

HelpAge

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Editor Speaks

Dear Readers,

A baseline survey carried out through partner organisations of HelpAge in some of India's poorest districts revealed some startling facts. One of them is that 84 % of the elderly are not even aware of their rights, let alone able to access them.

A few years ago, our study in Uttar Pradesh had discovered that the elderly have to go through inordinate delays to access their pensions, sometimes even having to pay bribes at several levels to get what is their due. Often, this leaves them with very meagre amounts, not enough to cover even their basic needs.

HelpAge India is engaged in taking all these pertinent issues to relevant authorities, so that the aged are able to get what is rightfully theirs. By being part of various forums, including the National Council of Older Persons and committees deliberating Five-Year plans, we try and influence policy so that the elderly are included.

We welcome suggestions and inputs from all of you to make our work more meaningful and effective. If there is something you feel strongly about, write to us and tell us.



Nidhi Raj Kapoor

HelpAge drive helps BPL elders access ration cards, pensions

Somti Bai lives in Village Guara in Madhya Pradesh. She can neither see nor hear and was completely dependent on her daughter and son-in-law, both casual labourers.

Somti Bai was entitled to old age pension which she had applied for last year, but since, had no word on the status. After 4 months of wait, she had nearly given up.

Guara is among the most neglected villages where HelpAge is running a rights-entitlement drive under its Poorest Areas Civil Society (PACS) programme.

This programme is aimed at making elders aware of their right, and helping them access their due by bringing their issues to the forefront.

Each of the villages is looked after by a Vridha Mitra or Friend of the Elderly, who interacts with them and learns of their concerns.

The Vridh Mitra in Guara is Uday Pratap Singh. When he learnt of Somti Bai's woes, he rushed to the Panchayat Secretary with a group of elders, and appealed for help.



Somti Bai

He discovered that though Somti Bai's case had been approved, it was pending along with nine others because they did not have bank accounts.

The discussion with the Secretary also revealed that cases concerning the elderly had been less prioritized.

After meetings at various levels, the Vridh Mitra was successful in getting all the pensions released. It was decided that the amount would be delivered in cash. Somti Bai received the first installment recently.

Giving voice to concerns of the aged

This is how the PACS programme has been steadily helping BPL elders in 10 of the poorest districts in MP, UP & Jharkhand.

Recently, State Level Advocacy Workshops were organized in Lucknow, Bhopal, & Ranchi.

These workshops were attended by older people's representatives of partner Civil Society Organizations, members of *Vridh Sanghs*, *Virdh Mitras*, project coordinators, Government, media, local voluntary organizations, Sarpanch and prominent people from the states local administration.

The purpose of these workshops was:

- Ground level experiences were shared with the state machinery and charter of demands submitted on behalf of the elders.
- Dialogues initiated with local, district and state government on issues which came to the fore during baseline surveys.

In Ranchi the elderly urged the State Government to arrange for a 'single window clearance system' in offices that deal with benefits for the old.



Chief Guest Mr. D. C. Lakha (right), Principal Secretary, Department of Social Welfare, UP, launches the poster developed by HelpAge India's Uttar Pradesh PACS team along with Dr. H.S. Bakshi, Regional Director (North) and Mr. A.K. Singh (left), Joint Director (North), HelpAge, in Lucknow. A Brochure of the Project in UP was also released.

Reaching flood-hit Maharashtra, Gujarat



HelpAge team at work in flood affected Sangli.

The states of Gujarat & Maharashtra reeled under severe floods, which brought disease and destruction in their wake. HelpAge India's

Mobile Medicare Unit teams reached the interiors despite most of the areas being difficult to access due to water logging.

The medical vans were deputed from Ahmedabad & Pune to the most affected areas near Sangli & Miraj City. Free medical check-ups were done by specialist doctors & free medicines were distributed. Within 3 days, 8 camps were organized and 1420 flood-affected villagers were treated.

In Surat, within 7 days, 11 villages & 5 slums were covered and 4372 persons treated, in co-ordination with Sanjivni Hospital, Chalthan.

