

## **DR. CHRISTIAN MEMORIAL LEPROSY FOUNDATION**

### **A Report on Leprosy :**

Leprosy is a simple, but enigmatic disease. There are more factors misunderstood than comprehended and more issues unresolved than answered, case detection trend is definitely one of them. Ever since the introduction of MDT, a number of changes have occurred, more in the way, Leprosy control has been implemented, than in the understanding of the disease.

Unfortunately we are focused more on the way the programme behaves, rather than the way the disease behaves.

We are entering a new phase in Leprosy control, the prevalence rate in a few states is supposedly in 10,000. To all intents and purposes as per WHO / NLEP (National Leprosy Eradicating Programme) the disease is on its way out.

Government infrastructure for Leprosy control is being slowly disbanded and the focus is shifting (has shifted to a great extent) to the battle against AIDS.

Amidst this feeling of complacency among the powers that be, we have a duty to remain ever vigilant.

Having been in the line of Leprosy work for the past five decades, certain factors have been noticed by us, which would suggest that we still have to be wary.

- (i) We have been getting a steady stream of new multibacillary (or infectious cases) every month. So the threat of these cases infecting others is very much a major danger.
- (ii) Certain cases who have supposedly completed the MDT course with NLEP, but who are resistant to the drug / drugs, still continue to infect. So in theory, as per government records, that patient has been cured. But in reality this may not be the case.

- (iii) The rampant spread of AIDS has exposed Aids afflicted patients to the ever present risk of Tuberculosis and Leprosy.
- (iv) The fact that despite several awareness programmes, Leprosy afflicted persons delay in getting treated mainly due to these factors.
  - (a) Financial reasons
  - (b) Domestic circumstances
  - (c) The fact that despite has harbouring bacilli, the affected persons feels per perfectly fit for a long time, have delay seeking medical advice.
  - (d) Long incubation period of the bacilli delay the appearance of early signs.
- (v) In some cases, those patients who one allergic to anti Leprosy drugs (maybe only a single drug) discontinue MDT and shift to alternative treatment (like herbal remedies) which do not help but result in aggravating the disease.

These persons are liable to infect others. Health education at the grass root level is a vital part of Leprosy control. Pancy of funds and global economic crunch has also contributed to the stalemate.

We are now in the cusp of a threat beyond imagination due to HIV / AIDS rampant spread. Therefore Leprosy control has taken a back seat.

We therefore have to be ever vigilant in our fight against Leprosy and we need your continuing help in doing so.

**JAIPAL F. CHRISTIAN  
CHAIRMAN**

**DETAILS OF LEPROSY PATIENTS BEING TREATED (MONTHLY)**

	<b>MB</b>	<b>PB</b>	<b>MONOTHERAPY</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
MEN	120	70	184	374
WOMEN	102	56	144	302
CHILDREN	20	8	---	28
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>704</b>

**YEARLY – 8448**

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**SORT OF THE MONTH**

**KARUNAKAR – AGED 10 YEARS – R/O ZAHEERABAD**

This is the story of Karunakar aged 10 years a resident of Zaheerabad, a large town about 70 km away from our unit.

Karunakar contracted Leprosy when he was in class 4, the same year he lost his mother. The twin tragedies struck him a cruel blow.

His father remarried and his step mother ill treated him. The external manifestations of the disease also appeared around the same time. His classmates started teasing him, making his life miserable. His teachers told him to get treated, (suspecting Leprosy) or leave the school.

His father took the easy way out and pulled him out of school. He was sent away to his maternal grandparents place who were struggling to eke out a living. They brought him to our unit a few months back. Medical examinations revealed that Karunakar was suffering from lepromatous Leprosy. (an infectious type). We at VKB, immediately swing into action. He was administered Multi Drug Therapy (MDT) and after a couple months re-admitted into a school in his maternal grandparents village. Dr. CMLF helped his with educational expenses and school uniforms (partially)

Karunakar now on a steady dose of Anti Leprosy Drugs (and love and affection of his grandparents) improved steadily.

The outward manifestations of the disease like the reddish colour on his face, swollen ear lobes, and nodules have disappeared completely.

He is fast progressing towards normalcy. Karunakar says he wants to become a doctor. Who knows? This may be a dream come true in future thanks to the donors of DIK / OIK.

## **DR. CHRISTIAN MEMORIAL LEPROSY FOUNDATION**

### **GANGA BAI W/o. Late LAXMAN Aged 25 Years**

Ganga Bai a widow of 25 years resides in the large village of Basheerabad about 80 km away from our unit.

She lost her husband a few years after she got married. Unfortunately at that time she had a son a few months old. Little did she know that he contracted Leprosy a year back. Her in-laws blamed out of her for the death of her son, saying she was cured and a bearer of bad luck. As soon as the external signs of disease manifested themselves, Ganga Bai was thrown out of her husbands house.

A widow and a women suffering from the dreadful disease of Leprosy, financially helpless. She was shattered and contemplated suicide.

Her neighbour, who was a cured Leprosy patient (treated by us) took pity on her and brought her to our unit.

She came to us, in a pitiable state, barely able to walk. In the throes of a Lepra reaction. Initially very high doses of cortico steroids helped to control the reaction after which the standard Antileprosy Treatment (MDT) was started. Things began to improve dramatically. Her disease was controlled. She found out that she could actually support her self and her child. We at DR. CMLF also helped giving her child proteins and milk suppliments. We also gave her pair of two goats under our Self-sufficiency and Betterment Programme (SEBP).

She wants to re-marry in start a new life, and we at Dr. CMLF are supporting her in this mission.

Today Ganga Bai is in control of her life financially independent, a proud young mother who has escaped a fate worse then death.

Thanks to all you wonderful donors – another person has been given a fresh lease of life.

## **WORLD LEPROSY DAY**

World Leprosy was celebrated on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2010. An awareness programme followed by lunch was arranged and about 150 Leprosy patients attended this event.

### **The main issues discussed were :**

- (a) Attitude of fellow villagers and general public to leprosy patients.
- (b) The importance of early detection and regular treatment.
- (c) The importance of living in a hygienic environment.
- (d) Various betterment programmes that could be offered to the Leprosy patients (based on their disabilities)

The programme was a huge success and, these patients who attended, promised to their bit to spread awareness and report any suspected new cases in their respective villages to us.