

THE TIMES OF CHILDREN

World AIDS Day, December 1, 2013

These heart touching tales tell the gory facts of HIV positive patients and their way of living life in a new way, braving against all odds **2**



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Stigmatization of HIV positive individuals prevents them to seek information, treatment and ways to lead normal healthy life **4**



THE TIMES OF CHILDREN, LUCKNOW

A CONSUMER CONNECT INITIATIVE

A smiling bright face with sparkling eyes, soft spoken and ready to help, aptly describes Yusuf Khan. Since his childhood, he lived in a small mohalla called Kidwai Nagar in Kanpur District. Fondly called 'beta' by elders and 'chacha' by the children, he lost his father at a tender age of three years. But, he never complained for this loss and was loved by all. His mother was instrumental in raising Yusuf and his sister alone.

Slowly and gradually, he grew up into a young man. He had very energetic approach for everything. He was a lively participant in the festivals of Eid, Bakrid or in the proces-

sion of Muharram. His active participation was also in the 'tolies' of Ramleela and Holi. A champion in kite flying, people of Kiwai Nagar, use to say, "Yusuf ke patang koi kaat nahi sakta kyouki Allah us per meherban hai." (Nobody can beat him in kite flying, because he is God's child).

Yusuf worked very hard and his sole ambition in his life was to give his son what he missed in his own life. He admitted his son at a prestigious school because he knew the importance of education in one's life. As time passed, Yusuf started falling ill. Over exertion may have been one of the reasons he presumed. He started taking some medicines from local chemist but it could not give him any relief. Eventually, the medicines stopped working. He was worried about his son who was still studying in class VIth. He had no idea from where he could take financial assistance as his earnings did not allow him to seek better treatment. Some well wishers advised him

seller. After a small interactive session, the counsellor asked him to give his blood sample to the lab technician. Yusuf was called the next day to collect



his blood test report.

Yusuf was tensed all night because he was thinking about

iskay aur bhee karan hotay hai. Kuch neam or dawao kay sevan say pura jeevan jeeia ja saktha hay."

Yusuf hurriedly asked for his

ga, mai jeeionga aur apni CDA report samay per lay lunga, jald lautunga."

From ART center, he went to his sister's house, who was married. He shared the day long agony with her and she wiped the tears from her brother eyes and assured him that she will be happy to support him in the time of distress. Yusuf thanked his sister for the emotional support. He came back home with a small gift, which his sister had sent for his nephew.

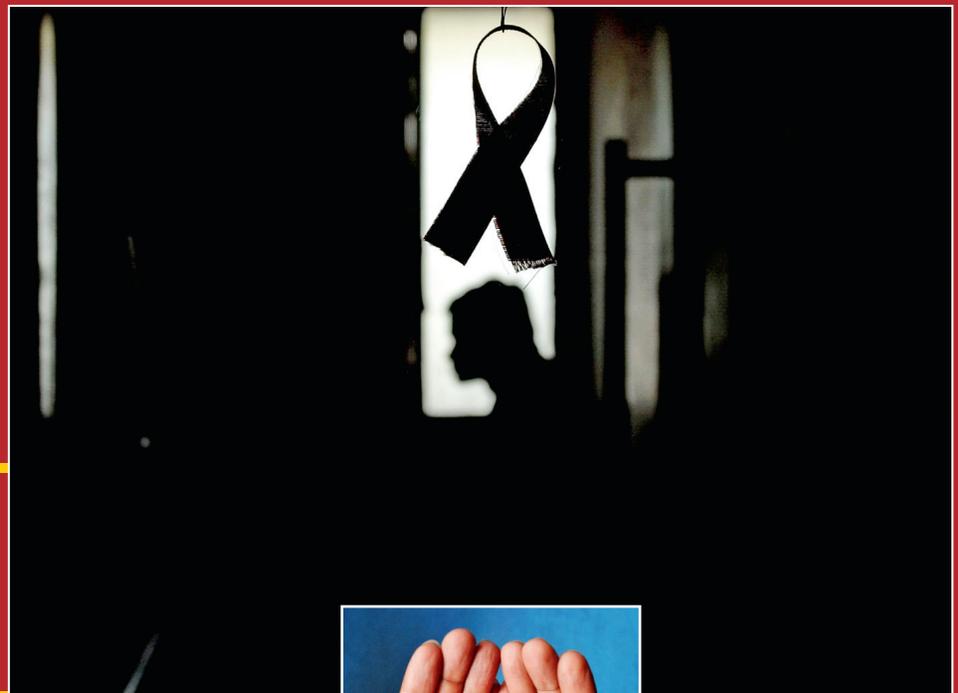
One June 25, 2005, Yusuf met Naresh Yadav, Director, Uttar Pradesh Welfare for People Living with HIV/AIDS Society (UPNP plus), at one of the regular meeting at ART centre. He

