

PRASANT'S MESSAGE

Dear colleagues, partners, and friends,
The past period has been marked by several significant developments and engagements across the organization. A combined meeting of the Management Committee and General Body was successfully convened, offering an opportunity to review our progress and align on future priorities. We were pleased to host tea estate owners from Assam, who are supporting the establishment of a referral centre within tea garden communities an important step towards improving access to essential healthcare services in these underserved areas.

At the same time, we are navigating a reduction in programme budgets due to financial constraints at LEPRO UK. While this presents challenges, our commitment to delivering impactful and sustainable interventions remains unwavering. A key highlight of this period was the integrated health screening conducted at the Cherlapally Central Jail, covering Leprosy, Lymphatic filariasis (LF), Tuberculosis (TB), HIV and Eye Care, ensuring comprehensive healthcare services reach even the most marginalized populations. We are also delighted to welcome four interns from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), who have recently joined LEPRO Society and are contributing meaningfully across various programme areas. In addition, a high-level meeting on Mission AIDS Suraksha was held in Hyderabad, strengthening collaborative efforts towards HIV/AIDS prevention and control.

As we approach the close of the financial year, we reflect on the milestones achieved and the challenges faced. With renewed focus and determination, we look forward to the year ahead with the aim of creating even greater impact.

IMPACT STORY

Background

Prabhu Dayal, a 70-year-old farmer from Dharmapuri, Delhi, was diagnosed with Multibacillary (Borderline Tuberculoid) Hansen's disease in 2014. He completed Multidrug Therapy (MDT) in Kanpur but was later referred to Guru Gobind Singh Hospital in 2017 as a Released from Treatment (RFT) case due to complications. His condition required continued monitoring due to the risk of disability progression.

Challenge Faced

He developed recurrent ulcers on both feet and clawing of the right foot digits, which severely affected his mobility, daily activities, and ability to work. This led to increased dependency and reduced his overall quality of life.

LEPRO Society's Intervention

At the West Delhi Referral Centre (WDRC), he received regular ulcer care and dressing, physiotherapy, customized Micro Cellular Rubber (MCR) footwear, and a self-care kit. Continuous counselling and follow-ups, along with disability care, supported him in improving self-care practices. The team also ensured regular monitoring to prevent further complications and promote healing.

Life After the Intervention

With consistent care and guidance, his condition improved significantly. He is now more aware, follows regular self-care practices, and is motivated to prevent future complications while continuing his daily life with greater confidence. His improved mobility has helped him regain independence in his routine activities.





- Capacity development and orientation programmes on leprosy were conducted for Medical Officers, nodal persons, and Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) across Machilipatnam, Visakhapatnam, and Vizianagaram, strengthening early detection and management.
- The Indian Institute of Health Management Research (IIHMR) team visited Vijayawada Referral Centre (RC) and demonstrated Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based measurement tools, enhancing technical capacity among staff and patients.
- Socio-Economic Rehabilitation (SER) livelihood cheques were distributed in Jaggaiahpet and Pedana with support from partners, promoting economic rehabilitation of affected individuals.
- An Integrated Prevention of Disability (IPOD) camp in Tenali supported self-care practices among patients, along with the distribution of protective footwear to prevent complications and improve quality of life.
- Foster care, clinical, and nutrition support were provided to Children Living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (CLHIV) and People Living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (PLHIV) with support from KCP Limited, Ramco Cements, and Tenali Double Horse Foundation, ensuring improved health, treatment access, and well-being.



- Ongoing leprosy screening activities are being conducted at Hukanpukhuri and Dheodaam Tea Gardens in Tinsukia. These targeted interventions focus on early detection, timely initiation of Multi-Drug Therapy (MDT), and prevention of disability
- Tea Garden Association members and donors visited the Dheodaam Satellite Centre in Tinsukia. where they observed ongoing activities and interacted with



the team. During the visit, they also met a beneficiary, gaining insights into her health condition and the challenges



- Monthly meetings across 130 Self Support Groups (SSGs) in Kalyanpur Block, Samastipur engaged ASHAs, health workers, and community members to raise awareness on Lymphatic Filariasis (LF), leprosy, and social welfare schemes. The sessions focused on early detection, stigma reduction, Mass Drug Administration (MDA) participation, and improved access to treatment and government benefits.



- A psychosocial support training program conducted in Samastipur involved JAGRUTHI staff, SSG leaders, and National Disability Forum (NDF) members to strengthen skills in mental health awareness, counselling, empathy, and confidentiality. Through role plays and discussions, participants enhanced their ability to provide emotional support, reduce stigma, and link affected individuals to essential services.



- A leprosy awareness activity in Mayapuri, under the Active Case Detection (ACD) program educated communities on early symptoms, nerve damage, stigma reduction, and the availability of free MDT.
- At Ekta Vihar Kusht Ashram, Tahirpur, Micro Cellular Rubber (MCR) footwear and self-care kits were distributed, along with physiotherapy guidance and awareness sessions reaching over 100 patients and family members.



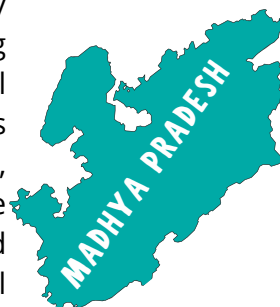
- As part of the evaluation, patient interviews and a field visit to Patel Nagar, provided insights into care delivery, including interaction with a LF patient and introduction to the Head of Dermatology, showcasing ongoing departmental work.

JHARKHAND

- A training program on compression therapy was conducted in Ranchi to strengthen care for persons affected by LF, focusing on reducing complications and improving treatment outcomes. The sessions equipped health workers with practical skills to enhance patient support and overall quality of care.



