

NOVEMBER 2019



NOTE FROM THE SECRETARY

Max Ehrmann in "Desedarata" says, "With all its sham and drudgery, it still is a beautiful world." Despite much of the happenings around the world and negative news that often gets more airtime, we still keep hearing about the humane efforts and actions. Villages, at one point, were self sufficient – more because there was inter-dependence and the social capital bond was very strong.

After Independence, focus was more on developing the living conditions of people and therefore, housing, roads, water supply etc took precedence while most forgot that the social fabric of values of community living was being eroded. Now, with world becoming a global village, fragmentation of families is taking place more rapidly than ever before. This phenomenon has hit the villages too, and villagers are facing disenchantment like never before.

Even before it laid its foundation on November 11, 1976, BCT always recognized the need to be a facilitator in the development of villages. This role involves, engaging the villagers and fostering local leadership to solve their own problems. The 1980s had seen the development through women while the focus in the last two decades has been children. Today, given the state of society, it is time to focus on communities, as a whole. More than ever, it is imperative to rebuild community cohesiveness, for which, the Community Action Groups (CAGs) are striving. In some of the villages, the change is perceptible, you will read one of such village, Mamidiwada, in this newsletter. While in many villages, it is work in progress.

Bringing about a holistic development is what BCT has always worked towards and with the agriculture returns on a downward spiral, it is imperative that livelihood programs are encouraged. None better deserving than People with Disabilities. In this vein, the training program at Haripuram is on, while a new chapter has started at the two SMART centers – training of mentally challenged youngsters.

Do read on with the happenings here but please do not forget to drop in a line or two about your thoughts. With Regards,

WHAT OUR RECENT VISITORS HAD TO SAY

It was wonderful with BCT visit and DAESI training programme and the food arrangements are very nice.

*Mr. Mallikarjuna Rao, JDA,
Visakhapatnam*

I was very impressed with the work done by the Bhagavatula Charitable Trust and KVK. I also visited the school during my time spent here. I feel that excellent dedication, devotion and discipline exist in the staff, teachers and students, which is remarkable. I would like to come again and spend time with the organization next year. Thanks and congratulations for the work being carried out here.

Dr. PSV Rao, Hyderabad

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Here is an excerpt from one of our old newsletters dated 28th January 1992. This was written by Ms Asha Nori. Also attached is the photo of our governing body in 1988 sourced from the souvenir.



Governing body 1988-89. Sitting (L to R): Smt M Veerayamma, Smt. T Ammaji, Prof Jagat S Mehta, Sri M Ramakrishnayya, Dr. (Ms) CV Ramani (Vice President), Sri T Balakrishnan, Kum C Mohana, Smt. Nookalamma and Smt. Y Ademma.

Standing (L to R): Mr. BV Sreenivasa Rao (Jt Secretary), M Verraju, YR Reddy, Dr. KL Dutt, MV Ramana Murty, KS Tilak, Ch S Narasimha Rao (Treasurer), R Adinarayana Rao and Dr. BV Parameswara Rao (Secretary).

Prof B Sarweswara Rao (President) was away on a tour to USA at the time.

RURAL ELECTRONICS

To make any headway, the quality of work produced in the villages must be good, said Dr. Satyamurthy, our consultant from Eicher-Goodearth, Delhi. To this end, Ramalakshmi and Suribabu are now working on practice circuit boards before they tackle the real thing. They had earlier undergone training with MACE, Visakhapatnam. Our 'Jet-king' radios are still available for sale at Haripuram. Buyers profess themselves entirely happy with their radios, and we haven't had a single complaint so far.

