



GURPREM

Accomplishments since 1990

Artificial Limbs – 3272	Cataract Operations – 1273	Repairing of limbs – 579	Orphan marriages – 38
Hearing aids – 144	Tricycles – 127	Wheel Chairs – 95	Orthopaedic shoes – 77
Polio calipers – 411	Crutches – 1200	Sewing Machines – 163	Railway Concession Certificates – 102

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

We have been sharing with you about our services for poor physically challenged people in border areas of Poonch. During my last travel to Mumbai to receive REAL HEROS award, many people there have shown curiosity to understand the hard realities of this region and asked me several questions about day-to-day life of people who loose their limbs due to mine blasts, militancy or earthquakes...etc. Therefore I thought you may like to know how these physically challenged people in Poonch have been surviving till date without scientifically prepared artificial limbs.

In this newsletter, I am taking you through old conventional artificial limbs, which have been used by people here before they are provided modern age limbs by Artificial Limbs Repairing Center of Pritam Spiritual Foundation.

Thank you

Prof. Jagbir Singh Sudan

Traditional artificial limbs, used earlier in Poonch



Many people in remote border villages have been making artificial leg and foot from wood as shown in attached photograph. We have also met old people in villages who have used empty cans of milk powders to make an artificial leg. People have tied an empty can with their amputated leg and have been trying to walk few miles through these kind of very basic means of survival.



There are few villages near the Line Of Control between India and Pakistan, where people do not have access to skilled carpenters and hence have been living through very basic simple wooden leg without any foot.



People in these remote areas also had a big challenge about how to tie this wooden leg with their amputated leg so that they can walk at-least few steps. People have been again using several methods - the most often being used is a set of old clothes to tie these together.

We have also seen many people whose legs are amputated very close to the feet and it becomes even a bigger challenge about how to tie a normal remaining leg with the artificial leg so that the combined length of this artificially assembled leg becomes equal to the normal leg. In such circumstances people have made a hollow wooden leg and through adequate padding of old clothes they put their normal amputated leg inside the hollow artificial wooden leg. It has been extremely difficult for many of our trust members even to see such hardships of poor victims.



In these photographs you may see the modern artificial limbs provided to these people. The old man in the right photograph had lost his both legs and thanks to your support how he can walk today with artificial legs. In these hills there is hardly any artificial foot which survives more than six months due to hilly terrain. So many victims bring with them their old broken artificial legs and we give them new artificial legs as well as replace belts / repair their old artificial feet.



NGO helps Pak national get prosthetic leg

Excerpt From TRIBUNE of Jammu and Kashmir, INDIA : Over 70-year-old Mohammad Yasin, a resident of Rawalpindi in Pakistan, was one-legged when he came to India, but he was walking on two legs when he went back. After losing his right leg in a mine blast in 1986, Mohammad Yasin visited recently his relative in Poonch that provided Yasin the opportunity to get an artificial limb.

The Pritam Spiritual Foundation, a Poonch-based NGO working for the rehabilitation of mine blast victims, came to his aid. "Though we have provided artificial limbs to 3,272 persons since the formation of our foundation, making a Pakistani guest stand on two legs is a matter of satisfaction for us," Jagbir Singh, chairman of the Trust, told The Tribune.

Jagbir said Yasin had approached him through the sarpanch of Salotri village and the foundation decided to provide him with the best treatment. Yasin came to India on a valid visa and permission to meet his relatives.

Yasin had lost his right leg in a mine blast at Yaar Sharief village in Pakistan in year 1986. And since then he had been approaching doctors and different organisations in Pakistan for an artificial limb, but to no avail. Fortunately, Yasin came to the state in February this year to meet his cousin Haji Mohammad Rashid at Salotri, Poonch. After Partition, Yasin for the first time crossed the LOC (Line of Control) to visit his native place in Poonch and meet his cousins.

"When we met our guest from Pakistan during a function, he narrated his tale of woes. As an NGO has been working in Poonch to provide artificial limbs, we decided to approach the foundation," Mohammad Azam, sarpanch of Salotri village, told The Tribune.

"Most of the time we have to bring limbs from outside the state. But at that time we had some additional limbs with us," Jagbir Singh said. He added that within three days Yasin was able to walk on his legs. As Yasin had to return to Pakistan, the foundation decided to provide accessories, including orthopaedic shoes, to him.

"I do not know how I express my gratitude towards people of India, especially the Pritam Spiritual Foundation, for changing my life," Yasin said as he walked on two legs.

Being a border town in the Jammu province, a large number of Poonch residents have lost their limbs in mine blasts. The foundation has taken up the task of providing artificial limbs to the affected people. It was set up in 1989 and since then it has changed the lives of many people.

This newsletter is a forum for all of us to come together and keep in touch. GURPREM will bring us closer. Contact us:

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