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PRESS RELEASE

India organizes Artificial Limbs Fitment Camp at Addis Ababa

An Artificial Limb Fitment Camp supported by Government of India under the 'India for Humanity' project has been set up by Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti (BMVSS), of Jaipur Foot fame, at St Paul's Hospital in Addis Ababa. It was formally inaugurated on 29th November 2019 by H.E Dr Ergogie Tesfaye, Minister of Labour & Social Affairs, H.E. Dr. Lia Tadesse Gebremedhin, State Minister of Health and Ambassador of India to Ethiopia and the African Union Mr. Anurag Srivastava. The camp will provide and fit artificial limbs free of cost to more than 500 persons with disabilities and will be in operation till 31st December 2019.

Speaking at the inaugural event, Ambassador Anurag Srivastava informed that the 'India for Humanity' initiative was launched by the Indian government as a tribute to the philosophy of compassion, caring and service to humanity of one of the greatest men who lived in the last century, Mahatma Gandhi, and to mark his 150th birth anniversary. He highlighted that India has a large and growing development partnership with countries in Africa, including with Ethiopia. This partnership has a strong humanitarian component and shares experience and knowledge in a spirit of solidarity with these countries which are treading similar paths of socio-economic development. He also outlined the ten guiding principles for India's engagement with Africa as laid down by Prime Minister of India, Mr. Narendra Modi last year and said that India's development partnership is inspired by the philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam – which says the world is one family.

Dr Ergogie Tesfaye, Minister of Labour & Social Affairs and Dr. Lia Tadesse Gebremedhin, State Minister of Health in their remarks described the challenges faced by persons with disabilities and, in this context, appreciated and acknowledged the sincere efforts of Government of India culmination in this noble initiative which would assist hundreds of beneficiaries regain their mobility, dignity, and in many cases, sustenance. The event was also attended by other dignitaries of the Ministry of Labour & Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, and members of the Indian community. This is the second such camp

held by BMVSS in Ethiopia. The earlier one in January 2017 was held in Mekelle and in Haramaya University and was very successful.

Under the India for Humanity project, the Government of India has organized a series of artificial limb fitment camps in a number of countries. So far 10 camps have been held in Vietnam (two camps), Malawi, Iraq, Nepal, Egypt, Senegal, Tanzania, Namibia and Bangladesh. Camps are scheduled to be held in Syria, Uganda, Djibouti, Myanmar and Angola. These camps have been held in collaboration with the well-known charitable organization, BMVSS, which is among the world's largest organisations for the fitment of artificial limbs. The organization has till date served over 1.8 million amputees. Jaipur Foot is the most widely used artificial limb in the world.

India's assistance to Ethiopia in the health sector includes capacity building of health care professionals under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation scheme and through scholarships/training opportunities (50,000 committed for Africa under the India-Africa Forum Summit initiative), through provision of equipment and medicines to hospitals as well as tele-medicine services and education through distance learning mode under the e-VBAB programme. Earlier this month, Ambassador Anurag Srivastava had, on behalf of the government of India, handed over a donation of USD 2 million of medicines to State Minister of Health Dr Lia Tadesse. This was in fulfillment of announcements made during the visit of HE Shri Ram Nath Kovind, President of India to Ethiopia in October 2017. The announcement of this donation was one of the significant commitments made during the visit – others being donation of 1000 metric tonnes of rice and 100,000 school textbooks.
