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108 ambulance service touches more than one lakh lives

Staff Reporter

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By 2010, number of ambulances is to be increased to 517

Bangalore: Continuing its services in providing integrated and timely emergency response services for medical, police and fire emergencies, the 108 Arogya Kavacha service in Karnataka has touched 1,21,224 lives from November 1, 2008 till date.

Announcing this at a press conference on Thursday, Bharat Radhakrishnan, Chief Operating Officer of GVK EMRI (Karnataka), said more than 55.6 lakh calls had been serviced so far. These include calls attending to delivery complications, injuries, acute abdomen related problems, respiratory, cardiac and poisoning emergencies.

Following the memorandum of understanding signed between the Government of Karnataka and GVK EMRI in August 2008, all the 29 districts are covered under the Arogya Kavacha scheme with 248 ambulances. "We plan to launch another 82 ambulances in the second phase. This will ensure a deeper coverage for the entire urban and rural population in the State. By 2010, we will increase our ambulances in Karnataka to a total of 517," Mr. Radhakrishnan said.

Written by Administrator

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Beneficiaries — Jagadisan of Malleswaram and Shekarappa of Venugopalnagar — who were present at the press conference, narrated their experience.

“I had never imagined a government ambulance would help in saving my son’s life. He was unable to tolerate a piercing pain in his abdomen when I returned home from work two months ago around 11 p.m. As it was very late, we were not able to get an autorickshaw and it was then that it struck me that I should call 108. I am a BMTC bus conductor and I had heard people talking about 108 in the bus. To my surprise, the ambulance arrived within 10 minutes of my call and my son was shifted to K.C. General Hospital in another 15 minutes after which he was operated upon for appendicitis,” Mr. Shekarappa said.

Mr. Jagadisan, a senior citizen who lives alone, said his brother-in-law who also lived alone near his house, called up one night saying he was feeling uneasy. “He asked me to take him to a hospital. It was a government holiday and I tried calling up various hospitals for ambulances. They would pick up the call and disconnect it. Finally, the watchman of our building suggested I call 108, and to my surprise the vehicle arrived in 10 minutes. Although we were able to shift my brother-in-law to a multi-speciality heart hospital, he died after some days because of other complications,” he added.