

AHIMSA COVID REPORT

“The mind can go in a thousand directions, but on this beautiful path, I walk in peace. With each step, the wind blows. With each step, the wind blows. With each step, a flower blooms.” - Thich Nhat Hanh

Report 6 (August 2021)

India has reported 26,964 new Covid-19 cases and 383 deaths in the last few days. The case tally has been pushed to 3,35,31,498. The active caseload declined to 3,01,989 - the lowest in 186 days according to the ministry data updated. The country on 31st August administered 12,500,000 doses of vaccines against Covid-19, according to provisional data, setting the highest single-day tally since the vaccination drive began on January 16 this year. A warning about the impending third wave of COVID-19 has been doing the rounds and we at Ahimsa Trust have been gearing up for that. However, Chief Scientist of the World Health Organisation, Dr. Soumya Swaminathan gave India a ray of hope stating that India might be entering some kind of stage of ‘endemicity’. This is because of the size and heterogeneity of the population and the immunity status of the country. The good news is that the children in India are all set to go to school. Governments of most states across India have issued directives to open schools, adhering to strict COVID-19 protocols.

Work in Dehradun:

- On 28th and 29th of August, the Ahimsa team organised the food distribution twice across the villages in and around Dehradun. 130 packets of dry rations were distributed in the Chandra Lok Village. 30 packets of dry food were distributed in Ammasari and Kairwaan villages located in the Uttarakhand hills. The food packets include Wheat flour, Rice, Pulses, Salt and Oil.



Ward Councillor Ms. Urmila Thapa in Dehradun, supporting team Ahimsa



Food distribution by Ahimsa team in Chandra Lok Village

- Supplies of soap, N95 masks and surgical masks were packaged and 170 packets of these supplies were distributed along with the food packets in the Chandra Lok, Ammasari and Kairwan villages. We are thankful to Ward Councillor, Ms. Urmila Thapa who has been a great supporter of the Ahimsa work in Dehradun.



Food supplies being distributed in Ammasari and Kaiwaan villages

- Ahimsa Trust has set up a Covid Relief room in the Chandralok Basti, Village Rajpur, Dehradun. The hut is now equipped with a bed, a small reception and a cupboard. People can now opt to isolate or come here and use the oxygen concentrator, BP machine, Oximeters etc. The hutment has a good location and is easily accessible to the village folks.



Covid Relief room set up by Ahimsa

Work around Shantiniketan, West Bengal, India

Several years ago, Ahimsa supported a number of pre-schools that we called 'Home Schools'. Here, children aged between three and six, would gather in the afternoon and spend time on games, exercises, art, craft, music and stories. The objective was to prepare the children for formal school.

- We were able to give the children of the Home Schools a modest tiffin- and this was perhaps their first introduction to nutritious food.
- The Ahimsa team also spent time with the mothers of the pre-school children, initiating them in basic child development.



Gupin, a team member explaining the Covid quiz prepared by an Ahimsa Volunteer



A team member, Mungli discussing Covid symptoms in Kayetkpur



Healthy snack making in Bidyadharpur

The Ahimsa team has spent a month with the children who are adolescents, in final years of formal schooling, introducing them to Covid awareness and Covid-friendly behaviour.

- The Covid Home Care Project (CHCP) supports patients with Covid- like symptoms with medical care and advises family isolation for two weeks. It has been extremely difficult to convey the importance of quarantine as a way of stopping the spread of this disease.
- We hoped that with this month dedicated to young people from the age of 14 to 18- those enrolled in classes 8 to 12 in High School- we might be able to explain the Covid timeline as well as explore certain aspects of Covid Home Care.
- The Ahimsa team have also tried to get to know the young people and understand their own situation. The schools in rural Bengal have been closed since the first Lockdown in March 2020. The children are spending most of their time at home. Of course, they still help their families with domestic chores, in particular the girls. But no school means no socializing, no meeting friends, and no social interaction beyond the immediate family. It has been a lonely time for these young people.



A talk with the Youth Group in Taltor by Subhas, a team member

A. Youth Group (YG) Activities in August 2021

- The YG members received drawing books and crayons. They have made a series of paintings on Covid-related issues.
- Nutrition with a focus on the Food Groups was discussed. Everyone was asked what they had eaten that day and which groups the foods fell in.
- A nutritious snack was made each week and enjoyed by all.
- The young people shared their life stories with us and also recounted their experiences during lockdown and the year and a half of the Covid epidemic.
- The YG members practiced and learnt about the pulse oximeter, the oxygen concentrator and also had a class on how to make Oral Rehydration solution (ORS).



Teaching proper handwashing in Shantiniketan



Subhojit Lohar and Bangshi Dass making paintings on Covid related issues

B. Some of their stories collated by Ahimsa Supervisor, Anuradha Mondal.



Subharti lives in Kayetpukur with her father, mother and older sister. Her sister only managed to study till Class4. Subharti is in Class 10. The family has 4 bighas of land. Subharti's father does farming. Subharti's mother works as an agricultural labourer. It is she who has put Subharti through school and who pays her tuition fees. Subharti's mother and sister were ill and they were treated by Dr. Ganguly who is our Ahimsa doctor. After taking the medicines, they felt better. Subharti's mother was worried because she was unable to go out to work and the household depends on her earnings. Subharti helps her mother with domestic chores. She also looks after the kitchen garden.



Bhuban Das studies in class 2 and lives in the village of Darpashila. Bhuban seems a very engaged child. He started chatting with us when we had gone to deliver the plastic containers (to make organic fertilizer from soaked mustard cake) to our kitchen gardeners. Bhuban said he was very happy to receive the *suji* and the *sattu*. He said he had eaten the *sattu* in the morning and his mother had made *suji* for him in the evening. He also said he appreciated the tiffin of potato *chaat* that was made by the Youth Group. (The Youth Group makes a snack each week, and some of it is provided to their siblings). Bhuban told Subhas that he enjoys playing hide and seek. He also wanted to know if the Project planned to give anything else to the children like him!

With kind regards and gratitude,

Ahimsa Community

