

PRASANT'S MESSAGE

Warm New Year wishes to all as we begin the year with renewed purpose and commitment to service.

We are proud to share that Ms. Rachna Kumari was honoured with a Presidential Award, recognising her exceptional contribution and reflecting Lepra Society's sustained impact in leprosy care and rehabilitation. Republic Day was celebrated across all 11 Lepra state centres, followed by the observance of Anti-Leprosy Day on 30 January and the ongoing Anti-Leprosy Fortnight (2 Daan Utsav, 30 January–14 February), marked by awareness and community engagement nationwide.

Preparatory discussions for the upcoming General Body and Management Committee meetings were held with Mr. Jagadish Pradhan, Chairman, LEpra Society, to ensure effective governance. Lepra Society also participated in the Leprosy Symposium in Mumbai, strengthening collaboration between leprologists and dermatologists. The inauguration of the Lepra Society office in Bhubaneswar further enhances regional coordination.

A comprehensive review of the EPIC Project (supported by FHI 360) was undertaken, alongside meetings with CSR partners at Mahanadi Netra Chikitsalaya to review progress and partnerships. Additionally, in collaboration with Eye Poly Clinic, Kaimur, four students gained hands-on OT experience as eye surgery support staff.

We thank all members, partners, and supporters for their continued dedication and trust. Together, we move forward towards a leprosy-free and stigma-free society.

IMPACT STORY

Background

Mr. Kuljeet Singh, a 39-year-old married jewellery artisan from Delhi, was diagnosed with multibacillary leprosy and successfully completed Multi-Drug Therapy (MDT) in 2019. His profession demands precision and long working hours, through which he supports his family.

Challenge Faced

He experienced numbness and loss of sensation in his feet, leading to burns, cuts, and other injuries. These complications gradually affected his work efficiency, mobility, and daily life.

LEpra Society's Intervention

At the West Delhi Referral Centre (WDRC), he received comprehensive ulcer care, customized Micro Cellular Rubber (MCR) footwear, self-care kits, and counselling. This support helped him manage injuries, prevent complications, and regain confidence.

Life After the Intervention

His foot ulcers healed, the risk of new injuries reduced, and he is now able to continue working and support his family. Mr. Kuljeet remains motivated to maintain self-care practices to protect his health and prevent recurrence of complications.



BEFORE



AFTER



- Morbidity Management and Disability Prevention (MMDP) camps was conducted in Machilipatnam, where persons affected by Lymphatic Filariasis (LF), practised self-care and swelling-reduction techniques.
- MCR footwear was distributed at Grace Leprosy Colony by the District Nodal Medical Officer (DNMO), Krishna District.
- An orientation on MDT was provided to Postgraduate (PG) 1st-year students in the Dermatology, Venereology and Leprosy (DVL)



Outpatient Department (OPD) by the Physiotherapist, Vijayawada Referral Centre (RC).

- Suspected case verification was carried out by Outreach Workers (ORWs) with support from Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) and general health staff in Eluru.
- Nutrition support was provided to people living with HIV at Nandigama Antiretroviral Therapy Centre through Tenali Double Horse Foundation and in other locations with support from Ramco Cements. Clinic services, including medical examinations and medicines, were also provided to patients.



- A 14-day Leprosy Case Detection Campaign (LCDC) (5–18 January) was conducted in urban Tinsukia, with house-to-house surveys and community awareness sessions led by a physiotherapist and field workers, with support from ASHAs.



- An awareness programme at Missionaries of Charity, Tinsukia sensitised caregivers supporting individuals with mental health conditions on early signs of leprosy, hygiene, self-care, and timely referral to strengthen early detection and treatment compliance.



- An orientation of ASHA Facilitators on Contact Survey and a Community-Based Group (CBG) meeting were conducted in Jamui, to strengthen active case detection and community engagement.
- A Self-Support Group (SSG) meeting was held in Samastipur village, where members were trained on LF, its causes, symptoms, prevention, and government social schemes,

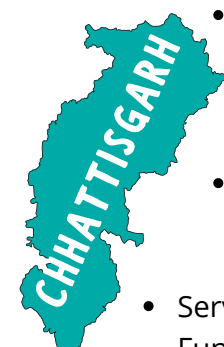


with emphasis on hygiene, mosquito control, and adherence to preventive medication.

- An interactive meeting with the Block Development Officer (BDO) and Kalyanpur Block staff, Samastipur focused on the Mass Drug Administration (MDA) campaign and Leprosy Awareness Day, outlining objectives, roles, and strategies for maximum coverage and community participation.



