Senior citizens come together as one force

A meeting of representatives of Senior Citizens Associations was held in December in Delhi, which jointly voiced the formation of a strong representative body for senior citizens. As a result, a “Confederation of Senior Citizens Associations of Delhi” has been registered, of which HelpAge India is a permanent Advisor and Mr. R. R. Gupta selected as Chairperson. It is a significant step towards building the advocacy drive for the cause.

BOOK POST

HelpAge India

Celebrities paint for the Aged!

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A survey conducted by the Senior Citizen Associations in India (SCA) has concluded that the impact of price rise on the lives of the elderly proved to be as we now see. 22.5 % of the elderly surveyed, were adversely affected, facing more than 30% inflation on their medicine and nutritious diet. Beyond the figures is the message that the elderly continue to be amongst the most vulnerable sections of the country. It is efforts such as these, representing them to the government, police, rescue & relief services along with offering counseling services to elderly in distress.

HelpAge India conducted Certificate Courses for News & Caregivers of old age homes in some cities. The interesting part was the mobilization of Senior Citizen Associations (SCA) through personal meetings of SCA members for their involvement in agecare activities in their respective cities. Members existing in counseling through the helplines, help conduct need assessment surveys and volunteer their professional services as those of – doctors, lawyers, media, civil engineers etc. Some physiotherapy centres are now being managed by SCA such as those in Shimla, Solan, Dehradun, Mussoorie, Bhopal, Delhi NCR, Chandigarh & Puducherry. HelpAge India conducted Certificate Courses for News & Caregivers of old age homes in some cities. The interesting part was the mobilization of Senior Citizen Associations (SCA) through personal meetings of SCA members for their involvement in agecare activities in their respective cities. Members existing in counseling through the helplines, help conduct need assessment surveys and volunteer their professional services as those of – doctors, lawyers, media, civil engineers etc. Some physiotherapy centres are now being managed by SCA such as those in Shimla, Solan, Dehradun, Mussoorie, Bhopal, Delhi NCR, Chandigarh & Puducherry.

Pakhu Ram, 65, lives on a daily wage. He migrated to Guwahati in search of a job and now lives in Manmohan’s Baktinagar in Guwahati. A stone cutter by profession, all his life he has lifted heavy weight materials. This being his only source of his livelihood. With growing age, he started suffering from severe hypertension, weakness and developed chronic back pain, suffering from severe hypertension, weakness and developed chronic back pain, suffering from severe hypertension, weakness and developed chronic back pain. His only source of income was a small job and now lives in Mamtman’s Baktinagar in Guwahati. A stone cutter by profession, all his life he has lifted heavy weight materials. This being his only source of his livelihood. With growing age, he started suffering from severe hypertension, weakness and developed chronic back pain. His only source of income was a small job and now lives in Mamtman’s Baktinagar in Guwahati. A stone cutter by profession, all his life he has lifted heavy weight materials. This being his only source of his livelihood. With growing age, he started suffering from severe hypertension, weakness and developed chronic back pain.

He became one of the first people to avail the services of the newly opened physiotherapy centre by HelpAge in Guwahati, a first in the north east. There has been a remarkable change in his health since, with considerable relief from pain. Today, Pakhu walks without a stick and is urging his community to avail the services of the physiotherapy centre.

Anjali Dey of Kolkata, suffers from left sided Hemiplegia resulting from a Cerebral Vascular attack two years ago. The right hemisphine of the brain controls the movement of the left side of the body. A stroke in the right hemisphere often causes paralysis in the left side of the body. This is known as left sided Hemiplegia. Anjali is unable to hold any object with her left hand and is not able to blow out of her mouth. She can’t even walk without support. Today, the gets home visits from the HelpAge physiotherapist and feels hope returning into her life.

Urban agecare programme spreads its reach

Helplines & Physiocare

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Elders demand the implementation of State Policy on Older Persons on World Elders Day

The march of elders in different states to put up a petition to national and state political leaders for implementing ‘State Policy on Older Persons’, on October 1, 2009, World Elders Day or alternatively International Day of Older Persons (IDIOP) was an emphatic and momentous assertion by the elderly to put forth their demands.

HelpAge took stock of how effective the National Policy on Older Persons has been in the last five years since its inception in 1995, in the presence of Chief guest Mr. Mukul Wasnik, Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment (Govt. of India), at a function organized in Delhi.

“The formation of the National Policy on Older Persons itself has been a great start, but 15 years down the line it’s implementation has been very poor, with much left to be desired. We require greater fund allocation and help, that the Government will step up the implementation process and more positive results will be seen” said Mr. Mathew Cherian, Chief Executive, HelpAge India.

