



# THE GANGA FOUNDATION

11 Years of Championing Quality Rehabilitation



DEEPAK SHARMA, ANKUR SHARMA (Born 17 October 2020)

2015 DEATH'S DOORSTEP ● 2020 DOTING FATHER

## THE INCLUSION JOURNEY 2020



## Deepak Sharma

## Transformative Journey 2015-2020

Spinal Cord Injury (2011)

No Quality Rehabilitation

Start of Bed Sores (2012)

Five Grade 4 Bed Sores

Remote village

Family status upside down

Villagers: He will die

Glide toward more poverty

No access to outside world

Bad Wheelchair

Caring Parents

Body wasting rapidly

Still Deepak stayed 'brave'

First Peer – Arman, My Guide

Smartphone & Facebook

4 Hospitals in Patna in Vain



Doting Father (2020)

Wheelchair Basketball Player

Half-Marathon Runner (2019)

Specialist Trainer for Bed Sore

Love marriage – Anjana Devi

Bunker shop

Small shop outside home

One-year minimal sitting

Independent Living (2015)

12 hours surgery, two phases

Dr Henry Prakash "No Sacrum"

Christian Medical College

'I will try my best' – Doctor

Near Death

Risks 48 Hours Sitting Travel

Turned Away at AIIMS Delhi





Dr Mary Verghese working on the plans for India's first Rehabilitation Institute with Dr Paul Brand, a pioneer in leprosy healing, and other experts in the early 1960s.

## Dedication Dr Mary Verghese

The Ganga Foundation Inclusion Journey 2020 is dedicated to Dr Mary Verghese, the Visionary Doctor on Wheelchair.

### Pioneering Doctor

Dr Mary Verghese is the pioneer who shaped Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation in India from the late 1950s. She set up India's first in-patient Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation (PMR), and also India's first specialised rehabilitation centre in Bagayam, Vellore, as an integral part of Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore. This facility envisioned in the year 1958 was inaugurated in 1966, and is now known as Dr Mary Verghese Institute of Rehabilitation.

Her vision and a holistic approach to develop a complete ecosystem of rehabilitation professionals are now having a transformative impact across India.

### Surgeon To Visionary

Dr Mary Verghese sustained a spinal cord injury in 1954 in a road accident just after she had completed her MBBS from Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore. With guidance from Dr Paul Brand, she started working as a doctor from her wheelchair before envisioning rehabilitation in India.

### Epitomising POSSIBILITIES of LIFE

"The magical part of the work by Dr Mary Verghese was that she was on a wheelchair, and so she never had to tell her patients that life is possible after a spinal cord injury, as they could see she was diagnosing, treating and also operating on her patients from the wheelchair."

Dr Suranjan Bhattacharji  
Former Director, Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore

Dr Mary Verghese (1925 – 1986) will always be our 'Our Inspiration.'

### The Ganga Foundation The Name

The Ganga Foundation is named after S. Ganga (1925-2002), the mother of S. Vaidyanathan, Founder of the organisation. Her approach of always looking ahead, unconditional giving and simplicity inspire our thinking and work.



## Vision 1990



**“...we must work towards restoring persons with disability to achieve their fullest and highest potential.”**

Dr Suranjan Bhattacharji

Former Director, Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore, in his visionary letter in 1990 to the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Bangalore.

The Ganga Foundation is the vision of Dr Suranjan Bhattacharji articulated in 1990 to Elango Thambiah and S Vaidyanathan, then students at IIM Bangalore, during the latter's rehabilitation after a spinal cord injury on campus on 28 July 1990.

**“As IIM Alumni, both of you will be in positions of influence in due course. You must do your bit for persons with disability.”**

## The *CHARPOY* Face to the Faceless without Quality Rehabilitation



Kasinathan and his *CHARPOY* give a face to the faceless thousands with spinal cord injury who languish without Quality Rehabilitation across India, and epitomizes their struggles in a powerful way. Kasinathan, who sustained a spinal cord injury at age 14, spent 14-plus years on The *CHARPOY* before moving ahead in life from mid 2017. When he shares his experience, he leaves a powerful impact with his messages on:

- the trauma of a spinal cord injury and how this injury accentuates poverty;
- the lack of awareness about the need for Quality Rehabilitation;
- what Quality Rehabilitation could accomplish even 15 years after a spinal cord injury and
- living to the fullest potential.





## Philosophy Aagha Vendiyatha Paaru

Aagha Vendiyatha Paaru, the abiding philosophy in life for the driving force behind The Ganga Foundation, epitomises what a brave, forward-looking and smiling approach can accomplish.

Aagha Vendiyatha Paaru, a Tamil phrase, means 'look ahead.' It exhorts people to always focus on doing what needs to be done rather than staying a hostage to the past.

## The Ganga Foundation Vision

Enhance Quality of LIFE for Persons with Spinal Cord Injury in India

Spinal Cord Injury = Multiple Disabilities + No Cure + Lifelong Impact

Quality Rehabilitation (Independent Living Training) = Only Way Forward



## Mission



Wedding Bells marked 2020 for Goutam Singh and Sitarani Nayak, a person who is paralysed neck down with minimal hand movements. Goutam also plays wheelchair rugby and aspires to have a shop open once COVID-19 risk abates. Kuni Devi, his mother, is also an amazing support for persons with spinal cord injury.

Enabling holistic impact underpins The Ganga Foundation.



## Inclusion Journey 2020 Map

2020 Snapshot

INCLUSION IMPACT Insights

NO Vision, YES VISION

Baby Blessings

2020 Pandemic Storyboard & Outreach

The Spinal Foundation CEO Role Enabled By Grant

Rehabilitation Experts Board

Spinal India Peer Trainers

The Right Wheelchair

30 Years of LIFE on Wheelchair *Founder's Journey*

## Report on Remote Work Mode



## Get Involved

### Volunteer

Please contact Madhuri 81978 96450 / Imran Khan 95030 70230  
or email [team@thegangafoundation.org](mailto:team@thegangafoundation.org)

### Meet Us to Discuss Possibilities at the Registered Office

The Ganga Foundation  
203, 18th Street, Chowdhry Nagar, Valasaravakkam  
Chennai 600087, Tamil Nadu, India

### Make Your Contribution. Empower A LIFE

Beneficiary Name	The Ganga Foundation
Bank	Kotak Mahindra Bank
Branch	Porur, Chennai
Savings Account Number	3812950969
IFSC Code	KKBK0000472
UPI Code	thegangafoundation@kotak
The Ganga Foundation PAN	AABTT8436G

### Give 30 Minutes of Your Time To Read. Change Lives

The Ganga Foundation Inclusion Journey 2020

271 Stories of Changing Lives

400 Images | 3056 Words In Captions | 30 Minutes-Read

450 words Summary 2020-Pages 8,9 | Three-Minutes Read

11,498 Words Complete Report | 100-Minutes Read

Feedback Email [team@thegangafoundation.org](mailto:team@thegangafoundation.org)

**Design** Paul Joshua, M G Karthikeyan, Vasanth Sankar

Copyright 2021 The Ganga Foundation. All Rights Reserved.

No part of this publication must be reproduced in any form  
without prior permission. **Publication Date 1 January 2021**

### The Ganga Foundation Legal Status

The Ganga Foundation is a Public Charitable Trust. It is registered under Section 12AA of the Income Tax Act, 1961. Contribution to The Ganga Foundation qualifies for deduction under Section 80G vide DIT (E).No.2(934) 09-10/FY-2019-20 dated 30-05-2019. The PAN of The Ganga Foundation is AABTT8436G.





## Summary 2020

## Pushed Beyond The Comfort Zone

“The 2020 Pandemic Year has been a breakthrough year for The Ganga Foundation with the COVID-19 Pandemic pushing us beyond the comfort zone to explore and use newer ways of reaching care and guidance to persons with spinal cord injury across India. We like almost every change ushered in by COVID-19 into our work.”

S.Vaidyanathan, Founder, The Ganga Foundation  
IIM Bangalore Distinguished Alumnus Awardee

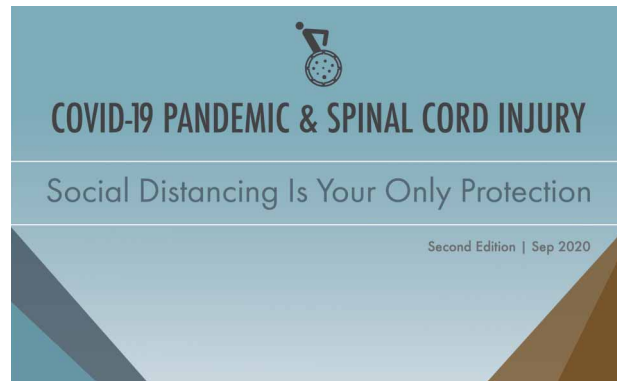


**Outcomes & Towards Impact** In the year 2020, the work of The Ganga Foundation touched the lives of 3,300+ persons with spinal injury with 16,000+ acts of support by the The Ganga Foundation team. Livelihood & Education 82 | The Right Wheelchair 213 | Touch REHAB 200+ | Lives touched since 2009: 9,500+

Yuvarani had a baby in 2020 and was guided to safe childbirth by a Peer Trainer.

**Touch REHAB** The goal is to develop all knowledge resources needed to live with spinal cord injury in a multi-lingual, user-friendly, visual form to spread uniform best practices. The project is set as a grant-based project at TTK Center for Rehabilitation Research & Device Development (R2D2) at IIT Madras backed by the best medical experts.

COVID-19 & SPINAL CORD INJURY, an initiative of Touch REHAB, published in June 2020 (cases in India were 1.24 lakh).



**Touch FREEDOM** This COVID-19 Outreach program of Touch REHAB uses video calls for enabling independent lifestyle, providing needed medical and lifestyle support. We now know we can reach every person with spinal cord injury with a quality team. We have touched 200-plus lives since starting in pilot mode in end July 2020.

Mohammad Imtiyazul Haque independently stepped out of home for the first time since 2004.





## Summary 2020

## Pushed Beyond The Comfort Zone

**Spinal India Peer Trainers** Persons with spinal cord injury engaged as Peer Trainers reach out, guide, motivate and train persons with spinal cord injury. Team size has risen from 16 to 51 in 2020. The team connected with 3,300+ persons (16,000+ interactions) across India. The Ganga Foundation aspires to have 100 Peer Trainers by 31 December 2022.

Harsha, paralysed neck down and vision impaired, is engaged as a Peer Trainer.



**Livelihood & Education** An initiative by Elango Thambiah, Co-Founder and IIM Bangalore Alumnus, and Kamal Kanta, a Peer Trainer, has led to job offers for 32 persons with disabilities in Odisha through a public-private partnership. In addition to the initiative in Odisha, 34 other opportunities were enabled including within The Ganga Foundation.

Kunilata Barik is employed in citizen service in Odisha and also serves as a Peer Trainer.



**The Right Wheelchair** 95%-plus of wheelchair users in India use one-size-fits all wheelchairs that damages lifestyle, confidence and health. Quality wheelchairs, at two different price points, that unleash potential were given to 213 persons in 2020. Systematic follow-up on lifestyle and health is planned as a potential research project.

NeoFly from NeoMotion, IIT Madras Start-Up, was one of our preferred three models.



**The Spinal Foundation** Having anchored the formation and gradual development of this collaborative national level self-help organization since May 2014, The Ganga Foundation fast-tracked its development by a grant for engaging a Chief Executive Officer (CEO). This will expand the footprint of impact with quality management bandwidth.

Justin Vijay Jesudas, International Para Athlete paralyzed neck down is the first CEO.





## Livelihood

## Breakthrough in Odisha

32 persons who are wheelchair users for a range of disabilities were offered jobs in citizen services in Odisha. This is a public-private partnership. The connects were facilitated by Elango Thambiah, Co-Founder of The Ganga Foundation, and Kamal Kanta, Peer Trainer at the Swami Vivekanand National Institute of Rehabilitation Training and Research (SVNIRTAR). Potential income over two years in the jobs was collectively Rs 92 lakh.

27 persons accepted the offers while the other five were not able to for reasons of health and distances. Out of these 27, three have resigned due to long distances from home to workplace, and two others did likewise as they had small businesses also to manage. For the 22 who have taken up the role in right earnest, the two-year contract job translates into an income of Rs 63.6 lakh over 24 months, and in small towns and villages in Odisha, this compensation will lead to healthy lifestyles.



Basudev Behera  
Bidanasi, Cuttack District



Diptimayi Das  
Ghodansh, Jagatsinghpur District



Madan Bhuyan  
Jalla, Gajapati District



Madhab Badseth  
Bilamala, Ganjam District

### The Ganga Foundation Core Values

- Walk The Right Path
- Collaborate
- No Comfort Zone



## Inclusion Impact

## Lifestyle Leap

Several persons with spinal cord injury who have been guided and supported by The Ganga Foundation over the years took major strides in life in the year 2020. This progress is important, as it serves as a reference for others to lead a meaningful life.



**Nojrul Islam** (Assam) From struggling with bed sores to marriage and running a nursery



**Avinash Dubey** (Bihar) Two Peer Trainers helped integrate him in the community and now he is back in business



**Anurag Kumar** (Bihar) A pillar of support for persons who are paralysed neck down, now student at IIM Tiruchirapalli



**Akash Behera** (Odisha) Akash Behera is full of life – marathons, wheelchair basketball, navigating beaches and sea



**Debashish Ghosh** (West Bengal) Injured at age 10, Debashish is now a graduate, works for good causes, operates a Toto



**Tarun Kumar** (Rajasthan) A home visit by a Peer Trainer three years ago led to Tarun travelling, working and guiding others





## Inclusion Impact

## What We Do

- 1 Experience Sharing**  
One-on-one sharing of experiences of living well with spinal cord injury
- 2 Quality Rehabilitation**  
Importance, appropriate guidance, rehabilitation support, spread of best practices
- 3 Livelihood & Community Integration**  
Education, small business, vocational training and equipment, job support, para sports
- 4 The Right Wheelchair**  
Awareness on the need for using good wheelchairs, development, wheelchair distribution
- 5 Spinal India Peer Trainers**  
51-member team motivating, training and guiding persons with spinal cord injury across India
- 6 Networking**  
Community interaction, connect with relevant peers, follow-up, meetings
- 7 The Spinal Foundation**  
National organisation for persons with spinal cord injury with peer organisations
- 8 Partnership - TTK Center for Rehabilitation Research & Device Development, IIT Madras**  
Extensive work on high quality, affordable mobility solutions, rehabilitation resources
- 9 Best Minds Summit**  
Platform for strategy, planning and training, involving persons with spinal cord injury
- 10 Touch REHAB**  
User-focussed knowledge resources underpinned by design and user & medical expertise



## 2020 Pandemic

## Major Strides

The 2020 Pandemic Year led to initiatives by The Ganga Foundation that are designed to establish best-in-class practices, guidance and enhance footprint of impact for persons with spinal cord injury by 2030.



