



Satsang Project Update

Satsang Vidyalyaya

The academic year has commenced on an invigorating note. Our freshly painted building is the backdrop for several new initiatives: a Tinker Shed program, a revitalized reading program, supplementation of mid day meals with eggs and addition of a high protein afternoon snack.

The Tinker Shed program is an outcome of the Science Fair conducted last term. Students of Classes 6-10 have weekly sessions with access to tools, motors, circuit boards, programmable sensors, and electrical and electronic materials to build devices and teaching aids. Within a few months time, we are seeing students program sensors and build device for diverse applications - from motion sensors to aid the blind, to light sensors for reducing electricity usage in classrooms.

A few specific projects include:

1. A device for maintaining safe driving distances between vehicles.
2. Automatic vehicle wipers
3. Water overflow alarm system
4. Automatic dustbin opener
5. Automated height measurement system

Carpentry and reverse engineering efforts have also been initiated as part of this program. These projects have been made possible through contributions of volunteers - engineers and scientists across India. We would like to augment the school's distance learning set-up to enable sustained participation of volunteers.

As learning outcomes are linked to childhood nutrition, an egg a day has been added to the midday meal of rice,

vegetables, and pulses. In addition, the day ends with a high protein snack of peanuts or bengal gram to augment our children's nutritional needs.

Other activities this term included Independence Day celebrations, where the focus was on strengthening oral and written expression skills through activities like essay writing, film screenings and cultural programs. Students of classes V, VI and VII spoke about their favourite aspects of the freedom movement, while students of classes VIII and IX made short videos on what freedom means to them. A film screening of Poorna, the real-life story of a girl from Telangana who is the youngest girl to scale Mt. Everest was relatable and inspirational. Our reading program continues to be strengthened by the addition of new books to the library.



The Satsang Rural Vidyalaya

Satsang Rural Vidyalaya located in the hilly hinterlands of Ma Konda behind Satsang Nagar, was revived and reopened by The Satsang Foundation, in association with the Ramanarpanam Trust (DRRT) in 2012.

There are a total of 42 children now studying in the school. Accordingly the children are nurtured in a multilingual environment, where Telugu and Hindi are taught along with English.

The Satsang Rural Vidyalaya which had a completely community based curriculum till the last academic year, has now embraced the formal academic curriculum by the State Government. The school caters to children from standard 1 to 7. After this, the

children will continue their education in The Satsang Vidyalaya, Madanapalle.

The challenge in the shift remains in trying to balance mere text book learning and only examination oriented teaching demands of the formal systems with fun learning activities, evening visits to homes and families where even some rights and values based community classes are held.

The Satsang Rural Vidyalaya children come from the remote villages from rural areas spread out in a 20 kms radius in the Makonda hills. Their families work as landless labourers, small farmers, vendors, daily workers, and construction labourers in the nearby town

of Madanapalli. The children travel to Satsang Rural Vidyalaya by the single public bus that reaches their villages in the early morning hours and returns in the evening hours.

The medium of instruction is English, and Telugu and Hindi are also being taught. Maths is taught with an emphasis on concept development and science and social studies are not only covered as subjects but a thematic relevance linking it to their experiential learning is also emphasized upon.

Free food, snacks, nutritious drinks are given everyday to the children. Bus passes are being provided to all the children by The Satsang Foundation. Free uniforms are also being given.



Kerala Flood Relief

The Satsang Foundation has been in the forefront supporting Kerala through the challenges of its catastrophic rains this August - the maximum in almost a century.

The Kerala Kendra with its volunteers joined in to help with offers coming in from all over the world. Although initial support came in the form of baby food, diapers, water purifiers, it was soon realised that such material was in excess supply in relief camps.

The Kendra decided to shift their focus to the next stage – rehabilitation for people who started returning to their homes. Providing clean drinking water was the primary need of the hour as the wells, the primary source, were found to be unusable due to flooding.

A recce was done in Chengannur, Alapuzha district, one of the worst affected regions. The team realised certain areas like Arattupuzha and Aranmula, situated in higher elevations, could be cleaned up.

On August 25, a small team started working alongside hired labour with

the assistance of two high-power 3HP water pumps, submersible pumps, and a generator. Soon, volunteers from local groups started joining in.

In ten days, they cleaned up more than a 100 wells.

Two weeks later, they moved to Pandanad, a low-lying area where water drained out much later. It was risky as the water pressure around wells was high and the chances of the ground caving in were high. Work is still continuing in this area with volunteer and local support.

Mid-September saw a group of volunteers cleaning wells at Chendamangalam, near Cochin. 25 wells have been cleaned. This is a long-term program needing months and the Kerala team will focus on this initiative until completion.