Earlier in the morning, HelpAge organized an intergenerational walkathon at Rajpath, New Delhi, which was flagged off by Mr. Mukul Wasnik, along with Mr. D. Napolian, Minister of State for Social Justice & Empowerment (Govt. of India). Similar walkathons were also organized in Patna, Mumbai, Goa, Hyderabad and Coimbatore where thousands of elderly and younger people walked together to create awareness to demand what’s rightfully theirs.

Creating Awareness to demand what’s rightfully theirs

HelpAge India, started year 2010 with the launch of its new campaign “LED India, FED India, TAUGHT India,” a tribute to forgotten elders, in Delhi’s PHD House. Special guest Mr. Shashi Tharoor, former Director, United Nations Information Centre, along with Mr. M. S. Pande, President Emeritus, HelpAge India, launched the new campaign, website www.ledindia.org and facilitated veterans who had led exemplary lives, with the “Inspirational Achiever” award.

The aim was to honor those elderly who have worked hard and achieved milestones within their own field and continue to so, living life with strength and dignity, the underlying motto of the campaign. They included achievers such as – the Marathon Man of India, Dr. (Wg. Cdr.) Ashis Roy who has run over 43 full marathons, Dr. Rajiv Kumar, Senior Scientist, BARC, Dr. Jagdish Chandra, Chief of Staff, Indian Army, Dr. V. Narayanan, 80 year old newsreader, Poet & Scholar & critic, 87 year old Chander Dhawan, Photographer, who has traveled to Leh via road at the age of 82 to capture its beauty in his cameras, Dr. HS. Bakshi, former Director, United Nations Information Centre and Mr. Mukul Wasnik, the Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment (Govt. of India) along with Ms. Shalini Dewan, former Director, United Nations Information Centre launch the brochure for the LED India, FED India, TAUGHT India campaign in Delhi.

Senior Citizens and Hyderabad pull-up the Government of Andhra Pradesh for effective implementation of State Policy on Older Persons, in a walkathon organized by HelpAge in the vicinity of Secunderabad.

Review Workshop on State Policy on Older Persons

A representative of Senior Citizens Association from Delhi, addresses the audience during the ‘Review Workshop on State Policy on Older Persons in Delhi’, organized by HelpAge to discuss about the implementation of National Policy on Older Persons. It was attended by senior representatives from Senior Citizens Association, looking on are (from right) Mr. N. Babu, National Director (Advocacy), Mr. K. P. Kaul, Country Head (Advocacy, Research & Communication), HelpAge India along with Mrs. Indrani Rajadurai (left), National Director (South & West), HelpAge India and Dr. H.S. Bakshi, National Director (Advocacy), HelpAge India.

As per the rules, those who neglected their aged parents or fail to provide for their upkeep will have to face imprisonment up to three months or a penalty of Rs. 500 or both. To create further awareness about this Act, a workshop was held in Chennai (TN) in coordination with the Directorate of Social Welfare, Tamil Nadu, where Mr. D. Napoleon, President of State for Social Justice and Empowerment (Govt. of India), aimed at creating awareness to the challenges faced by senior citizens and sensitize the judiciary on the importance of caring for elderly.

Senior citizen in Almora (Uttar Pradesh) led the way in Chennai (TN) as part of HelpAge’s campaign aimed to create awareness at the thresholds faced by senior citizens and sensitize the judiciary on the importance of caring for elderly.

Jointing Forces

The maintenance and welfare of parents and senior citizens, Act, 2007, seeks to make provisions for the maintenance and welfare of parent and senior citizens, guaranteed and recognized under the Constitution. The object is to ensure their maintenance by their children.

Senior Citizens get innovative & participate in an Auto-thon

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Inflation hits hard at Senior Citizens: HelpAge India does a nationwide survey

A

ny senior citizens were perturbed with the news which appeared in The Times of India (Delhi) on January 16, 2010, which spoke about proposed changes in the Motor Vehicle Act 1988 by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (Govt. of India) to weighing the option of barring people over the age of 72 – 75 years old from getting a driving license. This news came as blessing in disguise to an 83 year old resident of Pune, Ms. Taramati H. Khire, 74 year old resident of Pune, suffers from general weakness, joint pains, blood pressure & anemia. She had no means to meet her medical expenses and has no support from her family members. The money she had invested in a Bank became useless, as the bank ran into bankruptcy and money blocked since the past 5 years.

Ms. Taramati H. Khire

An unexpected gesture

M

r. Ravi Jain, Barmer District Magistrate, flags off the new Mobile Medicare Unit (MMU) in Barmer (Rajasthan), a project supported by CAIRN INDIA.

Meet Vantula Vishnu Surve, from Ratnagiri (Maharashtra) who feels she is too young to be 83. A learner with a spirit of an 8 year old. For her age is certainly just a number. Inspite of being the ‘only educated one’ in her village, her parents got her married at sixteen. She took care of her land while her husband worked at a printing press. She lost her husband just four years into the marriage. A few days later, she delivered her second child. A month later, her mother-in-law threw her out of the house. Living on just Rs.10 per day, that she received from her father through money order, she decided to move to Mumbai with her two children. She was all of 20 years back then.

