

# Q STRAIGHT ANSWERS

## **Merry Barua**

Founder, Action For Autism

### **On how her organisation has created greater awareness for Autism in the country**

**H**ow is the infrastructure to tackle Autism in India?

The infrastructure is very poor. Many medical practi-

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**W**hat has been your organisation's key achievement?

Our organisation could be credited for increasing awareness about Autism across the country. When I first approached the ministry for social justice with this issue in 1997, I was summarily dismissed. Today, thanks to our persistence, the central government has brought Autism on par with other disorders like cerebral palsy and mental retardation in the latest National Trust Act. This enables organisations working for Autistic people garner crucial government support.

**A**re you happy with the work being done by the Pune Support Group for Autistics (PSGA)?

They have begun very well. Importantly, they are taking medical practitioners with them. They should tie-up with other Autistic groups in the country to continue exerting pressure on the government.

— Rahul Chandawarkar