

SASAKAWA HEALTH FOUNDATION

Monthly Report

To

Executive Director of Sasakawa Health Foundation

Title of the Report	Monthly Progress Report
Name	Mrs. Maya Ranavare
Date of Submission	4 th June 2025
Reporting Period	May 2025

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

- APAL State Committee in Jharkhand, in collaboration with the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), organized a pivotal meeting at the Circuit House Auditorium in Jharkhand.
- In a focused advocacy effort, APAL's Joint Secretary, Mr. Ramavarai Sah, accompanied by members of APAL's State Committee in Bihar and State Coordinator Mr. Ramesh Prasad, visited the office of the *Samajik Suraksha Nideshalay* in Patna
- **"MCR Footwear Distribution Drive for Leprosy-Affected Individuals – Bokaro, Jharkhand"**
- APAL's State Committee in Telangana, in collaboration with local donor Madam Saraswathi, generously provided tent materials worth ₹75,000 to the residents of Santhosh Nagar Leprosy Colony.
- The State Committee of the Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL) in Andhra Pradesh recently met with the District Collector of East Godavari to address the urgent situation in one of the leprosy colonies in Bhimavaram that had been severely damaged due to heavy rains.
- The State Committee of the Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL) in Chhattisgarh, in collaboration with a generous local donor, Mr. Anil Dhiwar, recently organized a meaningful distribution program for persons affected by leprosy.
- The State Committee of the Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL) in Meghalaya took a proactive step towards improving the living conditions of residents in leprosy colonies by addressing the long-standing issue of inadequate water supply.
- Heartfelt Congratulations to Mr. Jawahar Ram Paswan, Vice President of APAL! A huge round of applause and our sincerest congratulations to Mr. Jawahar Ram Paswan, the respected Vice President of APAL India, on being conferred with the prestigious Seva Samarpan Samman by the Pratik Sangharsh Foundation.
- Mr. Ramavarai Sah, Joint Secretary, District Social Security Cell, Purbi Champaran, Motihari, is a dedicated and diligent officer known for his commitment to public welfare mainly families of persons affected by leprosy.
- The Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL) continues its active engagement across states to address the pressing concerns of persons affected by leprosy.
- Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL), in collaboration with its Tamil Nadu state committee, visited the Schieffelin Institute of Health – Research and Leprosy Centre (SIHRLC) in Karigiri, Tamil Nadu

- APAL's State Committee Visit to the Governor's House
- APAL, along with its Tamil Nadu State Committee, conducted a visit to Karnai Nagar Leprosy Colony in Karigiri, Tamil Nadu
- The Association of People Affected by leprosy, APAL's President Maya Ranavare, successfully conducted a State Committee Meeting at the Schieffelin Institute of Health – Research and Leprosy Centre (SIHRLC) in Karigiri, Tamil Nadu.
- Mrs. Maya Ranavare, the President of the Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL), along with the APAL State Committee members from Tamil Nadu, visited the Mother Leprosy Patient Welfare Society located in Karigiri, Tamil Nadu.
- The APAL State Committee in Bihar, in coordination with Mr. Ramavarai Sah, Joint Secretary of APAL, has undertaken a commendable initiative to support persons affected by leprosy who are facing mobility challenges due to disabilities caused by the disease
- “Advocacy Interaction During NHRC Visit to Danapur Leprosy Colony”

APAL State Committee in Jharkhand, in collaboration with the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), organized a pivotal meeting at the Circuit House Auditorium in Jharkhand.

"Inclusive Futures: APAL–NHRC Joint Consultation on Leprosy Rights"

On 1st May 2025, the APAL State Committee in Jharkhand, in collaboration with the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), organized a pivotal meeting at the Circuit House Auditorium in Jharkhand. The session was held under the leadership of Dr. Pradeep Kumar Nayak, Special Monitor (Leprosy) from NHRC, New Delhi, and brought together a wide range of government stakeholders to deliberate on the rights and welfare of persons affected by leprosy. The meeting witnessed active participation from departments such as Health, Education, Social Security, Social Welfare, JSLPS (Jharkhand State Livelihood Promotion Society), and the Welfare Department, alongside APAL representatives and members from local leprosy ashrams. The primary focus of the dialogue was the recognition and realization of personal, social, economic, fundamental, and political rights of leprosy-affected individuals.

