



**CELEBRATING DIVERSITY!**



**Purple Fest**

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## Introduction

Purple Fest: Celebrating Diversity

Date: 6 - 8 January, 2023

Venue: Entertainment Society of Goa

Disabilities do not equate to inabilities and so the **Purple Fest** 2023 was organized to celebrate diversity and inclusion of persons with disabilities (PwDs). The **Purple Fest 2023**, India's first-of-its-kind inclusive fest a distinctive 3-day event was held from 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at the Entertainment Society of Goa, Panaji that aimed to show how people can come together to create a welcoming and inclusive world for everyone. **Purple Fest** was organised by the Office of the State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, Govt of Goa in association with Directorate of Social Welfare-Goa, Entertainment Society of Goa and Department of Tourism.

The event intended to encourage people to overcoming personal stereotypes as well as to establish an environment that not only educates everyone about the disabled community and their capabilities but also respect and celebrate diversity. The festival which promoted inclusion and engagement of all people on a shared platform attracted over 5,000+ delegate registrations, including members of the disabled community and other individuals from all over the country. The event had 1000 local volunteers to assist the delegates, persons with and without disability for all three days. More than 50,000 people visited various venues and were mesmerized by the scale of the event.

Every activity planned for Purple Fest had a purpose. The Purple Think Tank sessions were meant to create dialogue among various stakeholders so as to empower persons with disability. The Sports events celebrated the spirit of competition and also conveyed the need to organise such Para games and activities thereby creating more opportunities for persons with disability.

Jagruti Mela provided an opportunity to parents, NGOs and other stakeholders to clarify their queries by interacting with the service providers. In Purple Dialogue, the speakers discussed eight different threads of conversations that are set up with experts and the Purple Ambassadors. The inputs given by the experts will be used to develop essential policies and policy modifications. This will aid advocacy not only in Goa but also at the national and state levels.

## Message



### **Shri. Narendra Modi (Hon'ble Prime Minister of India)**

Blessed with infinite talent and indomitable courage, our Divyangans face and surmount every challenge with a smile. They are a source of inspiration for all of us.

The many accomplishments of our Divyangan across diverse areas - be it in education, sports, arts, entertainment, or any professional space set an ideal for the society. Their record-breaking performances at sporting events such as the Paralympics have kept our Tricolour flying high.

The nation remains steadfast towards the empowerment of Divyangan through Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas'. Our endeavour is to create an enabling environment for Divyang to realise their full potential and fulfil their dreams and ambitions.

Whether it is reforms that increase accessibility of buildings or sensitivity in designing new public infrastructure, whether it is incentives in sports or increasing their participation in government jobs, the nation has taken a number of steps that create opportunities and impact outcomes.

Further, today technology-enabled tools offer a great potential to empower Divyangan and we are also working in this direction. The Festival will help the government learn from their experiences and finding opportunities for leveraging technology for larger benefit. The organisation of various events at the Festival are an opportunity for Divyangan to showcase their diverse skills before a wide audience. At the same time, it is also an occasion for the society to appreciate their unfathomable strength and endurance.

I wish "The Purple Fest" all success. May the occasion enable and empower our Divyangan, and also further strengthen the diverse and inclusive spirit of our nation.



## **Dr. Pramod Sawant**

**Hon'ble Chief Minister of Goa**

“Purple Fest has brought a lot of positivity for us to take forward in 2023. We are working on making most public spaces accessible. We have realised the importance of an inclusive society and Goa has begun work already. And it's my assurance to do as much as possible to create an inclusive environment in the state of Goa. I deeply appreciate this initiative taken-up by Goa State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities and Directorate of Social Welfare.”



## **Shri. Subhash Phal Dessai**

**Hon'ble Minister for Social Welfare, Govt. of Goa**

“As the delegates of Purple Fest from all over the country were here in the first week of January the entire state of Goa was beaming purple.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the dignitaries, persons with disabilities, parents/caregivers of persons with disabilities, volunteers and the entire Purple Fest team for making this first national event in the disability sector a reality. I look forward to making Purple Fest more bigger and more inclusive for all.”





## **Shri. Guruprasad Pawaskar**

**State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, Goa**

“I’m truly overwhelmed by the response of delegates at Purple Fest. I envisaged something like this long ago, and to see it become reality is a great feeling. I express my deepest gratitude to delegates, invitees and the entire team of purple fest for making this event a dream come true. But now we need to plan ahead for the next edition. And I believe a Fest of this kind should be held annually in Goa and we are more than happy to upscale this event year after year.”



## **Shri. Taha Haaziq**

**Secretary, Office of the State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, Goa**

“Purple Fest: Celebrating Diversity’, is one step towards a new, inclusive India. This fest was an eye opener in many ways. It broke many stereotypes associated with disability. In addition to demonstrating innovative solutions in the field of disability, it provided an opportunity to network with like-minded people and to sensitise the society to the diverse needs, solutions, issues and aspirations of persons with disabilities.”





## **Historic First Edition Of Purple Fest Goa**

**100+ exhibitors**

**200+ Guest speakers**

**300+ On Stage performers**

**1000+ Volunteers**

**5000+ Delegates**

**50,000+ Visitors**

**part of Purple Fest 2023**



## Launch Of Day Wise Event Calendar



The day wise event calendar which is a guide to various activities and locations was released at the hands of Minister for Social Welfare, Subhash Phal Dessai. The brochure has been specially put together to mark the First edition of Purple Fest 2023.













The event was intended to encourage people to overcome personal stereotypes as well as to establish an environment that not only educates everyone about the disabled community and their capabilities but also respect and celebrates diversity and inclusion.

The festival, promoted inclusion and engagement of all people on a shared platform, with an attraction of over 5,000+ delegate registrations, including members of the disabled community and other individuals from all over the country. The event had 1000 local volunteers to assist the delegates, persons with and without disability and all attendees for all three days.

