

Bhubaneswar, June 16: Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida interacted with adolescents from across Odisha through 'Advika Barta', a first-of-its-kind statewide dialogue platform aimed at strengthening adolescent participation in governance and policy discussions. The programme was organised jointly by the Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights and UNICEF as part of the 'A Day for Children' initiative.



Held on the occasion of Raja Parba, the programme brought together young girls and boys associated with Advika groups from across the state. While a group of adolescents participated in person at the Convention Centre in Bhubaneswar, representatives from all 30 districts joined virtually in the presence of district officials and administrators.

During the two-hour interactive session, participants raised questions and shared their experiences on issues related to education, safety, gender equality, child rights, leadership opportunities, skill development, health and their aspirations for the future. They also presented suggestions on strengthening programmes and services for young people in the state.

Addressing the participants, Honourable Minister reiterated the state government's commitment to ensuring that adolescents have a meaningful voice in decisions that affect their lives. She encouraged young people to actively participate in community development and leadership processes and assured them that their concerns and recommendations would inform future policy discussions.

Among those present were Ms. Babita Patra, Chairperson of the Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights; Mr Prasanta Dash, Chief of Field Office, UNICEF Odisha; Ms. Sovana Mohanty, Chairperson, Odisha State Commission for Women, and other officials.

The programme was streamed through digital platforms, enabling wider public participation and drawing attention to the issues, aspirations and leadership potential of adolescents across Odisha.