Dr. Pradeep Kumar Nayak passionately advocated for the complete inclusion of persons affected by leprosy into mainstream society. He underscored that every individual impacted by the disease has an equal right to dignity and opportunity, just like any other citizen. Dr. Nayak issued a clarion call to all attending departments to integrate efforts, dismantle discriminatory practices, and dispel societal myths around leprosy. He also issued specific, actionable guidelines aimed at fostering departmental coordination, with a shared vision of achieving a leprosy-free India by 2027. His address was a powerful reminder of the systemic changes needed to uphold the rights and humanity of those affected by leprosy.

Civil Surgeon Dr. Sahir Paul also addressed the audience and played a critical role in clarifying public misconceptions surrounding the disease. He explained that leprosy is a bacterial infection that can be completely cured with timely and proper treatment, emphasizing that it is not a highly contagious disease. Dr. Paul reassured the gathering that all health facilities in the district are well-prepared to conduct screenings and offer necessary medical interventions. He further informed that every leprosy-affected individual in the district has now been issued a disability certificate, empowering them to access various government

schemes and entitlements. This milestone reflects the district's commitment to improving the quality of life, social security, and welfare of persons affected by leprosy.



In a focused advocacy effort, APAL's Joint Secretary, Mr. Ramavarai Sah, accompanied by members of APAL's State Committee in Bihar and State Coordinator M In a focused advocacy effort, APAL's Joint Secretary, Mr. Ramavarai Sah, accompanied by members of APAL's State Committee in Bihar and State Coordinator Mr. Ramesh Prasad, visited the office of the *Samajik Suraksha Nideshalay* in Patna. The team met with concerned officials to raise pressing issues impacting persons affected by leprosy, particularly regarding the irregularities and inadequacy of disability pensions.

During the discussion, the APAL delegation stressed the urgent need to increase the existing disability pension, emphasizing that the current amount is insufficient to support even basic living expenses. They also drew attention to the alarming issue of sudden stoppage or non-credit of pensions for several eligible individuals—without any prior notice or explanation. These disruptions have placed an added burden on an already marginalized population.

The team appealed for immediate intervention to re-sanction the pensions of those affected and to ensure timely disbursement moving forward. They also recommended strengthening social security mechanisms and making service delivery more inclusive and accessible for persons affected by leprosy.

The department officials responded positively and assured the APAL team of prompt action to resolve the concerns raised.



"MCR Footwear Distribution Drive for Leprosy-Affected Individuals – Bokaro, Jharkhand"

"MCR Footwear Distribution Drive for Leprosy-Affected Individuals – Bokaro, Jharkhand"

On 5th May 2025, the Jharkhand State Committee of APAL collaborated with local health authorities to organize a meaningful distribution program at the Bokaro Leprosy Colony. In this initiative, MCR (Micro Cellular Rubber) slippers were distributed to individuals affected by leprosy by the District Leprosy Prevention Officer. These specialised slippers are crucial for protecting the insensitive feet of people affected by leprosy, helping to prevent injuries and ulcers that could lead to further complications.

Madhusudan Tiwari, a member of APALi's state committee in Jharkhand, was present at the event and expressed gratitude for the initiative. The event not only provided much-needed footwear but also symbolised a growing awareness and commitment to ensuring better health outcomes and social inclusion for the leprosy-affected community in Jharkhand.



were a much-needed resource for the colony and a symbol of collective solidarity.

