

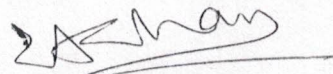
File No. C – 18018 / 01 / 2018 – Lep (Pt.I)
 Government of India
 Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
 Directorate General of Health Services
 (Central Leprosy Division)

Nirman Bhavan, New Delhi.
 Dated : 10.02.2022

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: **Minutes of the Meeting held under the Joint Chairmanship of Shri Rajiv Manjhi, Joint Secretary and Dr. Anil Kumar, Deputy Director General, DteGHS on 04.02.2022 at 12:00 Noon in Office Chamber of Deputy Director General (Leprosy) to discuss various issues and actions to be taken, arising out of the Hon'ble Supreme Court's Order dated 14.09.2018 in the Writ Petition (Civil) No. 767 filed in the year 2014 by Shri Pankaj Sinha against Union of India.**

The undersigned is directed to enclose Minutes of the above mentioned Meeting for kind information and necessary compliance please.



(Z. A. Khan)

Deputy Director

1. Joint Secretary (RM), DteGHS, Nirman Bhavan, New Delhi. 2523851/2022/LeP/22
2. Deputy Director General (Leprosy), DteGHS, Nirman Bhavan, New Delhi. 2523851/22/LeP/22
3. Director (RS), DteGHS, Nirman Bhavan, New Delhi. 2523851/22/LeP/22
4. DADG (Leprosy), DteGHS, Nirman Bhavan, New Delhi. 2523851/22/LeP/22
5. Section Officer (Leprosy), DteGHS, Nirman Bhavan, New Delhi. 2523851/22/LeP/22
6. Consultant, (Dr. Vijay Basappa Dhange), DteGHS, Nirman Bhavan, New Delhi. 2523851/22/LeP/22

Copy for kind information to:

Sr. PPS to DGHS. 2523851/2022/LeP/22
 10/02/22

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Minutes of the Meeting held under the Joint Chairmanship of Shri Rajiv Manjhi, Joint Secretary and Dr. Anil Kumar, Deputy Director General, DteGHS on 04.02.2022 at 12:00 Noon in Office Chamber of Deputy Director General (Leprosy) to discuss various issues and actions to be taken, arising out of the Hon'ble Supreme Court's Order dated 14.09.2018 in the Writ Petition (Civil) No. 767 filed in the year 2014 by Shri Pankaj Sinha *against* Union of India.

A meeting was held under the Joint Chairmanship of Shri Rajiv Manjhi, Joint Secretary and Dr. Anil Kumar, Deputy Director General, DteGHS on 04.02.2022 at 12:00 Noon in Office Chamber of Deputy Director General (Leprosy) to discuss various issues and actions to be taken, arising out of the Hon'ble Supreme Court's Order dated 14.09.2018 in the Writ Petition (Civil) No. 767 filed in the year 2014 by Shri Pankaj Sinha *against* Union of India. Following Officers were present in the Meeting.

1. Shri Rajeev Sharma, Director, Dte.GHS;
2. Dr. Bisworanjan Dash, DADG (Lep.);
3. Shri Z. A. Khan, Deputy Director;
4. Shri Satish Kumar, Section Officer; and
5. Dr. Vijay Basappa Dhange, Consultant,

At the outset, Chairmen welcomed all the participants. Shri Rajiv Manjhi, Joint Secretary asked to start the discussion. It was mentioned that the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India *issued* certain directions to Union of India, *inter-alia*, this Department *vide* its order dated 05.07.2018 in a Writ Petition (Civil) No. 1151 filed in the year 2017 by Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy *against* Union of India. The directions were *mainly* related to Awareness / Sensitization Campaign, Dissemination of Action Taken, curability of disease (Leprosy), the disease not being contagious, Non-discrimination, Healthcare, rehabilitation of persons suffering from the disease, Education, Employment / Livelihood, Welfare and repeal of provisions where leprosy is treated as stigmatic disability. An Action Taken Compliance Report on the directions was required to be filed by Union of India and the States in the Hon'ble Supreme Court. Accordingly the Hon'ble Supreme Court's Order dated 05.07.2018 was forwarded to all concerned for compliance. Meanwhile, one more Order dated 14.09.2018 was passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the Writ Petition (Civil) No. 767 filed in the year 2014 by Shri Pankaj Sinha *against* Union of India. This Supreme Court Order dated 14.09.2018 alongwith earlier Order dated 05.07.2018 was forwarded on 29.01.2021 to all concerned including concerned State Governments / UTs for compliance. In response, State Governments started furnishing compliance reports. A reminder was also issued to all concerned on 04.10.2021 for implementation of directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court. Subsequently, the Hon'ble Supreme Court passed Order dated 24.09.2021 in the Contempt Petition (Civil) No. 484 filed in the year 2021 filed by Shri Dibakar Bhoi & Ors. *versus* Dr. Megha Pravin Khobragade for non-compliance of directions given by the Hon'ble

Supreme Court in its order dated 14.09.2018 in the Writ Petition (Civil) No. 767 of 2014.

In the above background, directions given by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in its Order dated 14.09.2018 were discussed in details and following decisions were taken.