Elders being trained to earn their living

Our team of dedicated workers have been working very hard trying to help the elderly people of Kashmir regain some balance back in their lives post the relief phase. Here is an insight into some of our latest work;

- 6 medical camps were organized in the most interior of villages and medical treatment was provided to the elderly. More than a 1000 people benefited from such a camp.
- Training is underway for beneficiaries on Dairy Development, horse rearing, poultry farming. Over 125 people attended the training programme, comprising of elderly, widows and destitute people from Navarunda village, Uri Tahsil.
- A micro Hydel Project is also being planned in Navarunda.

- One year of the quake was marked through a small function at Bela Camp, Uri Tahsil. Some of the elderly were given solar lights to make life simpler for them during darker times.



Mr. Taj Mohi-ud-din (centre), Minister for Food (J&K Govt.) along with Mr. Farooq Rinzu (left), Director of Information, Mr. S. Ishrat (right) from Global Green Peace & Mr. P. Rajan (second from right) HelpAge, at the Kashmir CMS Vataran Film festival/photo exhibition of which HelpAge was a part. We thank young director Ms. Suparna Chadda who highlighted some of HelpAge's work in her film on J&K, which was also screened at the festival. She has been a consistent supporter of the cause and has been urging people to come forward and help.

Focus on community in Tsunami aid effort

Two years post the Tsunami, the rehabilitation project for elderly Tsunami victims is in full swing, working with the motto, "By the Community, With the Community and For the Community". HelpAge continues to push forward economic independence & social security for vulnerable older people.

Almost 7,807 older people have been assisted with livelihood activities. Nearly 376 Elders Self Help Groups, 37 Village Level Federations & a District Level Federation are already in place empowering older people to organize themselves and access their rights & independence.

HelpAge has supported 1376 older people who are destitute and had lost their support system in the form of care givers & children, covering them under its Adopt-A-Gran programme.

HelpAge's three Mobile Medicare Units (MMUs) are going into remote project areas making health care accessible for the elderly Tsunami victims in 67 villages of Tamil Nadu & Kerala.

In year 2, the multi-speciality camps have benefited 2,204 older people. Older people get free access to varied medical services on diseases such as, dermatology, orthopedics, dentistry,

Bhagidari with the Delhi Government



Dr. G. Narendra Kumar (IAS), Director, Department of Social Welfare, Govt. of NCT, Delhi, signs an MOU with HelpAge for running a recreation centre for the elderly at a Government-supported old age home in Delhi. Looking on are Dr. H.S. Bakshi, Regional Director (North), HelpAge, and Ms. Rashmi Singh, Joint Director, Department of Social Welfare, Govt. of NCT, Delhi.

Helping the mind heal

HelpAge is supporting the Palluruthy Settlement Home in Cochin, established by the People's Council for Social Justice. Hundred aged residents of the home will not only receive healthcare and nursing but also occupational therapy through activities like candle and envelope making along with individual and group counseling. This programme is aimed at primarily helping those elderly who suffer from psychiatric diseases.

Restoring sight



A patient gets screened for cataract, at a camp organized by MMU Chennai.

general health problems, psychology and ENT all under one roof.

Cataract is being addressed through special camps in association with leading hospitals. 500 IOL surgeries have been conducted. 5,824 older people have been assisted in empowering them to secure their rights and entitlements.

Attempts have been made to sensitize Government, INGOs, NGOs, corporates and institutions, on the vulnerability of older people and to submit recommendations to the Government.

Students campaign in support of elders

School children and teachers across the country have been keen supporters of HelpAge, participating actively in raising awareness for the cause of the elderly and sensitizing the community to lend a hand. Support comes in all shapes and sizes. One of the most significant achievers this year is Master Junaid Farooq of Burn Hall School, Srinagar, who raised Rs. 8,175 for a programme to help destitute elders. HelpAge applauds this remarkable initiative and thanks his teachers and parents for guiding him on this worthy path.