## United For Disability Inclusion

In order to raise awareness and gain visibility at Purple Fest 2023, Purple Ambassadors representing the 21 disabilities recognized by the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016. These Purple Ambassadors spoke on behalf of their communities and aimed to transform the perception of disability to break societal barriers.

### PURPLE AMBASSADORS

 <p><b>Manju Sharma</b> Person with Chronic and Neurological Disability</p>	 <p><b>Lalit Pargi</b> Person with Sickle Cell Disease</p>	 <p><b>Mahadev Sawant</b> Person with Low Vision</p>
 <p><b>Krunal Thakur</b> Person with Muscular Dystrophy</p>	 <p><b>K.Y Venkatesh</b> Person with Dwarfism</p>	 <p><b>Karishma Kannan</b> Person with Down Syndrome</p>
 <p><b>Kamal Kanta</b> Person with Spinal Cord Injury</p>	 <p><b>Jennifer Joseph</b> Person with Mental Illness</p>	 <p><b>Anjali Vyas</b> Person with Multiple Sclerosis</p>
 <p><b>Zamir Dhale</b> Person with Multiple Disabilities</p>	 <p><b>Dhanya Ravi</b> Person with Locomotor Disability</p>	 <p><b>Santosh Vani</b> Person with Haemophilia</p>

 <p><b>Deepashree Narendra</b> Person with learning Disability</p>	 <p><b>Sunil Sahasrabudhe</b> Deaf Individual</p>	 <p><b>Aarti Batra</b> Person with Thalassemia major</p>
 <p><b>Pragya Singh</b> Acid Attack Survivor</p>	 <p><b>Rakshita Shekhar</b> Person with Autism</p>	 <p><b>Nidhi Goyal</b> person with Blindness</p>
 <p><b>Jeeja Ghosh</b> Person with Cerebral Palsy</p>	 <p><b>Umesh Salgar</b> Person with Parkinson's Disease</p>	 <p><b>Maya Ranavare</b> Leprosy Cured Person</p>



## Opening Ceremony



The Opening Ceremony of the unique Purple fest was held on 6<sup>th</sup> January at Inox Courtyard in the presence of Chief Minister of Goa, Dr. Pramod Sawant and Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Dr. Virendra Kumar who presided over the function along with Minister for Tourism, Rohan Khaunte, Minister of Social Welfare, Subhash Phal Dessai, Secretary Social Welfare, Subhash Chandra, Mayor CCP, Rohit Monserrate, MLAs, State Commissioner for Persons with Disability, Guruprasad Pawaskar and Director of Social Welfare, Sandhya Kamat.







## Purple Fun Zone

### Fun At Beach

During all three days of the Purple Fest lifesavers assisted delegates to wade into the shallow end of the sea. The delegates were from various Indian states and from various walks of life, Special ramps were installed at the Miramar Beach, allowing delegates in wheelchairs to visit the shore. The delegates were then transferred to a specially modified wheelchair with inflatable wheels.





## Cruise Ride

Traveling with a disability can be challenging and stressful so we can all imagine how being on a boat/ ship for a cruise can be. Nevertheless, the experience of the delegates with disabilities at The Purple Fest was extremely fascinating. The expression and feeling that the short cruise left on each of the delegate was worth every effort that went into organizing and coordinating the mammoth exercise of making the jetty and boat accessible. Transporting of delegates in the buses from different locations to reach on time for the cruise added fun to the whole adventure. The Cruise was definitely a lifetime experience for all.





## Bird Walk

The early morning Bird Walk at the Carambolim lake saw 69 delegates; 32 visually impaired, 15 partially blind and 22 with hearing disability participate in spotting various species of birds.



## Saksham Car Rally For Visually Impaired

Blind Car Rally held in Panjim as part of Purple Fest-  
First ever accessible Blind Car Rally held in Goa

Purple Fest 2023, Celebrating Diversity: held its first-ever accessible car rally, featuring visually impaired individuals as navigators and braille maps as their guides, making it a historic event.

On Saturday individuals served as drivers in this innovative exercise that displayed the true meaning of interdependence.

The Blind Car Rally was flagged off by the Minister of Social Welfare, Subhash Phal Dessai and State Commissioner of Persons with Disabilities, Guruprasad Pawaskar. Television actress, Pooja Bedi was the special guest.

State Commissioner of Persons with Disabilities, Guruprasad Pawaskar, was overwhelmed with emotion as he spoke. "I thank The Rotary Club of Panjim and all the Rotarians who have come here to be part of this unique- Blind Car Rally. I'm sure you'll carry great memories from this Purple Fest. It is a dream come true, as I wanted to organise something like this for years now."

Pooja Bedi, Television Actress stated, "I think it's really wonderful when people come together to empower, help and support each other and encourage people to do better and shine bright."

Sujith Kumar, Director of Pro Sports, the organizer of rally, said "The response from participants is very positive and they loved the rally."

35 cars with 35 drivers participated, along with 40 navigators who came from various parts of the country.



## Purple Experience Zone

### Inclusive Carnival

Inclusive Carnival is a pioneering activity developed by Akshadhaa Foundation. The foundation has been training and educating individuals with neuro-development challenges for over a decade now. With these events, we seek to encourage government officials, regulatory bodies, and common people to contribute to the culture of inclusion of children with disabilities. The Carnival was a fun and experiential pathway to understand and engage with the neuro-diverse brain which is still a grey area for science. The next logical step of Akshadhaa is launching an Assisted Living facility for neuro diverse persons and their families.





## Antarchakshu

Antarchakshu is a simulation workshop designed to provide a sneak peek into the world of a person with disability. Participants experienced simulated activities for a few minutes and were made to perform a few simple tasks in a safe environment. Immersive activities were designed to mirror the experience of navigating life with disability.





## Museum Of Possibilities

Museum of Possibilities holds infinite possibilities. This space encouraged interaction with the community of users, creators and innovators and persons with disability.

This zone catered to many aspects of a life of a person with disability- from education, employment and healthcare to transportation, housing and others.