SESSIONS AT SMART DWARAKANAGAR



Sessions by guest speakers at the SMART centers are always looked forth to, especially for the variety of knowledge they bring in for the students. The month of November saw many guests come in and speak to the students. Mr. SVR Naidu, from the Planning Department, Naval Dockyard, Visakhapatnam, spent time on November 2. A master trainer in Neuro Linguistics Programming (NLP), he regularly conducts sessions on NLP, Personality Development and Motivation across educational institutions, and government organizations. His visit to BCT TMF center has been constant with almost every new batch, since the past one year. Alumnus Harsha Munaparathi, who works at Green Park as sales executive interacted with the students too, on November 4. Students Lavanya, Manisha, Neelima and Tejaswini from the previous batch, who now work at Ven Technologies came and interacted with the students too. They explained their job process to the students. Mr. Vijay Kumar (HGA) from LIC of India was another guest speaker this month. Addressing students at the Dwarakanagar center, he delivered a lecture and interacted on goal setting. Mr Sarat Kumar HR Manager from IDA Automation Pvt Ltd also interacted with the students on 21st November.

MOBILIZING AT SMART GAJUWAKA

Mobilizing the under privileged youth of the community has always been an important aspect on the agenda of the SMART center. On 8th November, SMART Gajuwaka team started the exercise for the upcoming batches, which started on 3rd December. As reaching out, educating and motivating target youth is difficult, the mobilization activity enables students to approach the target segment and elaborate about the program. This not only builds their confidence, but also helps in spreading the word around. The alumni also participate actively in conducting meetings and campaigns in the communities. They create awareness about the programme, talk about its benefits, and participate in public meetings and job fairs for this.



A SPECIAL DAY

A few team members of the BCT family paid a visit to the Arunodaya Special school for special children. Run by the Vizag steel plant, this school is headed by President, Mrs Sarada, wife of Sri PK Rath, Chairman and Managing Director. Sri B Sri Ram Murthy, Secretary BCT shared about the experiences of working with special children at BCT and also talked about how future collaborations between the school and BCT can be brought about. Discussions on further training of these challenged children at SMART centres was also discussed. The center managers, Sri Sitarama Raju and Sri Suresh, interviewed the graduated PwDs from Arunodaya.





A TRIP TO REMEMBER

Melissa Hutcheson and Rick Weldon reminisce about their five day stay at the BCT campus

In mid-October, we had the privilege of spending a few lovely days learning about a few of the projects of Bhagavatula Charitable Trust. For this, we spent time with participants, students, and staff at BCT. At literally each step of the way we enjoyed warm welcomes accompanied with excitement, big smiles and kind words. At the Sri PV Venkatesan Center for the Challenged, students enthusiastically taught us to sign a few basic phrases, play carroms while Rick played a bit of badminton. He received a mini-lesson in spinning the charkha from two very patient students, and we learned how a ball of fluff becomes thread. They made it look so easy! We also met students from the residential school, while an evening was spent with a group of rural farmers to discuss the challenges presented to them by pests and changing weather patterns and ways that BCT could provide guidance and support.

We traveled to the Regional Agricultural Research Station, to a tribal village to distribute Kadaknath chicks to 51 families and learned about the previous BCT-KVK initiatives. It was great to mingle with the local family members after the presentation, and while we did not share a spoken language, everyone enjoyed communicating with the universal languages of smiles, hugs, and food.

We were also honored to be a part of the opening of a prosthetics fitment camp onsite at BCT and met students at BCT's Industrial Training Institute and the SMART Training Center in Vizag.

We're both extremely grateful to everyone on the team for the time and energy in fitting us in to your busy schedules, enabling a wonderfully personal experience meeting many members of staff and all the people whose lives they are changing. Thank you!





SPOKEN ENGLISH CLASSES BEGIN

As part of a collaboration between the Jan Shikshan Sansthan and BCT, Spoken English classes will now be conducted for the students of ITI at BCT campus. The programme was inaugurated on November 22, and classes will be held for a duration of two months. BCT Secretary Sri B Sri Ram Murty, ITI Principal Mr. Subba Rao and the staff, Coordinator Prabhavathi garu and English teacher Mr. Siva Prasad from the Residential High School participated in the event. With Mr. Sri Ram Murty highlighting the importance of English speaking skills for the students, Mr. Prasad would be conducting the classes for the students.