- Follow-up of Under Treatment (UT) and Released From Treatment (RFT) cases was carried out along with contact and focal surveys in Jagdalpur and Baghmohali village, Bastar block, leading to the identification of new Multibacillary (MB) cases.



- Disability Prevention and Medical Rehabilitation (DPMR) clinic at Jagdalpur included follow-up of UT cases, registration of new MB cases, collection of skin smears, follow-up of reaction cases, and ulcer dressing services for beneficiaries.
- MCR footwear and self-care kits were distributed to beneficiaries in Bastar, and new leprosy cases were detected through Active Case Detection (ACD).



- Services at the Jagdalpur RC included Outpatient Department (OPD) consultations and Nerve Function Assessments (NFA), leading to the identification of reaction cases, improvement in existing cases, and treatment of ulcer conditions.



- An ASHA training programme at Nangli Sakrawati Government Dispensary, focused on early signs of leprosy, timely referral, community-level identification, and services available at the Indira Gandhi Hospital (IGH).
- A Disability Care Camp at West Delhi Referral Centre (WDRC), provided rehabilitation support, including physiotherapy, self-care education, ulcer care, and MCR footwear, aiming to promote disability prevention.



- IPOD camps at Hari Om Kusht Ashram and Sarvodaya Kusht Ashram, Tahirpur, supported persons affected by leprosy with MCR footwear, self-care kits, physiotherapy guidance, and awareness sessions for early detection and prevention.



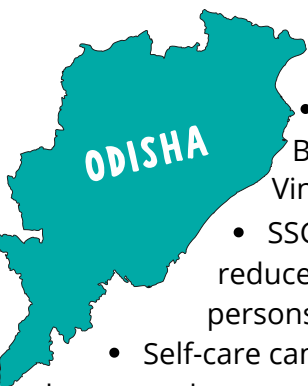
- A school awareness program at Jagarnathpur Middle School, Dhurwa, Ranchi engaged approximately 100 students and 10 teachers, focusing on educating participants about the symptoms and diagnosis of leprosy and LF.
- During the Health Mela at Namkum Primary Health Centre (PHC), Ranchi, our team identified leprosy cases and LF cases.
- At Namkum PHC, self-care education sessions were held to demonstrate practical techniques and guide patients on daily management, while self-care kits were provided to support their ongoing care and rehabilitation.



- A preliminary-cum-preparedness meeting was held in Rajura under the chairmanship of Dr. Suvarna Gedam, In-charge Taluka Health Officer, to plan the Sparsh Leprosy Awareness Campaign (SLAC) during the Anti-Leprosy Fortnight from January 30 to February 14. The meeting was attended by 18 health staff, including Medical Officers, Community Health Officers, and Health Assistants.



- LF-affected individuals with entry lesions and other complications were referred to the Medical Consultant of the LF project, Puri, for specialized treatment and ongoing care at the DPMR facility.
- Students from Jagannath Medical College visited LEPROSA Society centre to observe self-care demonstrations for persons affected by leprosy.
- Follow-up visits and footwear distribution were conducted in Birapurusotmapur Gram Panchayat, providing MCR and Ethyl Vinyl Acetate (EVA) footwear to persons affected by LF and leprosy.
- SSG were formed in Karanjia Block to promote recovery, reduce stigma, and enhance the social and economic well-being of persons affected by LF and leprosy.
- Self-care camps were organized across the Keonjhar project area, involving persons affected by leprosy, where participants received self-care education, MCR footwear, and self-care kits, with guidance from district health officials.
- As part of resource mobilisation, a meeting was held with the head priest of Ladukeshwar Temple and other temple authorities to seek support for leprosy and LF patients.
- Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities focused on health education, awareness campaigns, and field demonstrations to empower communities.



TELANGANA



- An awareness programme on leprosy was conducted for vocational college students enrolled in paramedical courses in Hyderabad district, with a total of 73 students participating.
- An exclusive group session for women on leprosy was held at Boregaom village, Nirmal district by Physio Care Assistant (PCA), targeting lactating mothers and women attending the immunisation centre. Symptoms of the disease were demonstrated through pictorial presentations.

- LEPRA Society's Physiotherapist provided technical support in two DPMR camps during the month organized by the District National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP) team of Hyderabad, the camps included Nerve Function Assessments (NFA), distribution of MCR footwear and self-care kits.

