

‘The Cleft Poem’

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Cleft lip and palate is a common problem, with the global incidence of one in every 700 live births [World Health Organization (WHO), 2001].[1,2,] Most of these patients don't get immediate treatment as they belong to poor socioeconomic status, difficulty of access to treatment centres and lack of awareness.

Smile Train is a USA based non – government organisation (NGO) [3] which is active and instrumental for the past 20 years in helping children with cleft lip and palate.

Jawaharlal Nehru Postgraduate Medical Education and Research (JIPMER), is a tertiary care institute of national importance, under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW), Govt of India. Smile

train project is associated with JIPMER for the past 5 years.

To commemorate 20 years of Smile Train Project and to spread awareness regarding cleft lip and palate, a national campaign was initiated by Smile Train India by torch ceremony programme across the country. After the torch travelled across 12 states of India, Pondicherry was selected as 13th state to receive it. On 3rd November 2019, the torch was received by Hon'ble Lt. Governor of Puducherry, Dr Mrs Kiran Bedi in the presence of Smile Train and JIPMER officials. On this occasion, JIPMER organized “Smile Torch Ceremony and Cleft Awareness Walk” at beachside followed by various activities performed by children with cleft lip and palate deformities (figure 1, 2).



Figure 1: The Smile Torch Cleft Awareness Walk



Figure 2: The Smile Torch Ceremony programme with Cleft lip and palate children

The programme was attended by Hon'ble Lt. Governor of Puducherry, Dr. Mrs. Kiran Bedi, Director JIPMER, Dr. Rakesh Aggarwal, Medical Superintendent, JIPMER, Dr. Ashok Shankar Bade, Vice President and Regional Director –Asia, Smile train, Ms. Mamta Carroll, Senior Director

– Programs, Smile Train India Ms. Leela Imam, Miss India DIVA (2019), Ms. Vartika Singh, JIPMER Smile Train project Director, Dr. Devi Prasad Mohapatra and Head of the Department of Plastic Surgery JIPMER, Dr. Dinesh Kumar S (**figure 3**).



Figure 3: The Smile Torch ceremony being attended by various officials

The welcome speech was delivered by Dr Ravi Kumar Chittoria, Professor of Plastic Surgery and Registrar (Academic) JIPMER. In his

speech, he recited 'The Cleft Poem' highlighting the role of multidisciplinary care including the role of society (**figure 4**).



Figure 4: Prof. Dr. Ravi Kumar Chittoria reciting the poem
The poem is as follows:

Hey, Hey Baby 'Cleft'
JIPMER will not 'Left'

Smile train will give you 'treatment free'
So you live your life 'carefree'

Dentists make your teeth 'white and bright'
To keep your spirit at 'height'

Speech therapists make you learn how to 'speak'
So you should not feel 'weak'

Social workers give you 'settlement'
To make you happy and for 'betterment'

Plastic surgeons and anaesthetists give you a 'beautiful smile'
So you could walk long a 'while'

We all thank JIPMER 'director'
For making this programme 'brighter'

On 20 years of smile train 'celebration'
Let us do some activities and 'deliberation'

We request whole society to support and 'accept'
So cleft children should not feel 'neglect'

During the programme children participated in various activities including cake cutting, drawing & painting competitions and prizes were distributed. (figure 5 - 7).



Figure 5: Cake cutting ceremony



Figure 6: Children participating in various activities



Figure 7: Prize and certificate distribution

Declarations

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All authors made contributions to the article

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