

# NURTURING TREES NURTURING LIVES

A consumer connect initiative

## ROUTINE IMMUNIZATION

# A SHOT AT IMMUNITY

The need for routine immunization has been emphasized by pediatric specialists time and again. Here are a few more reasons why it is so important



Rakesh Malik

In India, despite efforts from government agencies, international institutions and non-governmental organizations to motivate cross sections of the society to go for prescribed immunization programmes, the result is still not up to the mark. The situation can be well estimated by the fact that approximately 2.5 million children under five years of age die every year as a result of life-threatening diseases that can be prevented by life-saving vaccination. Official figures reflect that India presently houses almost half of the world's non-immunized children. It is also estimated that nearly 1/3rd of children in India are still not immunized and the present routine immunization coverage of children from life-threatening diseases stands at about 61 per cent.

Talking about the need for right immunization at the right time, Dr Nirin Verma, Senior Consultant, Pediatric, Max Super Speciality Hospital, says, "Immuniza-

tion, although a basic healthcare intervention, is very crucial when it comes to protection against the most dreaded childhood diseases. Among the various benefits of vaccination, the one which makes it most important is that it helps reduce child mortality rate of the country. It ensures protection against preventable diseases even amongst the poorest section of the society, which usually does not have access to basic healthcare."

Louis-Georges Arseneault  
UNICEF representative to India

Health professionals, too, assert that parents need to be more aware about the immunization process. Geetanjali Malhotra, a mother of two, talks about her experience and shares that she, too, at times fought with friends to assert the need for immunization of children. "I still remember pushing one of my friends for taking her daughter to the pulse polio camp every time it was set up."

The time has come when we all need to pledge and ensure that every child gets the prescribed immunizations.

"A large number of parents in many parts of the country do not take their children for routine immunization or do not complete their immunization schedule with timely visits to the health center. They are either unaware or are aware but do not act for a number of reasons. This puts the lives of a lot of children at risk. While every parent aims at giving the best to their children, as per data, there are 76 lakh children in India who have not received all vaccines that they should have under the routine immunization programme. Nearly 2.5 crore children are born in India every year and as per data, five per cent of them do not get any vaccines. This puts their lives at risk. Sixteen lakh children, under the age of five years, die in India every year. A large number of these deaths can be prevented with these life-saving vaccines."

Without immunization, every year many children die from measles, whooping cough and tetanus. A large number of kids are also disabled by polio. This is the state of affairs when the children could have been protected against these diseases by vaccines.

How does immunization help?

It protects against several dangerous diseases. It is proven that a child who is not immunized is more likely to become undernourished, to become disabled, and ultimately die. Immunization protects children against some of the most dread-

ed diseases of childhood. Kids can be immunized by vaccines, which are injected or given orally. The vaccines work by building up the child's defences. If diseases strike before a child is immunized, then it is too late.

How urgent is immunization?

Immunization is urgent. All vaccinations should be completed in the first year of the child's life. It is vital to immunize children early in life. Half of all deaths from whooping cough, one third of all cases of polio, and quarter of all deaths from measles, occur before the age of one year.

## TALKING POINTS

P. N. Roy Chowdhury, Head Environment, Health and Safety (EHS), Adani Group takes the time to tell us something about the Adani group and its support of the campaign that promotes immunization for better health and a greener India.

Tell us something about the Adani group.

The Adani Group is a global integrated infrastructure player with presence in Resources, Logistics, and Energy sectors. The Group is guided by a deep sense of nation building in all its economic activities and community initiatives. The group was founded and is led by first generation entrepreneur Mr. Gautam Adani, whose career trajectory is a study in rapid growth and inspirational approach.

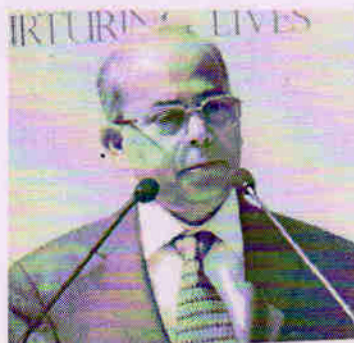
The US\$ 8 billion Adani Group marks its presence across six ports in India and two in Australia, making it the only Indian private port company to successfully venture overseas. It is also actively investing in renewable energy and has commissioned the largest solar power project in India.

What are the sectors that particularly interest Adani group with regards to its CSR responsibilities?

Adani Group's CSR activities currently revolve around four core touch-areas: Education, Health, Sustainable Livelihood and Rural Infrastructure. In addition, different Group entities such as Adani Port and SEZ Ltd dovetail resources to the creation of environmental assets such as terrestrial green zones and coastal mangrove plantation.

Adani Power is the first power company in India to use 'supercritical' technology at the Mundra Plant to reduce CO2 emissions, an initiative that has won the Clean Development Certification from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC); the only thermal power plant in the world to do so.

What part does the Adani group play in



P.N. ROY CHOWDHURY

adani



the campaign 'Nurture Trees Nurture Lives'?

We are committed to extend our moral, physical and financial support to this great campaign. Apart from financial sponsorship, we will be playing the role of cheering the youthful participants in practically every area of the campaign. We would also participate with our representatives and resources across different

geographies to make sure that the campaign picks up momentum across different states of the country while staying on course over a longer period of time. In many geographical locations we would be able to play a more active part in mobilizing public support to the cause and also observe and qualitatively monitor results for a sustainable impact on the ground.

## SEED OF HOPE

Neha Bhatia

It's a known fact that having green friends makes a person happier and stress free. And this has been corroborated by many studies. Taking care of a sapling and watching it grow into a healthy tree can make anybody happy. In case of children, it makes them responsible if they are encouraged to adopt a tree at a young age.

Aanchal Sarin, a horticulturist, who works to make kids more aware about their environment, states, "Plants not only help keep the environment clean and green, but also aid in the overall development of a child. Concepts like 'pet-a-plant' are a great booster for children. Plants as pet help the child develop a feeling of belonging and make them responsible towards another being."

Studies suggest that the very presence of plants makes the child more confident. Mishti Kulkarni, a



child counsellor, avers, "Give a child the responsibility of a plant and see the change in him. We advise the parents of a single child and those who have problems, like attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, to adopt a plant. While taking care of the sapling, the child himself develops the habit of caring, becomes more patient and understands the environment bet-

### Plant you Sapling

- The first few weeks after germination are the most crucial for the plant
- It is at this time that they need a good start
- Ensure that only the healthy germinated seeds are selected
- Consistency is the key. These newly germinated seeds need consistent temperature, humidity and air flow for a healthy future.
- Never keep the sapling in direct sunlight nor keep it in the dark. Keep it in a semi-shaded, but well-lit area
- Before watering the sapling, always check the soil. Water only if the soil is dry and not if it is moist
- Most important is to love your plant

ter. He/she can relate to the surroundings and make better and informed decisions. Having a plant also reduces mental stress and makes the child emotionally secure."

## Get your facts right

### What is the importance of immunization?

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