- The Leprosy Case Detection Campaign (LCDC) was effectively implemented across Indore and Dhar districts, with strong community participation, active field engagement, and impactful Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities supporting early case detection. Continued efforts in surveillance, follow-up, and capacity building, along with initiatives like Prevention of Disability (POD) camps, further strengthened awareness, disability prevention, and overall leprosy control efforts.



- Physio Care Assistants (PCAs) conducted outreach activities, including contact surveys and a school awareness-cum-screening programme in Kelzar block, Rajura, Chandrapur district, where school students were screened to promote early detection and awareness.



- Hydrocele surgery camps were organized at Sub-Divisional Hospital (SDH), Rairangpur in collaboration with the District Health Committee and The Leprosy Society (Mayurlep), where hydrocele patients were successfully operated and discharged as part of LF prevention efforts.
- Group discussions with Self Support Group (SSG) members across multiple blocks promoted livelihood activities such as mushroom farming and goat rearing, along with awareness on leprosy and LF, encouraging community participation and economic support initiatives.
- Disability Prevention and Medical Rehabilitation (DPMR) clinics at Community Health Centres (CHCs) and village-level activities focused on patient follow-up, self-care practices, footwear distribution, and strengthening rehabilitation services for affected persons.





- Community awareness programmes in Asifabad district engaged folk (Kala Jatha) artists to spread leprosy awareness across multiple villages, reaching large populations with participation from District Medical & Health Office (DM&HO), Primary Health Centre (PHC), National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP) staff, and LEPRA teams.

- Morbidity Management and Disability Prevention (MMDP)

camps conducted in Asifabad and Nirmal districts strengthened self-care practices among LF-affected persons through demonstrations, distribution of self-care kits, and involvement of local leaders and PHC staff.

- Extensive LF interventions included line listing of new cases, distribution of self-care kits, and collection of foot measurements for fabrication of lightweight Ethylene Vinyl Acetate (EVA) footwear to support mobility and prevent disability.
- Health support initiatives included eye screening camps in Nirmal for leprosy and LF affected persons, provision of spectacles, cataract referrals, and distribution of protective MCR footwear in Nalgonda, improving overall patient care and quality of life.

BPHRC



- An awareness session on TB was conducted at Crystal School of Nursing on the eve of World TB Day, aligned with the theme "Yes! We Can End TB: Lead by Country, Partnering with Communities."
- An active leprosy survey was carried out in the Cherlapalli area under the Bristol Myers Squibb (BMS) Project, in collaboration with PHC staff and ASHAs.
- Training on Peripheral Neuropathy was organized for paramedical staff, medical officers, and ASHAs at PHC Srirangavaram under the ICMR Project.

Key Highlights



Pleased to mark the first-ever support from Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOCL) for both a Phacoemulsification Machine (Eye Care) and a Footwear Van with Podo Scanner. The asset assessment and transfer visit by Mr. Raj Ratan Singh, Senior Manager (Plant), IOCL, was successfully completed.



A visit by APAL (Association of People Affected by Leprosy) leadership was held at LSHO to strengthen coordination, review ongoing activities, and discuss strategies for improving support and services for people affected by leprosy.



Footwear distribution was carried out for needy leprosy patients at Borabanda Colony, Hyderabad, with the support of Pragyan Ojha. Measurements and fabrication were done by the RC (Referral Centre), Nallakunta team.



Training was conducted for Mitans (ASHA - Accredited Social Health Activists) on SHAKTHI project activities, focusing on case detection, patient retention, and linkages with social security schemes.

A meeting on Mission AIDS Suraksha was held in Hyderabad, focusing on strengthening collaborative efforts towards HIV/AIDS prevention and control.



World TB Day was organized at Bakawand CHC (Community Health Centre), with local leaders as guests. A rally and meeting with around 100 Mitans were held in the presence of the DLO (District Leprosy Officer), Baster, BMO (Block Medical Officer), and the RLTI (Regional Leprosy Training Institute) team.



The State-Level Pediatric TB Consultation Meeting with Child Health Programme stakeholders RBSK (Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram) District Nodal Officers, DTOs (District Tuberculosis Officers), and DPCs (District Programme Coordinators) was successfully organized by LEPRA Society in collaboration with the State TB Cell, Chhattisgarh, and SAATHII at Babylon Inn, Raipur (Chhattisgarh).

A Mega Health Screening Camp was conducted over the past two days at Cherlapally Central Prison, where around 500 inmates were screened for HIV, Syphilis, TB, eye conditions, and leprosy.



The IIMR (Indian Institute of Health Management Research) team visited the Vijayawada RC (Referral Centre) to provide orientation on footwear measurements using an AI (Artificial Intelligence) tool.

Meet Our Staff

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

I joined LEPRA-BPHRC in 2022 as an intern, where I learned key laboratory techniques in leprosy and Tuberculosis (TB). I now work as a Project Technician under the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)-funded project, performing advanced procedures like Mycobacteria Growth Indicator Tube (MGIT), Line Probe Assay (LPA), Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR), and DNA/RNA extractions.

How do you engage with local communities to raise awareness?

Through accurate diagnosis and timely reporting, I support early treatment and help reduce stigma. LEPRA also promotes awareness and care, encouraging communities to better understand and support affected individuals.

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

Handling infectious samples and maintaining strict biosafety is a major challenge. I address this by following proper protocols, ensuring sterile lab conditions, and maintaining accurate documentation.



Ms. Humera Sultana
Project Technician
ICMR

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

My journey from intern to Project Technician has been a great learning experience. Being part of an organization that works for both treatment and patient dignity is truly meaningful and inspiring.

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

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