ITI STUDENTS PASS WITH FLYING COLOURS

It is with happiness and pride that we bring this piece of good news. All final year students of ITI successfully completed their exams and passed with flying colours. Sanapathi Satyanarayana, Pakkurthi Sivasankar and Neerukundi Vinay Kumar stood first, second and third respectively for electrical final exams. They scored 92.15%, 92.15% and 92% respectively. In the fitter exams, P Suresh Kumar, K Nooka Appalanaidu and C Bheem Tataji took the top three places with 89.69%, 89.23% and 89.08% respectively.

BHAGAVAD GITA CHANTING COMPETITION

The Chinmaya Mission of Steel Plant, Visakhapatnam conducted a Bhagavad Gita chanting competition for the children of BCT Residential High School. Held on the 27th of November, a total of 126 students participated in the contest at both senior and junior levels. Held on Chapter 1 of the Bhagavat Gita (pradhama adhyayam), this was a mandal level contest. The four selected students would go on to participate at the district level. We wish BCT students the best for the upcoming future competitions at the district level.



EXPERIMENTS WITH WEAVING

Clothing is one of life's basic needs and Gomathi M, who is pursuing her MA in Education from the Azim Premji University, strongly believes that everyone should know how to weave their clothes to be self-reliant. She feels that weaving should be part of the school curriculum as it promotes livelihood and improves concentration power. Towards this end, she is now experimenting with teaching middle school students of BCT about weaving. As the group is already familiar with spinning, she aims to enable students to appreciate weaving on a loom; improve student's understanding of issues faced by weavers in AP and introduce concepts of mathematics through hands on work.

As a first step, students learned coconut weaving and paper weaving. For this, a few mathematical concepts of the number system and geometric properties were imparted. A frame using cardboard and wood has also been readied to elaborate upon the concept of the weft and warp. The student's work has been captured during their learning process. All of them showed great energy, interest and enthusiasm. Once they learn current concepts the next level would take students to learn creative art skills like basket weaving, cloth weaving, and decorative items.

VISIT BY THE DENTISTS

On November 14, Children's Day, 36 dentists from IDC (Indian Dental Association) Visakhapatnam visited students of the BCT Residential High School. Dental examinations for all the students were conducted, and they were also given fluoride-medicated oral gel paste. It was a beneficial day for the students, and the doctors expressed that having a school in a clean and non polluted environment was a blessing for the students. The doctors also visited the Sri PV Venkatesan Center for the challenged and Dr. Sridhar Bitra of SMS Dental Hospital, gave a donation. This money will be used to help the children buy books and stationery. A special mention and shoutout for organizing this trip goes out to Dr. Sridhar, who has been a constant supporter of social causes and BCT.

VISIT BY THE MEO

On November 31, Mr. Surya Rao, the Rambilli Mandal Education Officer (MEO) visited the BCT Residential High School along with Sri Chitti Babu, Headmaster of the Panchadarla High school. The duo visited the premises, saw the various activities and skills being taken up and also interacted with the staff and students. They observed the school timetable that encompass classes along with skills and animation programmes with focus on self employment and moral values. The duo further expressed interest in sending children and teachers from other schools to the BCT High School.





TAILORING TRAINING

A tailoring training program for beneficiaries of the Tata Relief Committee was initiated on 3rd November. The three month programme will be held for 21 physically challenged people from 16 villages, to help them become self-employed. After 3 months of training, sewing machines and related materials will be given to the beneficiaries who have completed their training successfully.

TRC PHASE 2 PROGRAM BEGINS

Aiming to serve the physically challenged people, affected in Hudhud cyclone through BCT is the Tata Relief Committee programme. Through this, beneficiaries are provided necessary artificial limbs, and opportunities for self-employment and self-reliance. On 6th November the Phase 2 of the program was inaugurated by Secretary, Sri B Sri Ram Murty and Sri Dubey, Joint Director from Software Technology Parks of India, Visakhapatnam. Mr. Kingshuk Poddar, CEO and Sri V Krishna Kant from AIC-AMTZ, Medi Valley Incubation Council, Andhra Pradesh MedTech Zone, Visakhapatnam, were present too along with Mr. Nick and Ms. Melissa from the USA.