To mark this generous contribution and to acknowledge the ongoing efforts of leaders and donors, a "Lions International Success Meet" was organised at the Nampally Exhibition Grounds. Maniyada Ramesh and other colony leaders were also present to express their gratitude. During the program, heartfelt thanks were extended to Madam Saraswathi for her valuable contribution, reinforcing the importance of such collaborations in empowering people affected by leprosy.



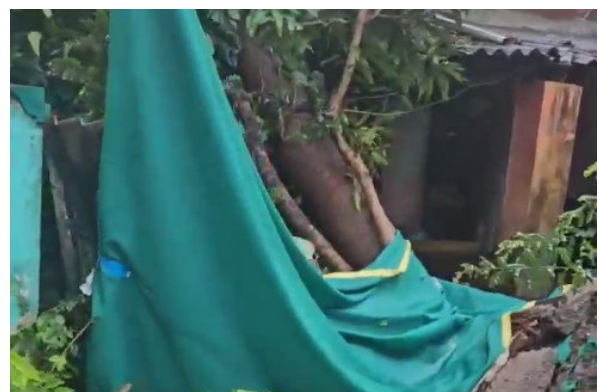
The State Committee of the Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL) in Andhra Pradesh recently met with the District Collector of East Godavari to address the urgent situation in one of the leprosy colonies in Bhimavaram that had been severely damaged due to heavy rains.

“Rapid Response and Rehabilitation Support for Rain-Damaged Leprosy Colony”

On 8th May 2025, The State Committee of the Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL) in Andhra Pradesh recently met with the District Collector of East Godavari to address the urgent situation in one of the leprosy colonies in Bhimavaram that had been severely damaged due to heavy rains. The torrential downpour had caused significant hardship for the residents, damaging homes, infrastructure, and disrupting daily life. The committee submitted a detailed memorandum highlighting the needs and the immediate action required to restore normalcy in the affected colony areas.

In a prompt and commendable response, the District Collector took swift action upon receiving the memorandum. Understanding the urgency of the situation, the Collector immediately directed concerned department officials to visit the colony and assess the damage. Within a short period, the district administration mobilised resources and initiated the reconstruction and repair work. The damaged areas were effectively restored, and essential services were brought back to normal, ensuring the safety and dignity of the residents.

APAL's Treasurer Mr. Prakash Done's timely intervention and the proactive approach of the District Collector and the district staff were deeply appreciated by the APAL State Committee and the colony residents. Their sincere efforts brought much-needed relief and support to a marginalised and vulnerable community. APAL's Andhra Pradesh State Committee, along with the residents of the colony, extend their heartfelt thanks to the District Collector and the entire team for their dedication, compassion, and quick action in resolving the crisis.



The State Committee of the Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL) in Chhattisgarh, in collaboration with a generous local donor, Mr. Anil Dhiwar, recently organized a meaningful distribution program for persons affected by leprosy.

“Self-Care Kit and Soaking Tub Distribution Program in Chhattisgarh”

On 8th May 2025, The State Committee of the Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL) in Chhattisgarh, in collaboration with a generous local donor, Mr. Anil Dhiwar, recently organized a meaningful distribution program for persons affected by leprosy. This impactful initiative took place at one of the leprosy colonies in the state, where Mr. Dhiwar personally distributed self-care kits and bathing tubs to the residents. These essential items are a vital part of daily care for those affected by leprosy, helping them manage their health and hygiene with dignity.

The colony residents and the APAL State Committee deeply appreciate the kind-hearted efforts and invaluable support extended by Mr. Anil Dhiwar. His contribution not only provided much-needed material support but also sent a strong message of solidarity and compassion to a community often marginalised and overlooked. Special thanks to APAL's State Coordinator in Chhattisgarh, Syam Bhai, for her active contribution in the distribution.



The State Committee of the Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL) in Meghalaya took a proactive step towards improving the living conditions of residents in leprosy colonies by addressing the long-standing issue of inadequate water supply.

