

# Government of India initiative against leprosy— We should be aware

Sir,

We read with great interest a review on Leprosy—A raging persistent enigma by Galhotra *et al.*<sup>[1]</sup> The authors have very nicely described the current scenario of leprosy in India and the factors that caused the persistence of the stigmatised disease. The authors have given current updated treatment guideline also. We tried to add additional information regarding the various government initiative to scrub this from India. Since there were lots of reasons pointed out for the persistence of the disease the government simultaneously have initiated and implemented various strategies.

### Leprosy Case Detection Campaign

Leprosy case detection campaign (LCDC) is the perfect move by government of India that was launched in the month of March/April 2016. Through this campaign approximately more than 34,000 hidden cases were brought out and were confirmed as on 17 February, 2017, and were put under treatment.<sup>[2]</sup>

### Sparsh Leprosy Awareness Campaign (SLAC)

January 30 of every year or last Sunday of January was observed as “anti-leprosy day” and message regarding leprosy as leprosy awareness is conveyed in each and every part of India. From the year 2017, in the particular day (January 30) in addition to the leprosy spreading activities, this awareness of SLAC was launched. The main activities will be nationwide organization of Gram Sabhas in cooperation/coordination with various allied health sector, all the health department/or ministries with reference to Panchayati Raj Institutions, Urban Development, Rural Development, Social Justice and Empowerment, and Women and Child Development.<sup>[2]</sup>

**SAPNA:** The next strategy to reach villages or rural is the National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP) which initiated a new mascot for SLAC 2018. It is Sapna with the keytag ‘Kyunki Sapna hai kusht mukt Bharat ka.’ It was conceptualized by the government of India’s Central Leprosy Division (CLD),

along with one of its nongovernmental partners, The Leprosy Mission (TLM) Trust of India. Basically it is the girl child who is identified in all our villages who can easily mingle with the village people and is termed “Sapna.” All the leprosy awareness related messages will spread through Sapna is expected to reach the doorstep of the community where she dwells during the SLAC campaign. This will definitely help in promoting community participation as the messenger is their liked person and this will help to reduce stigma and discrimination against leprosy affected people and helps in promoting reporting of cases much earlier.<sup>[3]</sup>

### WHO Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring in Leprosy

Currently antimicrobial resistance (AMR) monitoring is one of the core area in the Global Leprosy Strategy for 2016–2020. The WHO has released in 2017 an updated guideline on the surveillance of AMR in leprosy.<sup>[4]</sup> So accordingly many central institutes like central leprosy teaching and research institute (CLTRI) were made as the contributing centers for the national and WHO surveillance on resistance.

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### Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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