



PLUS

February 2009

Board visit State Governor

Board members from the NMP+ visited His Excellency Shri S C Jamir, Governor of Maharashtra, in his Raj Bhawan residence on 22nd February. President Shivaji Barge with Anil Dalvi, Vaishali Naik, Manoj Pardesi, Rajesh Pendhari and Satish Rangari were joined by Thane District board member Shabana Patel. The President presented the Governor with a document giving some history and other information about NMP+, and a letter asking for his help on four issues. These were:

- a fast-track arrangement for positive people in Property Rights cases
- tougher and quicker action against quacks.
- 2nd line treatment to be more easily available.
- free travel for ART centre visits.

Mr Jamir described HIV as the country's greatest menace. Our most important task in NMP+ should be positive prevention. He said that the clogged up court system was a huge problem that needed judicial reform.

He said we need to campaign against each quack, using the monthly meeting in each district looking at quack cases, led by a superintendant of police.

He asked NMP+ to consider other options for free travel to ART centres, such as mobile clinics.

The governor agreed to further meetings with him every 3 or 4 months to look at issues in more depth.

After the meeting with the Governor, we had a meeting with the Governor's ADC, Dr Sanjay Aparanti, who was well informed and helpful. He told us that although he was now a policeman he trained as a doctor at the JJ Hospital in Mumbai.

He suggested the following actions for NMP+:

1. ask the Chief Minister to add a clause to the existing Anti-quack legislation making it illegal to claim a cure for HIV.

2. use the monthly district meetings to bring specific cases to police attention.
3. propose free bus passes. Anticipate the concerns of the people who will consider the case and meet them. Have at least two options.
4. ask the government to finance a home for retired positive people, and another home for trafficked women.

NMP+ is arranging a board meeting to carry out the above actions

Below; The board with Mr Jamir



NMP+ supports hunger strikers

While in Mumbai to visit the state governor, NMP+ board members visited the ICTC staff on hunger strike at Azad Ground. The lab technicians and counsellors are striking for better employment conditions. Over 50 have been admitted to hospital so far.

After the visit, President of NMP+ Shivaji Barge wrote to the Chief Minister of Maharashtra asking him to intervene. He wrote: 'I have recently visited the hunger strikers in the Azad Ground, Mumbai who are protesting at the unfair treatment they receive... Their work is at the grassroots level, and it is a valuable part of the fight to prevent the spread of the infection. Because of the humanitarian nature of their work, we feel they should be treated fairly and with justice.'

Below; The president addresses the strikers.



World TB Day 24th March

In November we reported on the Haemoglobin (HB) testing arranged by Beed district at a Support Group Meeting. World TB Day gives others the opportunity to follow their good example. The website:

http://www.stoptb.org/events/world_tb_day/2009/resources.asp

has a toolkit and poster templates, as well as information to download. HIV and TB are both deadly. Together they are the positive person's biggest threat. Please do what you can to encourage positive people to get checked.

Migrant worker project

MSACS are funding a Migrant Worker project in Pimpri which aims to identify and help 25,000 people over the next five years.

The Project Coordinator is Shashikant Todmal, formerly counsellor for Chaha. Shashikant is working with the Network of Pune People with HIV to build a team of 25 outreach workers and one counsellor. Working through street theatre, condom demonstrations, and counselling to migrants, they intend to recruit a team of volunteer peer leaders. Their target is 250 leaders in six months.

They will contact doctors, builders, contractors and community stakeholders, to sensitise and train them. Most of the migrant workers, who come from Latur and other parts of southern Maharashtra as well as Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, work in construction and small workshops.

Further education scheme

Pragati Ingle has been encouraging members to join the scheme which allows people whose school education finished below 10th standard pass to re-enter education.

The Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University is running the Programme, which lasts 3 months and costs 500 Rs.

People who pass the exam at the end will be able to apply for degree courses. There are a number of regional centres offering the course. The application period closes on 28th February but there is another chance to apply in June. For more information, contact Pragati at NMP+

Employment for 7000

Pragati is also working on the ambitious project to bring employment to 7000 in Maharashtra. She recently sent out details to all districts of the Sanjay Gandhi Niradhar Yojana, the district Women's Development of Maharashtra Co-operative schemes, and Vocational Training courses for women in Pune and Nashik. Contact Pragati at NMP+ for more information.

PAI distribution of nutrition

The Paediatric AIDS Initiative, which NMP+ operates in Ahmednagar district, has been giving out nutrition packets. In the **photo below**, sent in by District Social Worker Satish Ahire from the Ahmednagar district, (left to right) PAI Social Worker Ganesh Khuldarme, President of Ahmednagar Ravindra Tokekar, outreach worker Rajaram Kharpude, four members of a beneficiary family receiving a package, and on the right, Chandralekha Das, Project Officer from Sevadham Trust., the coordinating NGO on the PAI Project.



Ammada trust supports income generation at PLC

The Ammada Trust is funding income generation at the Pune PLC. Nine families were given help totaling just over 30,000 Rs. At the hand-over ceremony in February, five families were given sewing machines, while other families received financial help for selling sarees, vegetables, fruit, and one for help with fishing. **Pictured below**, the PLC team, beneficiaries, and Mr Anand Waghmare from Ammada Trust.



Star of the month ☆

Star of the month is the PUNE PLC team, pictured top right. Apart from the money received from the Ammada Trust donation mentioned above, the team also heard that a bid for 420,000 Rs to the Kurswamini Trust for ongoing nutrition for 75 children and 25 bed-ridden adults has been agreed. The team is Salim Shaikh, Centre Manager, Swapnil Sonvale, Social Worker, Mahadev Touti, Centre Counsellor, Shaila Gonte, Field Counsellor, Manisha Pawar and Sachin Sontakke, Outreach workers, and Doctor D K Bhise.

World AIDS Day success. The AIDS Healthcare Foundation has announced that its campaign to have a million people tested for HIV in December was an overwhelming success. 1.5 million were tested worldwide. 61,000 positive people were diagnosed, a prevalence of 3.9%.

Please send pictures, contributions or suggestions for the newsletter to Vincent McDonald, Communications Adviser, at vjmcd@hotmail.co.uk, or to NMP+, 401-403 Ganga Prestige Arcade, Nana Peth, Laxmi Road, Pune 411002, e mail: nmpplus@gmail.com, phone: 020 – 26336084/87

Deadline: 25th day of each month