"Water Supply Advocacy and Installation Drive – Meghalaya"

Ensuring access to clean water by advocating with the PHE Department for pipeline extension to leprosy colonies, promoting health, dignity, and community empowerment.

On 9th May 2025, The State Committee of the Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL) in Meghalaya took a proactive step towards improving the living conditions of residents in leprosy colonies by addressing the long-standing issue of inadequate water supply. Recognizing the hardships faced by the colony residents, the State Committee formally approached the Public Health Engineering (PHE) Department with a request to extend a water pipeline connection from the main lines to the colonies. This initiative was part of APAL's broader mission to advocate for the rights and dignity of people affected by leprosy.

In a commendable display of responsiveness and collaboration, the PHE Department positively acknowledged the request and extended its support by providing the necessary water pipes and fittings. The installation work was carried out jointly by the residents of the

colonies and members of the APAL State Committee, reflecting a strong sense of community ownership and cooperation.

The successful implementation of this project has brought significant relief to the residents, ensuring access to clean and reliable water – a basic yet vital necessity. The APAL State Committee and the residents of the leprosy colonies extend their heartfelt gratitude to the PHE Department for their timely intervention and support. This partnership stands as a positive example of how community-led advocacy and responsive governance can together bring about meaningful change.



Heartfelt Congratulations to Mr. Jawahar Ram Paswan, Vice President of APAL! A huge round of applause and our sincerest congratulations to Mr. Jawahar Ram Paswan, the respected Vice President of APAL India, on being conferred with the prestigious Seva Samarpan Samman by the Pratik Sangharsh Foundation.

“Recognition of Leadership Excellence – Seva Samarpan Samman Award to Mr. Jawahar Ram Paswan” Vice President of APAL

To honour and celebrate the unwavering dedication and advocacy of Mr. Paswan for the rights and rehabilitation of people affected by leprosy.

On 11th May 2025, Heartfelt Congratulations to Mr. Jawahar Ram Paswan, Vice President of APAL! A huge round of applause and our sincerest congratulations to Mr. Jawahar Ram Paswan, the respected Vice President of APAL India, on being conferred with the prestigious Seva Samarpan Samman by the Pratik Sangharsh Foundation. This esteemed award stands as a proud recognition of his unwavering dedication, tireless advocacy, and lifelong commitment to the upliftment, dignity, and rehabilitation of people affected by leprosy.

Mr. Paswan has long been a beacon of hope and an inspiring leader, working selflessly to champion the rights of marginalised communities, ensuring their voices are heard and their

needs are addressed. His compassionate leadership continues to inspire countless individuals across the country who strive for justice and equality.

The State Committee of APAL in Jharkhand takes immense pride in this well-deserved recognition. We extend our warmest congratulations and best wishes to Shri Jawahar Ram Paswan Ji. May he continue to be a guiding light for the movement and bring about meaningful, lasting change in the lives of those he serves with such devotion.



Mr. Ramavarai Sah, Joint Secretary, District Social Security Cell, Purbi Champaran, Motihari, is a dedicated and diligent officer known for his commitment to public welfare mainly families of persons affected by leprosy.

“Welfare Scheme Implementation and Monitoring by District Social Security Cell”

To ensure effective delivery of disability pensions and social security benefits to families of persons affected by leprosy through coordinated administrative efforts.

On 13th May 2025, Mr. Ramavarai Sah, Joint Secretary, District Social Security Cell, Purbi Champaran, Motihari, is a dedicated and diligent officer known for his commitment to public welfare mainly families of persons affected by leprosy.

In his role, he ensures the effective implementation and monitoring of various social security schemes across the district. Mr. Sah has played an instrumental role in coordinating with local development officers to streamline the data collection and verification process for beneficiaries under welfare schemes like the Bihar State Disability Pension and other related programs.

His recent efforts in ensuring the timely reporting and resolution of issues related to beneficiary disability pensions have been widely appreciated. Through his leadership and administrative skills, he continues to contribute significantly to the upliftment of marginalised communities in the region.



The Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL) continues its active engagement across states to address the pressing concerns of persons affected by leprosy.

“Karnataka Leprosy Field Assessment and Advocacy Visits”

To evaluate living conditions, healthcare access, and welfare gaps in leprosy colonies and advocate for sustainable improvements.

On 13th May 2025, The Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL) continues its active engagement across states to address the pressing concerns of persons affected by leprosy. In Karnataka, APAL's State Committee has been working closely with local communities to advocate for better living conditions, healthcare services, and social inclusion. As part of these ongoing efforts, Mr. Sriram, the State Coordinator for Karnataka, recently conducted field visits to several leprosy colonies in the northern region of the state, including Raichur Leprosy Colony, Yadagiri Leprosy Colony, and Bidar Leprosy Colony.

During these visits, Mr. Sriram engaged with residents and community leaders to understand their current living conditions and challenges. A key focus of the visit was to assess the status of house construction projects, which remain incomplete or delayed in many colonies, leaving families in vulnerable and unsafe housing. He also gathered detailed information regarding the availability and accessibility of healthcare services, noting gaps in treatment, rehabilitation, and the lack of consistent medical support for chronic conditions related to leprosy.

The visits further highlighted a range of other issues faced by residents, including lack of livelihood opportunities, poor sanitation infrastructure, and limited access to government welfare schemes. Mr. Sriram emphasized the urgent need for coordinated action involving local authorities, health departments, and welfare agencies to implement sustainable solutions. The APAL State Committee in Karnataka is now preparing a detailed report based on these findings to advocate for targeted interventions and policy support, aiming to improve the quality of life for persons affected by leprosy in these underserved colonies.



Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL), in collaboration with its Tamil Nadu state committee, visited the Schieffelin Institute of Health – Research and Leprosy Centre (SIHRLC) in Karigiri, Tamil Nadu

“Collaborative Visit to SIHRLC Karigiri for Leprosy Healthcare Dialogue”

To strengthen collaboration on leprosy prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation through discussions with healthcare experts at SIHRLC.

On May 14, 2025, the Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL), in collaboration with its Tamil Nadu state committee, visited the Schieffelin Institute of Health – Research and Leprosy Centre (SIHRLC) in Karigiri, Tamil Nadu. This visit was led by APAL President Maya Ranavare and Executive Member Govind Swamy. During their time at the center, they engaged in discussions with SIHRLC authorities and staff, focusing on leprosy-related healthcare services, preventive methods, and rehabilitation strategies.

Established in 1955, SIHRLC has been at the forefront of leprosy care, research, and training. The institute has significantly contributed to reducing leprosy prevalence in its service areas and has pioneered innovations such as tendon transfer surgeries for deformities and the development of Micro Cellular Rubber (MCR) footwear to prevent foot ulcers. Their comprehensive approach includes integrating leprosy services into general healthcare, conducting state-of-the-art research, and training healthcare personnel at various levels .



APAL's State Committee Visit to the Governor's House

”APAL Meghalaya State Committee Visit to Governor's House”

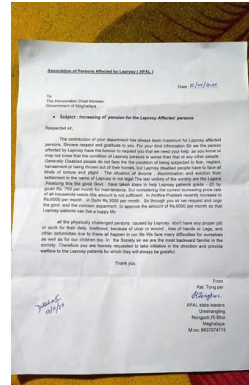
To advocate for increased pensions and improved welfare for persons affected by leprosy through direct engagement with state authorities.

APAL's State Committee Visit to the Governor's House – 15/05/2025

On the 15th of May 2025, members of the Association of Persons Affected by Leprosy (APAL) State Committee, Meghalaya, visited the Governor's House in Shillong with the intention of meeting the Honourable Governor of Meghalaya, Shri C. H. Vijayashankar. The purpose of the visit was to personally share the challenges and hardships faced by persons affected by leprosy in the state, and to request for support and intervention in improving their living conditions—particularly in the matter of increasing the monthly pension.

