

Odisha Govt. announces an exclusive department for the elderly



Mr. Mathew Cherian, CEO, HelpAge India, speaks on elder issues at the special workshop organized in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, on Dignity, Health & Security for Elders. This is part of HelpAge's ongoing efforts to bring attention to elder concerns.

As part of HelpAge India's constant lobbying with the Govt. of Odisha, a separate department for senior citizens was declared in the state. The Dept. of Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disability came to force on 1st July, 2015 with its main focus to deal with issues of elderly, transgenders and the Public Works Department (PWD) in Odisha. Prior to this, issues and grievances concerning these sectors was under the Dept. of Women and Child Development, Govt. of Odisha.

The allocation of an exclusive department, especially for the elderly, has been a long standing demand of HelpAge India and its partner Senior Citizens Associations, which has finally been realized. The new department is situated outside the secretariat for ease of access.

Toll Free Elder Helpline **1800-180-1253**

BOOK POST

If undelivered, Please return to:
HELPAge INDIA
C-14, Qutab Institutional Area
New Delhi- 110 016

Published & Printed by HelpAge India C-14, Qutab Institutional Area, New Delhi - 110016
Website: <http://www.helpageindia.org> Email: headoffice@helpageindia.org
Editor: Ms. Manjira Khurana
Associate Editors: Ms. Sonali Sharma & Ms. Pallavi Paul

Registered with Registrar of Newspapers for India Vide R.N.I. No. DELENG/2002/6655.
Price Rs. 12.50/- per issue. Annual subscription Rs. 50/-

COVER STORY: Tamil Nadu & Puducherry Flood Relief Work

HelpAge

NEWS



Vol. 14 No.3

October – December 2015

Battling the deluge with relief



Innumerable people were stranded inside their homes with no food, medical care, electricity or clean water supply. Many homes were submerged completely. Life in southern India had come to a virtual standstill. HelpAge India's disaster management team immediately got to work providing the following relief to the people of Tamil Nadu & Puducherry.

Tamil Nadu (TN)

- HelpAge rushed six of its Mobile Medicare Vans in 24 of the worst affected areas in Chennai, Kancheepuram & Tiruvallur districts providing urgent medical relief to victims.

- More than 7,600 medical treatments were meted out.

- 7,000 bottles of clean drinking water were distributed.

- Nearly 10,000 food items & 3,000 blankets were distributed.

Puducherry & Cuddalore (TN)

- 5,000 of those affected, received treatment through 25 medical camps held in 44 villages.

- 2,555 bottles of clean drinking water & 4,927 blankets were distributed.

- Nearly 12,000 families received dry ration and other essential items.

A heartfelt thank you to all those individuals, corporates, volunteers and our own team on ground, for helping those in need during such a time.



HelpAge India | Fighting isolation, poverty, neglect

EDITOR *Speaks*

Dear Reader,

Wishing you all a very happy and hopeful New Year! We begin this year with a sense of hope and anticipation after a tragic end to 2015.

December saw the Tamil Nadu floods, leaving many of our elders and their families bereft, stranded and helpless. Our team worked hard deploying HelpAge mobile healthcare units and providing the much needed rations and blankets. I would like to thank all those who came forward at such a trying time to help us in our relief measures.

HelpAge once again marked nationwide 'International Day of Older Persons' on October 1st. This year it campaigned hard with its 'Help Unite Generations' or HUG campaign, which aimed at focusing on the importance of love, care, respect and friendship between both the young and old. In the national capital, Shri Hamid Ansari, Hon'ble Vice President of India highlighted the increasing gap between generations.

A special conference titled 'From Jan Dhan to Jan Suraksha' was also held to bring together decision makers from the government, private sector, civil society and other institutions with an objective to discuss challenges related to India's demographic changes and the rapidly ageing population.

Last but not least, we acknowledge the tremendous strength and support corporates such as HSBC India, Tube Investments of India Limited, SBI Group, CAIRN India Limited, Asian Paints, SJVN Foundation and Sun Pharmaceuticals Industries Limited have given to the elder cause. Their unrelenting support to healthcare and long term sustainability projects will surely help bring much needed relief to our disadvantaged elderly.

Thank you for your generosity, without which, we could not have come this far.

