

Annual Report for the year 2009-2010

Adivasi Academy

Bhasha Research and Publication Centre was formed in 1996 for documentation and conservation of adivasi languages and culture and for creation of a national institute for research and education in the area of adivasi culture and imagination. The Adivasi Academy was visualised as an institute that would develop Tribal Studies as a new discipline and contribute to the development of adivasi communities. A decade later, the Adivasi Academy at Tejgadh stands as a unique institution that has laid the foundations of a distinct educational and development model for the adivasis of India. Recognised as a Centre of Excellence by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, the Adivasi Academy is viewed by adivasi communities as a space for intellectual dialogue, imaginative expression and hope for a dignified future.

The Adivasi Academy was established in 2000. The present Director Shri Ashokbhai Chaudhari joined at the Adivasi Academy in October 2008.

Ms. Antara Dev Sen, Dr. Sudarshan Iyengar, Dr Tridip Suhrud, Dr Varsha Das, Ms Vidya Rao and Shri Uttam Parmar and Shri Kanji Patel form the Advisory Board of the Adivasi Academy.

The following courses were offered by the Adivasi Academy during the academic year 2009-10:

- Diploma in Tribal Studies
- Diploma in Adivasi Languages, Society and Culture
- Diploma in Organic Agriculture and Forest Management
- Diploma in Tribal Studies
- Certificate Course in Rural Health Management
- Distance Education Programme (IGNOU)

The Indira Gandhi National Open University's Special Study Centre at the Adivasi Academy enrolled forty new students under various Certificate, Diploma and Degree courses.

English and Computer Training to High School Students

With a view to enhancing English and Computer proficiency among adivasi students, the Adivasi Academy commenced English Language and Computer Training programmes for high school students in remote villages of Naswadi and Pavi Jetpur talukas. During a three year period, the project intends to promote computer literacy, communication skills and English language proficiency among three thousand students of eight high schools of Naswadi and twenty seven schools at Pavijetpur talukas.

Recognition as IGNOU's Autonomous Special Study Centre

For design and delivery of courses for furthering education and livelihood opportunities among adivasi communities, the Indira Gandhi National Open University has decided to recognise the Bhasha Research and Publication Centre as a Special Autonomous Centre of IGNOU. Institutes set up by Bhasha, namely the Adivasi Academy and Himlok: Centre for Himalayan Studies, have launched Research and Educational Programmes from their respective campuses under the Trans-Disciplinary and Inter-Disciplinary School of IGNOU.

These courses include Diploma in Art and Culture, Diploma in Culture and Development, Certificate programme in Rural Health Care and Diploma in Himalayan Culture. A total 36 students are admitted at Adivasi Academy and 12 students are admitted in Himlok courses. Bhasha has also started a Himalayan Culture Course from the Keylong Museum in Lahul Spiti District from May 2010.

Research

Under its Fellowship Programme, the Adivasi Academy extended Senior Research Fellowships to the following scholars:

- Ms Eileen Coates, artist, Ireland
- Dr Brian Coates, Dept. of Cultural Studies, University of Limerick, Ireland
- Shri T. C. Negi, writer, Himachal Pradesh
- Shri Rajpal Varma, Shimla
- The following scholars visited the Adivasi Academy for research:
- Prof. Greg Alles, Maryland College, U.S.A. visited the Adivasi Academy on a Fulbright Scholarship to study tribal religion.
- Ms. Aliche Tilche, a student of SOAS, London is affiliated with the Adivasi Academy for her Doctoral Research on Museum Studies.

- Ms. Hanna Al-Taher from Germany was offered a Junior Research Fellowship for the study of gender relations in adivasi communities and the impact of micro-credit on the same.
- Rucha Patel, DAIICT worked on website development for Bhasha's language conservation work and Peoples Linguistic Survey
- Shivkala Vasava, MBA from Gujarat University examined portfolio management in Microfinance
- Mr. Charlie Mitchel worked on the Digital Mapping of the villages of Reach to Teach Educational Centres. He has put the centres over google mapping.
- Mr. Vipul Kapadia, Programme Officer of Bhasha Centre participated in three weeks training programme on Community Based Micro Finance at Coady International Institute, Canada and got the first rank in the programme.
- Shri Arjun Rathwa and Ms. Sonal Baxi participated in the Anthropology Conference in the U.K and presented papers.
- Shri Daxin Bajrange and Shri Umesh Rathwa were awarded the Ford Foundation Fellowship for higher studies and they are joining the course in UK.

