

Event Report

District Level Workshop Good Samaritan Guidelines *Challenges and Way Forward*

Issues Focussing on Good Samaritan

July 22, 2021, Ajmer

Background

In the past decade, over 13 lakh people have been killed due to road crashes in India. In the absence of an efficient Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system in India, the role of bystanders is crucial in saving the lives of victims in road crashes. As per the Law Commission of India, 50% of those killed in road crashes could have been saved, if rapid assistance was rendered. This assertion was also reaffirmed by World Health Organisation (WHO).

According to WHO, 50% of victims of road accidents die in the first 15 minutes due to serious cardiovascular or neurological injuries and the rest can be saved by providing basic life support during the ‘Golden Hour’. However, due to fear of harassment by police, detention at hospitals and prolonged legal formalities, bystanders are reluctant in coming forward to help accident victim on the road.

In 2012, a petition was filed in Supreme Court of India under Article 32 of the Constitution of India in public interest for the development of supportive legal framework for the protection of Good Samaritans, i.e., bystanders, who render help to the injured persons or a person in distress on the road. The objective of the petition was to create an enabling legal framework for the comprehensive protection of Good Samaritans from ensuing legal and procedural hassles. On March 30, 2016, the Hon’ble Court approved the guidelines and SOPs issued by Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. Under Article 141 of the Constitution, Hon’ble Court gave it ‘force of law’, thereby making it binding on all States and UTs of India and, therefore, instituting the Good Samaritan Law. In 2019, these guidelines ultimately became part of Motor Vehicle (Amendment) Act, 2019, by way of inserting a new Section 134A. But, on the whole, it is evident that there is little awareness about this new section on the rights of

Good Samaritan, which now fully protects those who selflessly and proactively come forward to assist injured persons on the road. Looking to the above facts and importance of the issue, CUTS implemented a project supported by Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Government of India, with a focus to spread awareness on the rights of Good Samaritan as enshrined in the M V Act, 2019.

The Ajmer workshop was the first in the series. The purpose of organising this workshop was to analyse the current opportunities, challenges and way forward related to rights of Good Samaritan.

Proceedings

The first district level workshop on **Good Samaritan** issues on road safety, supported by Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, was held on **July 22, 2021** at Cross Lane Hotel, Ajmer.

Raghvendra Singh Rawat, Secretary, Ajmer Jila Grameen Upbhokta Sansthan, Masuda, Ajmer, who was also the local coordinator of the programme welcomed all the guest participants and briefed them about the objectives of the workshop.



Later, welcoming the guest speakers and all the participants, **Deepak Saxena, Assistant Director, CUTS International**, briefly introduced the objectives of the workshop. He provided a brief introduction of each guest speaker. Saxena said that every injured citizen brought for medical treatment should instantaneously be given medical aid to preserve life and thereafter the procedural criminal law should be allowed to operate in order to avoid negligent death. Saxena said that there is no legal impediment for a medical professional when he is called upon or requested to attend to an injured person needing

his medical assistance immediately. The effort to save the person should be the top priority not only of the medical professional but even of the police or any other citizen who happens to be connected with the matter or who happens to notice such an incident or a situation. Carrying on with the proceedings, Saxena then invited Director of CUTS, Mr George Cheriyan, for his opening remarks.

Mr. George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS International, greeting the chief guest and other dignitaries on the dais, briefed about the evolution of Good Samaritan concept. He insisted on a need to change police behaviour and hospital response. George stated that almost 1.5 lakh deaths happens almost every year in the country, which is number one in the world and also aggregates to as much as 11% of total accidents of the world. Cheriyan said that 70% accidents are mainly caused due to over-speed driving. The term ‘Good Samaritan’ refers to someone who performs good things out of compassion and without expecting anything in return. George mentioned about the origin of the word Samaritan, which had come from a state Samaria in Israel.



Mr Indrajeet Singh, Joint Director, Medical and Health of Government of Rajasthan, Ajmer, emphasised the usefulness and need for basic life support and Good Samaritans. He stressed the need for providing road safety information to the people in the villages to district level with the help of Community and Community Based Organisation so that awareness is created and which will slowly lead to transformation in behaviour of the public.

Mr Arjun Singh Rathore, RTO, Ajmer, stated that Law Commission of India states that 50% of those killed in such crashes could have been saved, if timely medical care had been provided to them.



Mr Parth Sharma, Deputy SP, Traffic, said that the most crucial role is played by the person at the scene of the crash—the bystander or passer-by. Not only can such people invoke the official systems of care by making that all-important phone call but they can also play a game-changing role in saving lives of victims by providing them first-aid.

Dr. Virendra Singh Rathore, DTO, Bhilwara, pointed out that anyone can be a Good Samaritan; anyone helping an accident victim without any intention of getting something in return shall be considered a Good Samaritan. Rathore, in his speech, said that it is the duty of the public to help the accident victims and the public is only responsible for the death of an accident victim, if the death is caused by the negligence and ignorance of the bystanders.