BPHRC

- Under the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) Project on Peripheral Neuropathy, a one-day workshop on Diabetic Foot and Podiatry was organized at Osmania General Hospital (OGH), Hyderabad. Mr. Rajnikant Singh participated as a Resource Person, delivering a session on interpretation of Podiascan images and podiatry, followed by a panel discussion on podiatry practices.
- Dr. Kumar Ebineshan, Microbiologist at LEPRA Blue Peter Health Research Centre (BPHRC), participated in a training programme on Panel Testing in Tuberculosis (TB) conducted at the Intermediate Reference Laboratory (IRL), State Tuberculosis Demonstration Centre (STDC), Government Hospital for Chest Diseases, Puducherry.



Key Highlights



We are proud to share that Ms. Rachna Kumari was honoured with a Presidential Award, recognising her exceptional contribution and reflecting LEPRA Society's sustained impact in leprosy care and rehabilitation.



A Partners' Meeting was organized by Solidarity and Action Against The HIV Infection in India (SAATHII) at Chennai, during which a micro-planning and prioritisation session was presented as part of the Partners' Refresher and Review Meeting under the Principal Recipient (PR) of the Global Fund Cycle Seven (GC7) Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Grant.



The new LEPRA Society building, soon to accommodate an Eye Hospital, was inaugurated by Hon'ble Chairman Mr. Jagdish Pradhan and CEO Mr. Prasanta Kumar Nayak, marking a major milestone. The event was followed by a Griha Pravesh ceremony at Janla, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.



LEPRA Society attended a Leprosy Symposium in Mumbai, with participation from Mr. Prasanta Kumar, Chief Executive and Mr. Arun Kumar, Head-Programmes, RM & Communications, jointly organised by the Goodbye Leprosy (GBL), ALERT-INDIA, and the Bombay Leprosy Project, fostering knowledge exchange and collaboration in leprosy care and control.

Key Highlights

A review meeting was held with Mr. Prasanta Kumar, Chief Executive, at the LEPRAS Society, Odisha office to present comprehensive updates on ongoing activities and programme status across Odisha, including Leprosy and LF, Technical Resource Unit (TRU) and the Tackling LF Project in Puri and Nayagarh. The discussion also focused on identifying fundraising opportunities and expansion of livelihood programmes.

Mr. Prasanta Kumar, Chief Executive and Mr. Arun Kumar, Head-Programmes, RM & Communications, visited the EPIC Project Office, Thane, and interacted with the Project Manager and project staff to review ongoing activities. The visit provided strategic guidance, strengthened coordination, and supported effective planning for future project initiatives.



SHAKTHI Project Review Meeting was held at the Jagdalpur office, in the presence of Mr. Naveen, State Coordinator (Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh) and Dr. Khyathi (Manager-Knowledge Management and New Initiatives). The meeting focused on reviewing ongoing project activities, assessing progress against targets, and identifying key challenges. Discussions also included strategies for strengthening field-level implementation, enhancing community engagement, and planning upcoming interventions to ensure the project's objectives are effectively achieved.



The Global Fund Paediatric TB Review Meeting in Delhi brought together key stakeholders to review progress, share experiences, and plan strategies, strengthening coordination and enhancing the effectiveness of paediatric TB interventions.



Meet Our Staff

How did you join LEPRAS, and what is your current role?

I joined LEPRAS Society with a personal connection to leprosy, as my brother is affected by the disease. After completing six months of training as a Physio Care Assistant, I work on family contact surveys, support clinic-day diagnosis, conduct nerve function assessments, manage reactions, neuritis, and ulcers, and assist in disability care camps for leprosy and LF. My role also includes self-care demonstrations, counselling, and data entry.

How do you engage with local communities to raise awareness?

I conduct health education sessions on leprosy early signs, prevention, treatment, and self-care at Anganwadi centres, Gram Panchayats, schools, and group meetings for patients and families.

What are the most significant challenges you face & how do you address them?

Key challenges include MDT completion, nerve damage, ulcers, physical impairment, stigma, and psychological distress. These are addressed through health education, medication guidance, self-care support, ulcer care, referrals, and counselling.

Can you share a memorable experience from your time at LEPRAS?

During a contact survey, a patient initially refused to accept her symptoms. With counselling and timely treatment through LEPRAS, she recovered and now encourages others to seek early care. What I value most about LEPRAS is its focus on preventing disability and protecting dignity.



Ms. Nikode Sujatha
Physio Care Assistant
Kagaznagar, Telangana

Thank you to LEPRAS Society team for your unending support
Facilitated by

Manohar Kulkarni
Communication Executive

Dr. Anantha Lakshmi Latchayya
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Dr. Khyathi Pilaka
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Arun Kumar Kandukuri
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Bank Name IDBI Bank Limited **Branch Name** Basheer Bagh **Bank Address** Mahavir House, Basheerbagh Square, Hyderabad - 29



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