'Vidya' Non-formal Schools

Vasantshala, the non-formal residential school set up for children from migratory families on the Academy's campus, was created with the purpose of providing adivasi children from migrating families who have been either pushed out or have missed going to school, an opportunity to reintegrate with the formal schools. During the past three years of its existence, Vasantshala has been an extremely successful experiment in non-formal education for adivasi children. The residential school now has fifty children. The Academy continues to run bridge schools for adivasi children in the villages under its 'Vidya' programme.

In a new initiative, the Adivasi Academy has collaborated with Reach to Teach, a U.K. based organisation devoted to reaching out quality education to adivasi children in Gujarat. Towards this, the Adivasi Academy conducted a massive diachronic survey covering 264 villages of Narmada, Tapi, Vadodara, Dahod, Godhra, Kheda, Sabarkantha districts during June 2008 to assess the existing educational status and needs in these areas. Based on the survey and consultations with educationists, organisations and community members, Reach to Teach has set up fifteen non-formal schools in far-flung villages located on the borders of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh in the Kanwant taluka.

Under the Reach to Teach programme 14 non-formal schools continued to run from 2009-2010 and 16 new non formal schools were established throughout the year. Under the TDH Vidya Programme, a total 36 centres continued to run through the year. With the programmes of R2T and TDH, total 2500 children were taught during the year. Examinations of all 2500 children were carried out during April to evaluate the childrens learning and to assess their grade level.

Teacher training was carried out weekly at the Adivasi Academy, for teachers of the non-formal schools. The one week workshops were conducted two times during the year with the teachers of TDH and R2T for training and development.

Nutritious foods such as channa, kharekh, revdi and nuts were provided regularly to students of non-formal schools.

Three teachers travelled from Bevington school in the U.K to visit the non-formal schools. They also conducted a teacher training session with non-formal school teachers, exposing the teachers to world class mathematics curriculum and teaching methods.

After the Governments implementation of the Right to Education Bill, teachers from the Non Formal Schools met with Bhasha staff, trustees and educationalists to discuss the implications of the act and forward directions of Bhasha's education programme.

The Gujarat Government is currently in the process of implementing Right to Education Act. Under this, they approached Bhasha Centre for admitting the children of non-formal school into government primary schools. Bhasha has tried to admit as many children as possible to the primary schools. We have admitted almost 1200 children from our non-formal School to the Government primary schools. We will continue to admit the remaining children to the government primary schools.

Keeping in view of Right to Education Act, Bhasha has decided to change the titles of the non-formal schools. They will now be called "Special Training Centres (STC)" and Vasant Shala at Tejgadh will be known as "Main Special Training Centre (MSTC)". The focus of these Special Training Centres are to teach the children of between 4 to 6 years. A fresh survey will be conducted after the primary school admission and Special Training Centres will start giving training to children who drop out of government schools for one year.

'Prakriti' Healthcare

The 'Prakriti Clinic' at Tejgadh provides health care services, rural para-medical training, health awareness and need-based research. During the year, the Prakriti clinic was visited by 8636+3636 patients that included 3719 women, 4179 men and 702 children from 250 villages of Chhotaudepur, Pavijetpur and Kanwant talukas.

In addition, 1100 households were provided with health insurance during the year. The total households provided with health insurance is 8210

Health camps were held in 36 villages of Kawant, Chhotaudepur and Pavi Jetpur Talukas such as Jamla, Methibor, Jharuli, Dobacpra, Jervi, Koli, Kumbhani, Bodgam, Dehari, Singlabari, Diawat and Khadla, during which 936 persons were offered treatment.

A special camp for cracked lips was conducted in the month of April 2010 with the help of Maya Foundation, Surat and total 28 patients were given treatment and 23 patients were operated.

