

Rotary



lepra

We will beat leprosy together

# LEPROSY VIEW

A collaborative newsletter brought to you by Lepra and the Rotary Clubs of Delhi South, New Delhi, Delhi Southend, Regency Next and Stratford UK.

## United for Dignity

**W**orld Leprosy Day is an internationally recognised day observed on the last Sunday

in January. The day was chosen by French humanitarian Raoul Follereau in 1953 to coincide with the anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's death in 1948. Gandhi worked tirelessly to help people affected by leprosy.

74 years later, on **World Leprosy Day 2022**, Lepra, and our friends and partners across the world, joined together to be United for Dignity. People affected by leprosy may experience extreme

discrimination, facing over **100 prejudicial laws** worldwide. Laws that may force them from their jobs, families and communities, leading to emotional distress and isolation.



To find out more about our work this World Leprosy Day, [watch our video](#) or leave a message of support on our [online message board](#). Your messages will be used to develop an artwork which will be displayed in referral centres across India and Bangladesh.

You can also listen to **Jimmy Innes**, Lepra CEO, and **Victoria Hislop**, best selling author and Lepra Ambassador, on our radio broadcast [podcast](#).



## Meet Jimmy

Lepra has appointed **Jimmy Innes** as its new CEO, effective 4 January 2022.

**J**immy joined us from ADD International, working for disability rights and inclusion in Africa and Asia.

In joining Lepra, Jimmy said,

“I am thrilled to take the helm of this deeply respected organisation as we near Lepra's centenary year in 2024. Lepra wears

its values proudly on its sleeve in everything it does – placing paramount importance on the interests of people affected by leprosy, and working for the benefit of the most neglected and most marginalised.

I am very much looking forward to leading and living Lepra's value-driven approach in my new role, working alongside my colleagues in the UK, India and Bangladesh who do extraordinary work, every day, in support of our vision of a world free from prejudice and disability due to leprosy”.

# In the Media

Spreading the message of the Leprosy Control Project is a key component of our work. Here we highlight recent media coverage.



[The Quint, You Tube](#)



[Dainik Jagran, You Tube](#)



[India Express, World Leprosy Day 2022: How stigma and Covid-19 continue to hamper disease control interventions](#)



[The Free Press Journal: World Leprosy Day: Heart-wrenching narratives of those living with the disease](#)

## Leprosy Control Project lauded by

# Shri Om Birla

In a letter to the Rotary Club of Delhi South (RCDS), **Shri Om Birla**, Honourable Speaker of Lok Sabha, India said:

“I laud the work being done by the Rotary Club of Delhi South and its partners in creating awareness about leprosy. It is important that people know that leprosy is curable. Only with this knowledge will the ostracisation of patients end, allowing them to live a life of dignity and security. The work being done by Rotary and its partners in knowledge dissemination is vital and is aligned with the Government’s mission of eliminating leprosy from India by 2030. I am sure that going forward, this program will continue to grow and positively impact leprosy patients, their families and the larger community.”



In response **Mr Pradeep Bahri**, CEO Rotary Club Alliance for Leprosy Control said, “In the past, Rotary has been a key driving force for polio elimination across the world. Rotary’s global network, infrastructure and learnings from polio can

be utilised for leprosy control and elimination. We have realised that there is a lot of misinformation regarding leprosy, particularly with respect to its perceived incurability, which results in the

exclusion of patients from organised society, making their plight even more deplorable. It is of immense importance that the right information reaches the public. To develop this understanding among the changemakers of tomorrow, create awareness among them from an early age and prevent prejudice. Rotary will also organise essay writing and painting competitions for college and school students. We are looking forward to the active and large-scale participation of India’s youth in the same.”

The news of the commendation was covered by **APN News, The Statesmen, India CSR, and Devidsource** ensuring the message and work of the Leprosy Control Project was shared far and wide.