Dr Shaitan Singh, CMHO, Ajmer said that a prompt medical and surgical treatment will help preventing death. Singh emphasised that lack of awareness of people is also in a way responsible and resulting in non-availability of timely care to the victims and resulting in deaths. He informed that very few of the total population in Ajmer know about Good Samaritan Guidelines and the percentage reduces further, when it comes to national level.

Vote of Thanks

The program ended with a vote of thanks from Dharmendra Chaturvedi, Programme Officer, CUTS International. Around 66 people participated in the workshop, including guest speakers. At the end, Dharmendra expressed gratitude towards the participants for actively participating in the workshop.

Glimpses



Programme Schedule

| Time | Activity | Guest/Resource Person |
|--------------|---|--|
| 10.00-11:00 | Arrival, Registration of delegates & Tea | |
| 11.00-12.15 | Inaugural Session | |
| 11.00-11.05 | Welcome Expectations from the workshop | Raghvendra Singh Rawat Secretary, Ajmer Jila Grameen Upbhokta Sansthan, Masuda, Ajmer |
| 11.05-11.25 | Opening Remarks | George Cheriyan Director, CUTS International |
| 11.25-12.00 | Presentation on Good Samaritan-Key Highlights | Deepak Saxena Assistant Director, CUTS International |
| 12.00-12.15 | Short Films on Good Samaritan | |
| 12.15- 14.00 | Technical Session | |
| | Panel Discussion: (Moderator: Deepak Saxena, Assistant Director, CUTS International) | <i>Guest Speakers</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Indrajeet Singh, Joint Director, Medical and Health of Govt. of Rajasthan, Ajmer 2. Mr Parth Sharma, SP, Traffic 3. Mr Arjun Singh Rao, RTO, Ajmer 4. Dr Shaitan Singh Rawat, Trauma Ward, JLN Hospital, Ajmer |
| 14.00-14.05 | Summary and Vote of Thanks | Dharmendra Chaturvedi Programme Officer, CUTS International |
| 14.05 | Lunch & Departure | |

List of Participants

| S.N. | Name | Name and Address of the Organisation |
|------|----------------------------|--|
| 1. | Dr. Inderjeet Singh | JD, Ajmer |
| 2. | Arjun Singh Rathore | RTO, Ajmer |
| 3. | Parth Sharma | Dy. SP, Traffic Police, Ajmer |
| 4. | Dr. Virendra Singh Rathore | DTO, Bhilwara |
| 5. | Dr. Shaitan Singh | CMHO, J.L.N. Hospital, Ajmer |
| 6. | Arushi Sharma | 76, Madhav Path, Kundan Nagar, Ajmer |
| 7. | Dharmendra Chaturvedi | CUTS International |
| 8. | Deepak Saxena | CUTS International |
| 9. | George Cheriyan | CUTS International |
| 10. | Rajesh Kumar Verma | Vil.-Sadvasa, Via- Bandanwara, Ajmer |
| 11. | Puran Mal | Vil- Loharwara, Via- Nasirabad, Ajmer |
| 12. | Dilip Mathur | Civil Defense Deptt., Ajmer |
| 13. | Narendra Pal | Secretary, Akhil Rajasthan Upbhokta Sangathan Mahasangh, Jaipur |
| 14. | Babu Lal | Akhil Rajasthan Upbhokta Sangathan Mahasangh, Jaipur |
| 15. | Manju Sen | President, Ajmer Zila Gramin Upbhokta Sansthan, Masuda |
| 16. | Tej Karan Meghvanshi | Secretary, Lokhit Marudhra Gramin Vikas Sansthan, Ajmer |
| 17. | Sukhpal Singh Rawat | Lokhit Marudhra Gramin Vikas Sansthan, Ajmer |
| 18. | Sita Rawat | Nai Basti, Madarpura, Ajmer |
| 19. | Chandrabhan Singh | Male Nurse, Beawar |
| 20. | Manju | Mahila Manch |
| 21. | Isha Rawat | Arjun Lal Sethi Nagar |
| 22. | Rajendra Tailor | Bhinay |
| 23. | Om Prakash | Ajmer |
| 24. | Sanjay Choudhary | Ajmer |
| 25. | Sagar Singh | Masuda |
| 26. | Chena Ram Kumawat | Pisangan |
| 27. | Pukhraj | Pisangan |
| 28. | Arun Pathra | Ajmer |
| 29. | Tulsi Ram | 223/30, Pratap Nagar, Mayo Link Road, Ajmer |
| 30. | Lal Singh Rawat | Sarpanch |
| 31. | Mustak Khan | Deputy Sarpanch |
| 32. | Ashish Tailor | Student |
| 33. | P. Kant | -- |
| 34. | Praveen Choudhary | Ekal Abhiyan, Ajmer |
| 35. | Raghvendra Singh | Ajmer Zila Gramin Upbhokta Sansthan, Masuda |

