



# SASAKAWA HEALTH FOUNDATION

## Monthly Report

**To**  
**Executive Director of Sasakawa Health Foundation**

<b>Title of the Report</b>	Monthly Progress Report
<b>Name</b>	<b>Mrs. Maya Ranavare</b>
<b>Date of Submission</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> January 2025
<b>Reporting Period</b>	<b>December 2024</b>

### 1. Report on activities of APAL State-Level Bodies and APAL Leaders

- An impactful initiative took place in Devanagari Colony and Devpalli Colony near Ditch Pally, where 134 ulcer kits and tubs were distributed to individuals affected by leprosy.
- APAL and APAL's State committee in Telangana, in collaboration with representatives of the Leprosy Society distributed MCR (Micro Cellular Rubber) footwear free of cost to individuals affected by leprosy
- APAL's State committee in Telangana, in collaboration with the District Leprosy Referral Center (DLRC) in Nallakunta, Hyderabad
- Ms. Maya Ranavare, the President of APAL (Association of People Affected by Leprosy), participated in this significant event NLEP National Review Meeting
- Huge congratulations to Ms. Keroline Bhengra Executive Member of APAL for receiving the prestigious "LEPROSY CHAMPION" 🏆 award
- A meeting of the APAL's State Committee in Bihar was convened on December 11 to discuss various administrative and organizational matters.
- Maniyada Ramesh, the State Coordinator of APAL in Telangana, actively participated in the dissemination event for the pilot study titled "Leprosy and Migration in India
- Madhusudan Tiwari, Secretary of APAL's State Committee in Jharkhand, accompanied by Samuel Ji, conducted a significant visit to four leprosy colonies
- The meeting was honoured by the presence of Shri Bharat Ji, a senior officer of the Railways, accompanied by his colleagues. It was attended by local village leaders and community members
- The Karnataka State Committee of APAL, in collaboration with the Nandadeep Charitable Trust, organized a significant event in Mahatma Gandhi Colony
- A significant event was organized at the Pasumamula Santosh Nagar Leprosy Colony with the intent of providing support to individuals affected by leprosy.
- The State Committee of APAL in Madhya Pradesh recently engaged in a coordination meeting related to leprosy programs and the welfare of individuals affected by the disease
- APAL's State Committee in West Bengal convened a significant meeting with the Presidents and Secretaries of 12 leprosy colonies within the Paschim Bardhaman district

- The APAL State Committee in Bihar convened an important meeting in Areraj Colony to discuss key developments concerning the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY).
- APAL State Committee in Tamil Nadu recently took a significant step towards supporting the health and well-being of individuals affected by leprosy
- Ms. Maya Ranavare, in collaboration with Dr. Ranganadh Rao, Programme Advisor on Medical Issues at the Sasakawa Health Foundation (SHF), and members of APAL's State Committee in Odisha, recently convened a significant meeting with the Social Minister, Chief Secretary, and State Leprosy Officer of Odisha
- The tireless efforts of **Apal India**'s State Committee in Delhi and Mr. Vijay Kumar, the General Secretary of the RWA Leprosy Complex in Tahirpur, Delhi, a successful camp was organized by Sarvodaya Kusth Ashram.
- The Executive Committee (EC) members of the Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL), along with Dr. Ranganadh Rao, Program Advisor of Sasakawa Health Foundation (SHF), recently visited several leprosy colonies in Odisha.
- APAL's State Committee in Telangana, in collaboration with the Children of Deccan Foundation, has recently distributed food grains and blankets to persons affected by leprosy and their families.
- A significant meeting took place at the Leprosy Ashram in Tahirpur, convened at the request of the State Committee of APAL in Delhi and Mr. Vijay Kumar, the General Secretary of the RWA Leprosy Complex.
- A significant milestone was achieved in Kankar Danga Leprosy Colony, Burnpur, West Bengal, with the inauguration of a new healthcare center.
- APAL's State Committee in West Bengal organized the Sara Bangla Kustha Kalyan Samity Central Committee Meeting at Manipur, Adra, West Bengal.
- a significant event occurred at the Shantinagar Leprosy Colony and Balajinagar Mother Teresa Leprosy Colony, where essential commodities and blankets were distributed to 53 individuals affected by leprosy.
- Mr. Sarang Gayadhane, General Secretary of APAL, together with the State Committee and leaders from nine leprosy colonies, recently convened with the District Magistrate of Indore to present a memorandum advocating for an increase in social entitlements and disability pensions for individuals who have been cured of leprosy
- A distribution program was organized by the State Committee of APAL in Telangana in collaboration with the Grace Service Society Khammam to assist families affected by leprosy in Shantinagar Colony and Santosh Nagar Colony within the Peddambarpet area.
- A significant event took place at the Shantinagar Leprosy Colony, coinciding with the New Year celebrations.
- APAL's State Committee in West Bengal organized the Sara Bangla Kustha Kalyan Samity Central Committee Meeting at Manipur, Adra, West Bengal. The meeting served as a platform for key discussions on two significant agenda points.
- A significant event occurred at the Shantinagar Leprosy Colony and Balajinagar Mother Teresa Leprosy Colony, where essential commodities and blankets were distributed to 53 individuals affected by leprosy.
- Mr. Sarang Gayadhane, General Secretary of APAL, together with the State Committee and leaders from nine leprosy colonies, recently convened with the District Magistrate of Indore to present a memorandum advocating for an increase in social entitlements and disability pensions for individuals who have been cured of leprosy.