Three workshop on Traditional Medicine were conducted during the year in the month of August, September and October 2009

A Screening Camp for Sickle Cell Anemia was conducted with the help of Red Cross, Ahmedabad and total 2106 patients were given treatment.

The Adivasi Academy's teachers and health karyakartas collaborated with Darpana Academy's 'Acting Healthy Project' to raise awareness regarding women's health in the villages of Vadodara district. Artistes from Darpana Academy trained a group of teachers and community health karyakartas of the Adivasi Academy in community theatre.

Vaacha': Museum of Voice

Documentation of local history and culture was carried out and put on display at the Museum.

A new collection of tribal musical instruments was added to the museum artifacts.

Digital documentation and dissemination of tribal music was undertaken and exhibitions on tribal culture were held.

A total of 12, 663 visitors from India and overseas visited the Museum of Voice during the year.

Music workshops were held for the non-formal school children and also with the teachers of non-formal school during the year.

Mr. Vikesh Rathwa, Assistant to Co-ordinator, attended a Video Edition Course in Baroda in the month of October 2009.

During the year 7 workshops were held for the documentation of tribal music and songs under the title "Toor Mela" at Tejgadh, almost 800 tribal artists participated. Four music CDs were produced under the programme of Centre of Excellence of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India.

Till date, Vaacha Museum has collected 2358 manuscripts in different languages, 900 audio cassettes of different tribal music and have displayed them at the Vaacha Museum at Tejgadh.

A co-operative formed with the help of Bhasha Centre was revived during the year. The members of Tribal Artists co-operative came to Tejgadh for the Annual Meeting in the month of February 2010 and declared their new board of members. Artist co-operative has completed their financial audit till the year 2010.

Library

During the year 3171 new books were added to the library. With this, the Tejgadh library has a collection of 31,153 books and 188 academic journals and magazines. The library has a membership of 518 individuals that includes faculty, students, college teachers and local residents

Campus Development

The construction of the 'Residency Block and Hostel' supported by the Reach to Teach, UK was completed during the year. The three guest rooms and two dormitories built at the Activity Centre are fully functional. It was named 'Toor' Residency Block.

The boundary of the campus of the Adivasi Academy was marked with a fence and construction has completed with the pre-casting model wall.

Different models for the demonstration of Organic Agriculture, Mulching, Drip Irrigation and other agricultural systems have been established at the campus of the Adivasi Academy for study and training purposes.

The Bhasha Van was established in the month of March 2010. 400 saplings were planted by linguists, scholars and activists who participated in Bhasha Confluence at Baroda and Tejgadh.

The Alternate Development Centre of the Adivasi Academy has been converted into the Main Special Training Centre for residential school children. The centre has been renovated and it is now ready for the children.

Adivasi Chaitanya Trust and Samveg Foundation (Community Based Organisations created by Bhasha Research and Publication Center)

The Adivasi Chaitanya Trust was set up to create a model of sustainable development whereby adivasi villages could become self-reliant. Set up by trainees of the Adivasi Academy, Adivasi Chaitanya Trust has set up Development Services Centres in adivasi areas that carry out community work in nearly a thousand villages of the eastern belt of Gujarat.

The Adivasi Chaitanya Trust set up twelve new Development Services Centres at Surat, Tapi and Narmada districts. There are presently thirty centres spread over the eastern tribal belt of Gujarat. The community work of the thirty DSCs covers:

- Micro-credit: 2250 self-help groups having a membership of 28285 individuals
- Food Grain Banks: 55 banks with 4500 women members
- Migratory Labourers legal aid Forum: 852 members
- Organic Agriculture: 825 women farmers
- Micro-Enterprise: 834 entrepreneurs
- Artists' Groups: 11 SHGs having 242 members
- Gobar Banks: 98 with 857 members

The Adivasi Chaitanya Trust has conceptualised the setting up of a Green Economic Zone (GEZ) in the tribal belt of Gujarat with the involvement of a hundred karyakartas. GEZ plans to cover 2200 villages spread over 30000 sq. mt. area of Tapi, Narmada and Mahi river basins in Gujarat.

A walk with the field staff, activists and other colleagues was held in the month of June 2009 in entire tribal districts of Gujarat to promote the idea of Green Economic Zones. 175 villages were covered during the walk and the panchayats of these villages resolved to support the idea of Green Economic Zone by signing formal resolutions.

