

LAUNCH OF THE TRIBAL HEALTH COLLABORATIVE: A MULTI STAKEHOLDER INITIATIVE TO ENHANCE TRIBAL HEALTH AND NUTRITION

New Delhi, April 07: Anamaya, the Tribal Health Collaborative was launched by Hon'ble Minister of Health and Family Welfare Dr Harsh Vardhan and Hon'ble Minister of Tribal Affairs Sh Arjun Munda today. The Collaborative is a multi-stakeholder initiative supported by Piramal Foundation and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF). It will converge efforts of various Government agencies and organisations to enhance the health and nutrition status of the tribal communities of India.

Speaking on the occasion, Sh Arjun Munda, Hon'ble Minister of Tribal Affairs stated, "The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has been working relentlessly to address the health challenges of the tribal communities, engaging with State Governments and civil society organisations. The Ministry has created a roadmap to address tribal health issues through the Tribal Health Action Plan. We are addressing issues related to tribal health on a Mission Mode and I welcome all the non-government organisation who have come together and shown their interest for this unique initiative. I am particularly thankful to Dr Harsh Vardhan and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for their support and I look forward to jointly reaching our common vision of enriching the lives of the tribal communities."

Dr Harsh Vardhan, Hon'ble Minister of Health and Family Welfare lauded the efforts of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, saying "The launch of the Tribal Health Collaborative is like a dream from me. Health is an area where every Ministry can contribute. We all know that the tribal areas are our real deprived areas. Not just primary healthcare but through our various schemes we are trying to provide secondary and tertiary healthcare to the most marginalized people. My only appeal to this Collaborative is that, in addition to all the other mentioned areas, please focus on TB so that we can reach our goal of a TB Free India"

Hon'ble Minister of Women and Child Development Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani connected with the august audience through a video message highlighting the importance of the collaborative in addressing nutritional and health inequities among the tribal population.

Addressing the need for a collaborative approach to reach the most marginalised and vulnerable communities, Mr. Ajay Piramal, Chairman, Piramal Enterprises stated "On behalf of the partners of the Tribal Health Collaborative, I am delighted to contribute to enhancing the health and nutrition status of the most vulnerable population of India. It has taken over a year to bring together organisations with diverse experiences and expertise, aligning them towards the common cause of tribal health enhancement. We look forward to working under the guidance of both the Ministries."

This Collaborative is a unique initiative bringing together governments, philanthropists, national and international foundations, NGOs/CBOs to end all preventable deaths among the tribal communities of India. It aims to build a sustainable, high-performing health eco-system to address the key health challenges faced by the tribal population of India. It will begin its operations with 50 tribal, Aspirational

Districts (with more than 20% ST population) across 6 high tribal population states. Over a 10-year period, the work of the THC will be extended to 177 tribal Districts as recognised by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

Also present at the occasion were Dr Vinod K Paul, Member Health, NITI Aayog, Mr. R. Subrahmanyam Secretary, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Dr Navaljit Kapoor, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Mr Hari Menon, Director, BMGF, Mr Aditya Natraj, Head, Piramal Foundation, Mr Gaurav Arya, Country Director CIFF and Dr Shailendra Hegde, Senior VP, Piramal Swasthya.