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College of Social Work (Autonomous),
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- **Contribute to building a new social order based on human dignity and social justice.**
- **Work with a preferential option for the vulnerable and exploited, both locally and globally.**
- **Build cadre of young, competent professionals having a global perspective and a strong value base of compassion, personal integrity, moderation, tolerance and self-respect.**

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EDITORIAL

This year so far has seen starting of quite a few new initiatives in different fields like sports (Major Dhyan Chand Sports University in Meerut), Education (NEAT 3.0), agriculture (project 'Villages of Excellence', in collaboration with Government of Israel), safety and protection (AAHT operation by RPF) and health (AAYU app for dealing with chronic diseases and lifestyle disorders through yoga). Only time will tell how many and how much these initiatives succeed in achieving their goals. India has also experienced natural disasters – mainly hydrometeorological including landslides, flash floods and cloudbursts – during the last four months which hit Assam and Himachal Pradesh the most.

Amidst all the positive and negative happenings in the Country, India geared up to also celebrate 'Azadi ka Amritmahotsav' – 75 years of Independence. It has come at the tail end of a second wave of COVID 19 after a long year of battling this disease and going through graded relaxations. Lines between personal and professional life were blurred but this also led to new learnings. The pandemic has led to new appreciation for the gift of life and collective endeavors to help those who suffered the most. Freedom comes with certain responsibilities – towards ourselves, towards others and towards environment. The world has witnessed many acts of kindness and empathy but there are still many challenges in front of humankind. Today the role of human service professionals, including social workers, is ten-fold more crucial to facilitate the process of people, especially those from vulnerable communities, to bring their lives back to normalcy.

This issue of Perspectives in Social Work contains eight articles that offer a mix of reflective discussion on issues that face humanity in the current times and review of interventions. Disability, health and COVID 19 seem to be major theme for this issue with articles that are about the intervention models that emerged as well as challenges faced by social workers during

COVID 19, therapeutic interventions for the caretakers of persons living with cancer and issues faced by persons with disabilities and their families.

The first article by Dr. Arun K. V and Dr. Vanishree Joseph examines the Community Kitchen – a Collective Action Model in collaboration with Kudumbashree in the state of Kerala. It analyses the scope and nature of this project overseen by the local self governing institution During the COVID-19 The article emphasises that this project proves that local self government institutions are the best medium thorugh which co-operation aong the people is achieved, their participation is accrued and ensures economic developent. It, however, cautions against the over-politicization at the grassroots level that can overshadow the main purpose for which such a project is initiated. The authors argue for the replication of this model in communities even post COVID 19 pandemic.

In the second article titled 'Role and Challenges Faced by Frontline Social Workers in Health Sector Combating COVID 19', Dr. S. John Kaviarasu presents the qualitative insights gained from the interviews of the social workers who were working as frontline workers in the health sector during the pandemic The article describes three significant findings such as the need for multidisciplinary skills to deal with multidimensional pandemic impact, perceived challenges in pandemic practice and barriers in service delivery. The study concludes with suggestions for advancing social work efforts. Further it elucidates how contemporary social work can add more value to healthcare settings in fighting the pandemic.

Nazra Khatoon's systematic review of literature (105 articles) on the topics of disability, employability and employability of persons with disabilities (PwDs) throw light on the barriers and facilitators of employability vis-à-vis persons with disability. The author has identified five broad groups of barriers and facilitators:

attitudinal, physical, academic, financial and social. The article argues that a way forward towards better employability of PwDs would require peer support, career counselling and social support from family and friends at the micro level and federal policies and legislations, positive work environment and inclusive practices at the macro level.

The article by Dr. Shwetha Rasquinha Dr. Rameela Shekar titled 'Effectiveness of Cognitive Behavior Therapy on Enhancing the Coping Abilities of Caretakers of Persons Living with Cancer' provides a discussion on the findings of a study conducted with 120 caretakers randomly assigned to two groups to assess the effectiveness of Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) in improving the coping strategies of caretakers of persons living with cancer. The action research study using experimental research design had three phases – pre-test assessment, intervention and post-test assessment wherein one group was given the CBT over a period of four months and the other group was not given CBT. The study found that CBT was effective in improving the coping abilities of caretakers of cancer patients. The article recommends CBT combined with long term psycho-social interventions with the caretakers of cancer patients to enhance their coping abilities.

The article by Deepu Papanna, Stephen Babu, Dr. Ammu Elizabeth Alexander and and Dr. Padmakumari titled 'Quality Of Life among Caregivers of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)' examined the nature of quality of life (QoL) of caregivers of children with ASD in comparison with the QoL of the caregivers of typically developing children. The quality of life of caregivers of children with ASD was found to be significantly lower in the study, across all the domains with the domain of social relationships being the lowest. The two influencing factors among caregivers of children with ASD for the quality of life were their age and educational qualification. The article highlights the role of social workers in initiating and implementing efficient intervention programs for children with ASD, their caregivers as well as society as large to create a facilitative environment for the

children with ASD for their development and improved quality of life.

The article by Bilal Khan and Wakar Zargar explores that family's responses to a child's diagnosis of Down Syndrome. The article is based on the secondary data analysis that included 39 articles (from the initial pool of 220 articles) in the databases such as ProQuest, SAGE journals, Science Direct, ERIC, Medicine/PubMed/Medicine Plus, Social Science Information Gateway (SOSIG), APA online, World Wide Web Resources and Google Scholar. The article explored the parental responses as well as the stress they experienced after the diagnosis of Down's Syndrome in their child. The analysis showed that the feelings experienced by the mothers were of shock, numbness, anger, guilt, fatigue and discomfort. Withdrawal from social life, reduced participation in recreational activities, and increased stress were often experienced by the parents of children with Down's Syndrome. The sources of stress were receiving diagnosis in an insensitive manner, wrong or false test results that failed to detect anything wrong with the baby, care demands, future concerns, lack of knowledge about parenting a child with disability, lack of societal acceptance and financial implications of having a child with Down's Syndrome. The article has proposed interventions at micro, mezzo and macro levels.

The article by Dr. Meena Galliara and Bhawna Solanki discusses path to economic recovery post COVID 19, through initiatives that facilitate community peace and resource mobilization through Public Private partnerships. The article explores various such initiatives in different resource poor parts of the country that worked mainly to facilitate economic development through various livelihood options but also intervened on the issues of health, water conservation and sustainable agriculture, It concludes that building ecosystems to provide livelihoods to the poor during sudden disasters like Covid-19 can aid in maintaining harmony and peace at the community level.

The last article is on a topic that is different from the general theme across other articles. It is a research article by Mariaselvan A., outlining the major findings on the social support received by the widows of the Mutuvan tribe of Idukki district in Kerala state. The objectives of the study were to examine the magnitude of perceived social support sought among the widows of the Muthuvan tribe and its differences and correlations across their demographic and socio-economic characteristics. The article presents the findings of the study wherein primary data was collected from 144 widows of the Muthuvan tribe. The article, based on these findings, proposes that size and type of the family, occupation, economic status including assets and property and widow pension are the main factors that influence the extent of social support received by the widows in this tribe. The authors recommend that interventions should aim at economic elevation of the widows which will also garner more social support for them.

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