

## ISIC organizes 4th world spinal cord injury day

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### Minister of Textiles, Smriti Irani Flags off Rally with 200 Wheelchair Users



The Indian Spinal Injuries Centre (ISIC), a premier spine, orthopedic, and neuromuscular surgical centre of the country, organized a wheelchair rally at India Gate, New Delhi. The event was flagged off by **the Chief Guest, Honorable Union Minister for Textiles and Minister of Women & Child Development, Smt Smriti Irani** in the presence of Major HPS Ahluwalia, Chairman, ISIC, Dr A K Mukherjee, Director General, ISIC and Dr H S Chhabra, Medical Director and Chief of Spine Services, ISIC.

The event witnessed participation of over 200 wheelchair users and 1500 able-bodied citizens, thereby increasing awareness on spinal cord injury and prevention, as well as rehabilitating affected people in mainstream life to create an inclusive society.

**Speaking on the event Smriti Irani says,** "Today is a day full of hope as it was announced that the Vikram is located at moon - instilling faith that there is much to look forward in life even for the people facing disabilities. There is no dearth of trying as the SCI army move from Rajpath to Vijaypath on the course similar to our brave soldiers. I would like to highlight two things: the rampant prevalence of road accident related spinal cord injury and Osteoporosis amongst youth and women respectively. I urged and entreat everyone to abide by two things- the youth should pay stringent attention to the road rules, while preventing the cause of spinal injury. As for women, a better look towards their diet would prevent the occurrence of Osteoporosis in later years."

“ISIC is proud to become an organizer of the 4<sup>th</sup> World SCI Day, in association with ISCoS. Such events are a reminder of how people with disability have capabilities and talent hidden from plain sight. Our aim is to bring forth that hidden aspects of SCI survivors to boost their confidence and make able-bodied people aware of their fellow citizens. Disability should not deter people from living a healthy and fruitful life,” says **Major H P S Ahluwalia, Chairman, Indian Spinal Injuries Centre (ISIC), New Delhi and a SCI survivor himself after being injured in the 1965 Indo-Pak war.**

Nearly 20 to 40 per million people in India are affected by spinal injuries, mostly due to falls and road accidents. Spinal cord injury and the resultant paralysis impacts the overall well-being of a person, increases the economic and emotional burden on the affected person and his or her family. Organized in support of Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Day on 5<sup>th</sup> September every year, in association with International Spinal Cord Society, the event was an advocacy drive to support an inclusive life for persons with disabilities in keeping with this year's theme of 'Living Life to the Fullest'.

“As an inseparable extension of the brain, an injury to the spine can render a person, temporarily or permanently, partially or completely paralyzed. In many cases, the cause of the injury is preventable. Very often these injuries are not managed comprehensively. Year after year, we are trying to dispel the misconceptions around SCI and encourage people to get the treatment so that the survivors are not subjected to lack of self-confidence which prevents them from leading an inclusive life. This year's theme is applicable to the able-bodied as well. Few people really live life to the fullest. We get stuck in daily routines and seldom try to introspect and explore ourselves. Sometimes a major event in life makes us do so. Why wait for that moment to wake up? Why not explore now how to live life to the fullest?” says **Dr. H S Chhabra, Medical Director & Chief of Spine Services, Indian Spinal Injuries Centre (ISIC), New Delhi and President, International Spinal Cord Society.**

Apart from the wheelchair rally, other sporting and cultural events of the day included dance, yoga and human pyramid for which wheelchair-bound and able-bodied participants collaborated. The Indian team of wheelchair cricket will also participate in the event and will cheer the cultural fiesta.

In India, Spinal Cord Society (SCS) joins hands with Association of Spine Surgeons of India (ASSI), Indian Orthopedic 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) to carry out various activities across India each year. The events include wheelchair rallies, road shows, symposiums and awareness campaigns in schools and colleges in various cities including Delhi, Chennai, Chandigarh, Bhubaneswar, Jalandhar, Hyderabad, Vizag, Manali, Ranchi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Amritsar, Nagpur, Cochin, etc.