Manjira Khurana
Country Head - Advocacy & Communications



HelpAge marks International Day of Older Persons nationwide

Marking 'International Day of Older Persons' (IDOP) this year, HelpAge India pushed forth the importance of inter-generational bonding through its HUG - 'Help Unite Generations' campaign. Emphasizing on the need for love, care, respect and friendship between both the young and old, it marked the day across the nation. In the national capital, Shri Hamid Ansari, Hon'ble Vice President of India, highlighted the increasing gap in inter-generational ties. Earlier in the day, an inter-generational walkathon was organized at Rajpath in the national capital, flagged off by Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot, Union Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment. Nearly 5,000 elders took part in the walkathon.



"The Indian society is undergoing rapid urbanization under the impact of industrialization and globalization. Traditional values and institutions are changing, resulting in weakening of inter-generational ties. Transition from rural agrarian setup to urban industrial way of life due to migration from villages to cities and abroad, forces the young generation to leave the elderly alone back home" - Shri Hamid Ansari.

Similarly across India, inter-generational walkathons, signature campaigns, street plays, inter-generational meets and various other events were organized, to bring home the fact that it is vital for both generations to bond and be support systems for each other.

SNAPSHOTS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY

MUMBAI - Maharashtra



Veteran Bollywood actor Tom Alter shares a light moment with an elderly lady at Nana - Nani Park during the Mumbai celebrations marking IDOP. HelpAge in association with Nana Nani School and others such as Ryan International School, St. Coloumba School, Robert Money School and Prabhu Seminary High School, organized the event to felicitate elders.

KOCHI - Kerala



A 70 plus senior resident of St. Joseph Home for the Aged, rejoices during the IDOP celebrations organized for the elder residents of the home in Kochi, Kerala. Various other events were also organized in Kerala to mark the day.

DEHRADUN - Uttarakhand



Dr. Amitav Saxena, Medical Superintendent, listens to an elderly woman's medical concerns at the health camp organized for elders in Phata village, Uttarakhand, by the HDFC Health & Diagnostic Centre team, marking IDOP.

CHENNAI - Tamil Nadu



Mr. J.P Ambrose, Assistant Vice President, Human Resource, Southern Region, Balmer Lawrie & Co. Ltd, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, chief guest of the event, initiates the HUG campaign by greeting an elderly woman with a warm hug.

On the occasion of IDOP, Shri Hamid Ansari, Vice President of India honored the following with the Annual HelpAge Awards in the capital, for their exemplary service to society & the cause of the aged.

- The PL Roy Award to CAIRN India Limited - for Outstanding Continuing Contribution towards Corporate Social Responsibility towards elders and their community.
- The Gold Plate Award to Asian Paints Ltd. - for the corporate which made the highest contribution towards the cause of the elderly.
- Subsequently, followed by The Silver Plate Award to SJVN Foundation.
- The Bronze Plate Award to Sun Pharmaceuticals Industries Limited.
- The Samson Daniel Trophy to Ryan International Group of Institutions - for the school/educational institution which made the highest contribution and sensitized its students towards the cause of the elderly.
- Plaque of Recognition to The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, India - for the bank's generous support towards HelpAge India's Livelihood and Healthcare initiatives.
- The Golden Award to Mr. Somnath Chatterjee - for being an exceptional Indian citizen over the age of 80 years, who has been successful, both, during his pre & post retirement period, and has made a notable contribution to the welfare of society in advancing years.

PURULIA - West Bengal



Members of over 400 Elder-Self-Help-Groups from 7 different villages in the Purulia District of West Bengal march together, marking IDOP. Young members of the Women's-Self-Help-Group cluster 'Deepshikha' were also present on the occasion, displaying an example of inter-generational bonding with the elders of the region.

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The IDOP inter-generational walkathon is flagged off by Mr. Dilip Parulekar, Minister for Tourism and Women & Child Development, Goa. He is cheered on by a group of enthusiastic senior citizens and students.

Conference on old age security



Mr. Helmut Hauschild, Director, Indo-German Social Security Program, GIZ India addresses the gathering during a conference on Old Age Security in India. Seated at the dais are (from left): Mr. Wolfgang Koester, Deputy Head, Department of Economic Cooperation, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mr. Arun Maira, designated Chairman, HelpAge International and Former Member, Planning Commission of India and Mr. Mathew Cherian, CEO, HelpAge India.

HelpAge India and GIZ organized a National Level Conference on Old Age Security in India, titled 'From Jan Dhan to Jan Suraksha', on October 2015, in order to bring together decision makers from the government, private sector, civil society and other institutions with the specific objective to discuss challenges related to demographic changes and the ageing population. Ideas were exchanged and solutions were discussed – from social to contributory pensions and self-help approaches to comprehensive social security systems for today's elderly and the elderly to-be. Civil society institutions and the private sector are working within their means, by promoting adequate insurance products or by helping informally employed elderly persons. One such initiative includes the creation and support of Elderly-Self-Help-Groups (ESHG) on which HelpAge India and GIZ's Indo-German Social Security Program (IGSSP) has been working together since 2012.

