

## Progress Pulse

### Leprosy Day 2025: Unite, Act, and Eliminate Leprosy



- Leprosy Day 2025 was observed with the theme "Unite, Act and Eliminate Leprosy" at the India Gate on 30th Jan 2025 with a series of interactive and engaging activities aimed at raising awareness about leprosy, breaking the stigma, and promoting early diagnosis and timely treatment.
- The event brought together the Central Leprosy Division, ILEP India Partners, WHO India, and Government stakeholders to foster understanding and encourage proactive healthcare-seeking behavior.
- During the event, various games and activities were organized such as Snake and Ladder game, magic show and Nukkad Natak addressing stigma and fear, and the NTD Department highlighted prevention and treatment of NTDs like Kala Azar, Filariasis, and Chikungunya.

### Advancing Leprosy Elimination Efforts: Insights from the IAL Mid-Term National Conference 2025



The IAL Mid-Term National Conference of Leprosy was held on January 11-12, 2025, at Smt. NHL Municipal Medical College, Ahmedabad, bringing together experts to discuss the latest advancements in leprosy research, diagnosis, management, and policy updates. The event featured plenary sessions, panel discussions, free paper presentations, workshops, and interactive sessions, fostering knowledge exchange among professionals in the field.

Representing GLRA India, the National Medical Advisor, Regional Research Coordinator, and State Consultants from West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh actively participated in the two-day conference, engaging in discussions and exchanging insights. Dr. Srilekha Penna presented on "ILEP Agencies and Their Role in Indian Leprosy," highlighting collaborative efforts in leprosy control.

The team gained valuable insights from the conference, which will now be translated into field initiatives to further strengthen GLRA India's mission in combating leprosy.

## Promoting Sanitation and Hygiene for 'Resilient and Healthy Communities'



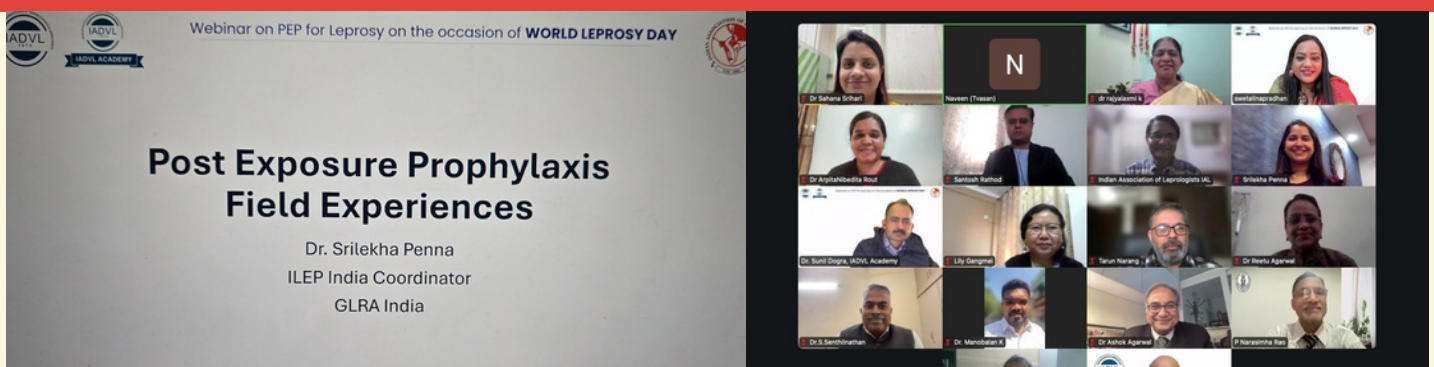
- Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene situation in urban cities is always a matter of concern, in terms of availability, accessibility, acceptability, quality, safety, and affordability.
- GLRA India successfully completed a short-term 7-month project in Agra, focused on creating awareness in 5 slum communities among 6000 households (32,000 people) by involving community volunteers, duty bearers, and stakeholders for better and improved WASH practices.
- One of the highlights of the project was the formation of 5 school health clubs involving school management for sustainable actions including the construction of 20 accessible toilets and hand wash stations beside safe menstrual hygiene orientation for 1250 adolescent girls and installing sanitary pad vending machines.

