

# hope

News for friends of Asha Issue 80 October 2018



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Support our cause



Asha wishes all the supporters a Merry Christmas!

## 02 Asha Activities



### Asha marked India's 72<sup>nd</sup> Independence Day

Celebrating India's 72<sup>nd</sup> Independence Day, the Asha slum dwellers assembled for a splendid ceremony on August 15. All the Asha slum communities' members invited government administrators to unfurl the 'Tiranga' (Indian flag).



### Asha Ambassadors visit a government school in Seelampur

Asha ambassadors, Jubair and Shiv, who recently visited the United Kingdom, organized a trip to the Girls' Senior Secondary School in Seelampur on July 31. They talked of their experiences of travelling overseas and also about the incredible journey of Asha and its founder, Dr Kiran Martin. They enthusiastically encouraged the Senior Secondary students to become active members of Asha.



### Sanitation drive at Chanderpuri slum community

An abrupt and intense downpour in Delhi made the drains in Asha's Chanderpuri slum overflow with filthy water. The stagnant water also became a fertile breeding ground for mosquitoes. Hence, the Bal Mandal children and Asha's College students started a clean-up drive and got Council workers from the Malaria Department to spray pesticides and oil around the Asha centre.



**Pre-cleanliness drive:** A filthy rubbish heap at the entrance to Seelampur slum had been causing a terrible smell and have caused pedestrians to cough and choke.



**Asha is a community health and development society dedicated to improving the lives of slum dwellers in Delhi.**

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[asha-india.org](http://asha-india.org)

[facebook.com/ashasociety1](https://facebook.com/ashasociety1)

[twitter.com/ashasociety](https://twitter.com/ashasociety)

[youtube.com/ashasociety](https://youtube.com/ashasociety)

[instagram/ashasociety](https://instagram/ashasociety)

**Post-cleanliness drive:** Asha slum dwellers got together and cleaned up the rubbish heap.

## 03 Spotlight



### Abhishek's story of transformation in his words

"I was born and spent my early childhood in Jammu & Kashmir. Our life was beautiful, and my father earned well to sustain the family. But my father got addicted to alcohol, and completely stopped working. He abused my mother physically and mentally. When my mother could not bear it any longer, she decided to leave him. We then fell into poverty, and kept moving from one place to another in search of shelter. Finally, we arrived in a slum community called Peeragarhi. My house is in a very congested lane. There are two rooms and it is made of TIN, which gets tremendously hot during summers and extremely cold in the winters. Living in the slum is not easy.

My mother teaches the small slum kids and earns about 9000 rupees (100€/120\$) a month. My mother was broken mentally and financially after we decided to stay away from my father. Unfortunately, now he is no more. Initially, my mother worked in a small local shoe factory, stitching shoe laces on to shoes by hand. The environment was unsafe and dangerous, she often came home late as she worked two shifts to earn money for us.

Then an even more terrible thing happened. My brother who dropped out of school to help my mother financially, was diagnosed with Bone Tuberculosis. My mother had to take loans from money lenders at high rates of interest. We are still trying our best to repay the loans taken. The financial crisis still causes a lot of tension and anxiety to my mother.

When I was in class 12, at that time the Asha centre was not constructed, and an Asha bus used to visit us twice a week. I heard a lot about Asha helping young students with study materials, so I decided to visit the bus. That day, I met David Sir in the bus who briefed me about the work of Asha and its values. I was very impressed and inspired, especially when I heard about Dr Kiran Ma'am.

This was the turning point of my life. I was thrilled when David Sir gave me study materials. Sandeep who is an Asha graduate and a dedicated Asha Ambassador, guided me in my board examinations. They both became my constant support, and always encouraged me. As a result of that, I secured 89 percent in my class 12 board examinations. From then on, there was no turning back. I became a committed and dedicated member of the Asha family.

I got admission to Delhi University to study a Bachelors in Commerce. My university fees were paid by Asha, and I am very grateful for that. I am the first person from my entire family to go to college. This is a pioneering effort in India where, for the first time, so many slum students are making it big to Delhi University, one of the top universities in India. I was very nervous and anxious at college in the first few weeks. Gradually, I settled down and began to enjoy college life.

I had the great privilege of doing my first internship at the British High Commission during my summer breaks. This was a wonderful experience for me as I had the privilege to meet Sir Dominic, who is the British High Commissioner to India. It was for the first time that I entered such a beautiful office building. This internship not only boosted my confidence but also gave me an understanding of the professional world for the very first time.