### Virtual Home Visits

Scalable, Cost-Effective Model for Grassroot Insights

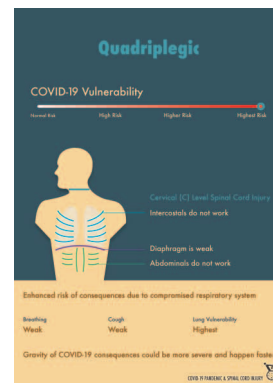
### Peer Trainers | Team Expansion | 16 to 51

Pan India Footprint



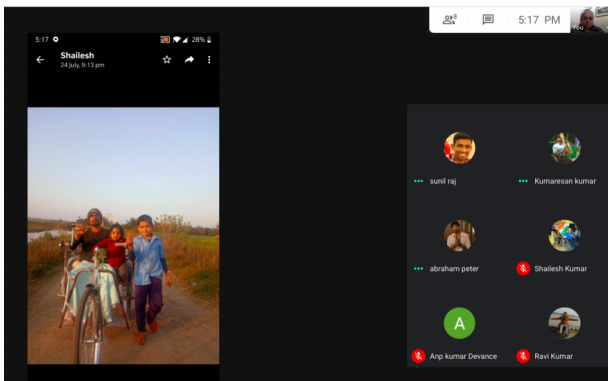
### The Right Connect

Matching Correct Peers for Guidance



### Touch REHAB

Knowledge Resources Project at R2D2, IIT Madras



### Touch FREEDOM

COVID-19 Outreach Enabling Independent Lifestyle



### The Spinal Foundation CEO

Enabled by a grant to develop the national organisation



# CELEBRATION of 30 YEARS

## LIFE on Wheelchair

S Vaidyanathan ● Founder, The Ganga Foundation ● IIM Bangalore Distinguished Alumnus Awardee



### QUALITY REHABILITATION

### DREAM TEAM 1990-2020



**Dr Suranjan Bhattacharji**  
Rehabilitation Leader



**Dr Henry Prakash**  
Physiatrist



**Dr Anand Viswanathan**  
Physiatrist



**Sheik Fareed**  
Caregiver



**Sunil Raj**  
Therapy Leader



**Shailesh Kumar**  
Peer Trainer



**Samson Daniel**  
Occupational Therapist



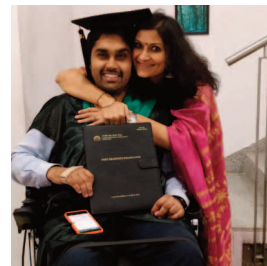
**Ramesh Sridharan**  
Physiotherapist



**Rani Alexander**  
Occupational Therapist



**Backiam Sathiakumar**  
Nurse



**Dr Divya Parashar**  
Psychologist



**Anand Samuel**  
Prosthetist & Orthotist



**Dr Guru Nagarajan**  
Social Worker



**Subha Venkatesan**  
Family Member



**Justin Jesudas**  
Para Sports Leader, Peer Mentor



**Dr Komal Kamra**  
Peer Mentor



## THE GANGA FOUNDATION

10 Years of Championing Quality Rehabilitation



## Inclusion Impact

## Highlights

### Acts of Support

**69,500 +**

Factoid for 2009-2020 on a conservative basis

### Lives Touched

**9,500 +**

Factoid for 2009-2020 on a conservative basis

#### NeoMotion Award-Grant Wheelchairs

The Ganga Foundation has been involved in the evolution of NeoMotion from the very first month of exploration of ideas; so it was gratifying to be a part of the program to give NeoFly, a world-class Made in India wheelchair as part of the Design: Impact Awards for Social Change by Titan Company in collaboration with Tata Trusts.



#### Creativity Undefined

Dr Komal Kamra, Co-Founder of The Spinal Foundation conceptualised this platform based on amazing work she observed in a networking initiative anchored by Kunilata Barik, a Peer Trainer engaged by The Ganga Foundation. Three Peer Trainers then helped to make it a powerful showcase at ISSICON 2020, an international Conference.

#### Privilege and Gratitude

Prof Rishikesha Krishnan took over as the Director of Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Bangalore amid the raging 2020 Pandemic that has reshaped education. It is a matter of privilege for The Ganga Foundation to have Prof Rishikesha Krishnan as a Strategy & Development Advisor. He was Director of IIM Indore (2013-2018).



## Inclusion Impact

## Highlights 2020

- 1 2020 Pandemic COVID-19 Guidance for several thousand persons with spinal cord injury.
- 2 2020 Pandemic Outreach Program launched with best-in-class peer trainers and therapists.
- 3 Independent Living Training at doorstep in virtual mode takes best expertise across India
- 4 16,000-plus acts of support provided to persons with spinal cord injury across India.
- 5 3,300 lives of persons with spinal cord injury touched in 2020.
- 6 713 home visits, physical and virtual, to understand needs of persons with spinal cord injury.
- 7 Footprint of Peer Trainers touches 900 + locations across India.
- 8 Even in restricted year, peer trainers visited 15 training centres across India.
- 9 Employment project partnership in Odisha leads to 32 job offers for wheelchair users.
- 10 Peer Trainers networking leads to Creativity Undefined platform showcasing talent.
- 11 30 persons with pressure ulcers healed at home with guidance and follow-up.



Imran Khan, Peer Trainer & Inclusion Advisor guided 150+ persons on marriage, sex and procreation



Kunilata Barik excelled in her full-time job, also a Peer Trainer, as a wheelchair marathon runner, in networking, creative work







## Inclusion Impact

## Factoids (2009-2020)

**12,750 +**

Experiences Shared - One-on-One

**3,700 +**

Persons guided - Rehabilitation Stage

**1,100 +**

Home Visits

**6,000 +**

Experience Sharing - Group Participants

**40**

Restoration of Acutely Damaged Lives

**400+**

Marathon Experience

**41,000 +**

Tele-Guidance to Live Well with Spinal Cord Injury (including repeat callers)

**260 +**

Peer Mentors across India

**780 +**

Mobility Aids

**360 +**

Enabling Livelihood



Facilitation - Quality Rehabilitation Centres

### On The Anvil Peer Trainer Centres

#### Works in 2020 - Spinal Cord Injury

**16,000 + acts of Support**

#### Type of Work

#### Persons

Rehabilitation & Experience Sharing	1200 +
Mobility, Livelihood, Education, Sports	434
Participants in Networking and Virtual Meets	1000 +
Ongoing Guidance & Knowledge Sharing	3000 +
Networking & Guidance in Amputee Space	996
Sexuality and Spinal Cord Injury	200 +

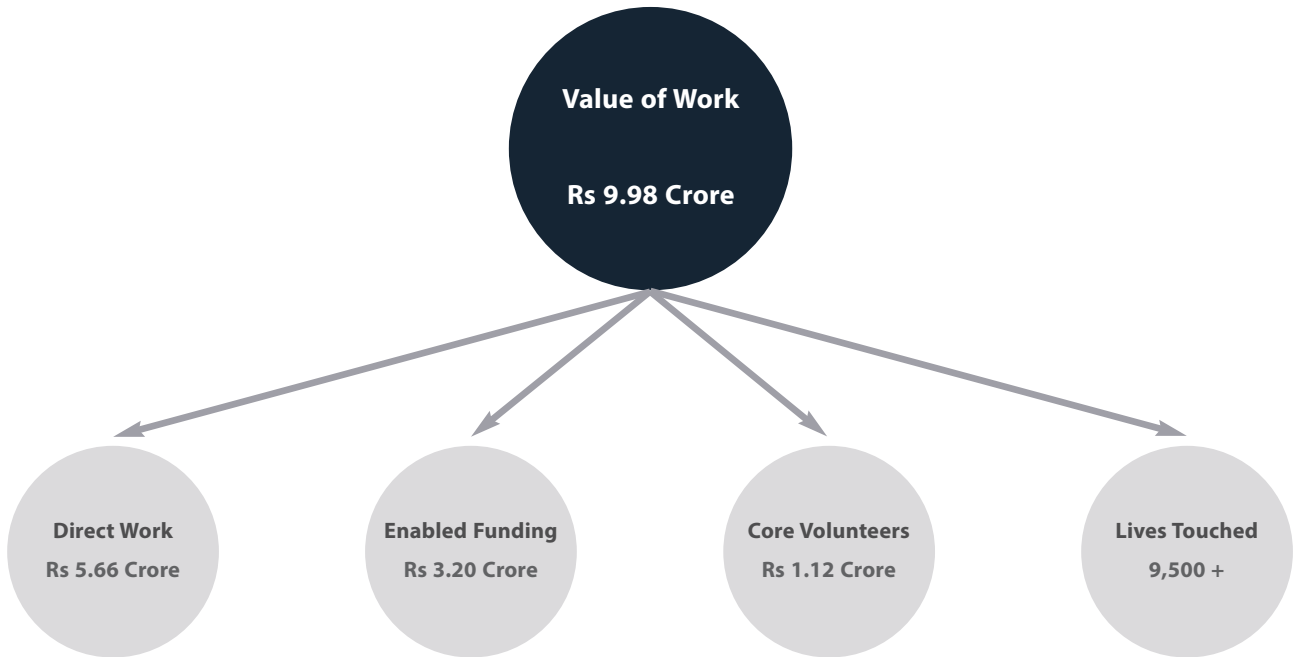




## Inclusion Impact

## Value of Work (2009-2020)

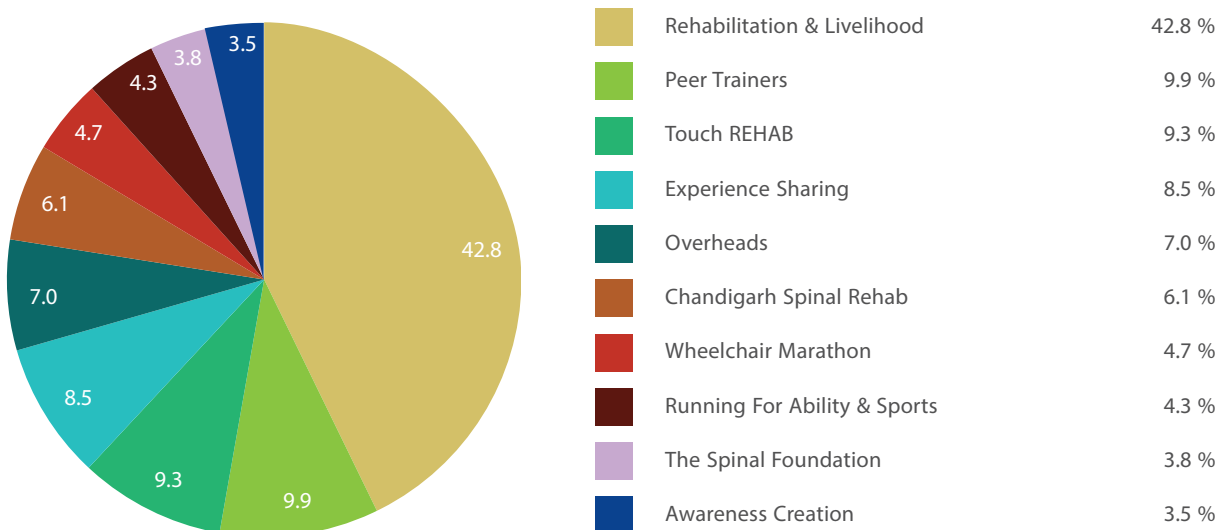
Enabling Living Well with Spinal Cord Injury is the focus of our work. Enabled funding has been arranged for good causes in the rehabilitation space, as The Ganga Foundation believes firmly in collaboration as the way to maximise impact.



In 2019, The Ganga Foundation has, on an extremely conservative basis, placed a value on the work done by core volunteers who have played near full-time roles on a pro bono basis in shaping the work. Their work is instrumental in overheads being less than 10% so far. Information presented from 2009 to December 2020 is based on audited accounts till March 2019, and the bank statement for April-December 2020.

## Direct Work

## Flow of Each Rupee





## Inclusion Impact

Passion, empathy, youthfulness, 'amazing energy' (as our first employee, Anumeha Srivastava puts it), imagination, positive attitude, active lifestyle, pushing beyond comfort zone, interaction, fun and style are attributes that define The Ganga Foundation team.

**62**

Team Members

**12**

Core Volunteers

**42**

Full-Time Paid Roles

**Class II onwards**

Education

**44**

Wheelchair Users

**79%**

Persons with Disabilities in Team

**11**

Persons Paralysed Neck Down

**19%**

Female in Team

**21 – 56 years**

Age Range

**650 + and counting**

Years with Spinal Cord Injury

**21**

States

**0 – 31 Years**

Work Experience





## Key Partners

## Empowering Essential Soft Skills



Rehabilitation Expertise



Spinal India Peer Trainer



Spinal India Peer Trainer



Corpus Donation



Touch REHAB



The Right Wheelchair



Wheelchair | Kickstart Life



Quality Rehabilitation



Wheelchair | 50% Subsidy



Wheelchair | Kickstart Lifestyle



Mobility & Research



Spinal India Peer Trainer

### Back The Right Wheelchair for Landscape Shift

The backing of Kotak Mahindra Bank and FLEX for providing Quality Wheelchairs at higher price points and help stamping out abysmal quality wheelchairs offers a great reference point for CSR Programs to follow than just donate for the largest number of wheelchairs for a given amount.



## Champions 2020

## Diverse Drivers of Footprint

In an extraordinary challenging year, persons with diverse expertise played a massive role in shaping the work of The Ganga Foundation in the spinal cord injury space. It would be great to have 100 such champions every year.



**Prof Prakash Bagri** Mentorship on marketing and story-telling for start-up aspirants in The Ganga Foundation ecosystem



**Maneesh Oberoi** His mastery of Respiratory Illness (his brother's H1N1 Swine Flu) shaped COVID-19 Guidance



**Mangaiyarkarasi** Her husband, Manigandan, took care of himself as she spent 50 days to help a peer in emergency



**Himanshu Chakraborti** A Class of 1991 Alumnus of IIM Bangalore, he ran to raise funds for at least 50 wheelchairs



**Sashank Vaibhav Allu** In the 2020 Pandemic, Sashank is the bastion on technology for Touch FREEDOM & Registry Project



**Swaminathan** An IIM Bangalore and IIT Madras Alumnus, and Technology Advisor for The Ganga Foundation



## Inclusion Impact

## Call to Action

Each of us can make a contribution to ensuring the well-being of persons with spinal cord injury. At least 90% hail from economically challenged background, and the injury also aggravates financial stress. Here are a few ways you can support.