## Advancing TB Awareness and Support through Active Case Search



In an effort to support to the NTEP, GLRA India engaged in early identification of TB in high-risk populations in Lucknow, Bhiwandi, Chennai, and Gurugram, the third phase of the Active Case Search Drive began on November 24 as part of the 100-day campaign under the "Nai DISHA" project. The campaign, which focuses on truckers and transport workers, has screened about 30,000 people and 13 new TB cases detected so far through this effort, increasing awareness of TB symptoms and indicators, encouraging early identification, and facilitating treatment access. Sample collection drives, screening camps, and community participation are all part of this campaign's initiatives, which support the continuous advancement of TB elimination. The ACS wants to help stop the spread of tuberculosis in these vulnerable communities by raising awareness and improving access to healthcare for truck drivers and their families.

## Webinar on PEPs in Leprosy Brings Together Key Stakeholders in India



On World Leprosy Day, January 26, 2025, the IADVL Academy, in collaboration with the Indian Association of Leprologists and the Indian Association of Dermatologists, Venereologists, and Leprologists, organized a webinar to discuss advancements in leprosy management. The event saw participation from the Central Leprosy Division, International Leprosy Association, and ILEP India members, focusing on Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) in Leprosy.

Dr. Srilekha Penna, ILEP India Coordinator, presented on "Post-Exposure Prophylaxis and Field Experiences," sharing insights from ILEP members' field experiences. A panel discussion followed, highlighting the need for a coordinated approach and the importance of involving dermatologists and private practitioners in national leprosy programs. The webinar reinforced collective efforts to combat leprosy and improve national strategies through multi-sectoral collaboration and knowledge sharing.

## CapaBLE Study: Advancing Leprosy Capacity Building Through Blended Learning in Chhattisgarh



The CapaBLE Study, launched on January 28-29 in Champa District, Chhattisgarh, focuses on capacity building in leprosy through blended learning. The study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of blended learning in improving knowledge retention, practical application, and cost efficiency. Medical Officers and Community Health Officers received in-person training on leprosy fundamentals, followed by enrollment in the InfoNTD e-learning platform for continued learning. Participants will be evaluated over two weeks to six months to assess the outcomes of this approach.

The training was led by Dr. Joydeeba Darlong (The Leprosy Mission Trust India), Dr. Pravin Kumar (NLR India), and Dr. Srilekha Penna (GLRA India), along with their teams. Additionally, an inception meeting for the study was organized on January 30th, coinciding with Anti-Leprosy Day in India, in the presence of state officials, further emphasizing the commitment to strengthening leprosy control efforts through innovative learning approaches.

### A Journey of Strength and Inspiration: Ms JayaShree



The sixteenth episode of Voices of Empathy is observed on NTDs day, focusing on **“Beat Leprosy, End Stigma, and Advocate Mental Well-Being”**. This week, we’re joined by the incredible Ms. Jayashree, a woman who inspires many and volunteer for the leprosy cause.

Don’t miss this empowering conversation with Ms. JayaShree—scan the code and tune in now!

Stay Connected! Follow us on social media for more updates.

### Improving Healthcare Access for Prisoners: A Collaborative Screening Initiative

Limited healthcare access in prisons often leads to undiagnosed and untreated conditions. To address this, regular health screening camps are essential for safeguarding prisoners physical and mental well-being.

In Khargone, MP, the District Leprosy Cell, with support from GLRA-India’s Project NIRAMAYA-III, launched an initiative to conduct general and leprosy screening in prisons. In January 2025, one new case of leprosy identified among 30 inmates in one of the screening camps and initiated for treatment.

NIRAMAYA-III staff, in collaboration with district health authorities, ensures treatment adherence, counselling, and encourages post-exposure prophylaxis for close contacts to prevent further transmission.

