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Report by Helma Ritscher, Chairwoman of the Indo-German Society Remscheid to the project AP38/19 - Establishment of a Health Centre in Baghwanala, India:

My impressions of the inauguration of the "Health Center" and "Free Health Camp" on Sunday, February 16, 2020.



The red sign in the upper left corner of the photo now points to the **Health Centre**, which now offers the poorest people the opportunity to participate in the Indian health system: Advice and treatment of their diseases and good care as patients, also in hospital if necessary. For the first time, the women will receive medical care before, during and after their pregnancy. **A model!**



Inaugurating the **Health Center** in Baghwanala

Left to right: waiting for the villagers with their children and families:

PVCHR - People's Vigilance Committee on Human Rights in Varanasi, Shruti Nagvanshi, wife of Dr. Lenin Raghuvanshi, active women's rights activist. Next to her, Dr. Lenin Raghuvanshi, the founder of the PVCHR, Helma Ritscher, chairwoman of the Indo-German Society Remscheid, Dr. Sheeta Tripathi (Gynecologist) and Dr. Mahendra Kumar Mishra (General Consultant) in the K.F.I Sanjeevan Hospital/Krishnamurti Foundation of India Sanjeevan Hospital in Saray Mohana, Varanasi.

Sunday, February 16, 2020 at 10 a.m., beginning the day of the Inauguration:

Young and old, parents, mostly mothers, had come with their children. Admission as a patient took place upon entry into the health centre with the creation of a patient file. The children were first weighed and measured. Then the visit to the doctor took place. Women and men were happy to be advised by doctors of the same gender.



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The children were treated without gender distinction. The colourful and predominantly cheerful hustle and bustle of the villagers displayed the great joy about receiving personal attention and care for their health now and in the future.



Right photo: A scale and a folding rule, on this table the smallest were weighed and measured.

A touching picture!



Left: The older children enjoyed being weighed and measured. I was shocked to learn that many children were malnourished. At the same time I was reassured by the thought that from today on they would be helped.

Right: I know **Madhu** (here in a white coat) since her school days as a committed student for the projects (of PVCHR and Indo-German Society) and as an activist in the PVCHR.



On this day she assisted the children and adults with great dedication.

It was a pleasure to watch her prepare for the visit to the doctors: how competently she took blood pressure, collected blood samples and noted it all down.

Madhu had been professionally prepared in advance for her role as an assistant!



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Madhu explained the **ECG device** to the first ECG patient before she started the device. The ECG device, a surprise gift for the **Health Center**, was donated by very loyal friends and sponsors of the Indo-German Society Remscheid - **here being used for the very first time!**



The ECG device was not provided for in the application AP 38-19. But faithful friends and sponsors of our society spontaneously made this expensive acquisition possible, as well as aids for gynaecological work, in addition to the basic equipment of the **Centre**, which was financed to 90% by Engagement Global gGmbH and to 10% by the Indo-German Society Remscheid. The **Health Center** with its very good equipment and its dedicated team of doctors from the above mentioned hospital is a very good example of the high quality. **Thus the Health Center is a shining example of a first point of contact for villages and for people who otherwise would not have access to "first aid" and other health services. And who – from now on – will never be forgotten...**



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While more and more villagers, especially mothers with their children, came to the **Health Center**, the examinations by the doctors were already in full swing, prescriptions were issued, and the newly registered patients were on their way to the improvised pharmacy.



In my conversation with Dr. Sheeta Tripathi, I learned how pleased she is to be able to help the women in Baghwanala and the surrounding area as a gynaecologist. In the **Health Center** she can treat women before and after giving birth and can educate them on birth control.

Dr. Lenin and I also learned in our conversation with Dr. Mahendra Kumar Mishra that it was always his greatest concern to provide **direct help** to the village population.



After their first medical consultation and the doctors' diagnosis of their illness, the patients rush with their prescription to the improvised pharmacy.





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The pharmacy was perfectly equipped to the first treatment of the patients and with dietary supplements for malnourished children. All drugs were the best the Indian health market had to offer.

I learned this from Frank Hoffmann, Project Manager at the “Friedrich Naumann Foundation” in Delhi, who accompanied me to Varanasi. We had already met in 2008 with Dr. Lenin. Frank did let his friend, a doctor at a hospital in Pune, join the inauguration of the **Health Center** via WhatsApp. The congratulations by his friend made me very happy. It only confirmed the great responsibility, respect and dignity for the poorest of the poor, Dr. Lenin and his PVCHR are committed to.



The **Health Center**, under the direction of Shruti Nagvanshi, is dedicated to medical prevention and treatment, as well as to the education on health and hygiene, in order to strengthen the awareness of the villagers. In order to include them in the health concept of the **Centre**, we decided in our application to Engagement Global to also apply for the provision of waste bins. The young would now throw garbage etc. into these bins and gradually develop a feeling for hygiene and cleanliness in their village and in general. The bins are already there for the **first little environmental activists of PVCHR - that's how I lovingly call them.**



Statement by Dr. Lenin: The Health Center treated a total of 150 people on the day of its inauguration - 61 girls and 18 boys between 0-18 years, plus 61 women and 10 men.



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This last page would actually belong **at the beginning** of my report. However, I have deliberately chosen it **at the end**. My welcome speech, which I delivered at the beginning of the inauguration ceremony in the presence of the press, already contained **my conclusion**. My speech was translated in Hindi by Dr. Lenin. I then presented Dr. Lenin with two more congratulatory messages from Germany as a surprise and he was visibly moved. One was from Sven Wolf, Member of the State Parliament of North Rhine-Westphalia, and another from Timo Bliss, Project Manager at Engagement Global gGmbH. Both messages were fully published in the press. <http://www.mediavigil.com/news/regional/uttar-pradesh/varanasi-family-health-and-nutrition-counseling-center-inaugurated-in-baghwana/>



The last words of my speech on behalf of the Indo-German Society were dedicated to the long lasting connection with Dr. Lenin, the PVCHR and all the people here. Especially the girls and boys I have seen growing up. All of whom have grown dear to my heart during this time - and today have a future as equal human beings in India and the world:

“Dear guests

*At the end of my greeting I would like to say:, did you notice that although I come from Germany, I am talking about **our Center**?*

*When I visited in 2002 for the first time on behalf of our "Indo-German Society Remscheid" Dr. Lenin, his PVCHR team in Varanasi and the village community with their happy children in Baghwanala – **I just lost my heart here. And because my heart is here, I'm also here for the inauguration of our Center.**”*

It was a very moving day for me! I returned home on February 27, 2020 with my heart full of gratitude towards all partners, sponsors and friends in India and Germany, those, who made our **Health Center Baghwanala** possible for the people here. By then the Corona virus had already spread around the world with its devastating disease COVID-19 and it also soon reached India. The PVCHR office began working from home office in mid-March. Dr. Lenin and his team were allowed, with the permission of the government, to go to the villages to help the people who were without medical care and starving. I receive regular reports about his activities, which have been highly appreciated by the press and government. (PVCHR work was appreciated by Niti Aayog <https://pvchrfightagainstcorona.blogspot.com/2020/04/enlist-peoples-vigilance-committee-on-23.html>)

My report ends here, with the message I received on April 14 from Dr. Lenin: He wrote that he, his wife Shruti and PVCHR volunteers were travelling nearly daily also on behalf of the **Health Center Baghwanala** to bring food and medical supplies to the affected people in the villages and that **two health camps** had already been organised there.