As part of the program, 229 People with disabilities (PwDs) were identified as beneficiaries mostly from the fisherfolk and other communities. Following the inauguration, Mr. Soikat and the team of seven members from Mobility India conducted an assessment of the beneficiary's requirement at BCT Haripuram premises till the 9th of November in the presence of Ms. C Krishna Jyothi, Treasurer, BCT. In this camp, 83 PwDs from 41 villages from 10 mandals gave measurements for artificial limbs. A fitment camp will be conducted two months later with the continuation of physiotherapy to the beneficiaries.



BACKYARD POULTRY

Kadakanath Chicks from Madhya Pradesh were given to 9 identified physically challenged persons for self-employment. Hailing from 6 villages in 3 mandals, each beneficiary was given 10 chicks each. This will allow them to learn the techniques of poultry farming and make economic progress.

LEGEND OF DIMILI VILLAGE



It is fascinating to see how the fabric of a community is woven by the telling and retelling of legends from the past. The month of Karteeka sees three occasions that bring the community of Dimili village together. Karteeka Purnima is the 'Jwala Toranam', which is a festival marked for the health and well-being of the livestock. A toranam made from dried grass is tied and the procession of Lord Shiva is taken under it, symbolizing his drinking of the poison. The villagers then jump to collect twigs of the dried grass which is believed to improve the well-being of their livestock.

The 'Burdalamma panduka' is celebrated every alternate year at Dimili village. Legend goes that in an attempt to usurp the lands of other Zamindar (landlord), one Zamindar sent a few of his mercenaries to fight with other zamindar. As a part of the victory, the victorious Zamindar wanted the daughter of the vanquished Zamindar instead of the usual prize, land. Hearing that her father has given her away without her wishes, the daughter ran away and jumped into the nearby well to save her honour. A week later her body was found and was bought into the village, all covered in mud. The village remembers this through the festival, and a mock fights take place in her memory. After a week, villagers put the mud from the swamp on each other, as a tribute to her.

ACTIVITIES AT THE FARM





Farm activities are on as usual, and Sri KJ Sharma shares about the work that's keeping them busy. If you happen to visit BCT now you can see the new additions of bunding, which has been done to demonstrate how one can prevent soil erosion and improve the quantity of water percolating the soil while preventing water run off. Students of the BCT High School actively participated in the stone bunding at Haripuram farm. Also, the larger area of farms has been divided into smaller plots where fruits, field crops and pulses are now being cultivated. Classes on horticulture for the students of the High School are on in full swing. The children are learning how to create soil mix for pro-trays, filling the trays, how to put the seed, and also preparing vermicompost. While classes with a year-long syllabus began with the start of the academic year, work has been in full gear since Dusshera. Students from classes sixth to tenth are showing active participation as they come 4 days a week. A few select students of 10th class, are also being taught how to look after cows and so they know how to milk cows too.





the story of Mamidivada


With a population of 830 people, Mamidivada village in Rambilli, has been a fertile ground for implementing BCT's initiatives successfully. The Community Action Groups (CAG) which began in April 2017 with the formation of the Mamidivada Village Action Committee, is one example. With Sri Kannam Ramanarao and Sri Dachehalli Satyanarayana as the convener and Co Convener of the committee, the group would meet on the 5th of every month at 7:30 pm in the village Ramalayam. There they would discuss development programs, issues and plan on how to address them. As a result, the CAG at Mamidivada could take action and showcase results. These are,


 **Development through devoutness:** At 7 pm every Saturday, a group of children, youth and committee members gather at the Sri Venkateswara Swamy temple, and take the Lord's palanquin procession to every street in the village. Through this, they have been able to keep the streets clean and also promote unity & devotion.


 **Development in children:** On special occasions, the CAG conducted sports and games competitions for children. They also organized a Grama Sabha of the elders for distributing plants as gifts to the winners. This helped to protect the environment and grow kitchen gardens.


 **Towards ideal youth:** Celebrating festivals like Vinayaka Chavithi, Grama Devatha (local deity) and organizing events like Shramadhaan have led to a better bonding between youth and the elders, who also take the youth to places of pilgrimage like Annavaram and Tirupati. In the temple premises, these youth are made to pledge that they will uphold values, will not fall prey to vices and will work for their village development.