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- A significant event took place at the Shantinagar Leprosy Colony, coinciding with the New Year celebrations

***An impactful initiative took place in Devanagari Colony and Devpalli Colony near Ditch Pally, where 134 ulcer kits and tubs were distributed to individuals affected by leprosy.***

On Sunday, December 1, 2024, an impactful initiative took place in Devanagari Colony and Devpalli Colony near Ditch Pally, where 134 ulcer kits and tubs were distributed to individuals affected by leprosy. The APAL State Committee in Telangana organized this charitable effort in collaboration with the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) under the auspices of the Leprosy Society. The event was marked by the active participation of M. Ramesh, APAL's State Coordinator, who emphasized the importance of engaging directly with the community.

The primary objective of the distribution program was to address the essential medical and hygiene needs of residents grappling with the challenges posed by leprosy. The provision of ulcer kits is critical for preventing complications and enhancing the quality of life for those impacted by this condition. This initiative exemplified a profound sense of solidarity and compassion, illustrating the collaborative efforts of organizations and individuals committed to supporting a marginalized population.

Residents from both colonies expressed their sincere gratitude to the officials from NTPC and the representatives of the Leprosy Society for their invaluable support. Their expressions of appreciation highlighted the significance of such initiatives in enhancing their daily lives and instilling a sense of hope and dignity. This partnership is a compelling testament to the effectiveness of community-driven efforts in addressing vital health and social challenges.



***APAL and APAL's State committee in Telangana, in collaboration with representatives of the Leprosy Society distributed MCR (Micro Cellular Rubber) footwear free of cost to individuals affected by leprosy***

On 3rd December 2024, on the occasion of World Disability Day, APAL and APAL's State committee in Telangana, in collaboration with representatives of the Leprosy Society distributed MCR (Micro Cellular Rubber) footwear free of cost to individuals affected by leprosy in Santosh Nagar Leprosy Colony, Rangareddy District.

The distribution was conducted in the presence of Dr. Paparao, the District Leprosy Officer (DLO). Other participants included Sulochana, Paramedical Officer (PMO); Yadagiri,

Laboratory Technician (LT); Baburao from the Leprosy Society (Physiotherapist); and V. Shantiraju, Deputy Paramedical Officer (DPMO).

The event was also contributed by Maniyada Ramesh, the State Coordinator of APAL, as well as colony elders Pullayya, Pentayya, Aziz, Prameela, and other residents of the colony.



***APAL's State commity in Telangana, in collaboration with the District Leprosy Referral Center (DLRC) in Nallakunta, Hyderabad***

On Tuesday, 03/12/2024, APAL's State commity in Telangana, in collaboration with the District Leprosy Referral Center (DLRC) in Nallakunta, Hyderabad, observed World Disability Day. The event was organized by the Leprosy Society in collaboration with local health authorities.

During the event, Dr. Muralidhar, District Medical Officer (DLO) of Hyderabad, distributed MCR (Micro Cellular Rubber) footwear and ulcer care kits free of cost to leprosy patients. The initiative aimed to support their mobility and health needs.

The program was presided over by Project Officer Kameshwar Rao and attended by several dignitaries, including Dr. Vanitha, Paramedical Officer (PMO) of Hyderabad, Maniyada Ramesh State Coordinator of APAL, Baburao, Physiotherapist, and U. Shivamma, Counselor.

They joined leprosy patients in celebrating World Disability Day, fostering inclusivity and spreading awareness about the challenges faced by differently-abled individuals.



***Ms. Maya Ranavare, the President of APAL (Association of People Affected by Leprosy), participated in this significant event NLEP National Review Meeting***

Ms. Maya Ranavare, the President of APAL (Association of People Affected by Leprosy), participated in this significant event NLEP National Review Meeting for High Endemic states on 4th & 5th December 2024. Her involvement reflects APAL's ongoing commitment to supporting the rights, rehabilitation, and empowerment of individuals impacted by leprosy. By attending this high-level review meeting, Ms. Ranavare represents the voices of those affected and underscores the importance of community-led initiatives in shaping national strategies for leprosy eradication.

