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3rd May 2012, 13:30 (IST)

New Delhi, Delhi, India - Mann Ki Baat (Business Wire India)

'Mann Ki Baat', Doordarshan's series on psychosocial and mental health issues is back on popular demand. Telecast begins from 5th May onwards on DD National channel every Saturday at 8.30 a.m., to be re-telecast every Monday at 8.30 a.m.

The content for the series has been developed by Dr. Sujatha D. Sharma, a clinical psychologist with over 25 years of experience who has also scripted several other television series on mental health in the past. Dr. Avdesh Sharma, an eminent psychiatrist is the Director and Expert anchor of the series. He has anchored and directed numerous health programs for the electronic media for over 30 years. Ms. Kanupriya, a well known media personality for nearly two decades, is the Anchor of the series.

About a quarter of the population suffers from a mental illness once in their lifetime and about 10% suffer from psychological distress at any given time. The psychosocial and interpersonal problems on day-to-day basis affect us all, reducing efficiency and causing untold emotional burden. The need is not only to overcome negative states but promote positive mental health for individuals, family and society. Caring for our mind is our greatest responsibility to ourselves.

It is critical to recognize early signs of psychological distress and address them immediately through self-help or seeking outside help. Better still would be for a person to share his or her feelings, conflicts, problems or dilemmas with others, who are sympathetic listeners and caring well-wishers. This way, an emerging psychological problem can be addressed in a timely manner and resolved early. In a country where there are only about 8000 mental health professionals compared to the required 100000 as estimated by the World Health Organization, Television, especially Doordarshan, with mandate for social change through infotainment is the one way – and an effective way - to reach out the masses and make a difference.

Mann ki Baat offers the platform to create awareness for mental health issues – both the ordinary ones that affect our daily lives and the not so ordinary one that may not directly affect us but someone we know or care for.

The episodes will cover problems of the elderly; psychological trauma & accidents; coping with disabilities, chronic illness and care-giving. The topics include Aggression, Road Rage, Psychological Aspects of Accidents, Coping with Trauma and Disasters, Bereavement, Occupational Stress and Burnout, Disabilities and Mental Health, Coping with Chronic Illnesses, Caregiver's stress, Aging and Mental Health, Memory Impairment and Dementia, Elder Abuse, Gender Discrimination, Single Parenting, Adoption etc. The series would subsequently take up special areas of children and adolescents within family and in the society; managing emotions and positive mental health.

Program website: <http://www.mannkibaat.com/>