With the theme 'Live', 'Work' and 'Play', the exhibits are not categorized as per a specific disability but showcased solutions to overcome barriers faced on a daily basis. The Museum of Possibilities demonstrated an accessible home model with adapted products and assistive aids and technology for everyday use and access. This will be an experience zone for everyone to understand accessibility and universally designed products to foster independent living.

### MODEL ACCESSIBLE HOME – SWAYAMPOORNA



## Jagruti Mela

Jagruti Mela is a platform which is curated for parents/ guardians of children with disabilities to provide information about education, skilling, schemes, training, and livelihood opportunities. In this area persons with disabilities were guided to take the right path from the beginning of their journey resulting in successful livelihood. Jagruti Mela is the unavailable opportunity for many Persons with Disabilities and their community. Person with Disabilities will able to see their future and making plan to reach right service providers towards sustainable livelihood.



## Purple We Care Film Festival

We Care Film Festival focussed on the accessibility for persons with disability. We have not seen anything like this ever before, in Goa or in all of India.

Kapoor has conceptualised and produced the National Anthem featuring Amitabh Bachchan and children with different disabilities. 25 films will be screened over the course of the Purple Fest for over 5,000 people. "This will be our 199<sup>th</sup> venue for We Care Film Festival and I'm excited," Kapoor adds.

Some of the films that were screened are 'The Wizard of Needles', 'National Anthem in sign', 'Virtue', 'Means to Live', 'I am special, So are you', 'Tiny steps', etc. The films will be at Inox, Panjim.

As much as Purple Fest celebrates diversity, it seems to have brought about awareness among the general Goan population who wish to come and experience the Purple Zone and learn more about disability and inclusion.





## Purple Rain





## Purple Think Tank

**Shijio Joseph**

**Self-Employment Of PWDS**



Self-employment requires a lot of background work and preparation for a person with disability and their stakeholders. Join us at this Think Tank as the speakers discuss the details of motivating, training, creating credit and market linkage, and initial handholding for entrepreneurs with disabilities.

**Shiva Kumar N**

**Government Role On Inclusion Of PWDS**



The government aims to mainstream people with disabilities by various means and one such policy level initiative is reservation in recruitment of persons with disabilities.

**Topic: Careers Of PWDS**



Ordinary people with extraordinary determination convert aspirations into achievements through persistent action!

### **Topic: Inclusive Education For Deaf**

Inclusive education is a new approach to education that emphasizes providing access to education for all children, both with disabilities and without, under the same roof.



### **Topic: Reach The Unreached**

How does hiring a person with disabilities impact a workplace? Is there a business case for hiring persons with disabilities? How can employers equip themselves to embark on and scale their journey of disability inclusion? Are there any best practices?



### **Topic: Inclusive Education Focused On Print Disabilities**

Most of us today don't blink an eyelid when we talk to Alexa or talk to our phones to make a call. But did you know that the same technology has also enabled access and inclusion for persons with disabilities? Technology has changed the lives of persons with disabilities in more ways than one. And yet, it also holds the potential of becoming the biggest discriminator.



Dr. Homiyar Mobedji



### **Topic: Inclusive Education Focused On Neurodiversity**

By sharing examples of best practices, the session highlighted how the main components of the National Education Policy 2020 such as Early Childhood Care and Education, Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, Curriculum and Pedagogy and Teacher Training is a huge boost for truly inclusive school education.



Nandita De Souza



## Topic: Inclusive Education: A Possibility Or An Ideal For India?

Discussions around Inclusive education tend to limit themselves to success stories. Understanding the challenges and practical solutions of ground- level projects in India is key to helping a wider range of educators adopt inclusive education practices.



Neha Trivedi



## Topic: Sports For PWDS

The session brought together personalities who have engaged with sport at the highest level and at the same time have experienced disability very closely.



George Abraham







## Purple Dialogue

### Topics

- **Physical Disability- Physical Infrastructure Accessibility**
- **Sensory Disability-ICT Accessibility**
- **Know Me Better!**
- **What After Us?**
- **Disability, Gender And Sexuality**
- **Celebrate My Journey To Success**
- **Blood Disorder**
- **Disability Activism And Social Media**

## Purple Bioscope

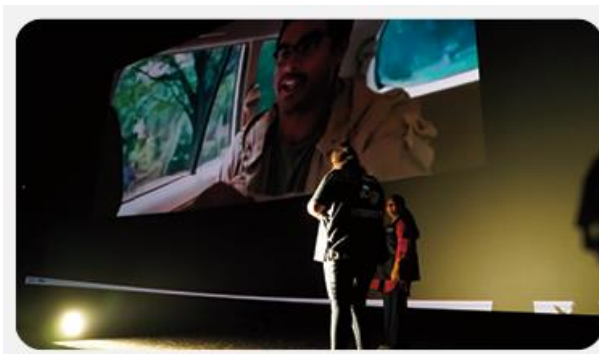




## Accessible Movie Screening

We Care Film Festival commenced with Minister Subhash Phal Dessai and Secretary Taha Haaziq in attendance, with the curator Satish Kapoor.

This 3-day film festival will have 6,000 Goan students as invitees to attend, interact, and watch films-based Disabilities to become aware and sensitive. Some of the movies screened on Day 1 were, 'Feet in the Sand', 'Impossible', 'National Anthem in Sign Language', 'Tiny Steps', and more.



## Purple Kaleidoscope

### Art Exhibition

Art Gallery-Exhibition cum sale of Paintings, Artwork, products of Art done by 18 Artists with various disabilities. In the Accessible Art section, there is set of tactile paintings curated by Access for All & some of these artwork with QR codes that can help the visually impaired.

The Gallery is also hosting live activities by artists - A Mehendi artist, etc. And guest artists will be coming in for daily sessions.

Art Garden - Paintings by students of Disha Centre



### Art Activities

The art activities are for all interested in Art & will be facilitated by Alpna Kale- an artist with locomotor disability.

