

Spinal Injury Survivors Deliver Powerful Performances; Leave Audience Spell-Bound

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Survivors of serious spinal injuries led the celebrations, putting on display a series of power-packed performances that showcased their unwavering audacity and spirit of survival, at a unique cultural event to mark the 2nd Spinal Cord Injury Day. The performances very appropriately reinforced the theme of this year's Spinal Cord Injury Day "YES WE CAN". The event hosted by Indian Spinal Injuries Centre at the Talkatora Stadium was graced by Olympian Sakshi Malik, and was aimed at increasing awareness about spinal injuries and their treatments as well as advocating the need for greater social inclusivity for persons with disability. The audience was left spell bound as they witnessed a series of powerful performances showcased by the spinal cord injury survivors. The survivors put forth an exhilarating display of their talent and indomitable spirit as they marched on with gusto - some on wheelchairs, others on crutches. The performances sent out a powerful message that life doesn't stop post a spinal injury and for survivors - The Sky is the Limit, if provided the right treatment, an inclusive society as well as enabling infrastructure. Olympian Sakshi Malik graced the occasion as chief guest, cheering the participants at their every move and every step. The World Spinal Cord Day is celebrated every year on September 5th. ISIC organized this event in association with International Spinal Cord Society (ISCoS), with the objective of increasing awareness about spinal cord injuries, preventive measures, and treatment options, with the assumption that awareness would facilitate an inclusive life for persons with disability and ensure greater chances of success of prevention programs. "For the second consecutive year, ISIC is happy to become a medium through which the spinal cord injury survivors could showcase their talents and indomitable spirit for life. It also gives us opportunity to spread awareness amongst people sensitizing them to encourage a positive and supporting environment for persons with disabilities. We are happy with the kind of response this event has garnered and will continue to make people aware about prevention of spinal injuries and curative options available that can help a survivor lead a near-normal life", said Major H.P.S Ahluwalia, Chairman, ISIC. "The various acts and musicals performed by the survivors provides a powerful glimpse into how they have fought against all odds to retain and nurture their undying love for life. I am honored to be present amongst them, and am inspired beyond words in seeing them perform. They have proven that with right spirit any challenge can be overcome. ISIC in providing such a platform of self-expression for these brave hearts is taking constructive steps towards a noble cause, and it has been a pleasure to be a part of their efforts," said Olympian Sakshi Malik. The inclusive cultural evening was presented by AAMAD Dance Centre, an NGO, which is considered to be one of the premier performing arts organizations in India, founded by Rani Khanam two decades ago. The event list included "Hosla" a dance composition with the central theme "Equalization of opportunities" highlighting that the differently abled people should not be treated in isolation. This was followed by "Om Shanti", in which the participants despite their disabilities performed miraculous Yogic postures. With KRISHNA LEELA, the journey of Krishna from his birth to his preaching to Arjuna was depicted. With Maula Mere Maula, the participants depicted the electrifying moment when devotees transcend material existence, forget worldly desires and experience spiritual union with the divine. Through "Hawan Karenghe - Bhag Milkha Bhag" the spirit of our soldiers were celebrated. With "Tarana - Dim Ta Deredani -Takshak" the wheelchair users and partisans celebrated the true spirit of life by emoting beautifully with body postures, graceful movements and with their expressive expression. Dr. Harvinder Singh Chhabra, International Spinal Cord Society, SCI Day Committee

Chairperson, and Medical Director and Chief of Spine Services, Indian Spinal Injuries Centre, said "Today's performances were live examples of how sky is the limit for these spinal cord injury survivors. It also puts focus back on rehabilitating spinal cord injury patients across age groups, from children to adults. The experiences we have gained over the years have helped us understand various aspects related to spinal injuries. Apart from medical issues, mental, social, sexual, and vocational concerns need dedicated care. Through such events and campaigns, we hope to promote inclusive living for the survivors and alert people against reckless and ignorant actions to save them from causing an injury to their spine." In India, Spinal Cord Society (SCS) along with Association of Spine Surgeons of India (ASSI), Indian Orthopaedic Association (IOA), Indian Association of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (IAPMR), Indian Academy of Neurology (IAN), Asian Spinal Cord Network (ASCoN), Indian Spinal Injuries Centre (ISIC) and The Spinal Foundation (TSF) would carry out various activities across India. The events include wheelchair rallies, road shows, symposiums and awareness campaigns in schools and colleges in various cities including, Delhi, Chennai, Chandigarh, Bhuvneshwar, Jalandhar, Hyderabad, Vizag, Manali, Ranchi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Amritsar, Nagpur, Cochin, etc. ISCoS, along with its 21 affiliated societies in various countries, promotes the highest standards of care for spinal cord injured throughout the world. Through its medical and multi disciplinary team of professionals, ISCoS endeavors to foster education, research and clinical excellence

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