

Tata Power Community Development Trust hosts first-ever Maharashtra Neurodiversity Summit; brings together over 50 institutions working on Autism Awareness

- **A Platform and a collective approach to optimize existing efforts on neurodiversity**
- **Launches Volunteering Module for Autism Support Champions marking 1 year of Pay Attention**
- **Facilitate support ecosystems for early diagnosis, acceptance & care by leveraging the combined power of technology, people, and government schemes**

Mumbai, April 29, 2023: Tata Power Community Development Trust (TPCDT) hosted the first ever 'Maharashtra Neurodiversity Meet' in Mumbai under its flagship Pay Attention Autism Support initiative, in its efforts to empower the Autism support network in Maharashtra. The platform brought together over 50 institutions working on neurodiversity and Autism domains to collaborate for wider reach.

The meet was inaugurated by Mr. Himat Tewari, CHRO, Chief Sustainability & CSR, Tata Power alongside thought leaders, NGO representatives, Anganwadi workers, corporates, and domain experts who came together to share their experiences and add impetus to the Pay Attention efforts. A few of the key participants who addressed the event were Dr. Ravi Singh, Head, National Institute for Empowerment of People with Intellectual Disabilities (NIEPID) under The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Ms. Mani Gupta, Head of Delivery, Healthcare & Lifesciences Digital Solutions, Tata Elxsi, Ms Dilshad Meher Shahi, Founder, Mann Centre for Individual with Special Needs, Mr. Vineet Saraiwala, Founder, Atypical Advantage, Mr. Kapil Kumar Agarwal, Founder & CEO, Viklang Sahara Samiti, Dr. Azizudeen Khan, Pro. Psychophysiology Laboratory, Dept. of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Bombay and Kamakshi & Vishala from Sound Space. The experiential event included a series of expert sessions, art & food by Café Arpan, managed by differently-abled youngsters and 'Access for All' and technology exhibits to help participants experience and appreciate neurodiversity.

Since its launch, over the last year, many institutions & champions from different regions have come together to work through the Pay Attention network, and the initiative aims to reach out to 1,000 institutions by 2027. The initiative has touched 10,000+ lives through its workshops, street plays, learning videos, and helpline so far. Over 900 Anganwadi workers and auxiliary nurses, and midwives have been trained to become early identifiers and community champions. In its effort to create grassroots awareness, over 24 street plays have been organized, in Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, and Odisha. The initiative aims to adopt cross-learnings from global community-care models, train educational professionals to be more inclusive, and creation of a phygital ecosystem for early diagnosis, acceptance, and care.

Speaking on the initiative, Dr. Praveer Sinha, CEO & MD, Tata Power said "Pay Attention was launched with the mission of promoting inclusion and creating a robust support ecosystem for individuals with Autism, with a focus on mainstreaming the cause of neurodiversity. Over the past year, the initiative focussed on raising grassroots awareness and developing a large-

scale bridgital platform to bring together stakeholders like corporates, social enterprises, and government ministries to design a pan-India support movement. We aim to bring in more organizations and support champions to partner with us to bridge gaps and expand access to the network.”

Welcoming the participants, Mr. Himal Tewari, CHRO, Chief Sustainability & CSR, Tata Power said, “Pay Attention represents a cause that is very special to the Tata Group’s community development philosophy since we believe in enabling holistic growth. Awareness of Autism and Neurodiversity is still at a nascent stage, and we still have a long way to go as large parts of our society still lie in the realms of unawareness, myths, doubts, and even shame. As we are completing one year of our Pay Attention initiative, we are grateful to each one of our partners who joined us over the last year on this inclusivity journey. Through this Maharashtra Neurodiversity Summit, Tata Power reiterates its goal to bring together several actors through bridgital connectivity and easier access for everyone, especially people with neurodiverse conditions in rural areas. Post the previously conducted national roundtable workshop, this endeavour of state-level network meets shall now be carried forward to cover other key regions across the country.”

The event also saw Mr. Himal Tewari and Mr. Vineet Saraiwala, Founder of Atypical Advantage launching the Pay Attention Volunteer-Champions Training Manual for Autism Awareness curated by Tata Power Community Development Trust along with its knowledge partner CADRRE. The summit also had an interactive panel discussion where experts discussed multi-sectoral synergies for an effective outreach mechanism to create awareness about neurodiversity and the significant role of NGOs in the formation of an effective network, the process of networking in neurodiversity domain along with leveraging the existing rural network in creating autism support. Professor Azizuddin Khan, IIT Bombay enlightened the audience about the potential of assistive technology to transform the lives of people with disabilities, highlighting the importance of continued innovation and accessibility in the neurodiversity domain.

