

Polio Eradication Campaign in 2009

Rotary's success in every humanitarian endeavour depends very largely on the support of every Rotarian and everyone in the family of Rotary. In the fight against Polio too, no one is alone. Every Rotarian around the world motivates and commits to eliminate Polio from the remaining reservoirs of the world.

In fact in the last two immunisation rounds we saw as many as 300 Rotarians from across the world joining hands with Rotarians in India to save children from contracting Polio. It is such efforts and volunteerism that has sustained Rotary as one of the biggest service organisation and helped Rotary spearhead the Polio eradication battle so successfully.

Today, major outbreaks of Polio are virtually unheard of in countries other than the endemic nations—India, Pakistan, Nigeria and Afghanistan. With Rotary efforts coupled with the wonderful support from Partners, Polio eradication is heading towards its destination. But as one of the endemic nation still to eradicate Polio, a lot is at stake for India. India's campaign against the virus though one of the best and biggest public health efforts has been time and again challenged in UP and Bihar. The encouraging aspect, however, is that in the week gone by there hasn't been any incidence of

Polio. Compared to last year when as on date (March 13) 132 cases of Polio had occurred, in the current year only 17 Polio cases has been recorded. Not only is the P1 virus type on a back foot, its elimination by the end of the year is almost certain. Further recent immunisation

Rotary. The campaign requires funds to carry on with the massive eradication strategy. Having said this, at this point in time, when the whole world is expecting India to bring the Polio battle to an end, my humble request to you all is not to lose sight but continue with the intensive efforts to eliminate

the virus. While our focus is on immunising children during each NIDs/SNIDs, equally important will be to increase the level of Routine Immunisation (RI) in our scheme of plans. Our District Governors, National Committee members, Club Presidents and our India National PolioPlus office headed by PDG Deepak Kapur and senior Rotary leaders in India have been the constant force behind our successes in making the goal of eradication possible and we expect no less from them in leading us to the ultimate goal. Please continue with the tremendous and impressive work.

World leaders and experts believe that India will be the country that will lead the world towards a Polio-free status. And the current year provides us that window of opportunity to make it possible. Together, I am sure, we will realize our dream of a Polio-free India and that of the world ... soon!



*Ashok Mahajan
Director – Rotary International*



coverage ensures that threat from the virus type P3 too is limited making it next in line for elimination.

Just past week while I was attending the TRF orientation meeting in the US, I was asked, 'By when could India be Polio-free?' And I declared on behalf of 1,00,000 Rotarians in India with full optimism that we are most certain to make it happen—Polio free India—by next year. Being so closely associated with the Polio programme, I am more than sure of Rotarians living up to this declaration.

However I must mention that time is running out and so are funds for