

A TB Champion's Journey: Turning Personal Struggle into a Mission of Hope

In 2018, I was diagnosed with Tuberculosis (TB). While fighting the disease, I realized that recovery is not only about medicines. Patients also need emotional support, encouragement, and someone who understands their pain. During my own treatment, I often felt alone and wished there was someone to guide and motivate me.

That experience changed my life. I made a promise to myself that once I recovered, I would support others who were fighting the same battle.

After successfully completing my treatment, I became a TB Champion under the TB Mukht Bharat campaign. Since then, I have worked voluntarily to spread awareness and support TB patients across the state. Over the years, I have conducted awareness sessions in nearly 100 schools and reached thousands of students. I have also organized awareness activities in colleges, ITIs, hospitals, prisons, Self-Help Groups (SHGs), NRLM platforms, and many other community institutions.

One of the most significant milestones of my journey was reaching around 70,000 trainees through all 10 Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs) in the state. Through these platforms, I was able to educate people about TB prevention, early diagnosis, treatment adherence, and the importance of eliminating stigma.

I have carried out this work entirely as a volunteer. I never accepted any payment for my efforts and, on many occasions, used my own resources to continue the mission.

The most challenging period came when my father was battling cancer and my family was facing financial difficulties. Despite these hardships, I continued my awareness work. To support my activities, I even sold my three gold rings, including a diamond ring. It was a difficult decision, but I believed that helping people affected by TB was more important than personal possessions.

To reach wider audiences, I used innovative approaches such as awareness campaigns through buses and LPG distribution vehicles. I also leveraged social media platforms including YouTube, Facebook, and WhatsApp to spread accurate information about TB and encourage people to seek timely diagnosis and treatment.

Even today, I continue to support TB patients by providing emotional encouragement and, whenever possible, financial assistance. My goal is to ensure that no patient feels alone during their journey to recovery.

For me, TB elimination is not just a programme—it is a personal mission. Having experienced the pain, fear, and challenges of the disease myself, I understand how much a kind word, timely guidance, and community support can mean to a patient. I believe that together, through awareness, compassion, and collective action, we can build a TB-free India.

बालीचौकी में 500 बच्चों व स्वयं सहायता समूहों की महिलाओं को किया जागरूक



टीबी जागरूकता अभियान के दौरान लोगों को जागरूक करते हुए।

 **अनंत ज्ञान**

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नूतन ठाकुर, बालीचौकी। जिला मंडी के बालीचौकी ब्लॉक में टीबी (क्षय रोग) के प्रति जागरूकता फैलाने के उद्देश्य से एक व्यापक जन-जागरूकता अभियान चलाया गया। इस अभियान के अंतर्गत क्षेत्र के कई स्कूलों के विद्यार्थियों तथा विभिन्न स्वयं सहायता समूहों की महिलाओं को टीबी से संबंधित महत्वपूर्ण जानकारी प्रदान की गई। इस कार्यक्रम के माध्यम से लगभग 500 विद्यार्थियों और स्वयं सहायता समूहों की महिलाओं को टीबी के प्रति जागरूक किया गया। यह जागरूकता कार्यक्रम राष्ट्रीय क्षय उन्मूलन कार्यक्रम के अंतर्गत स्वेच्छा से कार्य कर रहे अनिल ठाकुर द्वारा संचालित किया गया, जो कि मूलतः जिला सिरमौर के निवासी हैं। अनिल ठाकुर पिछले कई वर्षों

से समाज सेवा के भाव से लोगों को टीबी के प्रति जागरूक करने का कार्य कर रहे हैं और ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में फैली भ्रांतियों को दूर करने में सक्रिय भूमिका निभा रहे हैं। कार्यक्रम के दौरान प्रतिभागियों को टीबी के लक्षण, कारण, बचाव, समय पर जांच और मुफ्त उपचार की जानकारी दी गई।

टीबी रोगियों के प्रति भेदभाव न करने और उन्हें उपचार के लिए प्रेरित करने का संदेश भी दिया गया। स्वयं सहायता समूहों की महिलाओं को टीबी के प्रारंभिक लक्षण पहचानने, संदिग्ध मरीजों को नजदीकी स्वास्थ्य केंद्र तक पहुंचाने तथा समुदाय में जागरूकता फैलाने की भूमिका के बारे में जानकारी दी गई। स्थानीय लोगों और संस्थाओं ने इस निरंतर सामाजिक प्रयास की सराहना की है।