**Gift Independent Living Training Hour**

Rs 500



**Support A Necessity – Sitting Cushion**

Rs 1,000



**The Right Wheelchair – Kickstart Life**

Rs 8,000



**The Right Wheelchair – Kickstart Lifestyle**

Rs 40,000



**Livelihood for One Person**

Rs 20,000



**Gift Networking & Health with a Smartphone**

Rs 8,000





## Baby Blessings



**Sathana**

Blessing for Yuvarani and Vinoth Kumar

## Facilitating Safe Childbirth



**Joy Blesson**

Blessing for Selvi and Livingston

### Prof Vatsala Nagarajan's Baby Sneha Visakha

Prof Vatsala Nagarajan who had a long teaching stint at IIM Bangalore and her husband Nagarajan, both 80-plus, were at Vishranthi, an elderly-care home near Bangalore. About 30 months ago, a baby, all of five days, was abandoned by parents who were daily labourers. The baby was born with Spina Bifida that leads to paralysis.

Five surgeries and a shunt in the brain, all in the first nine months, gave Sneha Visakha a chance in life. Today she is a vibrant and active child, has access to the very best in rehabilitation and HOPE is even stronger that she will live to her fullest potential.

The Ganga Foundation is privileged to be a part of the life journey of Sathana, Joy Blesson and Sneha Visakha.

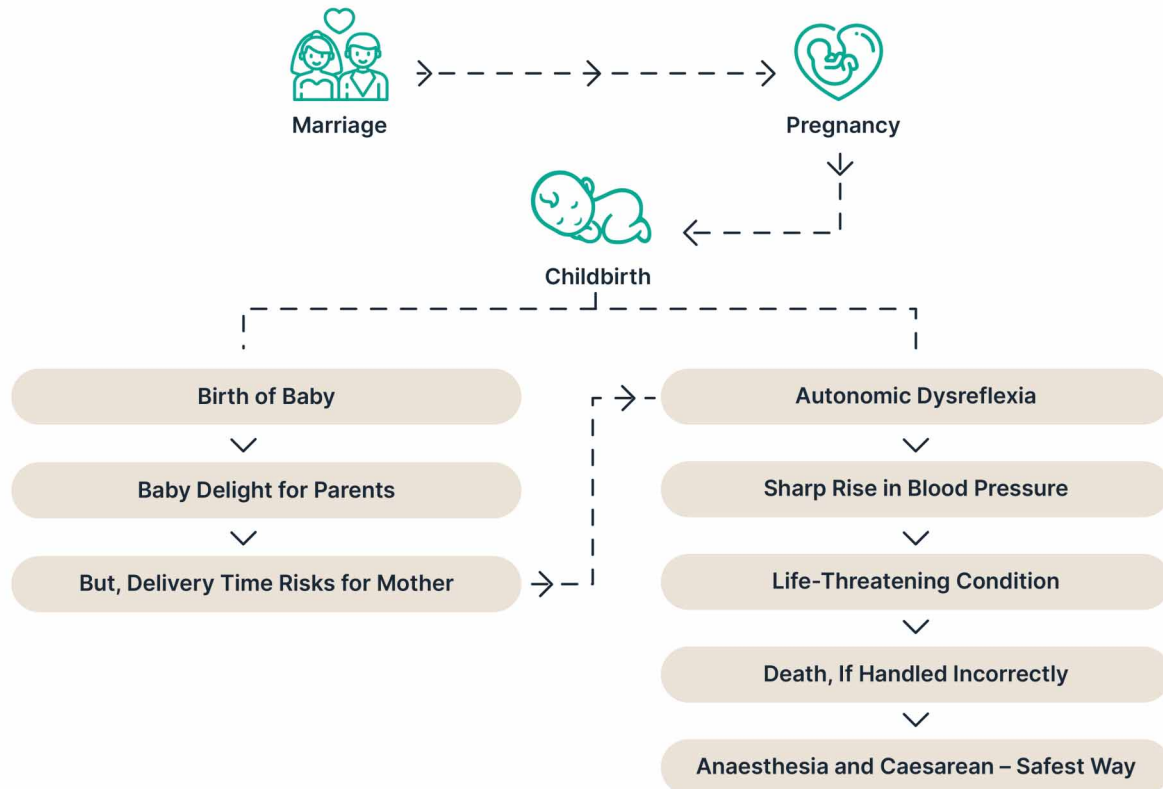




## Baby Blessings

## Optimal Risk Management

### Lady with Spinal Cord Injury



#### Woman with spinal cord injury delivers baby at CMC

... was diagnosed by doctors at the Christian Medical College (CMC) in Vellore, with a bone cyst in her spine leading to her becoming a paraplegic in 2011. Nine years later, the woman in her 20s, delivered a baby (on 23 April 2020) at the same hospital where she learned to become independent in mobility and self-care.

Women with spinal cord injuries (SCI) do have obstetrical challenges. But with increased awareness and support, they can have maternal experiences similar to their able-bodied counterparts, doctors say. "We have documented only three to four spinal cord injury patients having successful pregnancies in the past 25 years," Dr Henry Prakash M, Professor, Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, and Deputy Medical Superintendent, CMC, said.

"Many women who receive spinal cord injuries are in their childbearing years. A survey of women who delivered children after SCI showed that 96% of them had stated that becoming a parent improved the quality of their life," Dr Henry Prakash M, Professor, Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, and Deputy Medical Superintendent, CMC, said.

They are prone to complications such as urinary tract infections, bed sores, and deep vein thrombosis during the course of pregnancy. During labour, one should watch for a serious complication of autonomic dysreflexia (severe headaches, very high blood pressure, flushing, sweating), he added. There is a lack of awareness among even the medical community, he noted. "People living with disability are knowledgeable about their condition and listening to their views on management will optimise their care," he said.

Source The Hindu (22 May 2020). This is an edited version.



## Storyboard 2020

## NO Vision, YES Vision

Harsha is paralysed below the waist and is vision impaired.

Janathul Firduous is paralysed below the waist and is vision impaired.



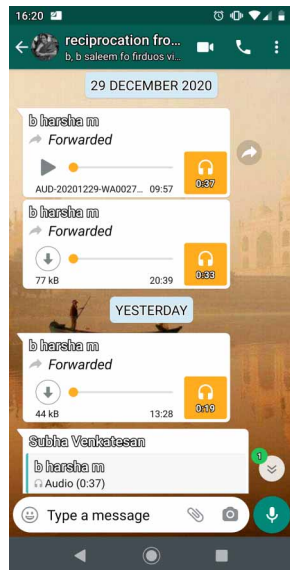
Harsha had the right guidance and support, and is now a post graduate.

Janathul, 13, has never been to school. COVID-19 made it impossible in 2020 too.



Harsha, using Touch FREEDOM (Virtual Mode Training), now teaches Braille and English to Janathul.

### Learning Tools: WhatsApp, LOUIE Voice Control



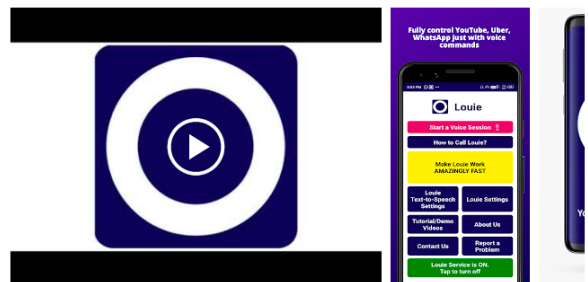
LOUIE VOICE CONTROL your Apps with voice commands (Early Access)

Visioapps Technology Productivity  
Everyone

- This app is in development. It may be unstable.
- This app is compatible with your device.

Add to wishlist

Install



## Storyboard 2020

## A Marriage, A Peer Trainer

On 10 December 2020, Balaji and Bhavatharani were happily married in a simple ceremony.

It was the culmination of an 24-month journey.

Subha Venkatesan, a Peer Trainer (last image from the top on the right) engaged by The Ganga Foundation, played a crucial role in paving the way for the wedding.

In her ongoing work with persons with spinal cord injury (300-plus and counting), she reckons this bond to be the work that has given her greatest joy and satisfaction.

### Key steps that she initiated were:

- Encouraging Livelihood
- Bridge between families
- Sensitisation
- Changing mindsets
- Clearing misconceptions

Balaji is a person with neck-down paralysis and runs a small business near Krishnagiri.





## The Spinal Foundation CEO Role

## Enabled By A Grant



The Spinal Foundation is the national organisation for persons with spinal cord injury in India and the vision of Dr Suranjan Bhattacharji, the former Director of Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore. The vision for a national organisation for spinal cord injury in India was articulated by him first in May 1991.

Justin Vijay Jesudas (Justin) is the first CEO of The Spinal Foundation with effect from 26 November 2020. Justin, aged 40 years, brings rich credentials:

- An Alumnus of the Global Sports Mentoring Program, a top diplomatic initiative of the Department of State, United States of America (U.S.A.).
- An International Para Swimmer and Rifle Shooter with many medals at the national and international level.
- A role model for persons with spinal cord injury everywhere by leading a lifestyle marked by almost complete independence for a quadriplegic and living to his fullest and highest potential at every step.
- An out-of-the-box thinker with a penchant for practical



and affordable ideas for Independent Living in the spinal cord injury space.

- A senior corporate professional with a distinguished career of about two decades in organisations such as Cognizant, UBS and RRD.
- A dreamer who has given up a corporate career to pursue his passion of working for good causes that will touch lives in a positive, meaningful and sustainable way.

And yes, Justin has, at best, minimal hand movements, and no finger movement.

He does showcases the Possibilities of Life.

With this role and a person with impeccable credentials taking over at the helm, The Ganga Foundation believes the grant has created possibilities for scaling up the work at the national level. The Spinal Foundation, a registered society, was inaugurated in May 2014 on the birthday of Dr Mary Verghese, the Visionary Doctor on Wheelchair and the pioneer of holistic rehabilitation in India.



## 2020 Pandemic Story

## Community-Led Restoration

### Loganathan's Community-Led Restoration

- But for COVID-19, Loganathan may have withered away in his tent.
- He was discovered by Pasumaikudy while giving essential materials.
- Abandoned, he was living in a plastic tent with an infected rod in the spine.
- From his cot, he was doing everything. But a bed sore got added to the woes.
- Sadiq Ali, founder of Inaintha Kaigal, Karur, galvanised awareness of his condition.
- His treatment for life-threatening condition was delayed by COVID-19.
- Finally, at Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore, he was healed.
- The wife of a person with spinal cord injury graciously stayed in hospital.
- Expert advice and community-based support enabled him to become independent.
- Local community has stepped forward to build a one-room home.

### Community Network for Loganathan

- Shepherds
- Mangaiyarkarasi , wife of a person with spinal cord injury
- Pasumaikudy
- Inaintha Kaigal, Karur
- Step Forward & Reach Out
- The Spinal Foundation Network
- Subha Venkatesan & Kumaresan, Peer Trainers
- Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore
- Touch REHAB
- The Ganga Foundation





## 2020 Pandemic COVID-19

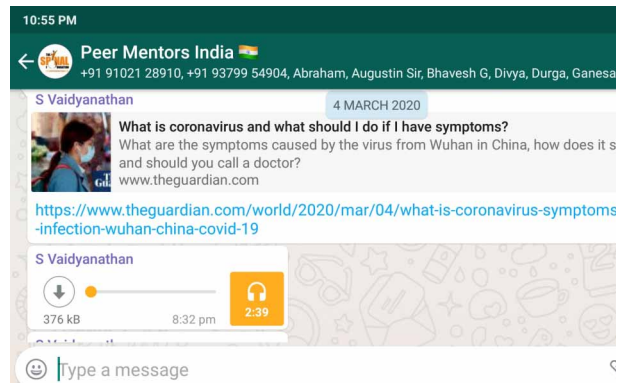
## Facilitating Guidance

Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) will always mark the year 2020 for posterity. With the network of The Spinal Foundation and backing of rehabilitation experts, Quality Guidance was provided to persons with spinal cord injury across India by Peer Trainers.



### Amit Oberoi's Respiratory Illness in 2019

His experience enabled the early guidance on 4 March 2020



### First Guidance - 4 March 2020

4 March 2020: Cases – India 29 and Deaths – India 0



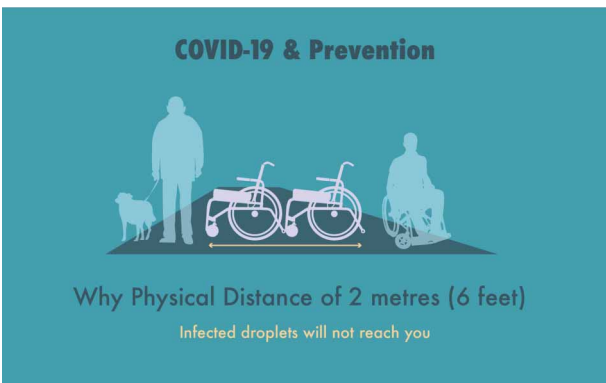
### Best Minds Summit 2020 – COVID-19 Guidance

Virtual Meet and Spinal India Bridge Calls



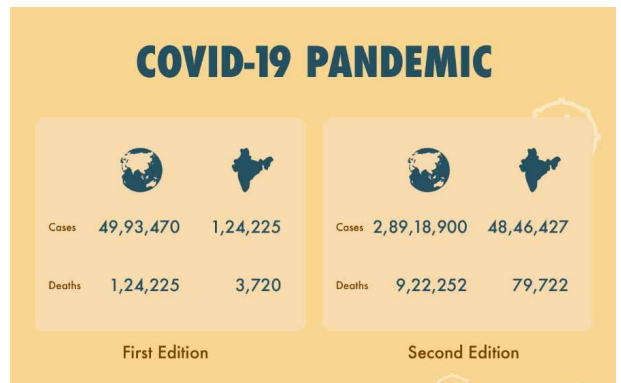
### WHO Guidance in 13 Languages | Text & Audio

Widespread reach of audio, text, video guidance



### Physical Distancing of Six Feet + Mask + Hand Wash

Constant Messaging till today



### Regular Updates, Pan-India Training Calls | Constant

March 4 | March 15 | May 22 | June 15 | September 22 ...



## Touch FREEDOM

As persons with spinal cord injury have had difficulty in accessing Quality Rehabilitation due to COVID-19, travel restrictions, reduced bed capacity and risks, The Ganga Foundation launched an outreach program as part of Touch REHAB.