Key points discussed:

- Around 90% of India's elderly have no access to social pensions.
- About 75% of working elderly are classified as main workers by the census, or those who are engaged in any economically productive activity and contribute 180 days or more (6 months) to their occupation.
- Nearly 87% of all senior citizens can be classified as poor.
- The elderly have enough wisdom and experience and this needs to be utilised.
- In the case of women, the work of elderly is not monetised by the economists of today.
- Universal pensions are possible and more tangible than large scale anti-poverty programs.
- It is important to organise elderly through institutions under both, the National Rural Livelihoods Mission and the Urban Livelihoods Mission, to provide them access to affordable credit and alternative livelihoods.
- We need to start quickly and prepare the elderly-to-be for old age.
- Arun Kumar, Addnl. Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, stated that the Ministry is working to reduce the time for transfer of pensions and bring in SMS linked alerts for the elderly receiving pensions, but since it is the Ministry of Rural Development that controls pensions, coordination is of utmost importance.

Student Action for Value Education (SAVE)

School children often share the deepest of bonds with their grandparents. It is this very bond that makes them come forward and support elders that are left bereft of family as well as basic needs. We thank each and every one of these little souls, and the schools that have become an integral part of our SAVE program for their sensitivity and generosity.



HelpAge India's Odisha office conducts a health checkup for over 3,000 students of DAV-Unit 8, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, under its SAVE program. This school raised Rs.1.45 lakh for the elder cause in the year 2014.



Swami Sharad (left), Chairman, Shivedale School, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, hands over a cheque of Rs. 2.33 lakh to Dr. Aapga Singh (right), former State Head, Uttarakhand, HelpAge India. This amount had been collected by students of the school. Also seen is Ms. Kiran Sharma (centre), Principal, Shivedale School, Haridwar.



Junior school students of Army Public School, Unchhi Bassi, Punjab, happily display a draft cheque of Rs. 2 lakh collected by the school for the cause of the elderly. Looking on are Col. Pramod R Ambasana SM (centre), Chairperson, Army Public School, along with Mr. Mohan Singh (right), Principal of the school, Ms. Neeru Sharma, Senior Executive (SAVE), North Jammu, HelpAge India and other staff members.



School children of Open Minds - A Birla School, Danapur, Patna, Bihar, interact with elder dementia patients during their visit to HelpAge's Agecare Centre in Patna as part of the school's community service. Besides spending time with the elders, the students also learnt how the Agecare Centre works and the functions of its various services such as physiotherapy, helpline and others are run. The students of the school also raised Rs. 94,770 for the elder cause.

Fun, frolic & festivities in Kolkata's Kalyan Ashram bringing two generations together

A young student of Mother's International School Salt Lake, Kolkata, West Bengal, ties a 'Rakhi', a band which signifies the promise to care and protect, on the wrist of an elderly resident of Kalyan Ashram in Chetla, Kolkata, West Bengal, an old age home supported by HelpAge India. Students between Class I to V visited the home and spent time with the residents, distributed sweets and tied Rakhi's on the grannies, forming an instant bond with them.



Students of Class X & XII of Sri Sri Academy Kolkata teach elder residents of Kalyan Ashram Kolkata, WB, how to make origami. 8 students along with their teachers visited the home every Monday for 8 weeks consecutively, interacting and sharing fun and memorable moments with the elders of the home.

A D V O C A C Y

Imparting knowledge & empowering elders

HelpAge conducted a community awareness drive in Daddu Majra, one of the biggest slums in Chandigarh, Punjab, where a majority of the population is under Below Poverty Line (BPL) category. The main focus of the drive was to generate awareness among the elderly about HelpAge India's programs and impart information on the 'Parents Maintenance Act' and 'Wills'. In West Bengal, HelpAge organized a Sensitization and Awareness campaign on 'Rights and Entitlements' at Salar town in Murshidabad District.



Mr. Ashok Patiyal, Advocacy Officer, Chandigarh, Punjab, explains the nuances of the 'Parents Maintenance Act' and imparts 'Will Information' during the HelpAge organized Community Awareness Drive in Daddu Majra, Chandigarh, Punjab, reaching out to more than 1,500 people in the community.

