

Bihar Deputy Chief Minister inaugurates Anti-Stigma Campaign against TB

Patna, 17 March 2021: In the run up to World TB Day next week, Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister, Bihar, Smt. Renu Devi, flagged off an anti-stigma campaign from her residence at 3 Stand Road in the city today. The eight-day-long campaign in ten districts is led by TB Mukht Vahini, a TB survivor-led network in Bihar, in association with REACH, NTEP and Stop TB Partnership.

Speaking about the need to address stigma surrounding TB in the communities at the launch event, Smt Renu Devi said, "TB does not spread by touch. It is curable and people with TB can get cured if they complete their treatment in the prescribed dosage without skipping a single dose. Women TB Champions have a key role to end discrimination and stigma surrounding TB in the community."

As part of this campaign, each of the 100 TB Champions from 10 districts taking part in the campaign would meet 5 Panchayat members in their district, urge them to take a pledge to ensure zero discrimination against people affected by TB, and to support the TB Champions in their endeavour to make a TB-Free Bihar. Through this campaign, the TB Champions are hoping to increase awareness about the stigmatization faced by people with TB and advocate for their right to be treated with dignity. The campaign also advocates for ways to adopt a non-discriminatory approach in public and private spaces towards people with TB. Panchayat heads, as campaign leaders, can significantly contribute towards encouraging people to support people with TB, and therefore, contribute to a TB-free village.

Dr B K Mishra, State TB Officer, Bihar, was also present during the occasion.

About TB Mukht Vahini

TB-Mukht Vahini (TMV) is a first-of-its-kind network of, and by TB survivors. TMV was born in 2017 as an outcome of the first capacity building workshop for TB survivors in Bihar. Thirteen TB Champions from seven districts announced formation of TMV, and their intention to work towards a rights-based, person-centred ecosystem for TB. TMV has supported people with TB, sensitised communities, advocated with various stakeholders. TMV members part of National, State and District TB Forums. TMV now a legally registered body under the Societies Act. There are over 400 members from across 17 districts in Bihar.

About REACH

An acronym for Resource Group for Education and Advocacy for Community Health, REACH was established in 1999 in response to the rolling out of the National TB Elimination Program (NTEP) in Tamil Nadu. The TB Champions were trained through capacity-building workshops, which was organised in keeping with REACH's mandate under the CFCS Project supported by Stop TB Partnership.

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