

**PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU (DEFENCE WING)
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

‘हर काम देश के नाम’

New Delhi, Agra Hayana 10, 1945
Friday, December 01, 2023

Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan inaugurates Tele-Mental Health Assistance and Networking Across States (Tele MANAS) Cell at AFMC, Pune

Tele MANAS Cell to serve as a central psychological helpline for all Armed Forces beneficiaries across country.

Chief of Defence Staff, General Anil Chauhan, inaugurated a dedicated Tele-MANAS Cell for serving personnel and their dependents at the Armed Forces Medical College in Pune on Dec 01, 2023. This cell will serve as an extension of the Tele-Mental Health Assistance and Networking Across States (Tele MANAS) initiative of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The cell will serve as a central psychological helpline for all Armed Forces beneficiaries across the country.

The Cell was inaugurated in the presence of DGAFMS Lt Gen Daljit Singh, Director & Commandant AFMC Lt Gen Narendra Kotwal, Director NIMHANS Dr Pratima Murthy, Joint Secretary, MoD Shri Mayank Tewari, and other dignitaries.

Tele MANAS, an initiative of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched last year, has witnessed an impressive response, receiving over 4,60,000 calls nationwide till date. With 51 active Tele MANAS cells across 33 States and Union Territories, the service now handles 1,300+ calls daily in 20 languages, depicting a consistently progressive trend towards building a comprehensive digital mental health network in India.

Recognizing the unique stressors faced by the Indian military, the need for tele-mental health services in the Armed Forces has become evident. The

operational environment, cultural challenges, and specific stressors related to regional conflicts necessitate a specialized approach to mental health care in Armed Forces.

In response to this need, the Director General Armed Forces Medical Services (DGAFMS) took the initiative to establish the AFMS Tele-MANAS Cell at AFMC, Pune with constant support and cooperation being extended by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The occasion was also marked by successful signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between MoH &FW and Ministry of Defence.

The AFMS Tele-MANAS Cell at AFMC will be operational 24x7, manned by psychological counsellors. Armed forces personnel in distress can call the toll-free number 14416 from anywhere in the country and avail the services. This service is poised to play a pivotal role in the future of mental health care delivery in Armed forces.

ABB/Anand