Touch FREEDOM = User Experience + Quality Team + Backing of Medical Expertise + Technology = Best-In-Class Care at Doorstep

### Touch FREEDOM

- Independent living training
- Bladder management
- Sexuality, procreation
- New Injury Guidance
- Fracture management
- Pain management
- Collaborative with traditional rehabilitation centres
- Psychological guidance
- Expert advice bridge
- COVID-19 infection
- Chronic Kidney Disease
- Livelihood enhancement planning

## COVID-19 Outreach at Doorstep



**Sakthivel** (Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu)  
Stepped out independently for the first time in 17 years



**Charumathi** (Tiruchirapalli District, Tamil Nadu)  
High degree of independence, part time job, household work



**Baldev Ram** (Jodhpur District, Rajasthan)  
Independent, weaving cots, driving tractor, innovative person



## Touch FREEDOM

## COVID-19 Outreach Team



**Shailesh Kumar**  
Independent Living Trainer



**Kumaresan**  
Independent Living Trainer



**Nuruddin**  
A Quadriplegic Trainer



**Ravi Kumar**  
Independent Living Trainer



**Beena B K**  
Nurse & A Quadriplegic



**Imran Khan**  
Sex and Procreation Trainer



**Deepak Sharma**  
Pressure Ulcer Trainer



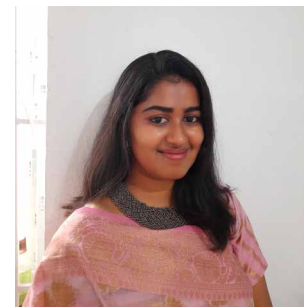
**Kritika Jain**  
Independent Living Trainer



**Reggie Arnold Nongsiej**  
Independent Living Trainer



**Akbar Rath Behera**  
Independent Living Trainer



**Shiny Mary**  
Independent Living Trainer



**Sunil Raj**  
Independent Living Advisor

### Listening, learning, training, empowering, enjoyable, eye-opening

Abraham Peter, an Occupational Therapy Alumnus from Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore was the first leader of Touch FREEDOM team that focussed on enabling independent lifestyle. "I was pleasantly surprised of how much we were able to touch lives in virtual mode."





## Inclusion Impact

## Lifestyle

- 1 I have spent 15 years after my spinal cord injury in one room. I thought that was life.
- 2 I never ever imagined that I would study at an Indian Institute of Management (IIM).
- 3 After meeting Kasinathan (Peer Trainer), I want to lead as vibrant a lifestyle as he does.
- 4 I was able to have the best and safest possible delivery of my child amid COVID-19.
- 5 I have lost 10 years though brilliant at school. I am now sure of making up lost time.
- 6 My pressure ulcer was healed by the Peer Trainers without even going to a hospital.
- 7 My colleagues at work treat me as an equal. I am happy to be in a job.
- 8 I received excellent guidance and support when I went through a COVID-19 infection.
- 9 I never wanted to go out though my husband wished us to. Now I wish to be out.
- 10 I am on a wheelchair and outdoors after 17 years. I also make artificial jewellery.
- 11 I wish to live and be as active as Shailesh and Kumaresan, Peer Trainers.
- 12 I had best-in-class guidance within 36 hours of my cousin brother's spinal cord injury.

### India Spinal Cord Injury Registry

If we are to avoid the trauma of Paramjeet Kaur who got rehabilitated 18-and-a-half years after her spinal cord injury, the most important need is the establishment of an India Spinal Cord Injury Registry. This must be mandated by the government and needs robust advocacy.





## Inclusion Impact

## Thought Leadership

Since 2009, The Ganga Foundation drives focussed initiatives towards accomplishing the vision of enhancing the quality of life of persons with spinal cord injury. Each of them has shaped well, though the journey ahead is still long and arduous.



# 100 WHEELS

### Touch REHAB

User-Focussed, Best Practices | Spinal Cord Injury



### Touch FREEDOM

2020 Pandemic Outreach – For Users, By Users

### 100 WHEELS

Possibilities of LIFE – A Showcase



### The Spinal Foundation

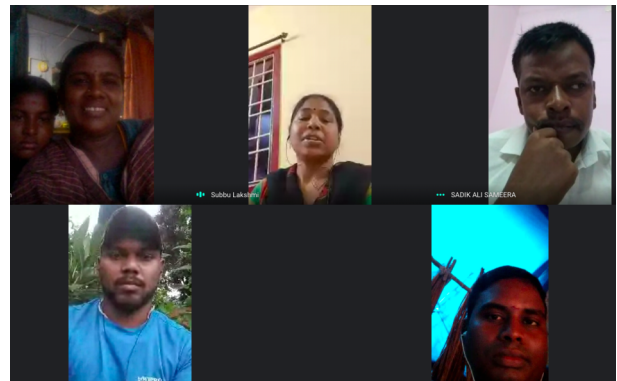
Collaborative Platform of Peer Organisations & Peers



## SPINAL INDIA PEER TRAINERS

### Spinal India Peer Trainers

Mentoring & Training Across India



### Spinal India Virtual Outreach

Expanding Home Visits Footprint





## Inclusion Impact

Since 2009, The Ganga Foundation drives focussed initiatives towards accomplishing the vision of enhancing the quality of life of persons with spinal cord injury. Each of them has shaped well, though the journey ahead is still long and arduous.



### Dr Mary Verghese Award

Excellence in Empowering Ability



### The Right Wheelchair

Transform The Health-Damaging Wheelchair Landscape in India



### Running For Ability

Fitness & Endurance-Running Platform



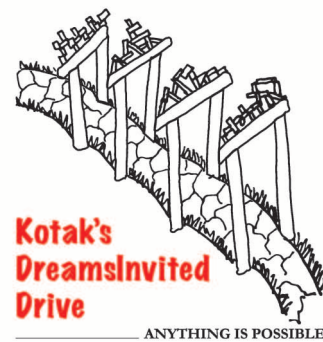
### Chandigarh Spinal Rehab

Quality Rehabilitation Plus Model



### Best Minds Summit

Thought Leadership & Strategy Platform



### Kotak DreamsInvited Drive

Beyond The Comfort Zone Outreach





SPINAL CORD INJURY ECOSYSTEM © 2010 – 2020

**Pan-India Landscape**

- 2020** Touch REHAB
- 2020** Touch FREEDOM
- 2020** Spinal India Virtual Outreach
- 2018** Best Minds Summit
- 2014** The Spinal Foundation
- 2012** India Spinal Cord Injury Registry (Pilot)

**For Users, By Users**

- 2017** Inclusion Role Model
- 2016** Spinal India Peer Trainers
- 2016** Quadriplegic Skills Trainer
- 2014** Peer Mentors India
- 2014** Training Peer Trainers
- 2012** The Right Connect
- 2010** Spinal India Livelihood

**Networking**

- 2019** Spinal India Bridge
- 2010** Spinal Care India
- 2010** Spinal India Helpline
- 2010** Spinal India Networking Meets

**Experience Sharing**

- 2018** The Duncan Hospital, Raxaul, Bihar
- 2018** Community Centres in Karnataka
- 2016** SVNIRTAR, Olatpur, Odisha
- 2010** Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore
- 2010** Rehabilitation Institute (REHAB)



**Beyond The Comfort Zone**

- DreamsInvited Drive **2020**
- Wheelchair Marathon **2015**
- Running For Ability **2012**

**Quality Mobility Devices**

- ARISE Standing Wheelchair **2019**
- NeoMotion **2016**
- The Right Wheelchair **2016**
- R2D2 at IIT Madras **2015**

**Rehabilitation Expertise**

- Rehabilitation Experts Board **2018**
- Championing Quality Rehabilitation **2016**
- Chandigarh Spinal Rehab **2016**
- Rehab Professionals Mentorship **2010**

**Awareness Creation**

- 2020 Pandemic & Spinal Cord Injury **2020**
- 100 WHEELS **2019**
- Beyond The Ramp **2016**
- Spinal India Quarterly **2014**
- Dr Mary Verghese Award **2012**

**Advocacy**

- CAT Disability Services **2017**
- World Spinal Cord Injury Day **2016**
- India Spinal Cord Injury Day **2014**

## Rehabilitation Experts Board

In order to bring the best-in-class rehabilitation experts and peers who are Living Well with Spinal Cord Injury, The Ganga Foundation has put together the Rehabilitation Experts Board that will advise on the direction of work.



**Dr Suranjan Bhattacharji**  
Physiatrist  
Rehabilitation Leader



**Dr Abhishek Sanyal**  
Physiatrist  
Outreach & Rehabilitation



**Dr G Balamurali**  
Spine Surgeon  
Director, iSpine India



**Sunil Raj**  
Therapy Leader  
Chandigarh Spinal Rehab



**Ramesh Sridharan**  
Physiotherapist  
Beyond The Comfort Zone



**Samson Daniel**  
Occupational Therapist  
Clinical Specialist, IIT Madras



**Dr Divya Parashar**  
Rehabilitation Psychologist  
HOPE & Forward-Looking Way



**Sister Backiam Sathiakumar**  
Rehabilitation Nursing Expert  
Repository of Native Wisdom



**Subha Venkatesan**  
Family & Caregiver Expert  
A Peerless Role Model



**Swostik Sourav Dash**  
Mobility Solutions Expert  
Co-Founder, NeoMotion

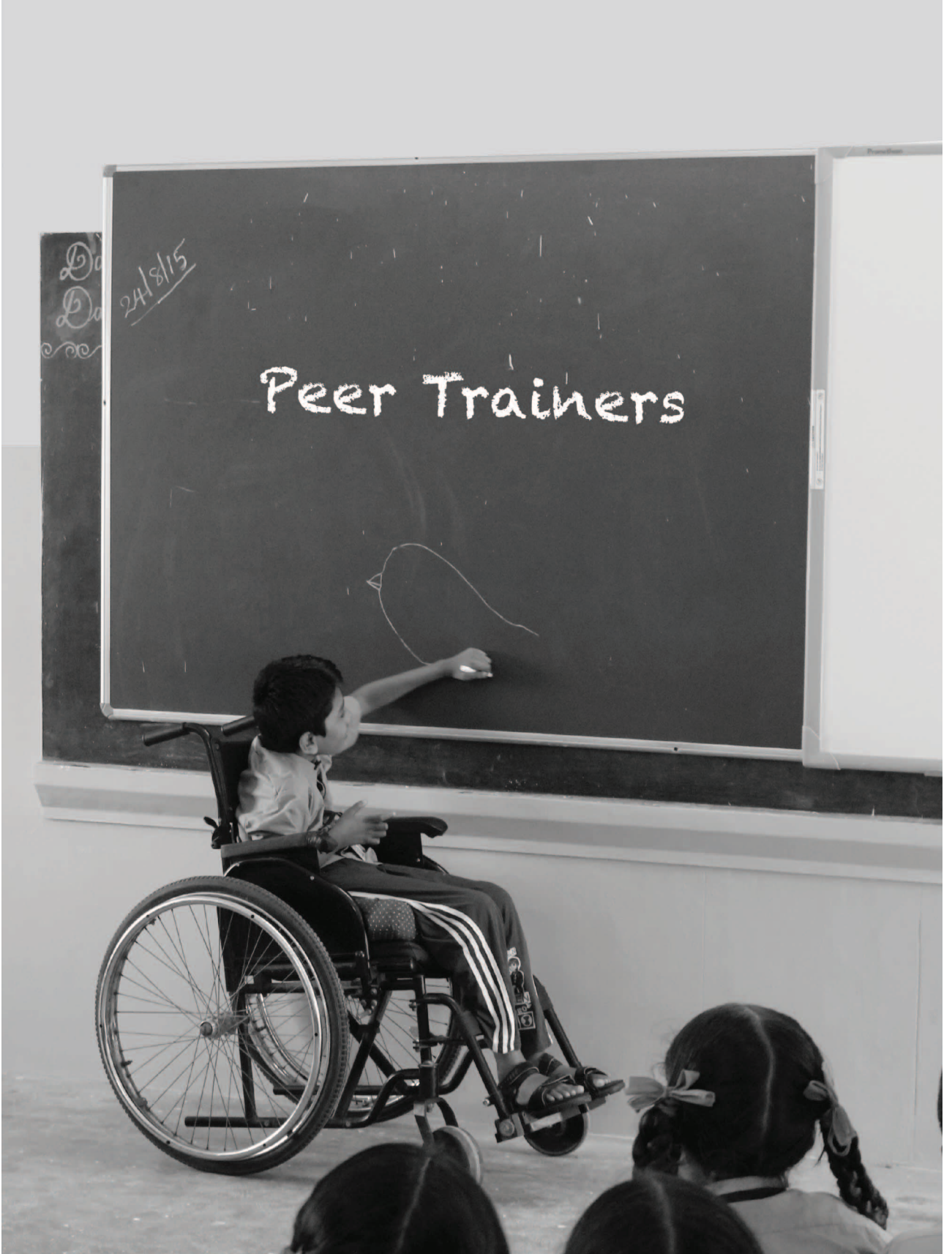


**Manoj Dawar**  
Peer Mentor  
Gym Owner



**Dr Komal Kamra**  
Co-Founder  
The Spinal Foundation







## Spinal India Peer Trainers

## Factoids 2020

Spinal India Peer Trainers is the core outreach program enabled by The Ganga Foundation so as to reach Quality Rehabilitation expertise and best practises of Living Well with Spinal Cord Injury across India.

**16,000 +**

Number of Interactions

**3,300 +**

Number of Unique Persons

**713**

Home Visits (In-Person plus Virtual Mode)

**1,200 +**

Awareness of Rehabilitation

**25 + States**

Geographic Footprint

**1,000 +**

Bedsores – Most Common Problem

**1,200 +**

New Injury Guidance

**200 +**

Sexuality and Spinal Cord Injury



Peer Trainers have a photoshoot with Manoj Dawar (third from left), a Peer Leader, after having deep conversations with him



Peer Trainers display their wheelchair skills and stylish lifestyle at Konark, Odisha



## Spinal India Peer Trainers

## At Work



Community outreach work with the hospital in East Champaran District of Bihar



A person with spinal cord injury getting training in doing wheelies that will help you cross hurdles



If the outside world does not offer accessible toilets, training in how to manage outdoors is critical



At a get-together of persons with spinal cord injury in Karnataka with a couple of Peer Trainers



An image that tells tale - you can get across any terrain even if the wheelchairs are not good provided the mind is willing



A senior Peer Trainer observes a discussion among persons with spinal cord injury at a community training facility





## Spinal India Peer Trainers

## At Work



Managing to eat roadside as a group as equals in the community and in sizeable numbers



A Peer Trainer evaluates the steep ramp and the risks that it poses to the wheelchair user and suggests modifications



Two active Peer Trainers take a young boy who was confined to home for four years into muddy terrain near salt pans



Networking meeting of persons with spinal cord injury in Odisha in a picturesque setting



A Peer Trainer holds the thrall of therapists with his skills in getting onto the wheelchair from the floor



Four wheelchair users and four wheelchairs packed into auto rickshaw showcasing possibilities in travel





### Spinal India Peer Trainers

### Team's End-To-End Expertise

Independent Living

Lifestyle Conversations

The Right Connect

Livelihood

Community Integration

Marriage, Sex, Procreation

Family Interaction

Wheelchair & Cushion

Adaptive Devices

Home Modifications

Wheelchair Skills

Outdoor Mobility & Travel

Para-Sports

Strength & Stretch Program

Nutrition & Hydration

Marathon Running



zoom



New Injury Management

Log Rolling

Rehabilitation Guidance

Skin Care

Pressure Ulcer Management

Bladder Management

Supra Pubic Catheterisation

Urethral Indwelling Catheter

Intermittent Catheterisation

Bowel Management

Scrotal Inflammation

Autonomic Dysreflexia

Urinary Tract Infection

Temperature Management

First Actions – Health Issues

Emergency – Zero Urine Output

#### Spinal India Bridge Facility

Bridge Facility was rolled out in December 2019 to enable easier connectivity with persons with spinal cord injury. It was optimally used to provide COVID-19 guidance across India. Regular training and guidance calls are organized. Trainers connects daily to have quality fun time also.