Activities will include- Community painting on canvas, Poster making, Craft, Origami



## Inclusive Art Workshop

These workshops are curated by Siddhant Shah from Access for All specifically for students from various special schools & other centres.



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## 10<sup>th</sup> Mister And Miss Deaf India





The Purple Fest played host to the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Miss and Mister Deaf India 2023 beauty pageant, organised by the Office of the State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, the All-India Deaf Arts and Cultural Society (AIDACS), and the Goa Association of the Deaf.

The event which was held at the Gera School (TGS) Auditorium, Old Goa, provides the deaf youth community of India with a national platform to showcase their talent and venture into the mainstream fashion industry. It also opens the doors for them to pursue any other dreams in such a field. The winners eventually participate in the Miss and Mister Deaf International, Europe, and Asia pageants. The Ms. Deaf India 2023 winner was Varsha G. Sheetal was the first runner up and Sadiya Bandodkar was the second runner-up.



## Purple I-Run Goa Marathon

Office of the State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, Goa & I-Help Foundation Goa (a non-profit organisation) organised Purple I-Run Goa Marathon on the third day of Purple Fest which is Goa's First National Marathon for 21 types of disabilities. It is a half marathon event which was held at Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Stadium, Bambolim. This marathon aimed to promote inclusiveness and acceptability of people with disabilities in our society. People with disabilities ran together with other runners in all age categories. All the participants of special categories were facilitated at the event.

Sangeeta Vishnoi from Jodhpur, Rajasthan participated in the Purple I-Run with full enthusiasm and positive vibes. She ran 2 km with other participants in the Marathon. Despite being disabled with Cheeta Foot also called as Blade runner, her enthusiasm of participation at the purple fest and other different levels did not hold her back.





## All India Open Para TT Championship Goa 2023

All India Para Table Tennis Open Championship All India Para Table Tennis Open Championship Goa 2023 was organised by the State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities in association with Directorate of Social Welfare and Sports Authority of Goa. 140 participants from 15 different states were part of the tournament with 82 standing players and 58 players on wheelchairs.

The event concluded with winners taking home 13 Gold, 13 Silver and 20 Bronze medals in different classifications.



## Unified Beach Cricket

“During Purple Fest, Special Olympics will be conducting sports events here. Unified Beach Cricket will be played at Miramar Beach on 3<sup>rd</sup> January. There will be demonstration of the Baggo and Bocce game on 6<sup>th</sup> January at Inox. It's a great feeling to have the Unified Beach Cricket, being introduced for the first time in India here at Purple Fest,” says Victor R. Vaz, National Sports Director and Special Olympics Bharat.

For the game a team consists of 4 special athletes and 2 partners (six playing members in a team). The playing area is 50mtrs × 50mtrs. Matches here will be played at 6 overs per side, where each player will bowl one over and each batsman will face six deliveries. Only one batsman will bat at a time. A typical game will be played for 30 minutes each with a 2-minute break in between innings.





## Inter State Blind Cricket Match

The Inter-State Blind Cricket Tournament was held as part of the Purple Fest. The tournament witnessed a total of six teams participating including Goa, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Pondicherry and Telangana. The 20 overs match with the basic rules of Cricket was played by four completely blind players, three who can see up to a distance of 2 mts and four with 6 mts vision. The final of the same was held at the GCA ground Porvorim here on Sunday in between Goa and Telangana. Telangana won the match by 152 runs, with the highest highest team total of 312 runs scored in the Finals. Goa emerged Runners- Up in the tournament.



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## Employment Conclave

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) in association with Office of Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) has organised a two days Sensitisation Workshop at hotel Taj Vivanta, Panaji Goa on 6th and 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2023.

In this workshop issues related to Grievance Management in the office of CCPD and their state counterparts as per Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, implementation related issues of various schemes and programmes for Persons with Disabilities, innovations and action plan in the field of accessibility etc discussed with the representative of States/UTs Government and some of the eminent NGOs and other stakeholders.



## Access India Convention



Panjim, January 5, 2023

As a part of Purple Fest which is set to begin on January 6, Access India Convention was organized by the Office of the State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities and the Directorate of Social Welfare, Goa in association with Access India. This was held on Thursday at Clube Tennis De Gasper Dias, Miramar, Panjim.

The event was inaugurated by the Minister for Social Welfare, Subhash Phal Dessai and State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, Guruprasad Pawaskar. The event was well-endowed by the Minister of Power, Sudin Dhavalikar. Also present for the convention was Solicitor and Core team member of the Access India Convention Kanchan Pamnani and Secretary of State Commission for Persons with Disabilities in Goa, Taha Haaziq.

Speaking about how digitalization has empowered persons with disabilities, Minister of Social Welfare, Subhash Phal Dessai said, “The revolution created by mobile phones has been phenomenal. Persons with disabilities have been keeping up with this revolution by using mobiles to overcome challenges and using various software like dictations, voicemail, banking. This helps gain knowledge on how to stay connected with the world. Digitisation has provided access to all of that to all of us.”

Multiple initiatives have been started through the Purple Fest for social and economic empowerment of people with disabilities. The focus has also been on providing quality education, providing placement, and making sure that discrimination and crimes against persons with disabilities are strictly penalized.

“Persons with disabilities have immaculate potential, creativity, ability, skills, and talent. A PwD does not lack ability just because one organ is not functional and that does not term them lesser than anyone. The fire and strength of each person reflect our motives,” he added.

Chief Guest, Sudin Dhavalikar Minister of Power said: “The Government of Goa has not left any stone unturned to raise the standard and living conditions of PwDs. This is a very good opportunity for delegates to discuss different issues that need to be taken up and resolved shortly.”

This Purple Fest through live performances, music concerts, dances, and stand-up comedy will be both interactive and entertaining.

On the occasion Kanchan Panmani, Solicitor and core team member of Access India said, “We are transforming ourselves from ‘bechara’ to being empowered persons. Change is revolutionary. And teamwork is the most important to succeed. Feedback is also important.”