Driving home the point on how society and corporations can accept and embrace neurodiverse people as a part of day-to-day living, the event also showcased dance and music performances, and various workshops like stone painting, doodling, and creative stitching anchored by neurodiverse talent. Aanganwadi workers who are registered with the Pay Attention initiative shared their experience and spoke about how the program has empowered them to be the primary identification and support champions augmenting early intervention for children and young adults with Autism. Several Tata Group companies employees and volunteers participated in this endeavour; enabling the sensitization of associates at the workplace while serving larger society.

As per estimates by the Indian Council of Medical Research, India is home to more than ten million individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). With every 100th child on the autism spectrum in India, it becomes imperative that practicing physicians, rehabilitation professionals, paediatricians, regular schoolteachers, early childcare professionals and paraprofessionals, parents, NGOs along with other mainstream travel, utilities, service, and retail industry professionals are thoroughly aware of inclusive and positive ways of interacting with individuals with autism and allied learning disabilities.

Earlier in April 2023, TPCDT in collaboration with the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI), a statutory body under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, hosted a public webinar and refresher training on 'A collective approach to the inclusion of people on the Autism Spectrum' on World Autism Awareness Day – where an audience of over 1000 special educators participated and earned recertification points as per RCI testing guidelines. Speakers at the webinar shed light upon the latest developments and strides in community care models as well as the voluntary groups run globally, highlighting good practices in technology for the inclusion of people on the Autism spectrum.

About Pay Attention

In 2022 to commemorate World Autism Awareness Day, Tata Power CDT partnered with the Center for Autism and other Disabilities Rehabilitation Research and Education (CADRRE) to launch 'PAY AUTENTION'. This phygital support network aims to empower parents, caregivers, Anganwadi workers, public health workers, schoolteachers, staff of public service organizations, and social workers to serve as an aware and empowered auxiliary support network for early identification and acceptance for children with Autism, especially in small towns and rural India.

The PAY AUTENTION network has been training & empowering community leaders, volunteers & Anganwadi workers from the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) through street plays & phygital workshops to further reach thousands of households for early identification, awareness, and enable reach to underserved regions. A toll-free helpline number – 18002099488 is made live to address queries from all over the country for Autism spectrum-related support along with a dedicated website (<https://www.tatapower.com/sustainability/social-capital/pay-autention.aspx>) and YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/@payattention1172>).

About Tata Power:

Tata Power (NSE: TATAPOWER; BSE: 500400) is one of India's largest integrated power companies and together with its subsidiaries and jointly controlled entities, has an installed/managed capacity of 14101 MW. The Company has a presence across the entire power value chain - generation of renewable as well as conventional power including hydro and thermal energy, transmission & distribution, and trading.

The Company developed the country's first Ultra Mega Power Project at Mundra (Gujarat) based on super-critical technology. With 5241 MW of clean energy generation from solar, wind, hydro, and waste heat recovery accounting for 37% of the overall portfolio, the company is a leader in clean energy generation.

It has successful public-private partnerships in generation, transmission & distribution in India viz: Powerlinks Transmission Ltd. with Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd. for evacuation of Power from Tala hydro plant in Bhutan to Delhi, Maithon Power Ltd. with Damodar Valley Corporation for a 1,050 MW Mega Power Project at Jharkhand.

Tata Power is currently serving more than 12 million consumers via its Discoms, under public-private partnership model viz Tata Power Delhi Distribution Ltd. with Government of Delhi in North Delhi, TP Northern Odisha Distribution Limited, TP Central Odisha Distribution Limited, TP Western Odisha Distribution Limited, and TP Southern Odisha Distribution Limited with Government of Odisha.

With a focus on sustainable and clean energy development, Tata Power is steering the transformation as an integrated solutions providers by looking at new business growth in distributed generation through rooftop solar and microgrids, storage solutions, EV charging infrastructure, ESCO, home automation & smart meters et al.

With its 107 years track record of technology advancements, project execution excellence, world-class safety processes, customer care, and green initiatives, Tata Power is well poised for multi-fold growth and is committed to lighting up lives for generations to come. For more information visit us at: www.tatapower.com

For further information, please contact:

Jyoti Kumar Bansal
Chief-Branding, Communications, Tata Power
jyotikumar.bansal@tatapower.com
Siddharth Gaur – Head PR, Tata Power
siddharth.gaur@tatapower.com

Nikita Crasta
Adfactors PR
98210 71527
nikita.crasta@adfactorspr.com