 **Skill Development:** Computer knowledge to the youth, sewing courses for women and Dairy, Farming, agriculture, technology to the women and farmers with the help of B C T KVK is done to increase their revenue and develop their skills.

 **Solving drinking water problems:** The problem used to be very severe during the summer months every year. Women had to cross a road to access their well and given the increased traffic, it was becoming hazardous to cross with pail of water. Pipelines and taps arranged from the ground wells at the end of the village were an action taken by the CAG.

 **Income Generating Programs for Women:** Self Help Groups were set up with women to increase women's income. 30 women formed 2 SHGs and raised capital by saving ₹100/- per month. Every month the savings are lent to a member to help her start a profitable petty business, for agriculture works or buying livestock.

 **Health Camps:** Health camps are being conducted by doctors from Visakhapatnam on the second Sunday of every month with the help of BCT. Now, patients come from surrounding villages too.

 **Farmer's Field School:** Encouraging farmers to use machinery for agriculture and offering know-how on pest control with the support of BCT KVK is the focus. With 488 acres of land being cultivated by 271 farmers with the help of scientists from KVK, farmers are motivated towards better returns. Rythu (farmer) Clubs are being formed by farmers for thrift and income-generation.

 **Mobilization of Financial Resources:** Created to mobilize financial resources for development, the Committee mobilized ₹60000/- from devotees at the Lord Venkateswara temple. Vegetable seeds and seedlings were distributed, and youth were sent to different cities for exposure on social skills. Support is also offered through an academic scholarship.

'MUSHROOM'ING BUSINESS



Mushroom Cultivation is fast emerging as a lucrative business opportunity for the enterprising entrepreneur. As this work can easily be taken up with limited resources, the BCT-KVK, conducted a six day vocational training programme on 'Mushroom cultivation'. Starting from November 15 to November 20, this event saw the enthusiastic participation of 25 farm women. The training held in collaboration with NTPC Simhadri CSR initiative was held at Mettupalem village of Parvada mandal. A mushroom unit was opened at Mettupalem, and machinery along with other materials were handed to the farmers. The participants were trained on how to go about the process of cultivation. They learnt about selection and sterilization of straw, preparation of mushroom beds, precautions, market linkages and other aspects.

TRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR TRIBAL WOMEN



Training Programme on Value Addition of Minor Millets was taken up for women in tribal areas. They were trained to prepare various breakfast, lunch and snack items using millets like Ragi, Korra and Sama. This aims to improve their food security and also help them in becoming entrepreneurs.

A training programme on woman-friendly equipment was taken up to enhance awareness on Drudgery reducing technologies. Implements like Tubular maize sheller, Rotary maize cob sheller, pedal operated paddy thresher, Groundnut decorticator, Banana comb cutter, Pomegranate aril extractor, CIPHET tomato grader, Hand ridger, Manual seed drill, Four row paddy drum seeder, Improved serrated sickle, Groundnut stripper, Cono weeder, CRIDA weeder, cotton plan puller were showcased. 19 tribal women from Arachettuveedhi village attended the programme.



VIGILANCE AWARENESS WEEK

BCT KVK marked the Vigilance Awareness Week from October 28 to November 2. Various activities were organized at different schools, and 272 school children, RAWEP students and KVK scientists participated. Events included Anti Corruption oath and Vigilance Rally with ZP High school children at Melipaka Jagannadhapuram village and essay writing competition for RAWEP students. Extempore, skit and pledge on vigilance awareness were taken up by the children of the MPUP School, Rajukoduru village.

THE ANNUAL FAIR

BCT KVK participated yet again at the annual Kisan Mela held at Regional Agricultural Research Station (RARS) in Anakapalle. The event which was held on November 23, saw BCT KVK exhibiting technologies transferred and agriculture machinery promoted during Kharif season. Nearly 600 farmers attended the event, and showed interest in machinery. Local school children and public visited the stalls as well.



