



PRESS RELEASE

MEGHALAYA GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES ROKO CANCER CAMPAIGN

Dr. Mukul Sangma, Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister Meghalaya and **Mr. A.P.S Chawla, Chairman MKC Trust, UK** are launching the FIRST MOBILE CANCER DETECTION BUS for cancer screening campaign for the state of Meghalaya on **15th April 2010 at 11 am at Civil Hospital Shillong**. Meghalaya is the first Indian State to launch a cancer screening campaign for the entire state. **ROKO CANCER CAMPAIGN** is an initiative of MKC Trust UK. The project is a partnership between Health and Family Welfare Department of Meghalaya and Roko Cancer Charitable Trust, India. The trust is launching two mobile units in Meghalaya as part of the Public Private Partnership for screening of Breast, Cervix and Oral Cancer. The first unit will cover the Khasi region and the second unit will be launched after five months which will cover the Garo region. A team of doctors and volunteers will travel with the unit providing free detection facilities and further investigation test to the people at their doorstep. Immediately after the launching programme free cancer detection camp will be organized at the inaugural site at Civil Hospital Shillong. This facility can be availed by all free of cost.

Mr. A.P.S Chawla, Chairman of MKC Trust, said, "My wife was just 40 then and by the time we discovered it, the cancer was in secondary stage. I kept wondering what we could have done to save her. The family depends on the woman and if she can't look after herself and get treatment, the whole family collapses."

Roko Cancer Charitable Trust is a leading Charity in India that has launched the ROKO CANCER CAMPAIGN by launching India's first fully equipped Mobile cancer detection units. The campaign voices its appeal loud and clear "Roko Cancer" - It could happen to you. The campaign is focusing on Breast, Cervix and Oral Cancer. Speaking on the occasion, **Ms. Isha Bhandari, Director of Operations, Roko Cancer Trust, India**, said: "Since Roko Cancer's launch, a large number of camps have been organized across the length and breadth of India and thousands of people have benefited from the services offered by the traveling Roko Mobile Units. Roko Cancer forges ahead with a message that by creating awareness we not only empower women but also save a life, as early detection leads to cure". Attributing the awareness of Cancer Ms. Isha Bhandari said "The first reaction to the word cancer is fear. We want people to realize if caught early, cancer is curable. We should not FEAR cancer but FIGHT it."

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Roko Cancer Charitable Trust, Shillong



ROKO CANCER CHARITABLE TRUST

www.rokocancer.org



EDITORS NOTE

ROKO CANCER CHARITABLE TRUST is an initiative of **MKC TRUST ,UK** which has launched the **ROKO CANCER CAMPAIGN** in India focusing on cancer screening programme. The charity is the first in India to launch fully equipped Mobile Cancer Detection Units in India. The mission of the trust is to launch at least one Mobile Unit for each state in India. It seeks support from Government and Corporate sector to partner them. The movement gained momentum as volunteers and cause driven partners joined hands globally. Roko Cancer's clarion call started reaching out its buzzword of "awareness" to the far-flung rural and semi urban areas of India, at a fast and furious pace. A first ever Mobile Cancer Detection bus that takes a journey for a cause through the tough terrains of Punjab, Delhi, Andhra Pradesh ,Goa, Assam, Jammu and Kashmir, M.P ,Haryana, Maharashtra has in a short span touched a figures that is nothing less than remarkable. It inspires an undying spirit of waging a war against ignorance towards Cancer Globally. **ROKO CANCER** has examined 47,196 Women,11,172 Mammograms have been conducted,662 camps have been organized , 350 women have been found positive and 3315 have been advised further investigations.

The developing world is expected to account for more than half of all cancer cases in the world by 2020 say medical experts. Cancer may strike as many as 7 million people a year in Asia by 2020, straining health systems in countries that can least afford it. The WHO is also warning that Asia's annual death toll from cancer, currently at about 4 million, could reach 6.4 million by 2030 if current trends continue.

There will be approximately 250,000 new cases of breast cancer in India by 2015. The Indian Council of Medical Research is of the view that "breast cancer has overtaken cervical cancer to become the leading cause of cancer-related mortality among women living in metropolitan cities".It places the incidence of the disease at 20-33 per 100,000 in urban India.

Dr. Umberto Veronesi, the Scientific Director of the European Institute of Oncology in Milan, Italy, and also known as the Father of the modern breast cancer surgery, believes that "Breast Cancer will become an **epidemic in India** in another 10 years if the country does not put in place a vigorous **mechanism for early detection and an awareness building exercise**". Early detection would be fundamental in such an initiative. "The second most important thing is to convince women – to raise the level of women consciousness – and the third priority is to convince the government to equip hospitals and health facilities across the country with mammography machines for detection and all the allied technology required for a big intervention programme. Then comes the task of convincing doctors that mastectomy is not the only way out and include in the repertoire of



their treatment protocols initiatives towards maximum breast conservation, along with hormone and chemotherapies.”

“Even two generations ago, India was not the high incidence zone. That was because Indian women married early and nursed two to three children each on an average. That kept the hormones flowing and breasts remained healthy. But now, women in India are emulating the West, marrying late and average child bearing age has increased to 30 and sometimes even beyond that. If a woman has her first child at 16, it reduces the risk of breast cancer”, says Dr. Veronesi.

This significant increase in incidence of Breast Cancer could be traced to changes in life styles, lack of awareness, **absence of a screening programme**, and, lack of quality curative service. More than 50 percent of the patients are diagnosed with Breast Cancer at an advanced stage of the disease leading to avoidable high mortality. The health care network for the disease ranges from peripheral hospitals with basic facilities to few specialized hospitals with specialized Oncology services in Metropolitan Cities.

There is now growing recognition of the **need for early diagnosis through screening through social mobilization initiatives with community as a critical stakeholder**, comprehensive treatment facilities, and well-recognized treatment protocols. It is believed that detection of Breast Cancer in **stage I has almost a 90 percent chance of cure**; it has a zero percent chance of cure in stage III.