## Spinal India Peer Trainers

## What They Do

- 1 Home Visits to understand ground realities and needs
- 2 Showcase Possibilities of LIFE with spinal cord injury
- 3 First Talk on living with spinal cord injury
- 4 Importance and facilitation of Quality Rehabilitation
- 5 Experience Sharing – stories of self and others with spinal cord injury
- 6 Teach basics of skin care, bladder and bowel management
- 7 Guidance on bed sore management, urinary tract infections
- 8 Steer persons away from fraudulent, expensive ‘treatments’
- 9 Need for and what is The Right Wheelchair and The Right Cushion
- 10 Community interaction and home modification / improvisation
- 11 Networking with peers and the community
- 12 Emergency and access to rehabilitation expertise

### Peer Trainer Impact: Sunil Raj, Head – Therapy, Chandigarh Spinal Rehab

“At Chandigarh Spinal Rehab, but for the presence of Peer Trainers – Shailesh Kumar and Kumaresan – the level of rehabilitation outcomes would have been 40% of what we have accomplished. Just seeing them lifts confidence. Their training has more impact.”



## Addressing Real Felt-Need

## Guidance on Sexuality

Spinal Cord Injury causes impairment of sexual function but is rarely discussed during rehabilitation though many are eager. We are bridging this gap and conservatively guided 200+ persons with spinal cord injury.



**Penile Ring** Imran Khan demonstrating use of silicon penile ring which helps in sustaining erection for longer duration.



**Umar and Imran** Possibilities after Spinal Cord Injury. Imran's dotting son Umar, age three, makes his family and life complete.



**Vacuum Pump (Vaculect)** FDA approved Vaculect device alleviates the concern on getting erection after spinal cord injury.



**Umar** is a constant in the work of Imran Khan's work. And he presents photo opportunities galore every day.



**Vibrect** Ejaculation can be achieved with use of vibratory devices like Vibrect. Planning for baby just got easier!



**Possibilities After Spinal Cord Injury** Sex? Marriage? Baby? Check Check! Family of Anil Amrawat from Uttar Pradesh.



## Sports Trainer

## Pioneering Role for Spinal Cord Injury

One of the top three wheelchair basketball players in India, Ramesh Shanmugam, was engaged to train persons with spinal cord injury. COVID-19 forced a pause after 40 days and his first training camp, which was in Odisha.



### Ramesh Shanmugam

Ramesh Shanmugam had his left leg amputated at above the knee due to an accident at age 8. He has handled this adversity brilliantly to become an international wheelchair basketball player and is delighted to play and coach in his passion sport.



## Occupational Therapist View

## Shailesh Kumar, Peer Trainer



**Shailesh, Lead Peer Trainer** An Independent View

### Emily Lunden

Emily Lunden, who is an Occupational Therapist at St. Luke's Rehabilitation Institute in Spokane, Washington, USA, was on a two-week expertise sharing visit to Chandigarh Spinal Rehab in February 2020. This is an edited version of her blog post, and is first independent view on the work of Shailesh Kumar since 2014.

"A hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles." – Christopher Reeve

This young man is not someone I have known my whole life, nor is he anyone I really know that well, to be honest. His English is better than my Hindi, but still the language barrier leaves us lacking in the area of communication. He is not a hero to me because of anything he has sacrificed on mine behalf, or any contributions he has made to my personal development. He is a hero to me because I admire his courageous attitude, outstanding achievements, and noble qualities. His name is Shailesh.

It would probably take me another week of Sundays to write the whole laundry list of achievements that this young man has already accomplished in life. To name a few, at age twenty seven he is the first Indian to complete a full marathon in a wheelchair (3 hours and 58 minutes), he holds the speed record in India for half marathon in a wheelchair (1 hour 44 minutes).

He is a spinal cord injury peer mentor to over 2,000 persons across India, and the list goes on. Shailesh was injured in 2011 in a freak accident that left him with a thoracic level spinal cord injury. Since that time, he has dedicated his life to supporting and educating others with spinal cord injury about the value of rehabilitation and proper health maintenance.

Although his list of accomplishments is impressive, it is not what impress me most about this young man. His tenacity to overcome the obstacles of the situation he suddenly found himself in is incredible and inspiring. The sacrifices he makes to support and encourage others who have found themselves in a similar situation is humbling.

When he is not off competing in sporting events or races, he is teaching all wheelchair users higher level wheelchair skills such as wheelies, ramp / stair management at Chandigarh Spinal Rehab.

Without fail, Shailesh always has a dimpled smile spread across his face, indicative of the cheerful attitude in which he seems to approach life. I have lived a small snippet of life in India and I know from first-hand experience that it can be a challenging place for an able-bodied person to live, but the challenges of life in India do not seem to impact his attitude or ambition in life.

I think one of the other characteristics of heroes is that when we hear or experience their stories, we are left wanting to be a bit more like them. I know I'd be a better person if I had a little more of my father's sacrificial attitude and grace when things don't go my way. I also believe that if I adopted a little more of Shailesh's incredible attitude (especially in the face of adversity) and a little more of his dedication and passion to serving others, I'd also be a better person for it.

Shailesh, my friend, thank you. Thank you for your amazing perseverance, your willingness to encourage others, your humility, and your consistently positive attitude. You are what heroes are made of... no cape needed.

Source:

<https://ofcurryandcustoms.blogspot.com/2020/02/not-all-heroes-wear-capes.html?m=1>

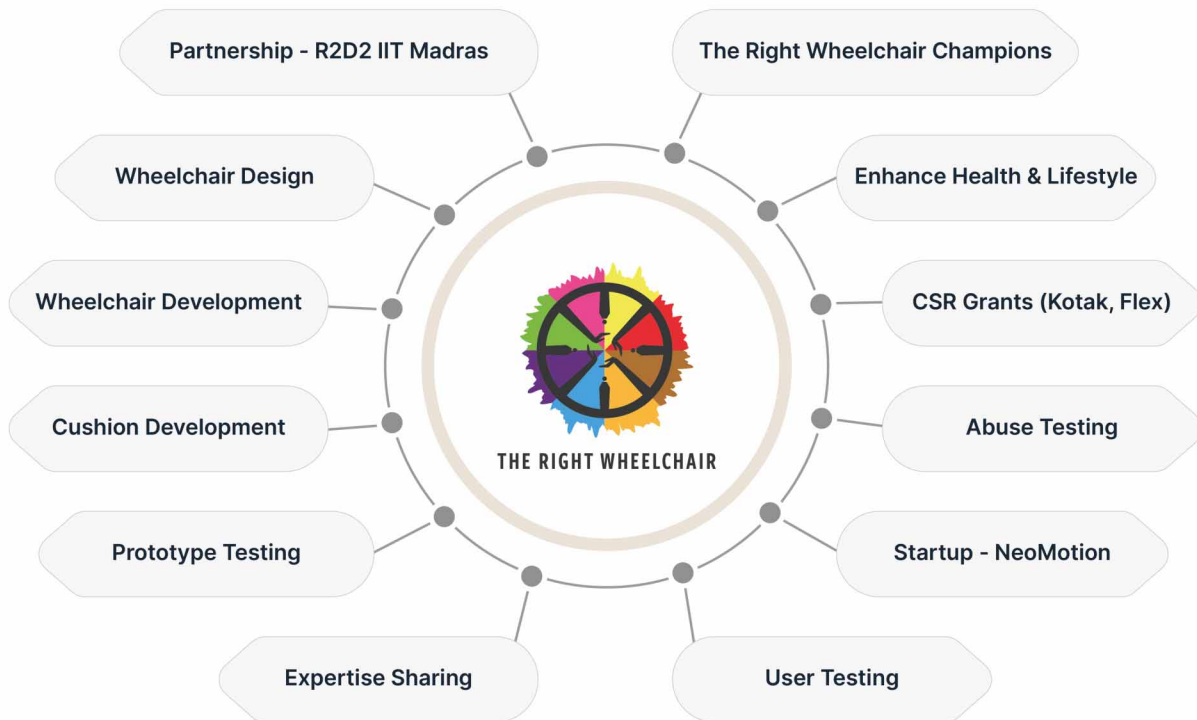
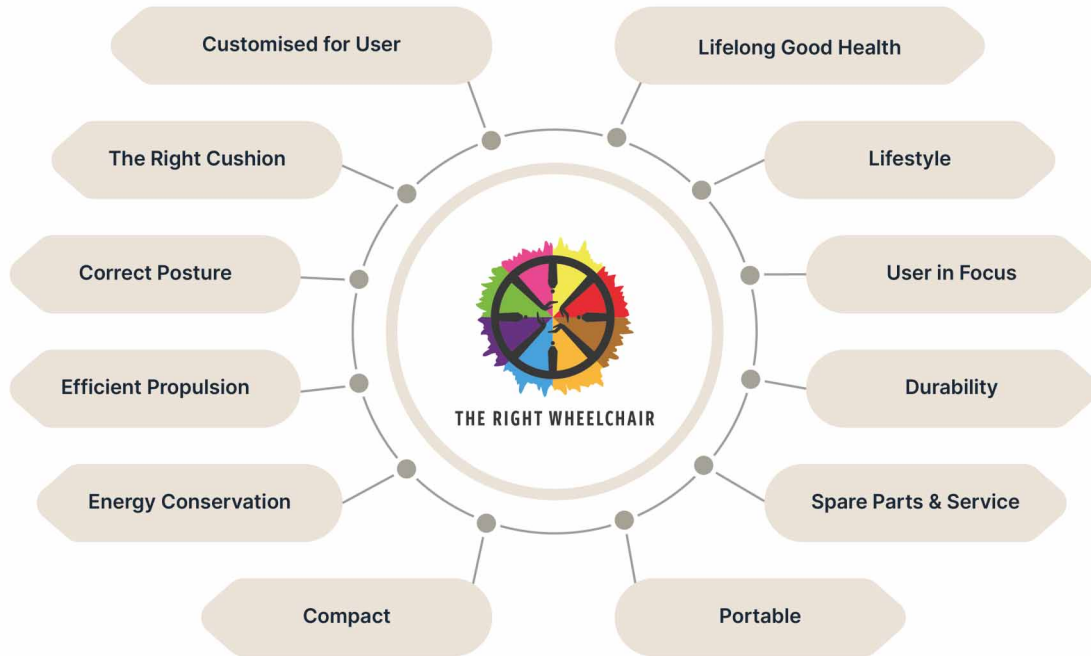






## The Right Wheelchair

## Ecosystem + Awareness





## The Right Wheelchair

## Enhancing Health + Lifestyle

NeoMotion, an IIT Madras Start-Up, makes world-class wheelchairs (NeoFly). To create an ecosystem on the need for high quality wheelchairs, 61 persons with spinal cord injury were enabled with NeoFly in the year 2020.



**Jayakumar** (Tamil Nadu) Student at the top end of his Class IX making light of neck-down paralysis



**Insha Bashir** (Jammu & Kashmir) Member of India Women's Wheelchair Basketball Team. She had an injury at age 15



**Ajay Jakkar** (Haryana) Just how he has survived no rehabilitation for seven years, massive bed sores is HOPE



**Kiruthika** (Tamil Nadu) Livewire on wheels who runs a small livestock business and also manages the house work



**Amarjeet Singh** (Bihar) Teacher in a school in a small village and a change agent for good for many in his area



**Prashanta Nayak** (Odisha) Farm worker and ultra-marathoner with 88.2 km run on 15 August 2018



## The Right Wheelchair

## Enabling Health

Forza Freedom 5000 is a good starting wheelchair for any person as it makes for good posture and decent propulsion efficiency. These are made by Forza Medi. 152 wheelchairs of Forza Freedom and Invacare Action 2NG were provided across India.



**Mahendran S**

Pennathur, Vellore District, Tamil Nadu



**Lalita Agrawal**

Kiraoli, Agra District, Uttar Pradesh



**Baibhasui Rana**

Mahule, Bargarh District, Odisha



**Samaresh Kar**

Gangutia, Paschim Medinipur District, West Bengal



**Naresh Vyas**

Brahmapuri, Udaipur District, Rajasthan



**S.Gobi**

Gollalakuppam, Tiruvallur District, Tamil Nadu





## 100 LIVES

## Life Beyond Spinal Cord Injury

100 Lives aspires to touch lives of 100 persons with spinal cord injury by focussing on three key essential needs:

- Enabling Quality Rehabilitation to restore lives
- Education for children with spinal cord injury
- Education of children of persons paralysed neck down due to spinal cord injury

Here are a few lives touched by 100 LIVES in 2020.



**Manickavasagam** In his 40s, he is a doting father who has grappled with acute pain for four-plus years and is better now



**Vijay Kumar**, father of Manoj, who sustained a spinal cord injury at about age five, got best-in-class care for health issue



**Abutaleq Gazi** He lives in a small village about 100 km away from Kolkata. Abutaleq is almost independent now



**Anup Kumar** Living without a wheelchair in a small village in Bihar for 10 years, Anup is now active in the community

### Be a Partner in 100 Lives

Enable such impact on 100 Lives by supporting this project. Each life will require two months of rehabilitation. Rs 30,000 is what it takes to ensure Quality Rehabilitation for one month. If you wish to support 100 Lives, please drop a message to 9677 199 299



## Empowering Ability

## Partnership with SVNIRTAR

At Swami Vivekanand National Institute of Rehabilitation Training and Research (SVNIRTAR) in Odisha, Peer Trainers engaged by The Ganga Foundation – Kamal Kanta, Kunilata Barik and Udaya Kumar Rout – empower persons with spinal cord injury.