**Together with the RCDS, we are delighted to have the work of the Leprosy Control Project commended and continue to advance our joint goals over the next ten years.**

# Global Grants Update

In the last issue of Leprosy View, we reported that Rotary International had approved Global Grant funding to support two additional training programmes which address the skills gap in leprosy healthcare in India.

We are pleased to announce that funding has now been released and the projects will commence at the end of February 2022. Both projects are supported by the



Rotary Clubs of Jubilee Hills, India and Stratford, UK, and will enable Lepra to train up a new cohort of specialist leprosy healthcare workers.

The two 12-month projects will see 30 new specialist leprosy technicians – 15 shoe technicians and 15 ulcer dressers – and 30 new physiotherapy care assistants, all of whom will be women with either lived experience of leprosy themselves, or with a family member who has been affected by it.

## The Leprosy Control Project Rotary Delhi

The aim of the **Leprosy Control Project** is to promote disease prevention and treatment programmes, whilst providing healthcare and rehabilitation for physical disabilities caused by leprosy. Our latest update also highlights the work being carried out to strengthen regional health care provision.

### From July to November 2021:

Despite disruption from the pandemic, two major training programmes have been instigated reaching:

**60** auxiliary nurse midwives and **9** ulcer dressers have been trained on how to identify and diagnose early leprosy cases and the necessary skills to conduct active case finding.



**52** government medical officers have received training on the management of leprosy cases.



### Why leprosy?

- Over **3 million** people living with undiagnosed leprosy.
- Over **4 million** people are living with a life-changing disability as a result of leprosy
- Every year over **120,000** Indian men, women and children are diagnosed with leprosy, with over **60%** of global leprosy cases in India.

### During December 2021:

**31** camps have been held on patient self-care which includes counselling and physiotherapy.



**T**he International Leprosy Congress (ILC) brings together key stakeholders in the field of leprosy. At the last ILC held in Manila Philippines in 2019 the baton was handed over to India to hold the next congress in **Hyderabad**.

In view of the prevailing COVID-19 situation the congress will be held as a **hybrid congress** in November with about 500-1000 physical delegates and unlimited possibilities for e-delegates. There will be an opportunity for more than 100 hours of scientific deliberations. The theme for 2022 is **'Better Knowledge, Early Diagnosis and Improved Care'**, well aligned

with Lepra's aims and ethos. At the same time the ILC takes place, Lepra will be also celebrating the 25th anniversary of the **Blue Peter Public Health and Research Centre** (BPHRC), located in Hyderabad.

In 1996/97, over £2.8 million was raised by school children in the UK, the equivalent to **£5.4 million** today. With that money, the BPHRC was built, with a **state-of-the-art** facility to undertake applied bio-medical research in the disciplines of clinical, immunology and molecular biology aspects of leprosy. The BPHRC works closely with clinics and outreach programmes across multiple regions in India endemic to leprosy and LF.

## The 21st International Leprosy Congress

### Did You know?

Lepra publishes **Leprosy Review**, an open-access peer-reviewed journal? The journal covers all aspects of leprosy including research on the medical, physical and social aspects, with information relevant to leprosy control. The journal is free to access via the [website](#).

### LeprosyReview

Established in 1928



### STAY UP TO DATE!

Stay up to date on our project work by signing up to our regular emails.

Email [Rotary@Lepra.org.uk](mailto:Rotary@Lepra.org.uk) with your full name and email address, and we will add you to our distribution list.

### Rotary Action Group for Leprosy

Would you like to be involved in the new Rotary Action Group for Leprosy? We are looking for members to help us to drive this partnership forward and ensure that fighting this neglected tropical disease becomes a global priority. For more information, or to join RAGL, please email [AbiW@lepra.org.uk](mailto:AbiW@lepra.org.uk).

### Find out more with Lepra News

To find out more about Lepra's work, take a look at our quarterly newsletter! Click here: [www.lepra.org.uk/news/article/lepra-news-spring-2022](http://www.lepra.org.uk/news/article/lepra-news-spring-2022)