Senior citizens, mostly older women, raise their hands to say they do not receive any pension, when asked by Ms. Anuradha Sen, Joint Director, Advocacy, (East) HelpAge India, during the HelpAge Sensitization and Awareness



campaign on 'Rights and Entitlements' at Salar town in Murshidabad District, West Bengal. Also present were the village Gram Panchayat representatives and Mr. Alok Sen, Jt Convenor, Pension Parishad, who emphasized the need to form Elder-Self-Help-Groups to demand for the Rights and Entitlements of elders and help each other in socio-economic and health areas. Anuradha also emphasized the immediate need to form groups to demand their rights for pension and food security in particular.

A nest under the bridge

"This is my Nest" says 75 year old Smt. Kamala Koley, who has been living under the Kona Expressway bridge for the last 2 to 3 years. Her home is marked by a make-shift boundary wall on three sides, that she made using bricks and plastic bags, to protect herself and her fistful of belongings. Widowed 15 years ago, her husband Sudarshan Koley used to work as a daily wage laborer and they lived in a rented house. With their small earnings she educated her daughter and got her married. But her daughter who works as a maid, is going through financial hardships and is unable to look after her. Due to old age and sickness Kamala is incapable of working and depends on passers-by and people living within close proximity. A good Samaritan, young Soumya Bhattacharya who resides near the expressway, spotted Kamala one day and immediately came to her aid by calling the HelpAge Elder Helpline. Helpline counsellor Ms. Swarnali Misra visited the spot, arranging for instant medical attention and contributing the much needed clothing for Kamala. She then informed and requested the ward counsellor Mr. Santanu Banerjee to provide her with a BPL card and old age pension to enable her to live a life of independence.



Dr. Ujjwal Mukherjee, Kolkata MMU, conducts a medical check-up of Smt. Kamala Koley to assess her medical condition.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Corporates today are becoming increasingly conscious of their role in social responsibility. HelpAge India is fortunate to be associated with some of those that have come forward in support of the elder cause. Growing focus is being given to healthcare and long term sustainability projects, with such support HelpAge hopes to bring much needed relief to more and more disadvantaged elders.

HSBC India supports healthcare & livelihood for elders



Mr. Stuart P. Milne, Group General Manager and CEO, HSBC India, flags off the Mobile Medical Unit donated by HSBC India towards HelpAge India's Livelihood and Healthcare initiative in New Delhi, titled 'Project GAMAN' - a 3 year project for needy elders, which will emphasize on eradicating poverty, promoting healthcare, livelihood enhancement and reducing social and economic inequalities. Looking on are: (from right) Mr. Amal Ganguli, Chairman and Mr. Mathew Cherian, CEO from HelpAge India, Ms. Aloka Majumdar, Head of Group Corporate Sustainability, HSBC India, along with HelpAge India team members.

HelpAge launches its 100th MMU



HelpAge launches its 100th Mobile Medical Unit in Avadi, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, supported by Tube Investments of India Chennai (Murgappa Group). In the picture: Shri Kalyan Kumar Paul, President, Tube Products of India flags off the MMU. Also present are Mr. Natarajan, Executive Vice President & Head R&D, Tube investments of India, Mr. Selvakumar, Sr. Asst. Vice President, Tube Products of India and Mr. Edwin, Joint Director, Programs, Tamil Nadu, HelpAge India, along with other staff members from the company and HelpAge India.

A bankable contribution by SBI



Ms. Arundhati Bhattacharya, Chairperson SBI Group, hands over the key of MMU Varanasi donated by SBI Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, to Mr. P.P. Singh, Deputy Director, Programs, Uttar Pradesh, HelpAge India, at the SBI campus in Varanasi. Looking on are staff members of SBI and HelpAge India. It has been a long association with the SBI Group, which in the past has generously donated for this healthcare service for the elderly. An Indian banker, Ms. Bhattacharya is the first woman to be Chairperson of the SBI Group, and was listed as the 36th most powerful woman in the world by Forbes.

Floods create havoc in Rajasthan, CAIRN India comes to the rescue



Heavy rains caused flooding in Rajasthan's Jalore District in August. HelpAge responded immediately by rushing its Mobile Medical Units to Sanchoe and Bhinmal blocks of the district. These Units supported by CAIRN India treated more than 4,200 patients during the relief operation.

A MMU in operation during the HelpAge flood relief work in Jalore district, Rajasthan.



Fighting isolation, poverty, neglect

NL/DEC/15

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REFERENCES

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