### 4218 km Wheelchair Running in 2020

Kamal Kanta, Lead Peer Trainer at the Swami Vivekanand National Institute of Rehabilitation Training and Research and India's first ultra-marathon runner (88.2 km) set an example by logging 4218 km in 2020 on his NeoFly wheelchair, unassisted.



### 3,000-plus km Outreach by Tricycle

### COVID-19 Cuts 50%

**Kotak DreamsInvited Drive**, Pioneering Initiative Ganesh Murugan and Kasinathan, two Peer Trainers engaged by The Ganga Foundation, championed an initiative to do Chennai – Kanyakumari – Chennai on tricycles. The goals were to showcase possibilities for wheelchair users and also do a meaningful outreach program to visit and meet 120-plus persons with spinal cord injury at their homes so as to pick up grassroot insights. As they were taking different routes each way so to maximise footprint, they were to cover 3,000-plus km. As Ganesh and Kasinathan reached Kanyakumari, COVID-19 was at a nascent stage and a decision was taken to freeze the 2020 Kotak DreamsInvited Drive at Kanyakumari. They did 65 home visits and interacted with 75 persons with spinal cord injury.



## Chandigarh Spinal Rehab

## Pushing The Frontiers

Chandigarh Spinal Rehab, an initiative of Sai Aasra Paraplegic Rehab Centre, led by the imaginative and dynamic Nicky P Kaur has made gratifying, multi-faceted progress in four-plus years, often pushing beyond the comfort zone.



### Exemplary Support

For Chandigarh Spinal Rehab, ICICI Bank set an excellent example in creating a support system to take care of the compensation for a high quality therapy team for two years. We deeply appreciate the understanding shown on the importance of Quality Rehabilitation.



## Dr Mary Verghese Award

Dr Mary Verghese Award for Excellence in Empowering Ability was instituted in 2011. The presentation was put on pause mode between 2017 and 2019 for unavoidable reasons. Pandemic 2020 has delayed the decision on 2019 recipient.



Dr Mary Verghese Award aspires to perpetuate the legacy of Dr Mary Verghese, the Visionary Doctor on Wheelchair



Dr Mary Verghese Award Foundation is an initiative of the Mary Verghese Trust and The Spinal Foundation



Recipients of Dr Mary Verghese Award receive a trophy and citation till 2023 as prize money is paused due to Pandemic



Awardee: For the 50th Year of Dr Mary Verghese Institute of Rehabilitation, Dr Sruti Mohapatra, Founder, Swabhiman



Awardee: Chandra Rao, Chartered Accountant, to mark 60 years of Living Well with Spinal Cord Injury. Injured at age 9



Awardee: Naseema Hurzuk whose injury at age 16 did not hold her back and Founder, Helpers of the Handicapped





## Running For Ability

## Chennai Marathon 2020

Running For Ability is a platform to encourage persons with spinal cord injury and other disabilities to take part in marathons. Starting with 2 in 2012, at the 2020 Chennai Marathon, the team had 130 persons with disabilities taking part.



Full marathon and 20-miler runners at the start point raring to go - a first in India when four wheelchair users are doing this



The first time two wheelchair runners to do the Full Marathon (42.195 km) Shailesh Kumar and Kamal Kanta



Meet Ravi Kumar and Rajeev Kumar from Bihar who completed 20 milers



Kunilata Barik is the first lady to a Half Marathon (21.097 km) on a wheelchair without assistance

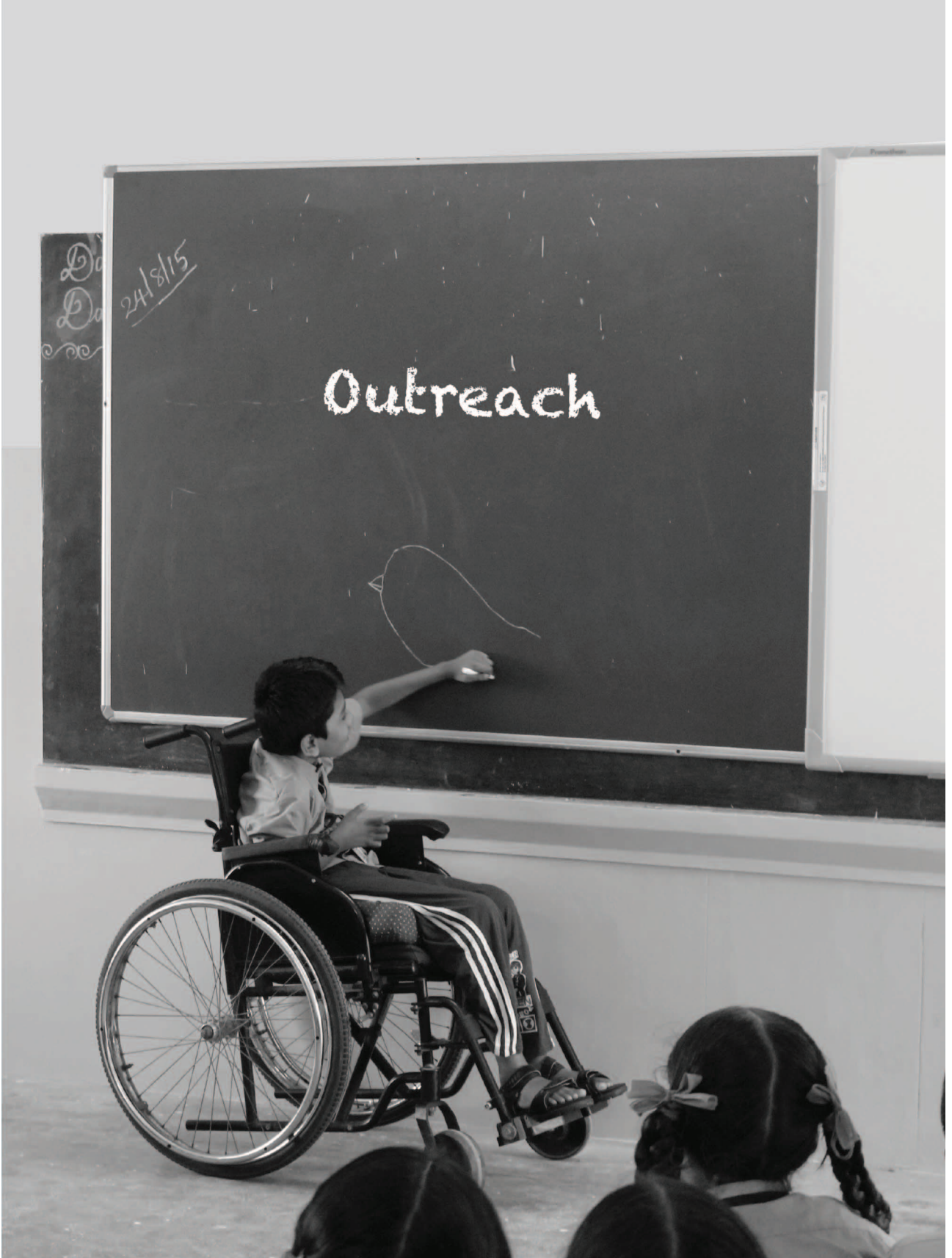


After full marathon, 20-miler and half marathon, there is still strength to demonstrate text book push-ups



India's first Half Marathon on a wheelchair was in December 2013. Nilesh Yadav completed the 100th in Chennai





## Home Visits

## Pillar of Outreach Work

Visits to homes of persons with spinal cord injury has been a pillar of The Ganga Foundation's outreach work. In 2020, the Peer Trainers did 96 homes visits and 617 virtual home visits post the onset of the 2020 Pandemic.



**Dinesh Kumar** with Peer Trainer Rajeev Kumar  
Nawada District, Bihar



**Saktivel** with Peer Trainer Ganesan Nagarajan  
Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu



**Ashutosh Bhardwaj** with Peer Trainer Ravi Kumar  
East Champaran District, Bihar



**Mithun Rawat** with Peer Trainer Apurba Samanta  
Paschim Medinipur District, West Bengal



**Bhagyashree Barik** with Peer Trainer Kunilata Barik  
Cuttack District, Odisha



**Samaresh Kar** with Peer Trainer Mithun Giri  
Paschim Medinipur District, West Bengal



## Inclusion Impact

## Expertise Sharing

The Ganga Foundation Team offers extensive expertise sharing for specific projects in rehabilitation, mobility devices and accessibility and also brings on board domain experts and experienced users to advance the quality and pace of work.

### Expertise Sharing – Empowerment

- Rehabilitation Research & Device Development, IIT Madras
- NeoMotion, IIT Madras Start-Up
- IIM Bangalore – Inclusion



### Expertise Sharing - Rehabilitation

- Chandigarh Spinal Rehab, Chandigarh
- APD, Bangalore, Karnataka
- Duncan Hospital, Raxaul, Bihar

### Expertise Sharing – Social Space

- Sevadharma
- DAWN Trust & Anugraha Home
- Chennai Runners



### World Spinal Cord Injury Day - September 5

The concept of World Spinal Cord Injury Day was pushed aggressively by The Spinal Foundation from August 2014. The idea gathered momentum. From 2016, September 5 is marked as World Spinal Cord Injury Day. Injury prevention and awareness are the focus.



## Inclusion Impact

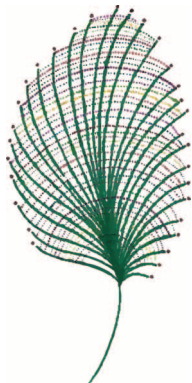
### Peer Trainers in Full-Time Roles

Peer Trainers sponsored by The Ganga Foundation play a full-time role in three rehabilitation centres in Bihar, Chandigarh and Odisha. They push the frontiers of Independent Living at home, in the community, travel, sports, arts, to name a few.



### Networking Meets

Networking meets of persons with spinal cord injury helps face-to-face interaction with peers, community integration and an opportunity for family members to share experiences. We had meets in Raxaul (Bihar) and Bhubaneswar (Odisha).



## Networking & Community



### Reaching Far and Wide

Five of the Peer Trainers covered eight other centres that work with persons with spinal cord injury. Such visits help spread user-based best practices and also indicate how it is possible to lead an active and healthy life with spinal cord injury.



### Best Minds Summit 2020

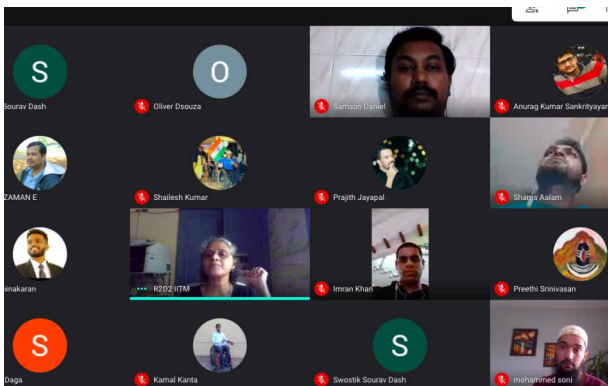
Best Minds Summit 2020 was in virtual mode with three select groups – framing appropriate COVID-19 Guidance for persons with spinal cord injury, digital outreach program for health and independent living and for quality mobility devices.



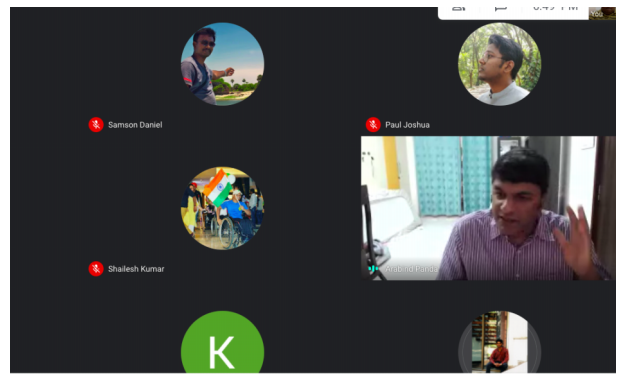
## Best Minds Summit 2020

## Virtual Thought-Sharing

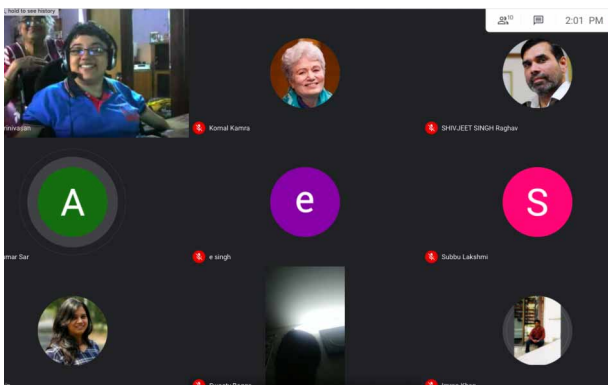
As a systematic plan to understand the needs and map strategy for enhancing the Quality of Life of persons with spinal cord injury, Best Minds Summit was launched in 2018 to bring the finest thought leaders in partnership with The Spinal Foundation.



