

officials to local health workers and a feasible strategy are necessary for elimination. But even more important is the necessity to reach out to society, disseminate accurate information and get each person to feel that elimination is his or her responsibility. I have no doubt that India, where Mahatma Gandhi made such a contribution to acknowledging the human dignity of those with the disease, will succeed in eliminating it once and for all.

Cambodia (December 4)



Meeting a patient at Kien Khleang Center, Cambodia

I met Dr. Mam Bunheng, secretary of state for health, at the Ministry of Health in Phnom Penh. Cambodia achieved the elimination target in 1988, and the current prevalence rate is 0.47 per 10,000. Secretary Bunheng told me that in undeveloped areas of the country, particularly the difficult-to-reach mountainous regions, the monitoring system is being strengthened and elimination activities are ongoing. I also had the opportunity to visit Kien Khleang Center, a facility for disabled people offering surgery and rehabilitation. I spoke with about 40 leprosy patients being treated there. The aftereffects of their disease were such that almost all of them required surgery, but with the fine treatment they are receiving from Dr. Stephen Griffiths of the CIOMAL—Comite International de l'Ordere de Malte, the aim is to help them return to society at an early date.

Sustaining what has been achieved and ensuring the social rehabilitation of leprosy-affected people are critical tasks to be continued beyond 2005. The fight against leprosy is never-ending, and I have renewed my determination to devote my life to this battle. □

SMHF Calendar Offer

The Sasakawa Memorial Health Foundation (SMHF) has prepared wall calendars for 2004 and 2005 entitled "A World with No Stigma or Discrimination." The 2004 calendar features messages relevant to the fight against leprosy, such as "Leprosy can be cured within 6 to 12 months" and "Leprosy is neither hereditary nor God's punishment," while the 2005 calendar is based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The 60cm x 42cm calendars are available free of charge by contacting the SMHF office at 1-2-2 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-0052, Japan (Fax: +81-3-6229-5388, Email: smhf@tnfb.jp). Please include the words "Calendar Offer" in the subject heading. □

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