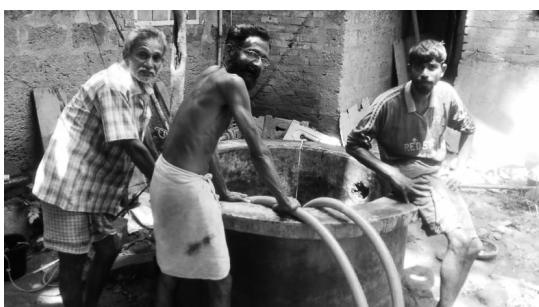
Not only human beings, but animals also were at the receiving end of this support – with a canine mother and its new litter getting a new lease of life. The litter was washed with the muddy waters with the mother desperately

burrowing the heavy slush in her effort to rescue the young pups. The Satsang team who happened to be on the scene, strengthened her valiant efforts with their hands becoming shovels. Eventually, the efforts bore fruit when all the puppies were pulled out – one of which was not breathing. After some timely intervention, the pup was luckily revived!

Help poured in from friends across the country and overseas.

The Mumbai Kendra coordinated the supply of a powerful pump to help drain the flooded areas and houses, apart from wells. A volunteer from NCR helped the Kerala team put together a proposal to the Government of Kerala for management of plastic waste, including non-recyclable elements. The proposal has been since forwarded to the Kerala Government.

The Satsang Foundation joins the Kerala Kendra in profusely thanking all the people who extended their support in the hour of crisis, to truly live the spirit of Manav Ekta!



The Peepal Grove School

The first term of the academic year 2018-19 has been filled with events. Here are a few highlights:

- Sunaad, a music group led by Tara Kini from Bangalore presented a performance to the children, on the poetry from different parts of India, echoing the theme of the Mandukya Upanishad.
- A workshop on water conservation by Bangalore-based Biome Environmental Solutions Pvt Ltd., an organisation working with sustainable architecture and water conservation. Commerce

students also visited a milk factory belonging to the Heritage group and interacted with the officials there.

- A creative writing workshop for students of Class 9 was conducted by Roshan Ali.
- Theatre person and dancer Mahesh Pande conducted western folk dance lessons
- A unique development has been the introduction of evening programmes where children stage plays, music and dance, in place of the Annual Day which usually takes place in the

first term. At least four evening programmes are expected this term, with two having been completed so far. Students staged scenes from Shakespeare's Julius Caesar, presented a Bharatanatyam programme and preparing for more.

- Students of Class XI and XII began an experiment this term when they decided to start teaching children of the workers at the school. The students come for classes every Sunday and are guided in the subjects they need help by the senior students of PGS.

Walk of Hope Awareness Programs

Living in unity and harmony in the midst of diversity was the main objective of Sri M's Walk of Hope 2015-16 from Kanyakumari to Kashmir, an epoch walk covering 7500 kms over 15 months. The **Mumbai Ken-**

dra has been visiting schools and colleges, spreading awareness about the message of the walk through films and talks.

Their efforts were fortified by a walk led by Sri M in February 2018 from a Masjid at Dadar, to a Portuguese Church, then touching Siddhivinayak Temple and concluding at the Sasmitra College, Worli. Sri M addressed the students here. Then came the opportunity to participate in the Monsoon

Miniathon in Thane in August 2018, a distance covering 3.5 Km. It was probably the first time that even the general public participated in taking the oath of social harmony.

The third walk was in September, 28th Thane Mayor's Varsha Marathon, again in Thane. This was indeed an honor as it was by invitation through the Mayor's office. The message of peace and harmony was reiterated by the participants.



The Pune volunteers of The Satsang Foundation joined hands with Deccan Education Society and Rotary Clubs to plant trees at The Fergusson College on 5th July 2018. Over 400 NCC cadets participated in the initiative.

15th August 2018 saw the birth of a **new urban forest in Noida** where over 2000 saplings were planted in Noida, Uttar Pradesh in partnership with the UP Forest Department and the Noida Development Authority. Over 200 volunteers from the Delhi Kendra participated in this program.

Projects in the pipeline

10-Bed Hospital:

Although the Satsang Swasthya Kendra (SSK) has been servicing 12000 OPD's annually, on the ground there is much need for a free hospital which can provide overnight care. Thus SSK is now being extended to a 10 Bed Hospital facility that will offer treatment exclusively to persons from BPL.

We are now in the process of constructing a building of approx. 6000 sq feet on the land available adjacent to the existing SSK facility.

10 Beds, 4 OPD consulting rooms, X-Ray, Ultrasound Rooms, Minor Operating Theatre, Dental Wing, Treatment room are some of the proposed facilities.

Contact

The Satsang Foundation - Admin Office
No. 9, 1st Floor,
Webster Road, Cox Town
Bangalore - 560005
Karnataka
Ph: +91-80-25480062

If you wish to contribute or participate in any of the projects please e-mail connect@satsang-foundation.org or call +91-9448092101