Although we were unable to meet the Governor due to not having a prior appointment, we were respectfully welcomed and directed to the office of the Joint Secretary within the same

premises. The Joint Secretary received us warmly and gave us the opportunity to introduce our association (APAL) and explain our mission. We spoke about the discrimination, social exclusion, and economic struggles that members of our community continue to endure. After listening to our concerns, the Joint Secretary advised us to submit a detailed written representation of our problems and needs. He assured us that our request would be forwarded to the appropriate authorities for necessary consideration and action. We were encouraged by his understanding and willingness to support our cause. The meeting concluded on a hopeful note, with a promise of follow-up and assistance to help improve the welfare and dignity of leprosy-affected persons in Meghalaya.



APAL, along with its Tamil Nadu State Committee, conducted a visit to Karnai Nagar Leprosy Colony in Karigiri, Tamil Nadu

APAL Tamil Nadu Visit to Karnai Nagar Leprosy Colony, To assess living conditions and advocate for disability pensions and sanitation facilities for leprosy-affected residents.

On 14th May 2025, APAL, along with its Tamil Nadu State Committee, conducted a visit to Karnai Nagar Leprosy Colony in Karigiri, Tamil Nadu. The visit was led by Ms. Maya Ranavare, President of APAL, accompanied by Mr. Govind Swamy, Executive Member, and Mr. Rajendran, the State Coordinator for Tamil Nadu.

During their interaction with the residents, the team assessed the current living conditions, including access to healthcare facilities, social entitlements such as pensions, and the overall infrastructure of the colony. One of the key concerns raised by the residents was the lack of disability pensions and the urgent need for toilets for the 46 houses, as well as sufficient common sanitation facilities. Taking serious note of these issues, APAL assured the community that they would work closely with relevant authorities to resolve the problems at the earliest, reaffirming their commitment to improving the quality of life for people affected by leprosy.



APAL Tamil Nadu State Committee Meeting at SIHRLC Karigiri

To deliberate on disability pensions, social entitlements, healthcare access, and infrastructure needs for persons affected by leprosy.

On 15th May 2025, The Association of People Affected by leprosy, APAL's President Maya Ranavare, successfully conducted a State Committee Meeting at the Schieffelin Institute of Health – Research and Leprosy Centre (SIHRLC) in Karigiri, Tamil Nadu. This important meeting brought together key representatives of the leprosy-affected community, along with health and social development professionals, to deliberate on critical issues faced by persons affected by leprosy and their families.

During the meeting, participants engaged in meaningful discussions centered around the urgent need to increase disability pensions and improve access to various social entitlements. The committee highlighted the financial hardship many individuals continue to face due to inadequate support and advocated for stronger policies that ensure economic security and dignity for those affected.

A significant part of the conversation also focused on the enhancement of healthcare and social protection services. The members emphasized that persons affected by leprosy must have access to continuous medical care, rehabilitation, and psychological support. In addition, the committee stressed the importance of developing youth leadership within the community to ensure a sustainable and empowered future generation.

Another key issue raised was the dire need for improved infrastructure in leprosy colonies. The participants called for better housing, sanitation, and community facilities to uplift the living conditions in these settlements. Through this State Committee Meeting, APAL reaffirmed its commitment to advocating for the rights, inclusion, and well-being of all persons affected by leprosy.



(APAL), along with the APAL State Committee members from Tamil Nadu, visited the Mother Leprosy Patient Welfare Society located in Karigiri, Tamil Nadu.

Visit to Mother Leprosy Patient Welfare Society, Karigiri

To assess living conditions and access to healthcare and social protection for leprosy-affected residents through direct community engagement

On 15th May 2025, Mrs. Maya Ranavare, the President of the Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL), along with the APAL State Committee members from Tamil Nadu, visited the Mother Leprosy Patient Welfare Society located in Karigiri, Tamil Nadu. The primary purpose of this visit was to closely observe the lives of people affected by leprosy residing in the colony, understand their daily struggles, and assess their access to essential healthcare and social protection services.

