



End Malaria – Blue Ribbon Clubs Initiated by Indian Leader with Educational Goals, Partnerships and Empowering Messages

Malaria Foundation International (MFI) embraces End Malaria - Blue Ribbon Clubs initiated in India.

Atlanta, GA, July 14, 2007 --(PR.com)-- End Malaria - Blue Ribbon Clubs have been initiated by Dr. Pratibha Singh, Director of the Community Outreach Program, Baptist Christian Hospital in Tezpur, Assam, India. Each week, malaria cases take a toll on the lives of children and adults in Assam, one of the most severely affected regions of India. “People do not simply die of malaria, they die because of poverty and ignorance. If we can educate the communities about the cause, prevention, symptoms and proper treatment we can control and then finally End Malaria,” stressed Dr. Singh. Dr. Singh's ADWR project (which means to care and nurture in the Boro Language) has started 16 End Malaria - Blue Ribbon Clubs in local schools in Udalguri and twenty others are planned.

Student leaders have been recruited to reach out to neighboring communities. Malaria is caused by the bite of Anopheline mosquitoes that are infected with the Plasmodium parasite, and if not properly treated, people can die within one to a few days from the start of symptoms. Almost every home has lost someone to malaria and this is an ongoing tragedy. Prevention measures being promoted in this community include cleanliness drives, use of insecticide treated mosquito nets and repellants, indoor residual spraying with insecticides and breeding anti larval fish. The other important aspect being promoted is the availability and access to the correct treatment at the proper time. These are achievable preventive and curative measures, and yet are not followed due to ignorance and cultural beliefs. The goal of the ADWR is to establish an increasing number of End Malaria - Blue Ribbon Clubs with at least one End Malaria - Blue Ribbon student leader volunteer in every village.

Dr. Singh contacted the Malaria Foundation International to work in partnership to expand this campaign and empower student leaders. “Our people must take responsibility for their own health,” she proclaimed. The MFI launched the End Malaria - Blue Ribbon in November 2006 as a universal symbol for awareness and education.

Dr. Singh recognized the power of the universal ribbon symbol and developed a plan. “This is a preventable and treatable disease. We must educate our children to think differently and also become economically empowered. We must prevent and treat malaria as we also focus on development in our communities. We are already experiencing results, with more people becoming conscientious and coming to the clinic for effective treatment. Once people understand the problem, and pass on the knowledge, there is a ripple effect and a positive impact against this terrible disease.”

The touching story of Vandana (see attached file), and how her life was saved through ADWR's outreach program demonstrates the power of this grass roots initiative.

To launch End Malaria - Blue Ribbon clubs, ADWR sponsored a Walk Against Malaria with 500 participants parading from village to village promoting the message “End Malaria”. Pictures from this



first of many planned events are presented at the MFI website (www.malaria.org) along with the group's impressive End Malaria - Blue Ribbon posters and hand made ribbon pins. An aim is for student leaders to recognize that knowledge and vigilance are two important keys to preventing illness and death from malaria. Prompt effective treatment is also essential. For more information and photos from India, see ADWR's updates at www.malaria.org or write MFI@malaria.org.

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