Access India is a community driven initiative that empowers its members with information and solutions and highlights issues faced by persons with disability and the solutions for the same.



## Closing Ceremony





The Purple Fest 2023 was attended by Delegates from different walks of life educationists, NGOs, Activists, Corporates, Government Officials from within and outside Goa. The Festival was not limited to the Delegates with Disabilities but saw a heavy footfall of people not from the disability sector. This made the whole event a colourful amalgamation of different talents and abilities. The entire effort was well praised by everyone as it not only gave a platform for differently abled to showcase their talent but a learning experience for all. The Concept and the intent of the whole Event was beautifully captured and executed and was able to drive home the need of developing team spirit, acceptance and leadership amongst all the participants and delegates present. Togetherness and Inclusion displayed in The Purple Fest helps us all to evolve them into stronger and more able human beings in future. The Feeling of Joy, Success and Acceptance on each and every face on the last day of The purple Fest said it all about the it's Grand Success!



## Purple Spirit!





## Testimonials

“Dear Guruprasad Sir,

Warm Greetings from Akshadhaa Foundation!

I write to convey our deep joy and gratitude for all the support and encouragement which was hugely motivating for the Akshadhaa team, especially our hardworking special needs individuals.

We were happy to be at Purple Fest and through the fun and non-judgmental Inclusive Carnival we were able to sensitise neurotypical people about the capabilities of neurodiverse individuals and challenges faced by them.

Look forward to a sustained and rewarding engagement with you. As a Professional in the field of Neurodiversity and a Mother of a special needs girl child, I wish all the best in your life for all this good and wonderful effort. May God bless you will all the Health and Happiness.”

**Sumana Dutta,**

**Founder and Executive Director, Akshadhaa Foundation**

“Hello sir. I just wanted to congratulate you on the tremendous success of the purple fest. I am still awestruck by the magnitude of the event and the inspiration it has given to so many professionals and parents. I have myself learnt so many new things n so have my colleague from paediatrics.”

“Thank you, sir. I don't think anyone could have pulled it off besides you. God bless you and your team.”

“Good morning Pawaskar Sir. This is Shruti Pushkarna from Enable India. I just want to thank you and the entire official team for making Purple Fest such a success. It was a delight seeing you work tirelessly and I am personally inspired by your spirit and commitment. I hope to see you and work with you again, soon. I am a former journalist based in Delhi, who now full time works for the disability sector. If you visit Delhi, I would love to meet with you. Thank you again, Sir. Have a great day!”

"Very good morning, sir  
It was great pleasure to be in purple  
Great organization, hats off to GOYENKARS.  
Masterpiece of inclusion of all DISABILITIES.  
Salute to you all"

"Thanks for giving us opportunity to show our work...  
We will support you...  
Once again, we r thankful to you."

"Congratulations for wonderful and excellent event.... 1<sup>st</sup> in country"

"Hats off to you and your team. It's a humongous effort... To get together this under one roof... We learnt so much... Loved all the stalls and discussions"

"Dear team purple fest 2023,  
You've been a wonderful host, the way you all have worked tirelessly, especially the commitment of all your VOLUNTEERS & INTERPRETERS is beyond verbal appreciation. My heart felt love to all of them for being there for all of us during these 3 days of the event.  
You all have defined the true definition of volunteering.  
Your commitment,  
Your compassion,  
Your efforts  
Your passion is just priceless and commendable.  
I wish I could personally convey the above but consider this message as straight from my heart."  
**Raghu**  
**Founder and CEO, Kaiteki Innovations**

"Good Morning Guru Pawaskar  
We all reached Chennai and our respective residents safely by last night.  
Once again, no more words to thank you particularly and your entire team, as I said right from the young responsible and dedicated volunteers, to each and every personnel, the DPSC , to our adorable Taha your right hand Secretary to the dedicated transport personnels (auto drivers, helpers, cab drivers, can drivers and helpers) made each one of us feel comfortable and safe from the day of arrival to day of departure. Heart-warming gesture of entire Goa Purple fest organisers.  
This event first of its kind we have attended and it will always be so close to our heart.  
Thank you so much for everything."  
**Dolly Menon Chennai**

“Hi Guru sir, firstly let me congratulate you and your team for making Purple Fest such a great success. Every feature was amazing and highly appreciated. All the hard work your team put together really showed off. Secondly, thanks a lot for inviting us and facilitating our stay there. It was very kind of you to attend to us despite your super busy schedule. We are looking forward to attending Purple Fest in future too and we will be happy to bring to you our services should you need it anywhere in Goa. Thank you once again.

“Great job Guru, you were literally the guru and under your guidance, the staff and volunteers did a super job in pulling off a massive festival. A lot of the staff and volunteers were handling a big event for the 1st time in their lives so there were bound to be a few hiccups at the start but under your leadership they learnt quick and most importantly whatever they did, they did with love and compassion and that made the event a great success. You are a true leader and a doer Guru. Goa definitely needs you and your leadership qualities. Forca Goa, may the force always be with you Guru.”

“Hello. I am Ritvik Rajan from Bangalore. I had the fortune of participating in the Purple Fest held by The State Commission for people with disabilities, Govt. Of Goa, celebrating diversity from 6th to 8<sup>th</sup> January 2023. I performed on the inaugural day the 6<sup>th</sup> and sang few songs.

I would like to state that it was a well-planned and a wonderfully executed event, in a highly collaborative manner. The event showcased the abilities and talents of a large number of disabled participants from all over the country.

It was a very delightful experience for me to perform in front of a large and distinguished gathering.

I was very excited to receive copious appreciation from the audience who wanted to hear more songs from me.

I wish and hope that there'll be more of such wonderful events in future.

Lots of love and thanks to the entire Purple Fest team.”

“sir

It was a pleasure meeting with you. Thank you for your time.