Her participation also highlights the collaborative efforts between government authorities, health organizations, and advocacy groups like APAL. Through such platforms, Ms. Ranavare continues to champion inclusivity and equity in healthcare policies, ensuring that marginalized communities receive adequate attention and support. This meeting serves as an opportunity to review progress, discuss challenges, and strategize actionable solutions for high-endemic states across India.



***Huge congratulations to Ms. Keroline Bhengra Executive Member of APAL for receiving the prestigious "LEPROSY CHAMPION" 🏆 award***

Huge congratulations to Ms. Keroline Bhengra Executive Member of APAL for receiving the prestigious "LEPROSY CHAMPION" 🏆 award in recognition of her tireless contributions to leprosy-affected communities. This distinguished honor was conferred by the Government of Chhattisgarh and presented by the Chief Minister on December 8, 2024. Ms. Bhengra's dedication and relentless efforts in advocating for the rights and well-being of individuals affected by leprosy have made a profound and lasting impact on the community. Her work stands as a beacon of hope and transformation, breaking barriers and fostering inclusivity for those often marginalized.

On behalf of APAL (Association of People Affected by Leprosy), we extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Government of Chhattisgarh for recognizing Ms. Bhengra's exceptional service. This acknowledgment underscores the importance of continuous support and empowerment for leprosy-affected individuals. A special thank you to Ms. Keroline Bhengra for being an unwavering role model. Her commitment, courage, and leadership inspire not only the leprosy community but also society at large, paving the way for a future where dignity and equality are upheld for all.



***A meeting of the APAL's State Committee in Bihar was convened on December 11 to discuss various administrative and organizational matters.***

A meeting of the APAL's State Committee in Bihar was convened on December 11 to discuss various administrative and organizational matters. The meeting witnessed active participation from all key members, who engaged in detailed deliberations on the pressing issues concerning the state unit's leadership and its future direction. The primary agenda was the election of the Bihar State Coordinator, a pivotal role that ensures the smooth functioning and coordination of activities across the state.

After thorough discussions and consideration of the organizational timeline, the committee unanimously passed a resolution to hold the election of the Bihar State Coordinator in January. This decision reflects the committee's commitment to maintaining transparency and upholding democratic values within the organization. The proposed timeline is aimed at ensuring adequate preparation for a fair and efficient election process. The meeting concluded with members expressing optimism about strengthening the organization under new leadership.



***Maniyada Ramesh, the State Coordinator of APAL in Telangana, actively participated in the dissemination event for the pilot study titled "Leprosy and Migration in India"***

On 12th December 2024, Maniyada Ramesh, the State Coordinator of APAL in Telangana, actively participated in the dissemination event for the pilot study titled "Leprosy and Migration in India." This event was conducted to share the findings of the research, which was carried out from March 2021 to March 2024. The program brought together various stakeholders, including representatives from the World Health Organization (WHO) India, ILEP (International Federation of Anti-Leprosy Associations), and Change Scape.

During the event, Maniyada Ramesh contributed by highlighting the challenges faced by people affected by leprosy, especially those who have migrated to urban areas in search of livelihood. His insights from Telangana provided valuable perspectives on how migration impacts access to healthcare, social protection, and sustainable living for those affected by the disease. Through his active participation, he emphasized the importance of a collaborative approach among government bodies, NGOs, and communities to ensure that individuals affected by leprosy are integrated into mainstream society with dignity and support.

This event underscored the commitment of APAL and its representatives, like Maniyada Ramesh, to addressing the systemic barriers faced by people affected by leprosy and advocating for inclusive policies.



***Madhusudan Tiwari, Secretary of APAL's State Committee in Jharkhand, accompanied by Samuel Ji, conducted a significant visit to four leprosy colonies***

On December 12, 2024, Madhusudan Tiwari, Secretary of APAL's State Committee in Jharkhand, accompanied by Samuel Ji, conducted a significant visit to four leprosy colonies in Jharkhand: Angarpathra Leprosy Colony, Tetulmari Leprosy Colony, Gandhigram Leprosy Colony, and Jamadobha Leprosy Colony. The visit aimed to assess the current living conditions of the residents and review ongoing initiatives to enhance their quality of life.

During the visit, the leaders interacted with new livelihood beneficiaries who had recently received support under various government schemes. They engaged in in-depth discussions to understand the beneficiaries' work experiences, evaluate the impact of the assistance provided, and review the benefits and projects they were involved in.

The visit also included direct interactions with the residents of these colonies to understand the challenges they face in their daily lives. Residents openly shared their concerns, and the leaders assured them of their commitment. The focus was on fostering mental and physical well-being, promoting social inclusion, and creating better resident employment opportunities.

