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## COVER STORY

### Indian receives UK's The Diana Award



With inspiration from her mentor coupled with the passion of volunteers, Meera Mehta strives to take mighty strides in creating hope and happiness in the lives of thousands

By IANSlife Features

**July 4, 2020 (IANSlife)** Meera Mehta is a 21-year-old young COVID-19 warrior from India. She volunteers with the global non-profit Shrimad Rajchandra Love and Care. Meera has been awarded the most prestigious accolade a young person aged 9-25 years can receive for their social action or humanitarian work

Mehta is the proud recipient of The Diana Award, established in memory of Princess Diana of Wales. The Award is given out by The Diana Award charity and has the support of both her sons, The Duke of Cambridge and The Duke of Sussex. "We congratulate all our new Diana Award recipients who are changemakers for their generation. We know by receiving this honour they will inspire more young people to get involved in their communities and begin their own journey as active citizens," states Tessy Ojo, CEO of The Diana Award.

Inspired by the vision and guidance of her spiritual mentor Pujya Gurudevshri Rakeshbhai, founder of Shrimad Rajchandra Love and Care, Meera was nurtured with a desire to serve selflessly since a young age. For the benevolent initiatives of the non-profit, she has been dedicatedly raising funds to uplift the underprivileged sections since the past 10 years.



Since the tender age of six, Pujya Gurudevshri Rakeshbhai inspired Meera to volunteer for various projects for the remote communities of South Gujarat with the belief “Make compassion your nature, not hobby, habit or mood.”

Talking about how through this holistic experience, deep virtues of empathy and compassion were sown within her, Meera shares, “I will always remember the day at the first tribal camp I visited. When I gave a tribal child a gift, Pujya Gurudevshri Rakeshbhai encouraged me to say thank you to that child and told me that it is a privilege to be able to serve the less fortunate... What Pujya Gurudevshri taught me changed my entire perspective towards fundraising. While I continue to actively raise funds, I am also studying hard to become a doctor, and help tribal children in more ways than one.”

Implementing this teaching, Meera raised enormous funds for many benevolent initiatives including the health and education projects, tertiary healthcare for a rural charity hospital, a Science college for the tribal students, primary and secondary education for indigenous communities, an ICU unit for new-born, and a skill development program for rural women.

Having raised over Rs. 33 lakhs to support vulnerable communities during the pandemic, Meera has been instrumental in sponsoring 2 buses for migrant workers to return to their hometown in Bihar, providing over lakhs of meals for daily wagers and support to thousands frontline workers with PPE Kits, masks etc. For Shrimad Rajchandra Love and Care’s recent initiative for proving migrants’ workers leaving in Mumbai for their hometown with nutritious meal for their journey, encouraged Meera to prepare handmade meals too. She aims to raise Rs. 50 lakhs to support Shrimad

Rajchandra Love and Care's extensive Covid relief work, that committedly provides safety and sufficiency to lakhs across the globe.



Meera was also selected as an 'Inspirational Change Agent' at the Mumbai Marathon 2019, alongside the eminent boxer Mary Kom, for her impactful fundraising endeavors. Across her 10-year journey, she has raised over Rs. 1.5 crore, garnering massive support from corporates, celebrities and organisations. In addition to several awards and accolades won for fundraising, Meera was also presented the 'Youth Leader 2015' award by The Global Education & Leadership Foundation, India for her unique social impact project 'Poster to Shelter'.