A Capacity Building Programme was organised for the core group of the DSCs focusing on the impact of the economic slowdown on adivasi areas, the role of gram sabhas, livelihood, gender issues and self-reliance.

A Computer Training Programme was conducted for imparting computer skills, internet usage and communication to the karyakartas.

Green Economic Zones are currently in the implementation stage focusing on building the capacity of Karyakartas and the creation of federations. The first model has been established in Panvad DSC of Chhotaudepur Taluka of Baroda district and more than 25 villages are currently engaged in GEZ activities.

The activities include the promotion of Drip Irrigation Systems, Smokless Chula, Organic Agriculture, Vermicompost and the creation of federations so that farmers can sell direct to industry for higher prices.

Adivasi Chaitanya Trust has completed the first round of forward linkage by procuring the maize crop produced by the members involved in different development work. The crop was sold in the market at a higher price, then farmers would have obtained from selling their crop individually. In this process of forward linkages, a transaction over Rs. 10 lakh was made and the members receive a much higher price for their crops in this process.

Adivasi Chaitanya Trust and Samveg Foundation have completed their three years of the audit period in the month of March 2010. The members from Adivasi Chaitanya Trust and Samveg Foundation participated in an annual meeting of Bhasha Centre under the title “Translating Bhasha” in the month of December 2009. They presented the activity chart and budget for the year 2010-2011. Adivasi Chaitanya Trust has taken responsibility of conducting Kaleshwari and Padam Dungari Melas from the year 2011.

The following small scale cluster federations are being created under Samveg:

- Mahi Parallel Federation for Panchmahal District
- Sukhi Parallel Federation for Dahod District
- Orsang Parallel Federation for Vadodara District
- Narmada Parallel Federation for Narmada District
- Tapi Parallel Federation for Surat/Tapi District
- Samveg has undertaken training for Strengthening of DSCs and for development of Green Economic Zone, micro-enterprise, forward and backward linkages and data analysis.

With the support of NABARD, 100 self-help groups are formed and linked to nationalised banks. In near future the total number of SHGs under NABARD sponsored project will go to hundred.

Budhan Theatre

The Budhan Theatre began with a small community library set up at Chharanagar ten years back. The group performed its first play based on the custodial death of Budhan Sabar in 1998. Since then Budhan Theatre has performed street plays to raise awareness about the condition of the denotified tribes. Budhan Theatre actors have adopted theatre as a medium to change their lives and their identity as “born criminals.”

Budhan Theatre engaged in the movement to resist the commercialization of the Kankaria Lake at Ahmedabad. The group performed a play on 16th February 2009 under the direction of Prof. Saumya Joshi for public sensitization.

The group performed six shows in various parts of Ahmedabad City such as Gujarat College, Lal Darwaja, Raipur, Behrampura Shah E Alam and Pushpa Kunj Gate at Kankariya Lake.

Budhan Theatre performed at Bhasha Confluence in March 2010 in Baroda.

Shri Dakxin Bajarange participated in the National Conference on 'Unorganized Sector and Role of Media' organized by the Mahatma Gandhi Labour Institute, Ahmedabad and presented the experience of Budhan Theatre and Community Development.

A petition for the Maninagar Demolition Case was filed with the Supreme Court and an interim was obtained on demolition of the basti.

Himlok

Bhasha is creating an institute by the name of 'Himlok' at Himachal Pradesh. 'Himlok' is set up for conservation, documentation, study, research in the area of Himalayan Studies and undertaking of cultural and ecological conservation or large-scale field studies and projects of development.

The present Advisory Board for Himlok includes Dr. K. K. Chakravarty, Dr. O. C. Handa, Shri Tobdan, Dr. Sukrita Paul Kumar, Dr. Shekhar Pathak and Dr. D. P. Agrawal. Bhasha has identified land for setting up of the Himlok campus at Nahan village in Sirmaur district. The application for procuring the land has been submitted to the Government of Himachal Pradesh.

Himlok has initiated community development in the Kalpa and Keylong areas.

A library at Kalpa was closed as per the advice of Himlok Advisors.