This visit served as a platform to review the progress of government schemes implemented in these colonies and identify areas for improvement. It also emphasized the need for corrective actions to ensure sustainable development and a brighter future for the residents of these communities.



***The meeting was honoured by the presence of Shri Bharat Ji, a senior officer of the Railways, accompanied by his colleagues. It was attended by local village leaders and community members***

On 12th February 2024, a notable public meeting was convened at the Gandhigram Kusth Ashram, facilitated by the dedicated efforts of the State Committee of APAL in Bihar, under the initiative of Mr. Someshwar Dubey, the State Coordinator. The meeting was honoured by the presence of Shri Bharat Ji, a senior officer of the Railways, accompanied by his colleagues. It was attended by local village leaders and community members. The primary objective of the gathering was to explore avenues for socio-economic empowerment and self-reliance for the ashram residents.

The discussions during the meeting primarily focused on the provision of sustainable livelihood opportunities for both men and women in the village. Key activities identified included tailoring, broom-making, and the establishment of nurseries for tree planting. These professions were recognized as viable options for job creation and financial independence for the community. The collaborative efforts emphasized the necessity of involving both genders in productive activities to promote inclusive development. Shri Bharat Ji and his team assured the attendees that the projects, supported by government schemes, would commence in January 2024, thus laying the groundwork for systematic implementation and long-term impact.

In addition to planning future initiatives, an immediate act of benevolence was executed during the meeting. Winter blankets were distributed to 50 families present, addressing their urgent need for warmth and comfort amid the harsh winter conditions. This gesture was met with gratitude from the residents and exemplified the commitment of APAL and its partners to the welfare of the leprosy-affected community.

The event highlighted the importance of self-reliance and community-driven development in villages such as Gandhigram. By providing essential opportunities and resources, the efforts of APAL's State Committee and its supporters are significantly contributing to the establishment of a foundation for dignity, empowerment, and enhanced living standards for the community.





***The Karnataka State Committee of APAL, in collaboration with the Nandadeep Charitable Trust, organized a significant event in Mahatma Gandhi Colony***

On 13 December 2024, the Karnataka State Committee of APAL, in collaboration with the Nandadeep Charitable Trust, organized a significant event in Mahatma Gandhi Colony, Vijayapur, aimed at supporting and promoting the education of children and youth from families affected by leprosy. During this event, 50 students, spanning primary school, high school, and college levels, were presented with essential educational materials, including books, pens, and examination pads. This generous provision empowers these students to engage with their education with renewed confidence and enthusiasm.

The distribution of these materials was made possible through the generous contributions from the Nandadeep Charitable Trust, whose dedication to social welfare has provided hope and inspiration to numerous individuals.

APAL expresses its sincere gratitude to the trustees for their support, highlighting the critical role of community collaboration in fostering the socio-economic empowerment of individuals and families impacted by leprosy.



***A significant event was organized at the Pasumamula Santosh Nagar Leprosy Colony with the intent of providing support to individuals affected by leprosy.***

On December 14, 2024, a significant event was organized at the Pasumamula Santosh Nagar Leprosy Colony with the intent of providing support to individuals affected by leprosy. This initiative, facilitated by the APAL's State Committee in Telangana, involved the distribution of essential commodities to 25 leprosy-affected individuals and new clothing to 70 families within the colony. Women received sarees, while men were provided with garments, fostering

a sense of joy among the beneficiaries. This commendable program was made possible through the generous contributions of Sai devotees Mr. Y. Janardhan Rao, Ms. Geetha, and Mr. Suresh Chandra, whose humanitarian efforts were met with widespread appreciation.

The distribution program was conducted with the active involvement of former MLA Jaggareddy, who attended the event as the chief guest, accompanied by APAL's State Coordinator, Maniyada Ramesh Garu. In his address, Jaggareddy underscored the vital role of NGOs, trusts, and other organizations in conducting service-oriented initiatives aimed at uplifting families affected by leprosy. He committed to advocating for an increase in the disability pension to Rs. 6,000 by bringing this matter to the attention of the Chief Minister.

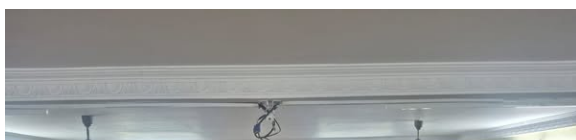
The residents of the colony, including elders Pullaiah, Pentaiah, and Aziz, expressed their profound gratitude towards the donors and organizers for their support. Their heartfelt words highlighted the positive impact of the program and the renewed hope it generated within the community. This event served as a compelling testament to the effectiveness of compassion and collective action in enhancing the lives of marginalized individuals.