Thank you so much for everything. I'm back in Mumbai and looking forward with enthusiasm to work together with your ministry and team, by being a part and coming back to goa real soon for making the state a role model state that's 100% accessible and inclusive for all persons with disabilities in India.”

**Divya Arora**

**Tara from the purple fest play Tara**



“aksham team wants to thank the entire team involved in this amazing event, especially the volunteers and coordinators who went out of their way to help against all odds.

Please do convey our thanks and gratitude to all of them.”

**Rummi K Seth**

**SAKSHAM (Limiting Limitations)**

“Dear Taha and Pawaskar Ji,

Hearties congratulations for such a wonderful event which has been unparallel in its scope and approach. Below is the quote from me for the report you mentioned in the telephonic conversation:

Purple fest was unparallel event in many ways. It was a real celebration of diversity and capabilities of persons with disabilities. It focused so much on solutions and not the problems. Problems and gaps keep getting discussed over and over in several platforms. I am so happy that Purple fest was very different to those platforms and celebrated solutions and social inclusion. Congratulations to the whole team and government of Goa to host such a wonderful event.”

**Dipendra**

“Hello Taha/entire purple fest team of Goa!

We all have reached back, and jump started our daily routine work!

On behalf of entire Saksham car rally Mumbai team, I must thank each of your efforts to make our stay comfortable.

While returning all 35 of us had just 1 word with us and that was awesome”

Trust me this would not have been possible without your volunteers, staff members and all others!

You people have truly set a new benchmark and breaking it would not only be difficult but may be impossible!

Overall, though there would be many positive impacts of Purple fest 2023 on PWD community, but personally, these 5 days has created historic experience in my life and which would be remembered for very long time!

The kind of thinking, planning and execution that all of you have done, I can go on and on.

Finally, my Entire team wishes great year to you all and your family members and best of health.”

“To Hon'ble Guruprasad R. Pawaskar sir and Hon'ble Taha Sir

On behalf of Mahatma Gandhi Seva Sangh and our Secretary Shri. Vijay Kanhekar, I am writing to express our deepest appreciation, gratitude, and congratulations to you and your entire team for organizing the first Purple Fest. The event was truly a success in creating awareness about disability and bringing it to the mainstream.

The fest was fun, eye-opening, and truly showed what is possible when the right approach and platform are provided. It was a wonderful example of how individuals with disabilities can be included and celebrated in our society.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to you and your team for your hard work and dedication in making the Purple Fest a reality. Your commitment to the inclusion of individuals with disabilities is truly commendable, and we are grateful for the opportunity to be a part of such an impactful event.

Once again, thank you for all that you do, and we look forward to the opportunity to work with you again in the future.

We are sure that next year will be bigger and more inclusive and we will go international.

I assure you of our more active participation.

Thank you again for making us a part of this experience.”

**Ameya Agrawal**

**CEO, Mahatma Gandhi Seva Sangh**

“The Purple Fest 2023 held in Goa, a first of its kind festival celebrating diversity among Persons with disabilities, was indeed an unforgettable experience. The concept of 'Purple' instilled self-pride in ourselves by showcasing our abilities and removed any stigma associated with disabilities. Moreover, it enabled people to think of indefinite possibilities by observing and using simple and low-cost accessibility solutions that promoted social inclusion and personal independence. I deeply appreciate this initiative organised by the Office of State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, Government of Goa which has set the example for other states to do the same. I am looking forward to witnessing growth of 'Purple Economy' through greater awareness created by the Purple Fest”

**Sunil Sahasrabudhe,**

**Ambassador for the Deaf Community**

“The purple fest has been a game changer for the disability sector.

For the first time ever, the country has seen a proactive state govt creating one umbrella (the festival) to bring together education, employment, solutions, sports, arts, culture, products and fun under one roof, creating impact for stakeholders from disability sector and influencers and leaders from mainstream.

Under the tireless and passionate leadership of Hon'ble minister ShubaSh phal Desai, disability commissioner Pawaskar, Secy Taha the festival helped create sustainable infrastructure for different disabilities such as ramps at tourist hotels and venues, accessible transport, accessible communication.

For the first time in the history of India, 21 ambassadors representing the 21 disabilities in RPwD act have come together to inspire generations of people with and without disability in the country.

Every state wants to replicate this phenomenon. Every individual touched by the festival says it is an unforgettable experience and felt they belonged there! The love and commitment shown by the Goa govt will not be forgotten. Jai hind!”

**Shanti Raghavan, founder, chief enabler, enable India**

**Dipesh Sutariya, chairman and managing director, enable India**



## Media Coverage

### Fest reflects nation's inclusive spirit: PM

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Panaji:** A message sent by Prime Minister Narendra Modi was read out at the inaugural of the Purple Fest in Goa on Friday.

Stating that the disabled are blessed with infinite talents and are a source of inspiration, the PM said it is deeply touching to see the festival celebrate diversity and the disabled community. "The festival reflects the nation's inclusive spirit towards diverse segments of society," he said in the message.

Modi said that the many accomplishments of the disabled across diverse areas such as education, sports, arts and entertainment set an ide-

al for society. "Their record-breaking performances at sporting events such as the Paralympics have kept our tricolour flying high," he said.

Further, he urged people to create an enabling environment for the disabled to realise their full potential and fulfil their dreams and ambitions.

"The organisation of various events at the Purple Fest are an opportunity to showcase their diverse skills before a wide audience and an occasion for society to appreciate their unfathomable strength and endurance. May the occasion empower and enable the community to further strengthen the diverse and inclusive spirit of the nation," he said.