Sr. No.	Directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court	Discussion and Decision taken in the Meeting
i.	The Union and the States are to undertake periodical national surveys for determining the prevalence rate and new cases detection rate of leprosy and, at the same time, publish and bring the reports of the National Sample Survey of Leprosy conducted in 2010-11 and subsequent thereto into the public domain. That apart, the activities of the National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP) must be given wide publicity.	It was decided that reports / data / information relating to National Surveys will be put on the website of DteGHS. It was also decided that link of the website may be given wide publicity including in replies of the RTI Applications that information / report / data of such surveys are already available in public domain.
ii.	On leprosy day which internationally observed every year on the last Sunday of January, the Union of India along with all State Governments should organize massive awareness campaigns to increase public awareness about the signs and symptoms of leprosy and the fact that it is perfectly curable by the Multi Drug Therapy (MDT). Awareness should also be spread about the free availability of MDT at all government health care facilities in the country, the prescribed course for MDT treatment and all other relevant information related to MDT. The content and information contained in the awareness programmes should discontinue to use frightening images of people disabled with leprosy and instead use positive images of cured persons sharing their experiences of being cured of leprosy.	It was mentioned that such awareness campaigns are being organized every year at periodical intervals. It was felt that photographs of such campaigns may be uploaded on the website for wide publicity. With regard to availability of MDT, it was mentioned that drugs for curing leprosy are available in concerned hospitals and health care centers, rather in excess so much so that drugs are expired before their use by leprosy patients. Other directions are noted for compliance.
iii.	The Union and the States are to ensure that drugs for management of leprosy and its complications including the MDT drugs are available free of cost and do not go out of stock at all Primary Health Centres (PHCs) or, as the case may be, public health facilities in the country;	As mentioned above, drugs for curing leprosy disease is already excess in all hospitals, health care centres, Primary Health Centres, so such so that some of

		the drugs are expired.
iv.	All-year awareness campaigns should also be run, by the Union as well as the States, to inform the citizenry that under the National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP) treatment is provided free of cost to all leprosy cases diagnosed through general health care system including NGOs.	Such awareness campaigns are already conducted. It was felt the photographs of such campaigns may be uploaded on the websites for wide publicity.
v.	The Union and the States must organize seminars at all levels which serve as platforms to hear the views and experiences directly from the former patients and their families as well doctors, social workers, experts, NGOs and Government officials.	It was decided that two such Seminars may be organized at the earliest.
vi.	The awareness campaigns must include information that a person affected by leprosy is not required to be sent to any special clinic or hospital or sanatorium and should not be isolated from the family members or the community. The awareness campaigns should also inform that a person affected with leprosy can lead a normal married, can have children, can take part in social events and to work or school as normal. Acceptability of leprosy patients in the society would a long way in reducing the stigma attached to the disease.	Campaign framework as directed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court is noted for compliance.
vii.	Health care to leprosy patients, at both Government as well as private run medical institutions, must be such that medical officials and representatives desist from any discriminatory behavior while examining and treating leprosy patients. Treatment of leprosy should be integrated into general health care which will usher in a no isolation method in general wards and OPD services. In particular, it must be ensure that there is no discrimination against women suffering from leprosy and they are given equal and adequate opportunities for treatment in any hospital of their choice. To this effect, proactive measures must be taken for sensitization of hospital personnel.	It was mentioned that treatment of leprosy is already integrated into general health care and letters are sent at periodical intervals emphasizing that there should not any discrimination to the patients including women patients suffering from leprosy.
viii.	Patient affected with leprosy, for whom partial deformity can be corrected by surgery, should be advised and provide adequate facility and opportunity to undergo such surgeries.	It was mentioned that actions on this point are already being taken and corrective surgeries are undertaken in dedicated hospitals and health care centres
ix.	The possibility of including leprosy education in school curricula so as to give correct	Letters have already been sent to the

2670504/2022/LEPROSY - DGHS

	information about leprosy and leprosy patients and prevent discrimination against them should be explored	Education Department but there is no response on their side. It was felt the matters may be taken up with the concerned Division in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
x.	The Union and the State Governments must ensure that both private and public schools do not discriminate against children hailing from leprosy affected families. Such children should not be turned away and attempt should be made to provide them free education.	It was intimated that no such case is reported so far
xi.	Due attention must be paid to ensure that the persons affected with leprosy are issued BPL cards so that they can avail the benefits under AAY scheme and other similar schemes which would enable them to secure their right to food	It was mentioned that this issue is concerned with the Department dealing with Poverty Alleviation Programme.
xii.	The Union and the States should endeavour to provide MCR footwear free of cost to all leprosy affected persons in the country.	MCR footwear are already being provided to all leprosy affected persons. It was felt the data / details of MCR footwear provided to leprosy affected persons may be uploaded.
xiii.	The State together with the Union of India should consider formulating and implementing a scheme for providing at least a minimum assistance, preferably on a monthly basis, to all leprosy affected persons for rehabilitation.	It was decided that this issue may be taken with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment by the Programme Division.
xiv.	The Union and the State Governments must pro-actively plan and formulate a comprehensive community based rehabilitation scheme which shall cater to all basic facilities and needs of the leprosy affected persons and their families. The scheme shall be aimed at eliminating the stigma that is associated with persons afflicted with leprosy.	It was decided that this issue may be taken with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment by the Programme Division.
xv.	The Union Government may consider framing separate rules for assessing the disability quotient of the leprosy affected persons for the purpose of issuing disability certificate in exercise of the power granted under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (No.49 of 2016)	It was mentioned that this matter will be taken up separately by Programme Division.

With regard to the Hon'ble Supreme Court's Order dated 29.09.2021 in the Contempt Petition (Civil) No. 484 filed in the year 2021 by Shri

Dibakar Bhoi & Ors. versus Dr. Megha Pravin Khobragade for non-compliance of directions given by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in its order dated 14.09.2018 in the Writ Petition (Civil) No. 767 of 2014, it was felt that an enquiry under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary (RM), involving ADG (L), DADG (L) may be conducted into the shortcomings pointed out in the representation (s) and the follow up steps taken by the concerned Department / Section.

It was also decided that in case the above directions have already been sent to all concerned including State Governments / UTs for compliance, a reminder letter may also be sent requesting them to furnish updated status on the compliance of the above mentioned directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

The Meeting ended with the thanks to the Chair.