***The State Committee of APAL in Madhya Pradesh recently engaged in a coordination meeting related to leprosy programs and the welfare of individuals affected by the disease***

On 15<sup>th</sup> December 2024, The State Committee of APAL in Madhya Pradesh recently engaged in a coordination meeting related to leprosy programs and the welfare of individuals affected by the disease. This important event convened key stakeholders, including Dr. Senthilnathan, Deputy Director General (Leprosy) of the Government of India; the Chief Officer of the Leprosy Division; District Leprosy Officers from the Indore Division; as well as representatives from the World Health Organization (WHO), German Leprosy and Tuberculosis Relief Association (GLRA), and LEPRO. The meeting emphasized collaborative initiatives and strategic methodologies to enhance the quality of life for individuals impacted by leprosy.

APAL was represented by its Secretary, Sarang Gaydhane, and dedicated members Raju Rathore, Gopal Shinde, and Sarita Dhundh. Their involvement underscored APAL's commitment to addressing the needs of communities affected by leprosy in Madhya Pradesh. The discussions aimed to fortify ongoing programs, ensure the effective implementation of welfare schemes, and advocate for the rights and societal integration of individuals affected by leprosy.



***APAL's State Committee in West Bengal convened a significant meeting with the Presidents and Secretaries of 12 leprosy colonies within the Paschim Bardhaman district***

On 15th December 2024, APAL's State Committee in West Bengal convened a significant meeting with the Presidents and Secretaries of 12 leprosy colonies within the Paschim Bardhaman district. The gathering focused on addressing the pressing challenges faced by these colonies, including issues related to social welfare, housing, and healthcare. Representatives from each colony shared detailed insights into their unique circumstances, fostering a collective understanding of the broader challenges across the district.

The meeting concluded with a commitment to design and implement actionable programs aimed at resolving these issues. The next steps were outlined, emphasizing collaboration between the State Committee, local leaders, and relevant authorities. This initiative marks a progressive step towards improving the living conditions and overall well-being of individuals affected by leprosy in West Bengal.



***The APAL State Committee in Bihar convened an important meeting in Areraj Colony to discuss key developments concerning the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY).***

The APAL State Committee in Bihar convened an important meeting in Areraj Colony to discuss key developments concerning the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY). They engaged with the mukhiya (village head) and other local officials to review the progress and challenges surrounding the scheme's execution. The committee noted with satisfaction that approval has been granted for the construction of 24 houses in this region, and the focus of the meeting was to strategize on the practical steps necessary for the successful completion of these homes.

During the discussions, they worked in tandem with local representatives to understand the unique needs of the community and resolve any logistical hurdles. Detailed plans were laid out to ensure the construction of these 24 houses is completed efficiently, adhering to quality standards and cost-effective measures. There was a consensus on maintaining clear communication and accountability throughout the process to prevent any delays or irregularities.

The dedication and cooperation displayed by all participants underscored the importance of this initiative for the betterment of the community. Moving forward, the APAL State Committee is committed to closely supervising the project, ensuring transparency, and addressing any issues that arise. This effort marks a significant step toward providing safe and dignified housing for families in need, and they are determined to see this mission through to its successful completion.



***APAL State Committee in Tamil Nadu recently took a significant step towards supporting the health and well-being of individuals affected by leprosy***

The APAL State Committee in Tamil Nadu recently took a significant step towards supporting the health and well-being of individuals affected by leprosy. In a dedicated effort, the committee provided essential healthcare services by distributing ulcer care materials and vital medicines in the Vadathorasalur Leprosy Colony. This initiative was aimed at addressing the specific medical needs of those living with leprosy-related complications, particularly chronic ulcers, which require consistent and specialized care.

In addition to medical supplies, the committee also extended support to elderly individuals affected by leprosy, recognizing their vulnerability and the challenges they face. By offering these healthcare services and resources, APAL's State Committee seeks to improve their quality of life, alleviate suffering, and promote dignity among these marginalized members of society. The distribution of medicines and ulcer care materials was conducted in collaboration with local healthcare workers to ensure proper guidance on the use of these supplies.

] This initiative highlights the commitment of the APAL State Committee to providing sustained care and support to those who have long suffered from the social and physical impacts of leprosy. Moving forward, the committee plans to continue these outreach programs and work towards expanding access to essential healthcare services, ensuring that no one in these communities is left behind.