### पर्पल फेस्ट : मिरामार येथे विविध उपक्रमांचे उत्साहात उद्घाटन

## ...आणि दिव्यांगही पोहू लागले



मिरामार : १) पर्पल फेस्टनिमित्तच्या विविध उपक्रमांना मंगळवारी प्रारंभ झाला. यावेळी उपस्थित समाज कल्याणमंत्री सुभाष फडकेसाई, महापौर रोहीत मोन्सेरात व मान्यवर २) मिरामार समुद्रात खास तरंगणाऱ्या दिव्यांगेअग्रगण्य पोहण्याचा आनंद घेताना एक दिव्यांग. ● संदीप देसाई

### महोत्सवात काय असेल?

महोत्सवात लाइट्स् परफॉर्मन्स, भव्य प्रदर्शन, क्रीडा इव्हेंट्स, इमर्सिव्ह अनुभवां आणि इन्ोव्हेशन यात्रा व उत्सव यांचा समावेश असेल. यात विविध स्पर्धा, चित्रपट प्रदर्शन, मेगा कार रेडी, तसेच शिक्षण, रोजगार, पर्यटन आणि जीवन यासारख्या महत्वाच्या विषयांवर चर्चा यांचा समावेश असेल.



व्हिलचेअरना ये - जा करता येणाऱ्या ई रिखा समाज कल्याणमंत्री सुभाष फडकेसाई यांच्या हस्ते लॉन्च करण्यात आल्या. यावेळी आमदार केदार

नाईक, महापौर रोहीत मोन्सेरात, फेस्ट अंबेसिडर कृणाल ठाकूर, मुख्य सचिव पुनीत कुमार गोयल, गुरुप्रसाद पावसकर, संचालक संजया कामत उपस्थित

होत्या. दिव्यांगांना स्वाकर्लबी तसेच आत्मनिर्भर करण्यासाठी विविध साहित्य व साधनांची गरज असून त्यादृष्टीने हे महत्वाचे पाऊल आहे.



पणजी : पर्पल महोत्सवाचे उद्घाटन करताना केंद्रीय सामाजिक न्याय व सक्षमीकरणमंत्री डॉ. वीरेंद्र कुमार, बानूला मुख्यमंत्री डॉ. प्रमोद सावंत, समाज कल्याणमंत्री सुभाष फडकेसाई, पर्यटनमंत्री रोहन खंबटे, आमदार जीत आरोलकर, आमदार उल्हास तुवेकर, आमदार प्रमोद शेट, दिव्यांग आयुक्त गुरुप्रसाद पावसकर, संजया कामत, सुभाष बंडा, ताहा हाशिक व इतर.



पणजी : पर्पल महोत्सवाच्या उद्घाटन सत्रात दिव्यांगांनी व्हिलचेअरवर बसून गोव्याचे वैशिष्ट्य असलेला गोफ गुफून सर्वांची मने जिंकली.

## दिव्यांगांनी जिंकली गोमंतकीयांची मने!

पणजीत पर्पल महोत्सवाचे शानदार उद्घाटन: गोव्याने देशभरातील दिव्यांगांना आणले एकत्र

**प्रतिनिधी**  
पणजी  
पर्पल उत्सवाला कात शुक्रवारी प्रारंभ करताना दिव्यांग बांधवांनी साहसी खेड, कता, संस्क्रुती, गोव्याचे पातो नृत्य, कुणबी हे सादर करून गोमंतकीयांची मने जिंकत पर्पल उत्सवात रंगत वाडवली.  
गोवा राज्य दिव्यांग आयुक्त, समाज कल्याण खाते आणि गोवा मनोरंजन संस्थेतर्फे आयोजित केलेल्या पर्पल उत्सवाला आयर्नीक्स कोर्ट पाई येथे शानदार उद्घाटनाने आजपासून सुरुवात झाली. उद्घाटन कार्यक्रमाला केंद्रीय सामाजिक न्याय आणि सक्षमीकरणमंत्री डॉ. वीरेंद्र कुमार, मुख्यमंत्री डॉ. प्रमोद सावंत, पर्यटनमंत्री रोहन खंबटे, समाज

कल्याणमंत्री सुभाष फडकेसाई, मधेचे आमदार प्रमोद शेट, आमदार उल्हास तुवेकर, आमदार जीत आरोलकर, समाज कल्याण खात्याचे सचिव सुभाष बंडा, समाज कल्याण खात्याच्या संचालक संजया कामत, दिव्यांग आयुक्त गुरुप्रसाद पावसकर, सचिव ताहा हाशिक उपस्थित होते. देशभरातील दिव्यांगांना आणले एकत्र  
केंद्रीय मंत्री डॉ. वीरेंद्र कुमार म्हणाले, गोवा सरकारच्या माध्यमातून या पर्पल फेस्टने देशभरातील दिव्यांग लोकांना एकत्र आणले आहे. केंद्रीय मंत्रालय कोशल्य प्रशिक्षण, शिक्षण सुविधा इत्यादीद्वारे दिव्यांग बांधवांना सक्षम करण्यासाठी योग्य पावले उचलत आहे.

**गोव्यात दिव्यांगांना आर्थिक मदत**  
मुख्यमंत्री सावंत म्हणाले,

शारीरिकदृष्ट्या ८० टक्के दिव्यांग असलेल्या बांधवांना गोवा सरकार हे देशात सर्वाधिक पेन्शन देणारे राज्य आहे. गोवा सरकारतर्फे दिव्यांग बांधवांना पेन्शन म्हणून प्रति महिना २५०० रुपये दिले जाते. इतर दिव्यांग बांधवांनाही दरमहा २५०० दिले जातात. इतर राज्यांच्या तुलनेत गोवा राज्यात दिव्यांग व्यक्तींसाठी सर्वाधिक आरक्षण कोटा आहे. पणजी शहर हे पर्पल फेस्टासाठी अनुकूल शहर असल्याचे दिव्यांग बांधवांनी सादर केलेल्या विविध कलातून स्पष्ट होते. सर्व सार्वजनिक इमारतींही दिव्यांग बांधवांना प्रवेश करण्यासाठी सोपे करण्यात येईल, असेही ते म्हणाले.