My second internship was with the Macquarie Bank, which is the largest investment bank in Australia. Here, I was placed in the Australian tax department which helped me understand the taxing system better.

Dr Kiran and her team have raised an army of Asha Ambassadors to carry out her vision to reach every slum in Delhi, I am one of them. We motivate students and their parents, mentor them, coach them, and give them career advice. Together, we are all determined to work hard to make our vision come true. And we will not stop till we have reached every slum in the capital of India!

Dr Kiran who is Asha's founder, she is like a mother to all of us, and we love her very much. This great transformation in me, and in our city, would have never been possible without the Asha values that Dr Kiran has taught all of us. They are the foundation of my life. Gratitude is my favourite Asha value. Gratitude is a way of life."

## 04 News at a glance



### Asha Celebrations in the USA

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Dr Kiran Martin, the Founder and Director of Asha, Mr Godfrey Martin, the Associate Director of Asha, and Usha, an Asha Graduate, were delighted to be present at the events on both the East and West Coasts of the USA.

The 18th Annual Asha Day was celebrated on September 8 in Napa Valley, California. Congressman Mike Thompson and his wife Jan Thompson were the hosts, while Rita Bresee, the daughter of Mr Kailash Chaudhary, was the chief organiser. This was followed by events at the Kiwanis Club, Valley Oak School and Chamberlain School. Dr Kiran and Usha were also interviewed by Ira Smith, the well-known anchor of KVON radio. Immediately afterwards the Asha family flew to Boston and then New York. Steve Watson and his skilful team organized the Asha Day at Reservoir, Boston on September 15. The one-day event was celebrated with great enthusiasm and joy by all the participants, including Dr Kiran and Usha. Another celebration was organised by the River Team, led by John and Sara Furste and held on September 16 at New York. Godfrey Martin shared Asha's story. Usha also spoke of her personal experience with Asha. The event concluded with a fantastic meal. There was also an Asha Photo Exhibition.

The USA tour ended with the wonderful event organised by the Friends of Asha Sacramento at Double Tree by Hilton Hotel, Sacramento on Saturday, Oct 13. This group was founded 6 years ago by the amazing Dr Nalini Prasad and supported by her husband Dr Praveen Prasad. This year their good friend Manmohan Passi, supported by his spouse Beeba took on a leadership role and formed an organising committee. The members of the organising committee worked tirelessly for many months to help make the event a success. There was a silent auction as well as delicious Indian cuisine served as the guests mixed and mingled, made donations and learnt more about Asha.

We extend our gratitude to the Asha USA communities for their wonderful hospitality!

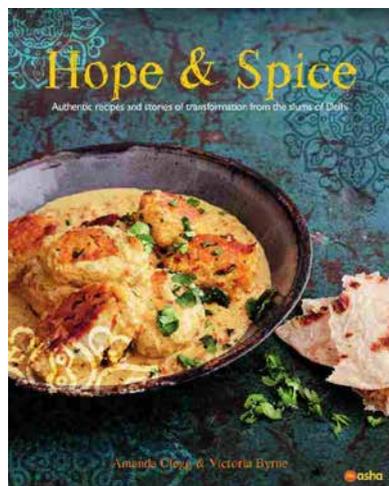
## 05 News at a glance

### Discussing future strategies with Australian High Commission

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Dr Kiran visited the Australian High Commission on November 12. She met with Her Excellency Harinder Sidhu, who is the Australian High Commissioner to India and the Deputy High Commissioner Rod Hilton.

"It was an immense pleasure to meet with Her Excellency Harinder Sidhu Australian High Commissioner to India and Rod Hilton, Deputy High Commissioner this afternoon. The AHC has been a key collaborative partner in our Internship program, helping us to find other partners in the diplomatic community and among both Indian and multinational companies. Rod and I will be making joint calls to a number of other possible partners in the coming months. It's exciting to work with such brilliant and committed people who use their influence to change lives," said Dr Kiran.



### Hope and Spice Launch

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To celebrate 30 years of Asha in London, the supporters and friends of Asha, GB organised an event where, "Hope and Spice" an enduring piece of creative amalgamation, with stories and recipes from Asha slums was inaugurated on 10th of November at the Amba Hotel, London. Here we take this opportunity to request you all wonderful supporters of Asha to buy "Hope and Spice" which is available on Amazon UK. Book your copy today.