A meet was organized in Jamshedpur for sensitizing school principals from 16 schools towards the cause. A student of Jamshedpur Public School lights the inaugural lamp. Looking are Mrs. Susmita Ghose (left), Regional Director (East), Kapil Kaul (second from left), Country Head - Resource Mobilization, HelpAge and Mr. Nitin Kulkarni, DC - Jamshedpur. HelpAge beneficiaries also received ration during the meet.



School captains (left) of Burn Hall School, Srinagar, present a cheque worth Rs.1.76 Lakh to Mrs. Sunita Santoshi (right), State Manager (J&K), HelpAge. Looking on are Mrs. Dilrubba, Co-ordinator and Father Maria John, Principal.



Mr. T.S. Krishnamurthy (third from right), Member, Governing Body, HelpAge, hands over a prize and certificate to a student of Maharishi Vidya Mandir, Chetpet, Chennai who contributed his bit in raising Rs. 3 Lakh for the cause. Looking on are Mrs. Indrani Rajadurai (left), Regional Director (South), HelpAge, Mr. Namachivayam (second from right), Principal, Maharishi Vidya Mandir and Mr. Anbazhagan, Deputy Director - Resource Mobilization, HelpAge.

Students & teachers of M P Birla Foundation Hr. Sec. School, Kolkata, the winners of the HelpAge India National Level Quiz competition for 2005 - 06 which took place in Chennai recently, hold their trophy with pride. Looking on is Mrs. Indrani Rajadurai (left), Regional Director (South), HelpAge. The second and third place went to TVS Lakshmi Matriculation H. Sec. School, Madurai, Tamil Nadu and Ryan International School Malad, Mumbai respectively.



Seniors make a run for it at the 26th Delhi State Veteran Athletic Championships 2006.

Thank you

SCHOOLS

- Alvernia Matric. Hr. Sec. School, Coimbatore
- Maharishi Vidya Mandir, Chennai
- Madras Christian College Matriculation & Hr. Sec. School, Chennai
- Kendriya Vidyalaya Schools of Southern Region
- Vidyodaya Group of Schools, Chennai
- Le-Chatelier Mat. Hr. Sec. School, Madurai
- Lecole Chempaka School, Trivandrum
- Jyothi Nilayam Hr. Sec. School, Trivandrum
- Nirmala Hr. Sec. School, Aluva, Ernakulam
- CSI School, Trivandrum
- Alanfeld Man Public School, Trivandrum
- Montessori School, Guivada
- Krishnaveni Talent School, Hyderabad
- Hyderabad Public School, Ramanthapur, Hyderabad
- Goutham Model Group of School, A.P.
- Bashyam Public School, A.P.
- The Girls Hr. Sec. School, Sri Rangan, Tiruchirapalli
- K.A.P. Viswanathan Hr. Sec. School, Trichy
- Seshasayee Paper Board Group of Schools, Erode.
- Bombay Scottish High School
- Kendra Vidyalaya No.1
- KV -Bhandup
- St.Anne's School, Malad
- Villa Theresa School
- St.Xaviers and Ryan International Group of Schools
- DPS, Nerul
- DPS, Ahmedabad
- Seventh Day Adventist School, Surat
- Bhavans High School, Nagpur
- Delhi Public School, New Town, Kolkata
- Lakshmipat Singhania Academy, Kolkata
- Kendriya Vidyalaya, Ballygunge Camp, Kolkata
- Little Angels School, Kolkata (Montessori)
- La Martiniere for Boys and Girls, Kolkata
- MP Birla Foundation HS School, Kolkata
- Little Flower School, Guwahati
- South Point School, Guwahati
- DeNobili School, Sijua, Dhanbad
- Delhi Public School, Dhanbad
- DeNobili School, Maithon
- St. Marys School, Jamshedpur
- Infant Jesus, Patna
- St. Josephs Convent, Patna
- Kendriya Vidyalaya, Patna
- St. Josephs, Chandernagore
- Kendriya Vidyalaya, Barrackpore (Airforce)
- St. Thomas, Gangtok
- Hind Motor HM Education, West Bengal
- Don Bosco, Guwahati