***Ms. Maya Ranavare, in collaboration with Dr. Ranganadh Rao, Programme Advisor on Medical Issues at the Sasakawa Health Foundation (SHF), and members of APAL's State Committee in Odisha, recently convened a significant meeting with the Social Minister, Chief Secretary, and State Leprosy Officer of Odisha***

On 17th December 2024, The President of the Association for Persons Affected by Leprosy (APAL), Ms. Maya Ranavare, in collaboration with Dr. Ranganadh Rao, Programme Advisor on Medical Issues at the Sasakawa Health Foundation (SHF), and members of APAL's State Committee in Odisha, recently convened a significant meeting with the Social Minister, Chief Secretary, and State Leprosy Officer of Odisha. This meeting was designed to promote dialogue aimed at enhancing services for individuals affected by leprosy and their families, with an emphasis on collaborative approaches to effectively address their needs. The discussion highlighted the critical role of partnerships between APAL and the state government in improving healthcare, social protection, and livelihood opportunities for the leprosy-affected community.

During the meeting, representatives from APAL articulated several key concerns faced by individuals impacted by leprosy, including the necessity for improved access to healthcare, disability certification, and social welfare programs. To ensure a thorough understanding and transparency in the discussion, members of APAL presented the government officials with their Annual Report, which comprehensively detailed the organization's activities, achievements, and ongoing initiatives. This report served as evidence of APAL's commitment to the socio-economic empowerment of the leprosy-affected population.]

The meeting included the active participation of Mr. Jawahar Paswan, Vice President of APAL, and Mr. Prabhakar Sahoo, Executive Member of APAL, both of whom contributed significantly to the discourse. Their involvement reinforced APAL's unwavering commitment to advocating for the rights and dignity of individuals affected by leprosy. This constructive engagement with officials from the Odisha government represents a pivotal advancement towards bolstering collaboration and delivering effective solutions for the leprosy-affected community within the state.



***The tireless efforts of Apal India s State Committee in Delhi and Mr. Vijay Kumar, the General Secretary of the RWA Leprosy Complex in Tahirpur, Delhi, a successful camp was organized by Sarvodaya Kusth Ashram.***

On 18th December 2024, with the tireless efforts of **Apal India** s State Committee in Delhi and Mr. Vijay Kumar, the General Secretary of the RWA Leprosy Complex in Tahirpur, Delhi, a successful camp was organized by Sarvodaya Kusth Ashram. The event witnessed active participation from the State Leprosy Officer, the District Leprosy Officer (DLO), and other departmental doctors, who played a significant role in ensuring the camp's success.

During the camp, MCR slippers were distributed to members affected by leprosy, addressing their need for specialized footwear to prevent complications. In addition, comprehensive health check-ups were conducted, including blood pressure, blood sugar, and eye examinations. After the screenings, spectacles were distributed to needy individuals, significantly enhancing their quality of life.

All attendees deeply appreciated the commitment and time contributed by the medical team and organizers. The residents expressed heartfelt gratitude to the entire team for their dedication and support, demonstrating a collective effort toward improving the welfare of leprosy-affected individuals



***The Executive Committee (EC) members of the Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL), along with Dr. Ranganadh Rao, Program Advisor of Sasakawa Health Foundation (SHF), recently visited several leprosy colonies in Odisha.***

The Executive Committee (EC) members of the Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL), along with Dr. Ranganadh Rao, Program Advisor of Sasakawa Health Foundation (SHF), recently visited several leprosy colonies in Odisha. The visit aimed to gain a firsthand understanding of the challenges faced by persons affected by leprosy and their families. The delegation interacted with the residents, discussing their current living conditions and the availability of social entitlements such as disability pensions, housing, healthcare, and educational support. Through these interactions, the team sought to identify gaps and explore viable solutions to improve the socio-economic status of the affected communities.

Ms. Maya Ranavare, President of APAL, Mr. Jawahar Ram Paswan, Vice President of APAL, and Mr. Prabhakar Sahoo, Executive Member of APAL, played instrumental roles during the visit. They engaged directly with the colony residents, listening to their concerns and providing assurance of continued advocacy for their rights. The discussions also focused on enhancing access to essential entitlements and addressing systemic barriers that hinder the well-being of leprosy-affected individuals. Dr. Ranganadh Rao shared insights and strategic recommendations to empower the community and integrate them into mainstream society. This collaborative effort reflects APAL's commitment to fostering dignity and equality for persons affected by leprosy in Odisha and beyond.



***APAL's State Committee in Telangana, in collaboration with the Children of Deccan Foundation, has recently distributed food grains and blankets to persons affected by leprosy and their families.***

APAL's State Committee in Telangana, in collaboration with the Children of Deccan Foundation, has recently distributed food grains and blankets to persons affected by leprosy and their families. This compassionate initiative, led by the foundation's founder, N. Malkanna Garu, and Chairperson Pandugula Jayasri Garu, underscores their commitment to supporting vulnerable communities. The distribution program is part of a broader effort to uplift individuals affected by leprosy, focusing on their socio-economic empowerment and overall welfare. These collaborative actions have instilled a renewed sense of hope and unity within leprosy-affected communities across Telangana.