A survey was carried out at Kalpa, Roghi and Warangi villages in Kinnaur District of Himachal Pradesh for training to be imparted to women on gender, health and livelihood issues.

Bhasha has completed the interior designing work at the Keylong Museum assigned to it by the Government of Himachal Pradesh. The Keyong museum is now fully functional. This year Bhasha, Himlok has signed an MOU with the Department of Art, Culture and Language of Himachal Government to run the Keylong Museum for another 3 years. Bhasha has taken over the Museum and appointed 10 fulltime staff members at Keylong Museum to run different activities.

A Workshop with the writers of Himalayan region was organized in May 2010 to finalise the People's Linguistic Survey of India volume.

A workshop was held in Binsar in July 2009 under the title Meeting of Minds.

A meeting under the title Meeting of Minds was held in November 2009 at Mussorie to explore collaboration with Seaforth Cultural Centre.

Purva Prakash

Purva Prakash, was set up as an autonomous Trust for carrying forward Bhasha's publication programme. The organisation represents 'purva' the eastern tribal of Gujarat and evokes the sense of light/knowledge of the adivasis as well as the eastern world. Purva Prakash offers a platform for alternative literature that focuses on issues related to communities that stand on the fringe of the mainstream and makes efforts to sensitise people in general to these issues through literature.

Purva Prakash brought out the following publications during the year:

Books

SEZ: Ek Sarvanami Tsunami (Hindi) by Abhijeet Sengupta

Swami Govind Guru (Gujarati) by Arjunsinh Pargi

Hind Swaraj Vishe (Gujarati) by Tridip Suhrud

2009 2010

Manda-English Dictionary (Manda-English) by B. Ramakrishna Reddy

Manda Oral Literature (Manda-English) by B. Ramakrishna Reddy

Tribal Literature of Gujarat (English) by Nishaant Chowksi

Indigenous Peoples: Responding to Human Ecology (English) by Lachman Khubchandani

Ananay te Por by Arvind Patel (Dodia)

Tarunavasthana Umbare by Kiran N. Shinglot (Gujarati)

Dapu by Surmal Vahonia (Panchmahali Bhili)

Magazines

Lakhara (Annual) 1 issue

Purva Para (Quarterly) 2 issues

Bol, children's magazine (Bi-monthly) : 6 issues

Important Events during the year 2009-2010

On 5th June 2010 hundreds of Adivasis as well as activists from around the country marched from Tejgadh to Vedchi, spreading awareness about Green Economic Zones. As a result of this, 175 villages committed to the concept

A three day workshop was held in September 2009 to discuss the Development of a National Indian Tribal Syllabus. Scholars from around India participated.

Bharat Bhasha Confluence was held in Baroda and Tejgadh from the 7th, 8th and 9th. The confluence brought together more than 650 participants representing over 320 Indian languages. The confluence drew nation wide media coverage.

A week long Green Economic Zone capacity building workshop was held with field level Karyakartas in Tejgadh, May 2010

Teachers from Non Formal Literacy Centers met in Baroda to discuss the Right to Education Bill, May 2010

Bhasha organized a multi-lingual tribute to the recipient of Sahitya Akademi for Translation, Prof. Tridip Suhrud. The tribute brought together speakers of 14 different Indian languages to speak, 5th May 2010

Ajit Kanikar from The Ford Foundation joined a seminar on Green Economic Zones and alternative development themes in Baroda with Karyakartas and Bhasha Staff, 5 May 2010

A film was made on Green Economic Zone by the French National T.V.

Funding Agencies

During the year Bhasha received funding support from the following international organisations and the government:

The Ford Foundation

Terre des Hommes

Reach to Teach

Association for India's Development

Aide et Action

Ministry of Tribal Affairs, GOI

Dept. of Education, GOG

Dept of Language, Art & Culture, Himachal Pradesh

Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore

District Planning office, Vadodara, GOG

District Primary Education Department

CAPART

NABARD

Catholic Relief Services (CRS)

District Collector, Godhara

MOU in force at Present

1. Department of Language, Art and Culture, Government of Himachal Pradesh
2. Reach to Teach, UK
3. Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi