); Director, Developing Countries Programme, Daisy Consortium; Managing Trustee, Saksham Trust.

Based on this webinar, the University plans to prepare a policy document concerning interventions required for the visually impaired, to be circulated in public domain and for implementation. The recording of the webinar will be made available on the Delhi University website.

REGISTRAR (Acting)

27th April, 2020

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