करमळी, जुने गोवे, पॅरी, पणजीतील ईएसजी, कांसार हाऊज

ईएसजी परिसर, आर्ट गॅलरी ईएसजी, आयर्नीक्स पार्किंग परिसर, मिरामार किनारा, आयर्नीक्स स्कीन १, सांता मोनिका जेटी आदी ठिकाणी आज दिवसभर पर्पल फेस्टचे कार्यक्रम पेश्यात आले. गोवा मनोरंजन संस्थेच्या (ईएसजी) सर्व परिसरात दिव्यांग बांधवांसाठी उपयोगी असणाऱ्या विविध वस्तूंच्या प्रदर्शनाचे स्टॉल वाटण्यात आले आहेत.  
**दरमिती होणार पर्पल फेस्ट**  
गेते काही दिवसांपासून राज्यातील विविध भागात खेड, स्पर्धा, नृत्य व इतर कलाविषयक दिव्यांग बांधवांनी यशस्वीपणे सादर केले असल्याने हा पर्पल उत्सव यापुढे राज्यात दरवर्षी साजरा करण्यात येणार असल्याची घोषणा समाज कल्याण खात्याचे मंत्री सुभाष फडकेसाई यांनी केली.







PICS BY HEMANT PARAB



## Purple dreams

NT BUZZ

The Purple Fest played host to the 10th annual Miss and Mister Deaf India 2023 beauty pageant, organised by the Office of the State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, the All India Deaf Arts and Cultural Society (AIDACS), and the Goa Association of the Deaf.

The event which was held at the Geta School (TGS) Auditorium, Old Goa, provides the deaf youth community of India with a national platform to showcase their talent and venture into the mainstream fashion industry. General Secretary of Goa Association of the Deaf, Mr. Prasad Joshi along with his two interpreters from Goa, Miss Muskan Shaikh and Mrs. Josefinia Fernandes were a part of the event. It also opens the doors for them to pursue any other dreams in such a field. The winners eventually participate in the Miss and Mister Deaf International, Europe, and Asia pageants.

The chief guest for the event was MLA of Poriem Constituency and chairman of Goa Forest Corporation Dr. Deviya Rane and the guest of honour was minister for

social welfare Subhash Phal Dessai.

The special invitees were Guruprasad Pawaskar, director of social welfare Sandhya Kamat, secretary of office of the state commissioner of PwD Taha Haazig, president of AIDACS Rajkumar Punjabi, and general secretary of AIDACS B. Kalyan. The winner of Miss Deaf India was Vinita Shirodkar. Khushboo Patel was declared the first runner up and Sujatadevi Pasi was the second runner up. Rajesh Bhanushali was the winner for Mister Deaf India 2023. The first runner up was Harsh Choudhan and the second runner up was Parth Nanula.

The Ms. Deaf India 2023 winner was Vansha G. Sheetal was the first runner up and Sadiya Bandodkar was the second runner-up. Atisha Mapari won for Best Action Talent.

The participants were trained by Abir Naik, the director of AB Production Goa, a modeling agency based in Goa.

The judges for the event were Mister Grand International 2022 Nehal Puri, and Miss Teen Goa 2022 Miss Sachin Sawant, along with Naik.



# Purple Fest Day 3: A Fitting End to a Spectacular Festival

Goemkapronn desk

Panjim, January 8, 2023: Purple Fest 2023, Celebrating Diversity: The third and final day of Purple Fest was a whirlwind of excitement, with a wide variety of activities ranging from sports and workshops to cultural and fun events. Despite the busy schedule, attendees were able to take part in maximum number of events the festival had to offer, culminating in a memorable and enjoyable experience for all.

Closing Ceremony of the unique Purple Fest was held today at Inox Courtyard in the presence of Chief Minister of Goa, Dr. Pramod Sawant and Union Minister of State Tourism, Shri. Shripad Naik who presided over the function along with Shri Nilesh Cabral, PWD, Minister, Shri. Subhash Phal Dessai, Minister of Social Welfare, Shri Digambar Kamat, MLA, Shri Sadanand Shet Tanavade, President, BJP, Shri. Subhash Chandra, IAS,



Secretary, Shri. Guruprasad Pawaskar, State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities and Shri Taha Haazig, Secretary, Office of the State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities.

Chief Minister of Goa, Dr. Pramod Sawant on the closing ceremony said: "I visited the Jagruti Mela and saw all the NGOs together assisting

the parents of Persons with Disabilities. And that brought immense joy to me."

Union Minister of State of Tourism, Shri. Shripad Naik said: "Society is accepting the Divyang (Persons with Disability) more openly. They are getting more respect and opportunities that they deserve and Purple Fest is a brilliant example of it."

Minister of PWD's, Shri Shubash Phal Dessai said, "The speakers who came here for the talks empowered those with disabilities to become socially acceptable, economically, and educationally empowered. We are trying to give them the best educational facilities, safety, security, and protection and ensure good laws And acts are enforced from the policy point of view."

Here's a summary of what went down on the last day of Purple Fest.

### Purple Dialogue

The Purple Dialogue had panel discussion that included sessions on physical infrastructure accessibility, sensory disability, Know Me Better, What After Us?, Blood Disorder, Disability Activism and Social Media, Disability Gender and Sexuality.

The disability, gender, and sexuality discussion featured notable guests advocating for disability rights and inclusion. The panel also discussed

using social media as a tool for achieving goals for people with disabilities. Specialists and activists talked about the power of social media to bring people together and find solutions.

### Purple Think Tank

When open minds engage in honest dialogue, they create a space safe and welcoming environment. The Purple Think Tank consisted of a series of talks and panel discussions. Persons like Dr. Nandita de Souza who is the Developmental Paediatrician and Director, at Sethu, and Neha Trivedi enlightened people on inclusive education as a possibility, ideal for India. They also highlighted topics such as inclusive education and employment across disabilities, equal opportunity and livelihood enhancement for Persons with Disability.

The three-day event, the first of its kind concluded on Sunday, January 8, 2023 on a high note, leaving a benchmark for next year.