### Luncheon at the Australian High Commission

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On September 6, the Deputy High Commissioner of Australia to India, Rod Hilton, hosted a lunch for Asha students, who had interned with the High Commission this year. They shared what they had learnt and their experiences as interns. Many Asha students also interned with MNCs and other Embassies. These experiences help students improve their professional skills.

### MAX SMART Hospital Free Health Camp at Kusumpur Pahari

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Asha organized a Free Health Camp for its slum dwellers at Kusumpur Pahari on September 14. The camp, conducted in partnership with Max Smart Super Speciality Hospital, Saket. 140 people were treated and provided medication. We thank MAX SMART Hospital for their support.

## 06 Spotlight



### Unlocking her inner potential

Zareena, a resident of Asha's Chanderpuri slum community, is a mother to five children. Her husband is the sole breadwinner of the family. He works as a helper in a sweet shop, earning a living from providing confectionary for weddings and other special occasions.

Zareena hardly ever left the confines of her home. She spent all her life looking after her husband and the family.

She had barely stepped out of the house until she joined Asha's Women's Association. Coming from a conservative background, Zareena never ever dreamt of going out alone for anything. In the beginning, she was very hesitant about visiting the Asha centre in her area. But as she began to come to the centre, she began to change and love her times at the Asha centre. Her active participation became so noticeable that it caught people's attention. The regular visits built confidence in her and gave her a spirit of ownership.

The lady who could hardly respond to a morning greeting has now applied for her children's Unique Identification card on her own. Her decision to join Asha has brought about a remarkable transformation in her personality. The interaction with Asha staff and other women has really helped her to change; she never misses her times to come to the Asha centre and she always arrives on time!

## 07 Visitor diaries



### Amalgamation of a lifetime

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**Prof. Kevin Outtersson**  
**Professor of Law.**  
**Boston University, USA.**

“A large crowd swarmed around me as soon as I entered Asha’s Dr Ambedkar Basti, Delhi on August 31. What an experience it was to meet the college students, the little kids in the Children’s Association and the Women’s Association. I am happy to have seen the work of Asha first hand right from the Asha Polyclinic to the community centre. They have left an imprint on my heart.”

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If you would like to volunteer at Asha,  
please contact [info@asha-india.org](mailto:info@asha-india.org)



### An Amalgamation of unique experiences

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**Dr David Armstrong,**  
**Partner at the PwC United Kingdom.**

“What an inspiring day! As I visited the Kusumpur community I was proud by the genuine community transformation that has taken place for last thirty years. The precious people talked and laughed with, who are seizing opportunities for a better life with both hands, gave me much encouragement. I was enthralled meeting the bright children in the university and the bright professionals who have made it big to many companies. I am spell bound by their positivity.”

## 08 Transforming lives

### Promoting Education

£ 75 – One year of books for one child

£ 110 – College preparation for 30 children

£ 230 – One year of university tuition for one student

£ 450 – One year of entire university expenses for one student

### Promoting Health

£ 18 – Vaccinations against diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis for five children

£ 45 – Basic health education for 1,000 people

£ 75 – Vitamin A supplements to prevent night blindness for 60 children

£ 115 – Recovery treatment for 10 TB patients

### Promoting Empowerment

£13 – Training for 1 Community Health Volunteer

£ 30 – Celebration of events and interactive activities

£ 65 – Training workshops on infrastructure and environmental improvement

## Friends of Asha (Great Britain)

If you would like to contribute to the lives of poor slum dwellers in Delhi, then you can become a Friend of Asha. Friends of Asha (Great Britain) aids our activities through donations, fundraising events, volunteering opportunities and raising awareness of the work we do.

### For more information, contact:

**Dr Richard Hogben, National Coordinator, Friends of Asha GB**  
foasha.richardhogben@gmail.com

### Donations

If you would like to make a donation to Asha, and you are a UK tax payer, you can Gift Aid your donation. Friends of Asha GB (Charity Registration No. 1085071) can collect an extra 25p for every pound you donate.

**1. To donate online directly from your Bank** Make a payment to The Lloyds Bank account of Friends of Asha (GB);  
Sort Code 30-96-31; A/c No. 01899891

### 2. To donate online

Send your contribution to Asha by visiting our website at:  
<https://asha-india.org/get-involved/donate/great-britain-donations/>

### 3. To donate by cheque:

Make your cheque payable to "Friends of Asha (GB)" and mail to:  
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Yeovil, Somerset BA21 3PE, UK