CORPORATES & OTHER SUPPORTERS

- Dr. Reddy's Lab, Hyderabad
- TCIL, Chennai
- CIPLA
- Intas Pharma. Ahmedabad
- Unichem, Mumbai
- ONGC, Surat & Baroda
- Mineral Foundation of Goa, Goa
- DSP Merrill Lynch, Mumbai
- HDFC, Mumbai
- WNS Global services, Mumbai
- State Bank Of India, Mumbai
- Union Bank of India, Mumbai
- TIL Welfare Trust, Kolkata
- ITC Ladies Social and Welfare Society, Kolkata
- Hira Group, Raipur
- Orissa Cement Limited

Cultural Night in Chandigarh

A cultural night in memory of Late Surinder Kaur, the legendry Punjabi singer was organized by WWICS (Worldwide Immigration Consultancy Services Limited) & Dainik Bhaskar in Chandigarh in association with business houses in the campus of WWICS. Well known Punjabi singer Dolly Gularia & daughter of Surinder Kaur captivated the hearts by her voice.

Dr H.S Bakshi, Regional Director (North), HelpAge was presented with cheques from WWICS and other businessmen as donation towards the cause worth about Rs. 2.6 Lakh.

Par for the cause HelpAge golf attracts corporate leaders



Former Cricketer Ajay Jadeja (centre) takes stock of the golf course along with entrepreneur Mr. Sanjay Hans (left), and banker Mr. Ashok Sahni (right) at the HelpAge Invitational Golf Tournament organised at the Delhi Golf Club. The city's prominent citizens "putt" their best foot forward for the cause of the elderly. The tournament was followed by an award ceremony hosted by the High Commissioner of Britain to India, Sir Michael Arthur.



Late Ms. Satyawati, died at the age of 82, an ordinary woman who made an extraordinary gesture which surpassed her lifetime. The widow of Late Padam Narain who was an Under Secretary in the Govt. of India and had passed away many years earlier.

She assigned to HelpAge a Fixed Deposit of Rs. 50,000/- in 1997 out of her ordinary savings. She dedicated the donation to the memory of her late husband and her late son and desired that the interest on the FDR should preferably be used for cataract surgery for the disadvantaged elderly.

She donated the interest on the FDR in her lifetime & proceeds of the Fixed Deposit after her death went to

HelpAge India due to her nominating us, as well as writing a Will. So convinced was she to ensure that the money came to us without hindrance, that she put her relatives also to the task of ensuring that after her death they informed HelpAge quickly about her Will & her death and facilitate the transfer. HelpAge has availed the interest for the past 10 years and the

Fixed Deposit got transferred to HelpAge in a record 7 months of her death.

While there is always some sacrifice in giving - one need not be super rich to support a cause, monetarily or otherwise. It does not take a fortune to bring a smile on a human face, and that is where the joy in giving lies.

– Asha Saxena

Sr. Manager (Legal), HelpAge

A tribute to a selfless spirit

Acknowledgements



Mr. Mathew Cherian, Chief Executive, HelpAge (right) shakes hands with Mr. Subbajetty of Bangalore who donated Rs. 25 Lakh to HelpAge India. The interest earned is to be utilized for various programmes for the elderly.

- The Punjab Government (Chief Minister's Fund) donated Rs. 10 Lakh to Dr. H.S. Bakshi, Regional Director (North) HelpAge, towards the cause.
- In memory of his wife, on her death anniversary each year Mr. M. L. Sikka donates Rs. 25,000 to restore the sight of 25 elders.
- Dr. U.N. Singh, Jt. Commissioner (ACAD), has rendered valuable support by urging decision makers to contribute to the cause.
- BPCL is sending six lakh HelpAge mailers to their Petro Card holders, resulting in a huge saving.
- Bank of Maharashtra have agreed to support the City, State and National Level Quiz for the year 2006-07, besides supporting last year's quizzes by donating Rs. 8 Lakh.
- **Intas Pharmaceuticals gave Rs. 1 Lakh as continuation of its ongoing cause related marketing initiative with HelpAge.**

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