



Newsletter 07 – February 2008

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Model School

Festivities and Projects:

Harmoniously we passed the last days of 2007. Christmas eve we spent on Ravi's farm, which is located directly in the open nature, outside of Visakhapatnam. The children could play in an area akin to their native places.

Mentally we already prepared for the New Year by tinkering calendars with all the children's paintings from the past year. With this Item they can give their families and village friends a glimpse of what has been at Balamitra Model School.

The New Year celebration was committed in a rather uncommon way. It was consistently impacted by tribal traditions. We started the evening with traditional songs in all of the four represented languages until we continued with a vivid dance session on tribal Dhimsa dancing. Finally we cheerfully welcomed the New Year, 2008.



Pupils on the farm

At the beginning of 2008 we had a grand group of visitors at Sagar Nagar Model School. Pupils of the Waldorf School in Hyderabad went on an excursion to Visakhapatnam district. They spent one day in school, chatting with our students, exchanging experiences, and presenting songs and poems to one another. Afterwards they visited Bora Caves as well as the Adivasi village Bora. This experience has been fruitful for both sides since it enhances the mutual understanding between two completely divers cultural groups.

In January our students went home, to visit their families and celebrate Pongal, the South Indian harvest festival. Since they are back we busily started preparing the annual day, and the 4th grade play „Sidharta the Enlightened One".

Village schools

In the past December Jayashree, one of our field coordinators visited 21 of our village schools and met thereby over 350 Balamitra students. Through observation of classes and in discussion with teachers she gained a new overview of the current situation and problems in field schools. Based on hers and the teachers' feedbacks, new teachers training were organized, which took place in both, the Sagar Nagar Model School and the field areas.

Colorful classrooms!

One of the main issues to supervise the teachers on is the classroom decoration. Quite a few classrooms are bald, colorless and the school gardens neglected. However, if pupils are taught in a comfortably and delightingly prepared classroom they can absorb new information more easily.

At our training in Poolabanda we invited all teachers from Adivasimitra area in order to encourage them to decorate their schools. They prepared various charts with Telugu alphabets, English alphabets and numbers. These we used to decorate in the close by village school of Boorguchettu. We furthermore enriched the classroom with bricolages of the children, new shelves for the storage of teaching materials and rangoli paintings (Indian form drawing) on the wall.

On our January teachers training at Sagar Nagar we focused again on the issue of an ideal classroom; this time all the 40 village school teachers were invited. We tried to give them new creative ideas, how to decorate their schools, involving the pupils assistance. Additionally our volunteer Gulia -a trained waldorf teacher- taught the village school teachers more about waldorf education. Her main subjects were the 12 senses, defined by Rudolf Steiner. After the three day long training the attendees' motivation to implement our new suggestions seemed to have increased note worthily.



*Colorful and bright:
Classroom of Gingeruvada
Balamitra School*

Anjoda School

Opening a new Balamitra School in Anjoda Village, gives 26 further children from 3 different villages the possibility to gain education. Currently two of our volunteer, Ria and Gina, both of them are studying social work in Germany, help to set up this school. While they stay in Anjoda, they supply the school with teaching materials, train the teacher and teach the children themselves.

Midday meals

Since months we were waiting for governmental support for midday meals. These were officially promised, though never received. As parents frequently need their children's hand on the fields, they refuse to send them to school, unless they receive a meal for lunch. Thus regular attendance of students is not always the case.

Now we can finally report that over 20 village schools are provided with food supports. Assumable even more schools will receive this aid soon.



Children of K.Panasapattu enjoying their meal

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Appeal:

You can contribute to our efforts by way of donations in materials or money. Financial contributions to Samata are exempt from Income Tax under Section 80G and has a contribution regulation act (FCRA) number from the Central Government which allows it to receive foreign funds. Please make Cheques payable to 'Samata'. Legal Status:

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