Councillor Vidhyavathi Vejender Reddy Garu has been instrumental in connecting these communities to essential government schemes and resources. Working closely with Maniyada Ramesh, APAL's Telangana State Coordinator, she has ensured that the affected individuals are aware of their rights and have access to basic necessities. Their persistent advocacy efforts have brought significant improvements in addressing the pressing needs of these communities, resulting in meaningful welfare programs.

Additionally, Samuel Garu and Puja have made notable contributions by dedicating their efforts to enhancing the living standards of leprosy-affected families. Their collective endeavours have created a positive impact, empowering individuals to lead dignified lives while promoting their integration into mainstream society. Together, this team continues to make remarkable strides in building a more inclusive and supportive environment for those affected by leprosy in Telangana.



***A significant meeting took place at the Leprosy Ashram in Tahirpur, convened at the request of the State Committee of APAL in Delhi and Mr. Vijay Kumar, the General Secretary of the RWA Leprosy Complex.***

On December 20, 2024, a significant meeting took place at the Leprosy Ashram in Tahirpur, convened at the request of the State Committee of APAL in Delhi and Mr. Vijay Kumar, the General Secretary of the RWA Leprosy Complex. The Deputy Director General of Leprosy (DDGL) of Delhi, accompanied by key officials from his department, visited the ashram to address the urgent concerns of the residents affected by leprosy.

The discussions primarily focused on the population residing within the ashram and the critical need for consistent medical care, which includes the regular provision of medications and appropriate dressing for leprosy patients. These matters received particular emphasis during the dialogue, indicating the authorities' commitment to enhancing the residents' living and healthcare conditions.

The residents and the RWA expressed their sincere gratitude to the DDGL and the accompanying officials for their visit and for the constructive discourse that suggests actionable steps toward addressing these challenges.





***A significant milestone was achieved in Kankar Danga Leprosy Colony, Burnpur, West Bengal, with the inauguration of a new healthcare center.***

On December 20, 2024, a significant milestone was achieved in Kankar Danga Leprosy Colony, Burnpur, West Bengal, with the inauguration of a new healthcare center. The inauguration ceremony was presided over by Shri B.P. Singh, the esteemed Director-in-charge of the Burnpur Steel Plant and Durgapur Steel Plant, in collaboration with the State Committee of APAL. This healthcare center is set to play a pivotal role in improving healthcare access for the community.

The new facility will provide essential medical services to residents of Kankar Danga Leprosy Colony as well as those from five surrounding villages, ensuring accessible and quality healthcare for a larger population.

Its establishment underscores a strong commitment to inclusive healthcare, addressing the needs of marginalized and leprosy-affected communities. This collaborative effort marks a significant step forward in empowering these communities with better health infrastructure and support, fostering a positive impact on their quality of life.



***APAL's State Committee in West Bengal organized the Sara Bangla Kustha Kalyan Samity Central Committee Meeting at Manipur, Adra, West Bengal.***

On 22nd December 2024, APAL's State Committee in West Bengal organized the Sara Bangla Kustha Kalyan Samity Central Committee Meeting at Manipur, Adra, West Bengal. The meeting served as a platform for key discussions on two significant agenda points.

Firstly, detailed plans were discussed for the observance of Anti-Leprosy Day in 2025. The committee emphasized the importance of raising awareness about leprosy, promoting early

detection and treatment, and addressing the social stigma faced by affected individuals. Various activities were proposed, including awareness campaigns, medical camps, and community engagement programs, to ensure widespread participation and impact.

Secondly, the committee deliberated on organizational matters to enhance the effectiveness and reach of their initiatives. They reviewed the current structure, identified areas requiring improvement, and proposed strategies for stronger coordination among member organizations. The discussions aimed at building a unified and robust approach to advocating for the rights and welfare of leprosy-affected individuals in West Bengal.

The meeting concluded with a strong commitment from all members to work collaboratively towards these goals, reaffirming their dedication to the cause.



***A significant event occurred at the Shantinagar Leprosy Colony and Balajinagar Mother Teresa Leprosy Colony, where essential commodities and blankets were distributed to 53 individuals affected by leprosy.***

On Thursday, 26th December 2024, a significant event occurred at the Shantinagar Leprosy Colony and Balajinagar Mother Teresa Leprosy Colony, where essential commodities and blankets were distributed to 53 individuals affected by leprosy. This distribution was conducted under the compassionate leadership of Maniyada Ramesh, the State Coordinator for APAL in Telangana, alongside K. Anusuya, the Vice President of APAL's State Committee, both of whom were present to oversee and support the initiative. The effectiveness of the program was further enhanced by the involvement of Shivarani Madam and Venkateshwari from the Society of Rural Development (SRD), who played a crucial role in organizing the event and ensuring the distribution was executed efficiently.