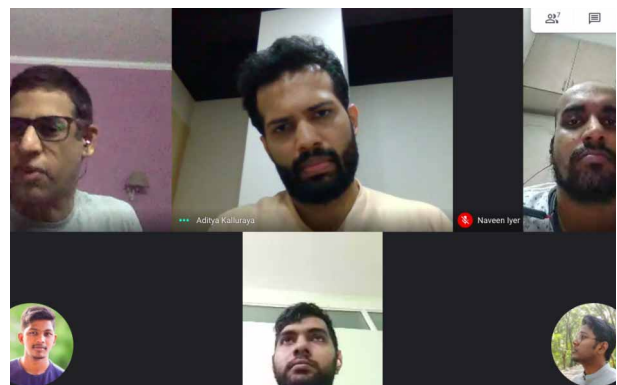
Insights and conversations on R2D2 at IIT Madras and NeoMotion, mobility devices start-up



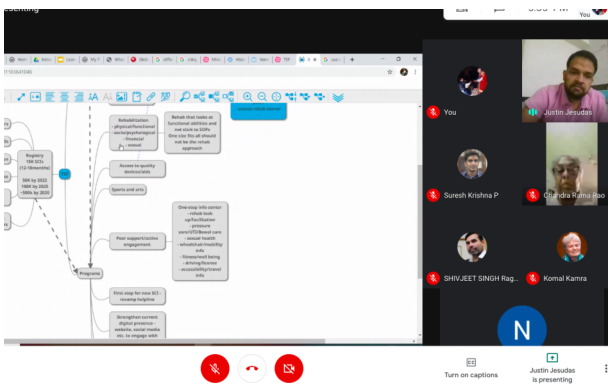
Expertise Sharing | Bladder Management & Spinal Cord Injury by Dr Arabind Panda for therapists from across India



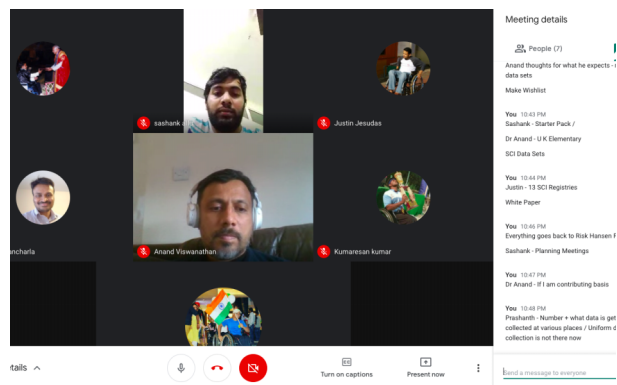
Brainstorming with leading peers with spinal cord injury in India on COVID-19 Outreach Program for 2020 Pandemic



Technology Platform for outreach program – brainstorming involving experts in technology, telecom, design and users

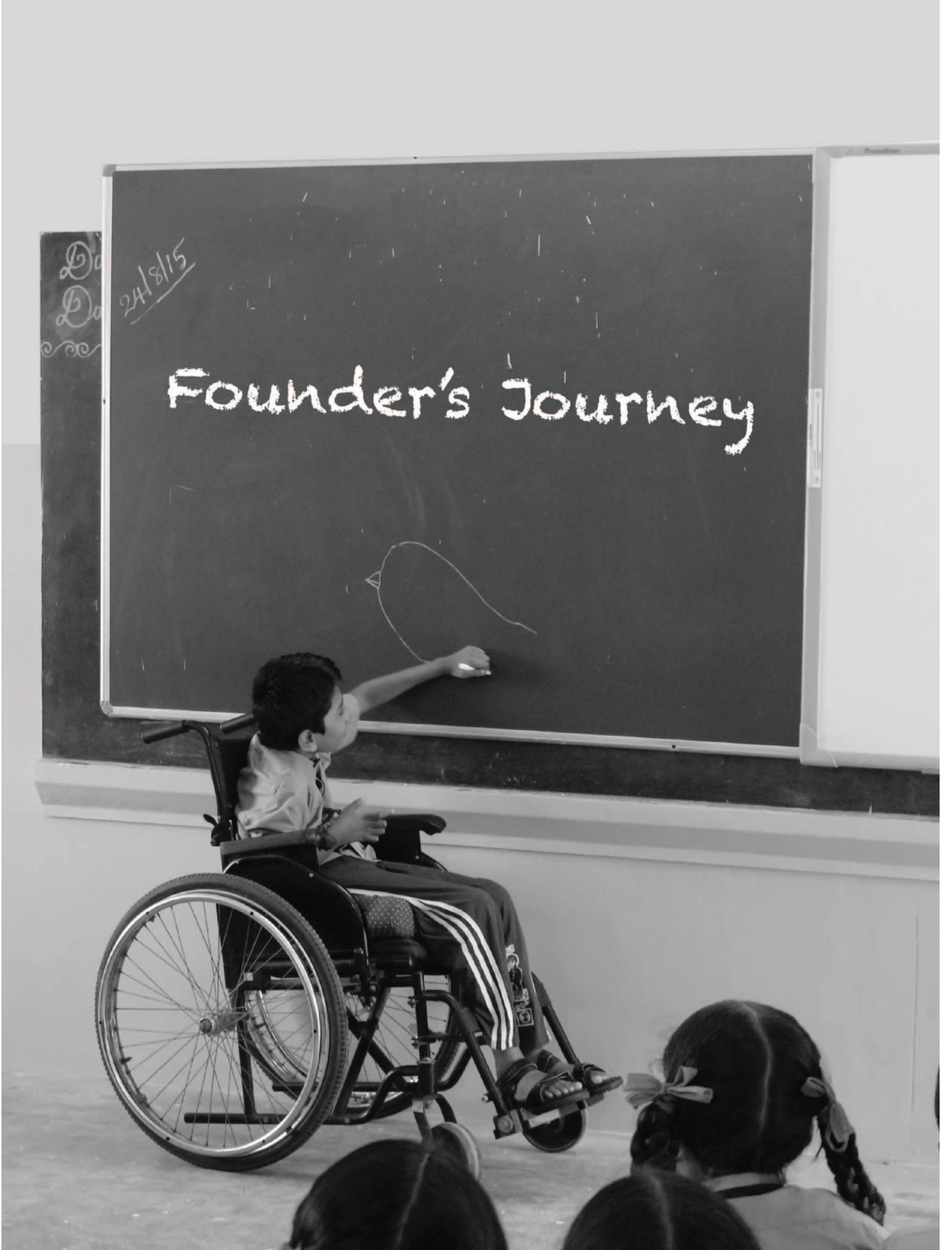


Conversations on prospective CEO for The Spinal Foundation, the national organisation for spinal cord injury



Conversations on India Spinal Cord Injury Registry with experts in medical, technology, storage and user experiences





## 30 Years LIFE on Wheelchair

**Safe Handling** Blessed to have been handled to perfection after my fall from the first floor at IIM Bangalore by my classmates – Nainesh Jaisingh, Sunil Nair, Narayan Bharathan, Sanjeev Agarwal (28 July 1990).



## Injury-Aftermath Blessings



**The Right Guidance** Courtesy Lakshmi, my sister, on day three after the injury I was at India's oldest and best rehabilitation facility that is a part of Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore. My family has been a great support (28 July 1990).

**Ganga, My Amma** In any adversity, you need at least one family member to look ahead and be courageous. My mother ticked off all boxes in a perfect way. That was a big step in my entire journey since the spinal cord injury (29 July 2020).



**Dr Suranjan Bhattacharji** "You will be able to go back to study at IIM Bangalore" –These were the first words at Vellore from an extraordinary human being at the hospital. I was ecstatic when it was a reality six months later (30 July 2020).



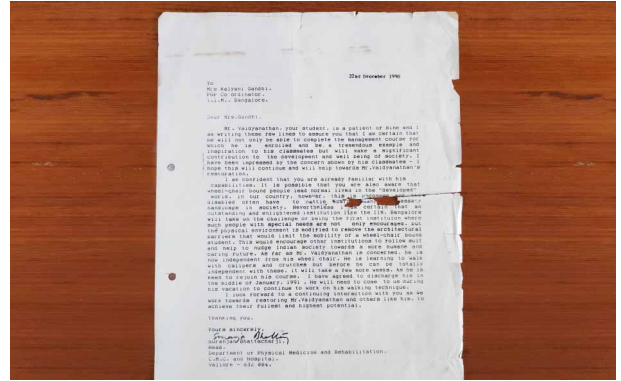




### 30 Years LIFE on Wheelchair

### Hurdles, Equality, Opportunity

**IIM Bangalore NO, Dr Suranjan Bhattacharji YES** The biggest challenge was IIM Bangalore's refusal to take me back. Dr Suranjan changed mindsets, and clinched readmission with a 343-word visionary letter (22 December 1990).



**Treated as Equal and Graduation** My mates at IIM Bangalore – Class of 1991 and Class of 1992 treated me as equal in every way and focused only on my abilities; so did the faculty, none more so than Prof Vatsala Nagarajan (1991 and 1992).

**No Job, Yes Job** If you thought being an IIM Bangalore Alumnus guaranteed a job, the answer was No for a wheelchair user in 1990. Now it is a little better. It took 22 months to find a job (December 1993).



### THE HINDU GROUP



**The Ganga Foundation** "As IIM Alumni, you will reach positions of influence in due course. You must do your bit to enhance the quality of life of persons with disability." - Dr Suranjan Bhattacharji's 1990 vision for Elango and Vaidy.





## 30 Years LIFE on Wheelchair

**India's First Half Marathon on Wheelchair** I am always a casual dabbler in sports, but I will always cherish becoming the first in India to do a Half Marathon (21.097 km) on a wheelchair, unassisted (1 December 2013).



**Passion with Spinal Cord Injury Peers** Having never met another person with spinal cord injury for 20 years till 2010, it has been a privilege to meet, interact and be friends with 3,000-plus persons with spinal cord injury (21 May 2010).



## Living To The Fullest Potential



**Yelagiri Hill Descent** For adventure, nothing beats the Yelagiri Hill descent on a wheelchair from 1.41 km above sea level, 14.2 km, 14 hairpin bends, upcoming traffic, edges leading to deep ditches and undulating roads (18 October 2015).



**IIM Bangalore Distinguished Alumnus Award** The Class of 1991 and Class of 1992 provided great support to The Ganga Foundation at their respective 25th Year Reunions, and it was capped by recognition by the Alma Mater (28 October 2018).



## Founder's Message



### S.Vaidyanathan

IIM Bangalore Distinguished Alumnus Awardee

Dear Friends

Our team and work we do is in the 'beyond-the-comfort-zone territory.' The 2020 Pandemic took us out of this comfort zone. And we are glad. New ways of working have been an eye-opener on what could be accomplished in years ahead.

- 1 Independent Living Training for persons with spinal cord injury through the virtual mode means best-in-class practices – the boundaries of what is practiced at the rehabilitation centre of Christian Medical College (CMC) Vellore and safe lifestyle practices of users – now has the potential to reach the home of every person with spinal cord injury anywhere in India.

If we can get a person who was confined to bed for 17 years outdoors and independent, it captures the possibilities of Independent Living expertise and technology in advancing lifestyle. I am aspiring to devote 1,000 hours in 2021 and connect with 1,000 persons with spinal cord injury.

- 2 Spinal India Virtual Outreach is a program of home visits and networking using Zoom / Google Meet. This helps to connect, understand grassroot realities and develop support networks with a reach several times that of a physical mode and a geographic footprint we could have never matched with conventional ways of working.

In a simple example, one such virtual home visit enabled us to save at least Rs 60,000 by delaying the visit to a rehabilitation facility so that person who had sustained a spinal cord injury one month before the call was ready to go and start training immediately.

- 3 Touch REHAB is a comprehensive platform under development in partnership with R2D2 at IIT Madras to provide best-in-class, evidence-based and user-driven practices in a manner that every user, irrespective of background, can understand and follow. This project has the backing of the very best medical professionals in the rehabilitation space.

Touch REHAB Knowledge Resources Project is seeded by a grant by The Ganga Foundation, made possible by the Class of 1992 at IIM Bangalore. Touch REHAB will be set up as a separate Not-For-Profit Section 8 Company.

Our team of 51 Peer Trainers is well trained for the digital world. We are at the cusp, and each of you could enhance the footprint of impact by joining the journey.



S.Vaidyanathan

Founder

The Ganga Foundation





## Trustee Report



**Suresh Krishnamurthy**  
Trustee, The Ganga Foundation

### Overcoming the Pandemic Adversity

The 2020 Pandemic triggered by COVID-19 presented unprecedented challenges. This pandemic has caused more misery to the deprived people at the margins of our society. This was even more reason to increase our efforts manifold. At The Ganga Foundation, through wholesale adoption of the virtual route, we touched 3,300 + lives in 2020.

Virtual meetings and Spinal India Bridge were the principal tools we used to further the aims of the Foundation. We are pleased that 47 of our 51 Peer Trainers at the end of 2020 are persons with disability.

Despite the pandemic, The Ganga Foundation's value of work increased in 2020 and we spent Rs 1.1 crore on rehabilitation related activities. The operating expenses to spend ratio remains amongst the best in India. This report contains details on the pattern of spend on page 18. In this report, we have anecdotally recorded several instances of how our intervention led to change. Through programs such as Spinal India Peer Trainers, The Right Wheelchair, Touch REHAB and through The Spinal Foundation, we continued to tie the Foundation's spends to bringing about meaningful change.

The year 2020 also saw material progress in our efforts to integrate into society people with spinal cord injury. The Livelihood & Education initiative led to employment opportunities for 32 persons with disabilities in Odisha. We also saw an increase in number of marriages among persons with spinal cord injury and commit to statistically document such social changes going forward. The Right Wheelchair initiative too led to support for 213 persons. This is in addition to the diverse and large outreach initiatives of our network of peer mentors.

Despite the challenges, we continued our engagement with Institutions too. We saw progress in engagements with IIT Madras, The Spinal Foundation and Chandigarh Spinal Rehab. We were not able to make any meaningful progress on a Centre for Rehabilitation Excellence, given the 2020 Pandemic; we aim to make a start in 2021.

Additionally, the success of efforts by us as well as similar-minded individuals and organizations have provided deep insights into how to scale up our reach. In particular, the combination of online and distributed model of outreach will prove to be transformational. Insurance is another area that we have identified, although it needs careful thinking and deeper financial support. In all, the year 2020 has led to breakthrough ideas in outreach that will produce meaningful outcomes at scale.

I take this opportunity to thank persons with spinal cord injury, donors, The Ganga Foundation's team, trustees, patrons, partners, peers, volunteers and members of the Rehabilitation Board for their contribution in 2020.

Wish you all a safe and healthy 2021!



Suresh Krishnamurthy  
Trustee  
The Ganga Foundation





## Leadership

The Ganga Foundation is blessed to have Trustees who bring a rich background in leading organisations, rehabilitation expertise, marketing, finance, compliance and research.

## Trustees



**Elango Thambiah**

Leadership – TATA & Airtel & Co-Founder, The Ganga Foundation



**Samson Daniel**

Occupational Therapist & Clinical Specialist, R2D2, IIT Madras



**B G Nath**

Alumnus, SPJIMR, Mumbai & Co-Founder, The Ganga Foundation



**R Sekhar**

Chartered Accountant & Consultant



**Suresh Krishnamurthy**

Finance Professional & Head – Global Research, CRISIL





## Leadership

Blessed to have thought leaders in education, governance, disability, employability, entrepreneurship, good causes, psychology and branding to empower The Ganga Foundation.

## Thought Leaders – Strategy



**Prof Rishikesh T. Krishnan**  
Director  
IIM Bangalore



**Shanti Raghavan**  
Founder  
EnAble India



**Shoma Bakre**  
Entrepreneur & Founder, Let's  
Do Some Good Foundation



**Atul Shinghal**  
Alumnus, IIM Bangalore  
CEO, Probe Information



**Anuradha Narasimhan**  
Alumnus, IIM Bangalore  
Good Causes Champion



**Dr Divya Parashar**  
Rehabilitation Psychologist  
Founder, Back 2 Fitness



**Jai Mukundan**  
Chartered Accountant  
Head – Internal Control, Volvo



**Sashank Vaibhav Allu**  
Alumnus, IIT Madras &  
Purdue University





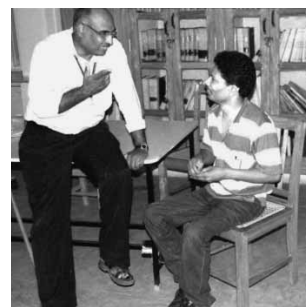
## Leadership

The Advisory Board of The Ganga Foundation brings on board persons of eminence who share their expertise and networking on a need basis regularly.