During the visit, the APAL team engaged in direct conversations with the residents of the colony. They discussed the current living conditions of the community members, their access to regular medical care, and the availability and reach of government and non-government social welfare schemes. The team carefully listened to the concerns raised by the residents and noted their pressing needs, especially in terms of healthcare infrastructure, financial support, and rehabilitation services. This interaction was part of APAL's ongoing commitment to ensuring the dignity, inclusion, and well-being of people affected by leprosy across the country.



The APAL State Committee in Bihar, in coordination with Mr. Ramavarai Sah, Joint Secretary of APAL, has undertaken a commendable initiative to support persons affected by leprosy who are facing mobility challenges due to disabilities caused by the disease

“Tricycle Distribution Program for Leprosy-Affected Persons in Raxaul, Bihar”

To enhance mobility and dignity of persons affected by leprosy through the distribution of 26 tricycles.

On 24th May 2025, The APAL State Committee in Bihar, in coordination with Mr. Ramavarai Sah, Joint Secretary of APAL, has undertaken a commendable initiative to support persons affected by leprosy who are facing mobility challenges due to disabilities caused by the disease. In a recent program held at the Government Block in Raxaul, Bihar, a total of 26 tricycles were distributed to individuals living with leprosy-related disabilities. This initiative marks a significant step in empowering affected persons with better mobility and dignity in their daily lives.

APAL expresses deep gratitude to the Government of Bihar for extending its invaluable support and services to persons affected by leprosy. The distribution of mobility aids like tricycles addresses one of the most pressing challenges this marginalised community faces—physical movement and access to basic services. APAL extends special thanks to its State

Committee in Bihar and to Mr. Ramavarai Sah for his rights-based approach and tireless efforts in advocating for the needs of the leprosy-affected community. His active contribution is a testament to APAL's ongoing commitment to inclusivity, empowerment, and social justice for persons affected by leprosy.



“Advocacy Interaction During NHRC Visit to Danapur Leprosy Colony”

“Advocacy Interaction During NHRC Visit to Danapur Leprosy Colony”

To raise critical issues of exclusion and housing rights faced by leprosy-affected persons and advocate for their inclusion in government schemes and programs.

On 26th May 2025, the State Committee of the Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL) in Bihar took a significant step in advocating for the rights of persons affected by leprosy. During a visit to the Danapur Leprosy Colony by a delegation from the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of India, which included representatives from NLR India, the District Leprosy Prevention Officer (DLO), and other concerned officials, APAL leaders actively brought critical issues to light. The visit marked a key opportunity for the APAL State Committee to raise the voices of the community and highlight the neglect faced by leprosy-affected individuals in Bihar.

During the interaction, senior colony members, Mr. Ramesh APAL's State Coordinator and Mr. Kamlesh, strongly conveyed their concerns to the NHRC team. One of the major issues raised was the exclusion of APAL leaders from government programs and activities coordinated by the District Leprosy Prevention Office. This lack of community participation contradicts the principles of rights-based approaches and meaningful inclusion, which are essential for the empowerment and dignity of persons affected by leprosy.

Another major concern presented to the Commission was the irregular and incomplete implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) in Bihar. Despite being eligible, many families residing in various leprosy colonies across the state have not received the benefits of the housing scheme. This deprivation has continued for years, leaving affected families in vulnerable living conditions without proper shelter. The APAL State Committee demanded immediate intervention from the authorities to ensure that the promises of central welfare schemes are fulfilled for all, without discrimination or delay.

Through this engagement with the NHRC, the APAL State Committee in Bihar has reaffirmed its commitment to protecting the rights and dignity of people affected by leprosy. The

Committee called for more inclusive governance and stronger accountability mechanisms, urging both state and central authorities to work closely with community leaders to address these long-standing issues.



Maya Ranavare
President APAL