SECOND BATCH OF DAESI

November was a busy month for the BCT KVK, and various events took place. Other than the on farm trials and frontline demonstrations, team KVK launched the 2nd batch of DAESI (Diploma in Agricultural Extension Services for Input Dealers) training for the input dealers. Started from November 24, it will be held for 48 weeks. Classes will be held every Sunday for the 40 dealers from different mandals of Visakhapatnam District. The programme is sponsored by MANAGE, Hyderabad in collaboration with ATMA, Visakhapatnam.



QRT Time

November 27 and 28 marked the visit by the Quinquennial Review Team (QRT) to BCT KVK. Reviewing the work undertaken from 2011 to 2019, on Day 1, the team visited the DFI (Doubling the farmers income) cluster villages at Aratichetla veedhi and Marripalem. They conducted a review meeting with 9 KVKs of Krishna, East Godavari, West Godavari, Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram and Srikakulam districts. They visited the strawberry farm of V.Rajkumar at Siripuram village of Chintapalle mandal, and spoke about the problems in cultivation and marketing. The team suggested marketing techniques and value addition. They visited Marripalem, and saw the low-cost shade net and Gravity drip established by KVK for nursery raising and cultivation of off season high value vegetables like Broccoli and Red cabbage. They went to Aratichetla veedhi, where they were welcomed with the traditional Dhimsa dance and were amazed to see the exhibition of various traditional seeds, tubers, vegetables and foods made by the locals. The villagers also talked about the benefits of KVK initiatives of introducing organic paddy cultivation, bio fertilizers, bio fungicides, preparing vermicompost, rearing chicks etc.



Day 2 activities mainly took place at BCT-KVK, and involved visiting Demo units, KVK Farm and exhibition stalls by 9 KVKs. After a formal inauguration, presentations on significant achievements and impact pertaining to the period for 2011-12 to 2018-19 were made by all the Senior Scientists & Heads and SMS's of 9 KVK's. Suggestions were given by the QRT, chairman and team members for KVK's development. The team released publications prepared by BCT-KVK on Value addition to Jack fruit, Millets cultivation and Mechanization in Paddy.

The visiting team included Dr. S.N. Puri, Chairman of QRT, Former Vice Chancellor, CAU, Imphal, and other QRT members- Dr.N. Sudhakar, Former Director, ATARI, Hyderabad, Dr. Ashok Narula, Former Director, ATARI, Ludhiana, Dr. H. Phillip, Former Director of Extension, TNAU, Coimbatore, Dr. N. Nagarja, Former Director of Extension, UAS, Bengaluru, Dr. B.T. Rayudu, Principal Scientist, ICAR- ATARI, Bengaluru, Dr. Y.G.Prasad, Director, ICAR- ATARI- Zone-X, Dr. Bhaskaran, Principal Scientist, ATARI and Dr. G. Ramarao, Associate Director of Research, RARS, Chintapalle. On Day 2, Dr. A.S Rao, Director of Research, ANGRAU, Dr. P. Rambabu, Director of Extension ANGRAU, Dr. B. Vijayabhinandan, DDE, ANGRAU, Dr. B. Srinivasulu, DE, Dr.YSRHU, Dr. P. Jamuna Rani, ADR, RARS (NC zone), Anakapalle and Dr.G.Ramarao, ADR (HAT zone), Chintapalle, Senior Scientists & Heads and SMS's of all the disciplines (Crop Production, Crop protection, Horticulture, Home Science, Fisheries and Extension) of 9 KVK's (KVK- Amudalavalasa, KVK-Rastakuntubai, BCT-KVK- Haripuram, KVK-CTRI, Kalvacharla, KVK-Pandirimamidi, KVK-VRgudem, KVK- Undi, KVK-Garikapadu and KVK-Ghantasala) were present. The BCT KVK team wonderfully came together as a team for the occasion. BCT-KVK Senior Scientist & Head Dr.Sailaja Kurra and KVK staff ensured that the visit was a success.



Snapshots

**Jwala Toranam at
Dimili village.
Celebrated on
Kartika Purnima,
for the welfare of
livestock.**



**Bhajana Programme at
Teruvupalli village**

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