The elders of the colony, including Samuel Rahimatullah, CH Mallaiah, and Y. Chakali, conveyed their deep gratitude on behalf of the residents, expressing appreciation for the solidarity and commitment demonstrated by the APAL State Committee leadership and the SRD team. The provision of blankets and essential commodities provided substantial relief to the recipients during the colder months, thereby reinforcing the ideals of care and support for the leprosy-affected community. This thoughtful initiative addressed immediate needs and promoted a sense of dignity and inclusion among the residents, inspiring hope and optimism for a more promising future.

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Mr. Sarang Gayadhane, General Secretary of APAL, together with the State Committee and leaders from nine leprosy colonies, recently convened with the District Magistrate of Indore to present a memorandum advocating for an increase in social entitlements and disability pensions for individuals who have been cured of leprosy. This commendable initiative aims to alleviate the financial difficulties encountered by those who depend on these pensions for their basic needs and overall well-being. The delegation's proactive engagement highlights their commitment to securing dignity and financial stability for individuals affected by leprosy and disabilities.

The advocacy for an increase in these pensions represents a critical and necessary measure towards addressing disparities in social support systems across India. While regions such as Delhi, Telangana, and Haryana provide pensions of Rs 3,000 per month, and Maharashtra offers a disability pension of Rs 2,500 in addition to a municipal allowance of Rs 4,000, Madhya Pradesh significantly trails behind with a mere Rs 600. In contrast, Andhra Pradesh exemplifies progressive policy by providing a disability pension of Rs 6,000 and additional support for individuals experiencing more than 80% disability. This stark disparity underscores the urgent need for uniform and equitable pension policies that ensure all individuals, regardless of their geographic location, receive adequate financial assistance to sustain a dignified standard of living.

Mr. Gayadhane and his team's efforts are both commendable and serve as a potent call to action for policymakers. By drawing attention to these inequities, they are advocating for the rights and welfare of marginalized communities. Their ongoing dedication is poised to resonate with governmental authorities, encouraging meaningful reforms in pension policies. With sustained advocacy and community involvement, there exists a potential for a more promising future where every individual affected by leprosy and disabilities can live with dignity and financial security.

APAL expresses its gratitude to the District Magistrate for his affirmative response and assurance that he will communicate with the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh regarding favourable actions for individuals affected by leprosy.



***A distribution program was organized by the State Committee of APAL in Telangana in collaboration with the Grace Service Society Khammam to assist families affected by leprosy in Shantinagar Colony and Santosh Nagar Colony within the Peddambarpet area.***

On Saturday, December 28, 2024, a distribution program was organized by the State Committee of APAL in Telangana in collaboration with the Grace Service Society Khammam to assist families affected by leprosy in Shantinagar Colony and Santosh Nagar Colony within the Peddambarpet area. This initiative provided essential items such as 5 kilograms of rice, blankets, sarees, and shirts, thereby benefiting 150 families.

The distribution was managed by Jacob, the President of the Grace Service Society, alongside the dedicated staff of the organization. Maniyada Ramesh, APAL's State Coordinator in Telangana, served as the chief guest for the event. Additionally, Jayashree Raja Garu, the Municipal Chairperson of Peddambarpet, attended to express her support. Esteemed elders from the community, including Y. Samuel, Dominic Rahimatullah, Ch. Mallaiah, Y. Chakali, J. Pullaiah, N. Pentaiah, R. Ramulu, and Azeez, were also present to witness the event.

APAL and the local communities expressed their profound gratitude to the Grace Service Society for their steadfast dedication to enhancing the lives of individuals affected by leprosy. This collaborative initiative exemplified a strong sense of solidarity and compassion for marginalized communities. Special acknowledgement is extended to Maniyada Ramesh for his significant contributions to the distribution efforts.



***A significant event took place at the Shantinagar Leprosy Colony, coinciding with the New Year celebrations.***

On December 31, 2024, a significant event took place at the Shantinagar Leprosy Colony, coinciding with the New Year celebrations. The State Committee of APAL, in collaboration with Teacher Hephshiba Madam and supported generously by Zekaraiah Garu, organized an impactful distribution program that provided sarees to 35 women residing in the colony. This event represented a demonstration of compassion and community engagement, bringing joy and a sense of belonging to the residents.

The distribution program was honoured by the attendance of APAL's State Coordinator, Maniyada Ramesh, whose unwavering commitment to the welfare of individuals affected by leprosy continues to serve as an inspiration. Prominent elders from the colony, including Y. Samuel, Rahimatullah, Ch. Mallaiah, and Y. Chakali, also actively participated in the program, underscoring the unity and resilience within the community. The initiative was met with profound gratitude from the residents, marking a memorable commencement to the New Year.



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