## The Advisory Board



**Dr Suranjan Bhattacharji**  
Physiatrist  
Rehabilitation Leader



**Dr Guru Nagarajan**  
Social Worker & Community  
Rehabilitation Expert



**Parakkal Unnikrishnan**  
Carnatic Musician  
Goodwill Ambassador



**Rasheeda Bhagat**  
Writer & Media Columnist  
Rotary News & The Hindu



**Sunil Gautam**  
Public Relations Expert  
Founder, Pitchfork Partners



**W S Ravishankar**  
Investment Specialist  
Banyan Tree Advisors



**S Ramakrishnan**  
Analytics, India Cricket Team  
Founder, SportsMechanics



**Jaskaran Singh**  
Alumnus, IIM Bangalore  
Associate, Goldman Sachs







## Empowerment Team



**S.Vaidyanathan**  
Inclusion Grassroot Leader  
Chennai, Tamil Nadu



**Imran Khan**  
Inclusion Advisor – Projects  
Ahmednagar, Maharashtra



**Shailesh Kumar**  
Inclusion Role Model & Trainer  
Shivlal Bigha, Bihar



**Sashank Vaibhav Allu**  
Inclusion Advisor – Technology  
Andhra Pradesh



**Akbar Rath Behera**  
Inclusion Therapist  
Vellore, Tamil Nadu



**Allepu Bharath**  
Peer Trainer  
Chinthala pally, Telangana



**Alok Kumar**  
Peer Trainer  
Faridabad, Haryana



**Amartya Sen**  
Peer Trainer  
Bhagabatipur, West Bengal



**Anil Kumar Amrawat**  
Peer Trainer  
Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh



**Anurag Sankritayayan**  
Peer Trainer  
Patna, Bihar



**Apurba Samanta**  
Peer Trainer  
Dubrajpura, West Bengal



**Balageetha G**  
Peer Trainer  
Manapparai, Tamil Nadu

### The Ganga Foundation Film

The Ganga Foundation focuses on supporting rehabilitation of persons with Spinal Cord Injury. Join hands with us with your ideas, time, resources, networking, influence, creativity, volunteering and giving. To know why, view The Ganga Foundation film at [www.thegangafoundation.org](http://www.thegangafoundation.org).



## Empowerment Team



**Beena B K**  
Peer Trainer  
Vettickal, Kerala



**Binod Kumar Lohar**  
Peer Trainer  
Hijuguri, Assam



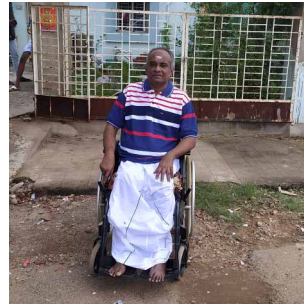
**Deepak Sharma**  
Peer Trainer  
Bankat, Bihar



**Dildar Ahmad Shapoo**  
Peer Trainer  
Jammu & Kashmir



**Edward Sigamani**  
Peer Trainer  
Vellore, Tamil Nadu



**Ganesan Nagarajan**  
Peer Trainer  
Manapparai, Tamil Nadu



**Ganesh Murugan**  
Peer Trainer  
K V Kuppam, Tamil Nadu



**Harsha & Anjali**  
Peer Trainer  
Chennai, Tamil Nadu



**Indu Devi**  
Peer Trainer  
Bankat, Bihar



**Kamal Kanta**  
Peer Trainer  
Niajpur, Odisha



**Kasinathan**  
Peer Trainer  
Ariyantangal, Tamil Nadu



**Kritika Jain**  
Therapist  
Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh

### Kannadasan

Kannadasan is a veteran in the spinal cord injury space pursuing his doctoral study at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. He works as Technical Expert for Tamil Nadu AIDS Control Society as a person engaged for the project by Hindustan Latex Family Planning Promotion Trust.



## Empowerment Team



**Kumaresan**  
Peer Trainer  
Natrampalli, Tamil Nadu



**Kunilata Barik**  
Peer Trainer  
Taradapada, Odisha



**Madhankumar P**  
Peer Trainer  
Chinnambedu, Tamil Nadu



**Madhuri Paturi**  
Peer Trainer  
Bangalore, Karnataka



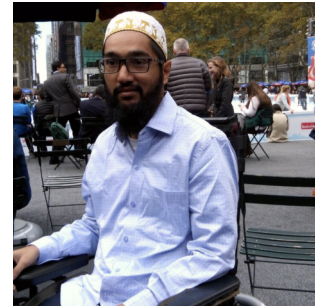
**Md. Dastagir Fasihuddin**  
Inclusion Manager – Outreach  
Chennai, Tamil Nadu



**Meera Srinivasan**  
Inclusion Treasurer  
Chennai, Tamil Nadu



**Mithun Giri**  
Peer Trainer  
Dhaneswarpur, West Bengal



**Mohammad Mustafa Soni**  
Peer Trainer  
Mumbai, Maharashtra



**Naresh Sundararaman**  
Peer Trainer  
Chennai, Tamil Nadu



**Naveen Iyer**  
Peer Trainer  
Chennai, Tamil Nadu



**Nuruddin**  
Peer Trainer  
Delhi



**Parbati Kairi**  
Peer Trainer  
Labac Te, Assam

### Making Possibilities Real for Persons with Spinal Cord Injury

For persons with spinal cord injury, Praveen Rajendran is the go-to man. Medical emergency to rescue in a flood to partying, Praveen does everything for them. If somebody has to be taken two floors up and down, even that would be done. He also runs for good causes through the year.





## Empowerment Team



**Parthasarathi**  
Peer Trainer  
Theni, Tamil Nadu



**Poornachandran Ganapathy**  
Peer Trainer  
Kumananthangal, Tamil Nadu



**Rajeev Kumar**  
Peer Trainer  
Beldhar, Bihar



**Raja Saha**  
Peer Trainer  
Giridih, Jharkhand



**Rajkumar**  
Peer Trainer  
Rohat, Haryana



**Ramesh**  
Peer Trainer – Sports  
Minnathampatty, Tamil Nadu



**Ravi Kumar**  
Peer Trainer  
Raxaul, Bihar



**Rayan Fernandes**  
Peer Trainer  
Udupi, Karnataka



**Sakthikumar Raja**  
Peer Trainer  
Rajapalayam, Tamil Nadu



**Satnam Singh**  
Peer Trainer  
Mannan, Punjab



**Sheik Fareed**  
Inclusion Caregiver  
Chengam, Tamil Nadu



**Shiny Mary**  
Independent Living Trainer  
Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

### Pillar of Support for Amputees

We are privileged to have Md Dastagir Fasihuddin as a member of The Ganga Foundation Team. In addition to his work for The Ganga Foundation, Dastagir is the backbone for networking and integration of persons with amputation across India touching about 2,000 lives.



## Empowerment Team



**Shubham Shankar Ware**  
Peer Trainer  
Pune, Maharashtra



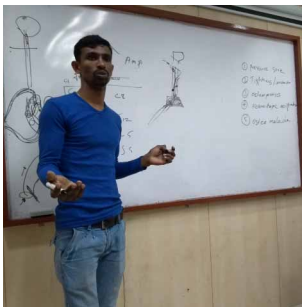
**Sivakumar T**  
Peer Trainer  
Keeranur, Tamil Nadu



**Sreedhar Raju**  
Peer Trainer  
Wardhannapet, Telangana



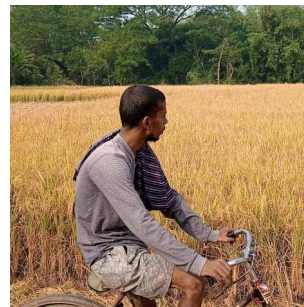
**Subha Venkatesan**  
Peer Trainer  
Pudukkottai, Tamil Nadu



**Sunil Raj**  
Independent Living Advisor  
Chandigarh



**Tarun Kumar**  
Peer Trainer  
Jaipur, Rajasthan



**Udaya Kumar Rout**  
Peer Trainer  
Jamdhar, Odisha



**Ved Prakash**  
Peer Trainer  
Seri, Himachal Pradesh



**Smita Vyas Kumar**  
Freelance Designer  
Mumbai, Maharashtra



**Paul Athisayaraj Joshua**  
Freelance Designer  
Marthandam, Tamil Nadu



**Karthikeyan M G**  
Freelance Designer  
Melapalaiyur, Tamil Nadu



**Vasanth Sankar**  
Freelance Designer  
Chennai, Tamil Nadu

### Vasanth Sampath

Vasanth is a Physiotherapy Alumnus of Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore and Cardiff University, Wales. He was instrumental in establishing Running For Ability, and stays a major contributor in the work of The Ganga Foundation.



## Venkatram, A Selfless Life

## Tribute



“I will give back and do my best for persons with spinal cord injury” – as a father, he could have derived immense satisfaction at just the fact that his son, Parthasarathi (in the image playing basketball), was sitting, an activity that appeared impossible. Yet, Venkatram in 2012, was looking beyond his son, despite also having the challenges of day-to-day existential needs for his family. Gratitude at its best was on display.

And he did what he promised till he breathed his last at about 7:00 pm on 19 July 2020 (Sunday) at his village in Theni District, Tamil Nadu.

Venkatram was set to join the Spinal India Peer Trainers Team in January 2021 to do home visits across Tamil Nadu. “I am willing to do anything in the cause. Just let me know” were his last words in our last call. This role was planned a week before his demise, as he was keen to devote the rest of his life completely in the cause.

In eight years, Venkatram, and his wife, Kumuda, touched the



lives of at least 100-plus persons with spinal cord injury across Tamil Nadu, liberally giving their time and skills. Add in at least a 100 lives touched by Parthasarathi, you get the sense of a special family. Parthasarathi is a member of India's Men's Wheelchair Basketball Team.

“Impressed with him as a high level basketball prospect, but also as a young man of character and substance,” the coach of Great Britain Women's Wheelchair Basketball Team (# 2 in the world) paved the way for Parthasarathi's admission at The University of Alabama, United States of America in 2019 on complete scholarship for a five-year program in Sports Science.

Six months after Parthasarathi joined the course, Venkatram was an integral part of a Chennai-Kanyakumari-Chennai trip of 3,000-plus km by tricycle by two of our Peer Trainers, Ganesh Murugan and Kasinathan.

On behalf of every stakeholder of The Ganga Foundation, we place on record our Deep Respect and Gratitude to Venkatram





## Volunteers

## Gratitude



**Chandan Mondal**  
Caring Human Being



**Pinky Biswakarma**  
Community Worker



**Sister Backiam Sathiakumar**  
Nurse



**Kuni Devi**  
SVNIRTAR Volunteer



**Dr K Karthik Kailash**  
Spine Surgeon



**Ramesh Sridharan**  
Therapist



**Dr Arabind Panda**  
Urologist – Expertise Sharing



**Dr Vinitha Varghese**  
Physiatrist – Expertise Sharing



**Vasan Subramanian**  
Touch REHAB Advisor



**Dayanand**  
Community Worker



**Sonu Kumar Dangi**  
Community Worker



**Seetha**  
Nurse

### Volunteering in 2020 Pandemic

In April 2020 when not much was known of COVID-19, Nagoorkani, who has two young children, took significant risk to take a pregnant girl with spinal cord injury to a couple of hospitals just a week before childbirth and supported several others. Deep Respect.





## Networking & Collaboration

## Thank You

### Corporate

Accel  
 Aditya Birla Fashion & Retail  
 Airtel  
 Banyan Tree Advisors  
 CL Educate  
 Delight Foods  
 Eventjini  
 FLEX  
 Fuel A Dream  
 FundsIndia  
 Grand by GRT Hotels  
 HK Strategies  
 ICICI Bank  
 IIMPOWER  
 Kotak Mahindra Bank  
 LetzChange  
 Marathon Needs  
 My Race Timing Solutions  
 NeoMotion  
 Pitchfork Partners  
 Quantum Leap  
 RAGE  
 Rane Group  
 Scripbox  
 Seed Design  
 Studio E  
 Sundaram Finance Group  
 Sustainable Square  
 Tata Tele-Services  
 VA Tech Wabag  
 Vindhya E-Infomedia  
 YouTooCanRun Sports Management

### Rehabilitation

APD, Bangalore  
 Broadwell Christian Hospital, Fatehpur  
 Chandigarh Spinal Rehab  
 Duncan Hospital, Raxaul  
 Ganga Spine Rehab, Coimbatore  
 Herbertpur Christian Hospital  
 Kauvery Hospital, Chennai  
 Nav Jivan Hospital, Satbarwa  
 REHAB, Tamil Nadu  
 SAHAI Trust, Coimbatore  
 Sawai Man Singh Hospital, Jaipur  
 Seva Dhama, Belthangady  
 St John's National Academy, Chennai  
 Swami Vivekanand NIRTAR, Olatpur  
 Swasraya, Vettickal

### Partners & Institutions

Class of 1991, IIM Bangalore  
 Class of 1992, IIM Bangalore  
 IIM Bangalore Alumni Association  
 IIM Bangalore  
 R2D2, IIT Madras

### Awareness Partners

Kamal Haasan  
 Unnikrishnan  
 Know Your Star  
 Suryan FM  
 The Better India  
 The Hindu Group  
 Vasanth

### Social Sector Organisations

Ability Foundation  
 Chandigarh Spinal Rehab  
 Chennai Runners  
 CRISIL Foundation  
 Dawn Trust & Anugraha Home  
 Divyang Foundation, Thodupuzha  
 Dr Mary Verghese Award Foundation  
 Dream Runners  
 EnAble India  
 ESCIP Trust India  
 HeART BEAT Foundation  
 ICICI Academy for Skills  
 I Am Possable Foundation  
 India Inclusion Foundation  
 Let's Do Something Good Foundation  
 Love and Acceptance  
 Mary Verghese Trust  
 Madras Management Association  
 Olcott Memorial School  
 Polagam Foundation  
 Rotary International District 3232  
 Sai Aasra Paraplegic Rehab Centre  
 Saksham Ek Abhiyan  
 SaveLIFE Foundation  
 Spinal Cord Injury - Telangana  
 Spinal Injured Persons Association  
 Spinal Jammu & Kashmir  
 St. Louis Institute for the Deaf & Blind  
 Swabhiman  
 The Challenging Ones  
 The Hope House  
 The Spinal Foundation  
 The Theosophical Society  
 Thee Trust  
 Trinity Trust  
 United Way Chennai  
 Vidya Sagar  
 WORTH Trust