## Apollo Tyres' Health Care Initiative for Truck Drivers



Truck drivers are vital to India's logistics sector but face challenges like long hours, irregular shifts, and prolonged time away from home, which put their health at risk. Apollo Tyres Foundation, in collaboration with GLRA RF, runs health care centers at key transport hubs in cities like Chennai, Salem, Bengaluru, Mumbai, Pune, Raipur, Jodhpur, and Jaipur, providing dedicated services for the truck community. The centers offer treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV prevention, tuberculosis awareness, and early screenings for lifestyle diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and vision problems.

A recent IIT Delhi study highlighted concerning health statistics among truck drivers: 44.3% had high body mass index, 57.4% had elevated blood pressure, and 18.4% had high blood sugar levels. Additionally, over half had vision issues, and many reported stress. This initiative is crucial in improving the physical and mental health of truck drivers, benefiting both their families and the logistics sector.

## Towards a TB-Free Future: The 100-Day Gurugram TB Mukta Campaign



Under the 100-days TB campaign, the GLRA team is conducting a series of activities to raise awareness and facilitate screening. In schools under Bhangrola TU, informative sessions reached over 1,150 students across three schools, educating them about TB symptoms, prevention, and treatment, with a TB screening canopy set up for both students and their parents. In urban slums, intensive TB screening was carried out in five hotspot areas including Naharpur, Bhangrola, and Manesar Village. Additionally, two TB screening camps were organized at factories in the International Centre for Automotive Technology, IMT Manesar, where employees were educated on TB awareness and provided with screening. The team also ensures vulnerable groups are sensitized and tested during active case finding. These efforts are part of a comprehensive approach to control and prevent tuberculosis in the community.

## Hiring Intern!

GLRA India is hiring a Communication Intern in Delhi, who will work closely with Manager Communication and PR. Interested candidates can send their resume to [communication@glraindia.org](mailto:communication@glraindia.org). Deadline is 10th February 2025, apply now.

## Bridging the Gap: How Data-Driven Insights Shape Inclusive Public Health Interventions

In the ever-evolving landscape of public health, data isn't just numbers on a spreadsheet—it's the foundation that drives meaningful change. From combating tuberculosis in vulnerable communities to ensuring accessible healthcare for persons with disabilities, every intervention must be backed by strong evidence to be truly effective.

At GLRA India, our commitment to evidence-based programming ensures that no one is left behind. Take, for instance, our recent interventions focusing on menstrual hygiene and WASH—key areas where data collection helped us identify critical gaps in accessibility and behavioral trends. By leveraging monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks, we were able to tailor solutions that addressed real needs rather than assumptions.

But data alone doesn't create an impact. The real magic happens when insights are translated into actionable strategies—informing policy dialogues, refining program approaches, and amplifying voices that are often unheard. Our work in TB screening among truckers and allied populations, WASH Project, and Niramaya II is a testament to this, where continuous tracking of program effectiveness has helped in refining outreach efforts for better engagement.

As we step into a new year, our focus remains on strengthening data accessibility, fostering cross-sector collaborations, and driving sustainable change. The heart of public health lies a simple yet powerful truth—every dataset represents a human story, and every insight holds the potential to transform lives.

**-Ms. Deepa Lakshmi (M & E Officer)**



**EVEN A SMALL CONTRIBUTION MAKES A DIFFERENCE**



PLEASE COLLABORATE  
WITH US TO SUPPORT  
CHILDREN AFFECTED BY  
LEPROSY, TB, AND OTHER  
NTDS

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donations*



THROUGH YOUR  
CONTRIBUTION:  
\*NUTRITIONAL SUPPORT  
\*SELF-CARE KITS  
\*SCHOOL KITS

Account Name: GERMAN LEPROSY AND TB RELIEF ASSOCIATION  
INDIA

Account Number: 1345967218

Account CRN: 213670657

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