To support her two young children, she joined a government program, as a teacher, which aimed at teaching adults who had missed school early in life, where she earned Rs.35 per month. No support from her family, no means to meet her pressure & anemia. She had no money blocked since the past 5 years.

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Mr. Mathew Cherian, Chief Executive, HelpAge India, gives resourceful insights into HelpAge’s Palliative Care project ‘Project Sharat’ which has a demonstration model running in Guwahati (Assam) during the IIIrd International Palliative Conference held in Guwahati (Assam). Palliative care is given when a patient’s disease is no longer responsive to curative treatment and the emphasis is on maintaining quality of life. Sharat, an 8 year old Indian boy, is helped by medical support because his parents can’t afford the medical bill.

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In order to understand the perspective of Senior Citizens pan India, the survey was conducted amongst 12 states namely: Delhi, Maharashtra, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu. It was conducted during October 2009 – March 2010.

The lower and the middle income groups were hit the hardest. 71.5% elderly clip down on their health expenditure and 40.5% cut down on their food expenditure. In their diets, 27.8% witnessed tension/anxiety which grew either from their families due to which their relationships were strained.

A strong need was seen in demand for subsidized food articles through ration stores & subsidized medical services, a stunning 84%. 82% want further exemption in Income Tax. 35% elderly across India are looking for a structured re-employment programme by the Govt. Also, an astonishing 71.1% want IT exemptions for children who are spending money to maintain their elderly parents.

Mr. J.R. Gupta, President, Senior Citizens Council of Delhi, says senior citizens are large in numbers and the matter is being addressed by the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways. However, many elderly people over the age of 72 – 75 years old from getting a driving license.

An unexpected gesture

Ms. Taramati H. Khire

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In past six months HelpAge has been urging more and more school children to spend time with the elderly, to understand their  

**SCHOOL ADVOCACY & VALUE EDUCATION**

...more to understand their

...more...to understand their

**Content Development for Value Education on Agecare**

Mr. Prasanth Sinha, Principal, Arya Vidya Mandir, Delhi, received a Certificate of Appreciation from Ms. Gloria Paul, Sr. Executive, HelpAge India, for organizing a seminar on "Content Development for Value Education on Agecare" at Arya Vidya Mandir, Delhi. The seminar was attended by over 40 Educational Experts and School Teachers from the Delhi area. The program was conducted by HelpAge India in collaboration with the Arya Vidya Mandir and the Delhi Education Department.

**A poignant reunion**

In June 2009, 60 plus Sr. Premlata, a resident of Delhi, went to the market to get some gifts for her 3 year-old daughter. She was searching for a special gift for her daughter to celebrate the occasion of Christmas.

On Jan 2010, television channel Aaj Tak was covering a news piece on a school education programme being held at Mother Teresa School, New Delhi, for the elderly residents of the HelpAge supported old age home, Guru Vishram Vridh Ashram. As fate would have it, Premlata who was residing in the home, was immediately recognized in the news by her neighbors. Mrs. Gloria Paul, Sr. Executive of HelpAge's Corporate & Resource Mobilization, alongwith Ms. Piya Mukherjee, Manager - Resource Mobilization, visited the home to support the cause.

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**CITI VOLUNTEERS PITCH IN THEIR BIT**

On the occasion of Citi Global Volunteer Day on Nov 7, 2009, 190 volunteers from Octa isima along with the employees of the Citi Global Operations Centre at Chennai, contributed Rs. 1.65 lakh towards the cause. The school contributed Rs. 1.94 lakh towards the cause.

**SPECIAL MENTION**

Mr. George Jacob (fourth from right), CITI, Mr. C. Kishorekumar (left), Manager - Resource Mobilization, and Mr. K. Ratnakar (right), Deputy Director (Resource Mobilization), from HelpAge India (Madurai).

**CORPORATE GIVING**

It is difficult to work without the support of donors. In the recent past, a trend has been seen in the growth of corporate donors. More & more are now coming forward to support the cause of the elderly and are focusing on their CSR initiatives. Awareness levels are higher and the willingness to make a difference has become more focussed. HelpAge is thankful to them for their support.

Mr. M. V. Sivakumar (left), Principal, Jawahar Mat. Hr. Sec. School, Ranchi (Jharkhand) hands over a Demand Draft of Rs. 2.32 lakh (approx.) to Ms. Piya Mukherjee, Manager - Resource Mobilization, HelpAge India (Jharkhand).

**OCL SUPPORT**

HelpAge received a cheque of Rs 72,000 from Mr. S. K. Yadav, Headmaster,況tine Public School, Rewari, for the ‘Grannies Day Out’ organized by HelpAge in Baneshwar.