

PADMA SHRI AWARD
Citation – Biographical sketch
Dr.P.K.GOPAL, M.A.,Ph.D



Dr.P.K.Gopal receiving Padma Shri Award
from the President of India on 22nd March 2012.

Dr.P.K.Gopal is the President of IDEA India, an organization working for improving the quality of lives of people affected by leprosy. His relentless service in the leprosy field for the past 40 years made him a well known figure around the world, especially for his contribution in Socio Economic Empowerment of people affected by leprosy.

He was born in Erode, Tamil Nadu in a weavers family on 13th May 1941. After his graduation in Economics in Erode he joined Loyola College in Chennai in 1970 for Post Graduation study in Medical Social Work. Then he got employed in Sacred Heart Hospital, Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu where he started with his professional qualifications, a Rehabilitation Department, first of its kind in the State. He worked for 25 years in that hospital during which he provided rehabilitation service to around 3000 leprosy affected and physically challenged persons. During that period he conducted many research studies in rehabilitation and submitted Papers in the National conferences & International Leprosy Congresses which got acclaimed by many scholars. In 1994 he obtained a Doctorate Degree from Ranchi University in Social Science.

An international organization, IDEA (Integration, Dignity & Economic Advancement of people affected by leprosy) was established in 1994 through his efforts in the leprosy conference in Brazil. In 1996 he was elected as a Member to the Medico-Social Commission of International Federation of Anti Leprosy Associations (ILEP), London for five years. During this period he was responsible for publication of the book titled "Guidelines for Socio-Economic Rehabilitation" which is since being used by organizations around the world. In early 1997 he started IDEA India to provide services to the leprosy affected people in India. Socio-Economic Rehabilitation (600 persons received assistance), Education of Children of leprosy affected parents / children affected by leprosy (about 9000 children received assistance), fight against stigma of leprosy / related Human Rights violations and Socio-Economic Empowerment of people affected by leprosy have been the main objectives of his organization. He work with WHO on issues related leprosy. He is a Member of Government of India Technical Resource Group formed by the Director General of Health Services, New Delhi. He is a Board Member of International Leprosy Association, USA.

Dr.P.K.Gopal, by jointly working with Mr.Yohei Sasakawa, Chairman of The Nippon Foundation, Japan and other stake holders from 2003, the United Nations Human Rights Council, Geneva passed a unanimous resolution to end Stigma and Discriminations in leprosy. The resolution was later adopted by UN General Assembly on 21st March 2011.

In 2006-2007 his IDEA India & National Forum conducted a nationwide survey to identify the leprosy colonies, Homes in India, a first of its kind and brought to light 850 leprosy colonies, Homes in India.

He has received a **National Award** from the President of India in 1986 as an outstanding Rehabilitation Officer. In 1995 he was awarded the Erwin Stindl Memorial Oration Award, Calcutta. In 1984 he received Best Social Worker Award, from Loyola College Madras. In 2001 Dr.P.K.Gopal received the **Wellesley Bailey Award** in London, **AIFO Award** in Italy and later in 2005 the **FESCO Award** in Japan for his outstanding contribution in the field of rehabilitation in improving the quality of lives of persons affected by leprosy around the world especially in India. In 2012 Life Time Achievement Award was given by the Karnataka State Sumanahalli Organization.