Hospital, Lucknow. He was assigned one week's time to undergo surgery. But, as doctors came to know about his HIV status, they refused to do his surgery. Naresh Yadav interacted with the officials of UP-SACS, but it was all in vain. The, doctors referred him to AIIMS, New Delhi.

Yusuf initiated his self-advocacy and resisted his discharge from the hospital. Naresh never wanted to lose one of his 'Hero.' He persuaded him to accept the discharge as his condition became more critical day-by-day. Finally, he was discharged. Lots of private hospitals were contacted, but due to his HIV positive status, all the hospitals refused to get him admitted. Fi-

Story of a LOST HERO

Braving all odds, Yusuf Khan, wanted to live a healthy life battling AIDS. However, his destiny for act of discrimination and negligence prevailing in the system, snatched away his dreams...



He got married after opening a small cycle repair shop. His wife belonged from a well-to-do family. However, she spent very little time with him. His poverty may have become one of the major reasons. Yusuf never complained for this also. Days passed on and he was blessed with a baby boy. He was a very good father to his son. He gave his utmost care and affection to his child as his childhood was deprived of his father's affection and care. The child was brought up by Yusuf alone, as most of the time, Yusuf's wife stayed at her parent's home.

to go to Kanpur Medical College (KMC) as it was affordable.

One day he went to KMC, where doctor advised him to go for some blood tests.

Yusuf became first 'Positive' speaker at Kanpur district and had proactive participation at various district level advocacy forums

Among those tests performed, one of the tests was to be conducted at ICTC. He went to the ICTC unit and met a coun-

sellor. After getting ready, he went to the pathology without having his breakfast. When his mother asked him the reason for going so early, he simply said, he was called by the doctor.

He went to the ICTC, where the office had just opened. The counsellor gave him a token number and asked to wait for some time. She had started finishing her routine work. After some time, many patient came in and started taking token from the counsellor. He found some of them were weak and many of them seemed to be healthy. He wondered why they would have come here.

As he was called, the counsellor asked him if he knew anything about HIV infection. Yusuf replied, "Yeh buri adato ki wahaja say hoti hay. Ismay log halal ho jatay han!" Counsellor replied, "Nahee Yusuf Ji,

hay aur aap kay behatri ke lia aap ko kutch jach karani hongy". Yusuf could not think anything. His mind stopped working. He simply nodded his head in agreement to have further tests.

After coming out from the ICTC center, he felt depressed, he wanted to hide somewhere. He even thought of killing himself. But he thought of his son, his mother, and people around him.

He decided to live for his son and mother. He at once went back to ICTC, there were lots of people. He peeped inside the counsellor chamber; she had just finished one more session and recognised him. She asked the reason of coming back, he said, "One question madam, kaya may jee paunga" Counsellor said, "Kyo nahee. Jaisay ke mainay kaha tha..." Yusuf interrupted her and said, "Bus madam, mai sab kutch karun-

got encouraged with some of the motivational thoughts of Naresh. He took his address and became regular visitor of UPNP plus office. He participated in the number of capacity building training sessions held under UPNP plus banner.

Yusuf became first Positive speaker at Kanpur district and had proactive participation at various district level advocacy forums. On December 25, 2009, while returning from one of the HIV infected client's home, Yusuf met with an accident. His both knee and his back were fractured. He was admitted at Balrampur

nally a private hospital agreed to operate with a condition in which prior deposition of Rs 5 lakhs was required. However, with the continuous efforts of UPNP plus, the amount was brought down to Rs 2 lakhs for each of the knee. The network pooled this amount through the donations from PLHIV family across the district. The surgery was initially successful but later Yusuf developed septicemia.

Yusuf wanted to live, but lost the battle for life on December 23, 2012.

This gave an active lesson to the organisation - to find who the culprit was for Yusuf's death. UPNP plus increased their aggressive effort in mainstreaming of medical service providers. Because it now opined that 'This is totally an act of discrimination and negligence prevailing in the government hospitals.'

The crusade is still going on...