

Anant reaffirms commitment to inclusive education, releases White Paper on Strengthening Urban Education Ecosystems

Ahmedabad, March

11: Anant National University hosted the launch of a significant white paper titled 'From Policy Intent to Lived Inclusion: A Systems Framework for Strengthening Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs in Urban Contexts'. The white paper was formally released by Dr Sanjeev Vidyarthi, Provost, Anant National University and Keshav Chatterjee, Founder, Prabhat Education Foundation, in the presence of the Centre Heads and team members of the Centre for Public Policy Research and Design (CPRD) and the Prabhat Education Foundation.

The white paper examines the critical gap between policy intent and the lived realities of children with special needs, particularly within high-vulnerability urban education contexts. While India has made important policy commitments toward inclusive education, the report highlights the systemic and institutional challenges that often pre-



vent these commitments from translating into meaningful outcomes on the ground.

Moving beyond a compliance-driven understanding of inclusion, the paper advocates for systems-level reform that addresses governance structures, institutional design and service delivery mechanisms. It introduces a comprehensive systems framework, including the concept of an 'Inclusion Funnel', to analyse how children navigate and are often filtered out of education systems due to gaps in coordination, capacity and accountability.

The framework places

particular emphasis on strengthening urban education ecosystems, where demographic pressures, resource constraints and fragmented service networks can disproportionately affect children with special needs. By examining policy translation at multiple levels, from intent and design to implementation and lived experience, the white paper offers actionable insights for policymakers, educators, administrators and civil society organisations.

The initiative reflects the growing research engagement of the Centre for Public Policy Research and Design (CPRD) at Anant National University,

which approaches public challenges through a design-thinking lens. By positioning every policy problem as a design problem, CPRD seeks to develop more empathetic, inclusive and context-sensitive frameworks that bridge the gap between legislation and lived reality.

The collaboration with the Prabhat Education Foundation further reinforces Anant's commitment to meaningful academic-practice partnerships. By bringing together research expertise and field-level insights, the white paper embodies an approach that is both analytically rigorous and grounded in on-the-ground realities. With this release, Anant reaffirms its commitment to inclusive, equitable and systems-driven education reform. Through research, dialogue and cross-sector collaboration, the University continues to shape policies and frameworks that translate intent into lived inclusion, strengthening urban education systems for the future.