

NEWSLETTER FROM JAGRITI VIHARA – FEBRUARY 2021

Dear friends,
Namaste!

Thank you for your letter and the financial support to our corona project. On 5th of January we had our Executive Committee meeting at Jagriti Vihara. It was very successful meeting. We discussed about the plans and the projects of Jagriti Vihara. Members were very happy to see people working in the campus. Now we will start the work of repairing the broken boundary walls and the repairing of electrical wiring in the guest house and in the kitchen. We all are very happy with the support from JVV and sending our thanks and gratitude to you for your kind support. We will also send you the photographs of the activities in the campus.

The most important discussion was about the new rules and regulations of the government of India for the non government organizations who are giving their services to the society and adding support to the development of the country. According to the new rules and regulations the NGOs in India who are registered under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) have to open an Account at State Bank of India, New Delhi Main Branch as Designated FCRA Account. The account so opened at New Delhi Branch can only be used for receiving Foreign Contribution. One more Account has to be opened at SBI in the state/town where the NGOs are situated. This account is to be used as utilization account. It means we have to open a designated bank account at SBI New Delhi to receive donations from foreign countries and then we have to open another account in Ranchi (utilization account) to utilize the amount for the purpose it has been donated to us. We have been given time till 31st March 2021. After that we can not receive any amount in our present bank account in Ranchi. Earlier this facility was given to states in India but now it has been centralized. It is a time consuming and tiring work. I have been working day and night to prepare so many documents for this purpose. It was not necessary but once the rules are imposed on us we have to follow them. Hopefully we will complete the process in a few weeks and get a new bank account for future financial transactions. We will send you the details of our new banking account when we get them.

We organized a health check up camp in the village where about 85 people were examined by the doctors and nurses and given medicines. About 30% of the total patients had problems with their blood pressure and about 25% had problems with the blood sugar level. I was surprised to know that because I had the impression that villagers are hard working and they can not be the victim of the life style diseases. But this is the reality now. Under the corona project we have already distributed dry food articles, warm clothes and blankets to the poor and needy people in our region. We also distributed walking sticks and crutches to the needy people. We kept ourselves busy with these humanitarian activities. Your support added wings to our dream and we successfully carried out the activities.

For the last one year we have been fighting against an invisible enemy. It took a long time to understand what to do in this difficult situation. Suddenly we were locked in our houses. Everything was stopped. People have to walk miles and miles to reach home. They migrated to some other cities in search of jobs and suddenly had to come back with empty pockets and empty stomach. It was heart touching moment.

At home they had nothing to do. No earnings, no food. It was terrible. Many people lost their lives. Some of my friends have also become the victim of this fatal virus. Somehow we managed to survive . In this difficult situation the voluntary organizations in India played a very important role in making them feel good. We were also cooperating with the other organizations in Jharkhand and also with the government to provide some relief work to the needy and affected people. We were able to do that only because of the kind support from our friends and supporters. You always supported us in difficult situation. We extend our thanks and gratitude to all of you for your strong support.

We are very sorry to hear that two of our (JVV) board members and one of Perji's daughters got infected with the virus. How are they now? Praying for their quick recovery. Soon in India the government will start the move for vaccination. Because of the rumors spread around the country the government has decided to go for vaccination to the Covid Warriors, the health workers, policemen, Municipality workers and then the senior citizens etc. to create awareness and send a positive message to the people about the safety of the vaccine. To vaccinate such a large population in India is not an easy task. It will take a long time to provide vaccine to everyone. So, we have to wait for our turn with patience and precautions.

With very warm greetings,

Rajesh Prashant
For Jagriti Vihara

NEWSLETTER FROM JAGRITI VIHARA

BIRSA MUNDA BIRTH ANNEVERSARY AND THE FOUNDATION DAY OF JHARKHAND

The people of Jharkhand celebrated the birth anniversary of Birsa Munda as the “DAY OF TRIBAL PRIDE”. The government of India has declared this day as “JANJAATIYE GAURAV DIWAS “ (DAY OF TRIBAL PRIDE). This day is also celebrated as the foundation day of Jharkhand. Tribal people call him DHARTI AABA, the father of earth. He is regarded as god among tribal community. The place where he was kept as a prisoner and later hanged till death on June 7,1900, has now been converted into a museum. This museum was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of India on his birth anniversary (15th Nov, 2021). This museum will be open for the people very soon. As always people of Birsa Nagar also celebrated the birth anniversary of Birsa Munda with dance and songs followed by the speeches of some local leaders. The life of Birsa Munda was dedicated to the society. He always fought for the rights of the common people, farmers, land reforms, forest protection and conservation etc. His philosophy/ideology (Love, Peace and Progress) is still relevant to the society and will remain relevant for the generations to come. Jagriti Vihara also follow the same principle. As we all know Jayaji was very fond of his life and philosophy. Birsa Munda as a freedom fighter united the people of this region against the agrarian rules imposed by the British government in this region and became very popular leader among the Tribal community. Birsa Munda’s slogan as a freedom fighter is still remembered in the area of Jharkhand, Orissa, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, “ ABUA RAJ ETE JANA, MAHARANI RAJ TUNDU JANA” (Let the kingdom of the queen be ended and our kingdom be established). He lived only for 25 years but he did a lot of work for the society. His life teaches us a lot of lessons for the development of the society .

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACT IN JHARKHAND

The state of Jharkhand has a unique relation with forest since ancient times. The word ‘Jharkhand’ connotes ‘*area of land covered with forests*’. Therefore, literally as well as symbolically, Jharkhand is associated with forests. Various ethnic groups such as Munda, Oraon, Ho, Santhal, Paharia, Chero, Birjea, Asura and other have influenced their ecosystems by varying practices of agro-pastoralism over the years. Traditionally, these indigenous people have symbiotic relations with forests. Local festivals like *Sarhul* and *Karma* are customarily related with worshipping of trees

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges faced by the human community today. The analysis of past changes and current irregular behaviour in climatic events shows that changes being experienced in the climate of Jharkhand are the proof of natural climate variability prevailing in the state. Previous studies for the state show that the Jharkhand is in precarious

situation due to its high climate sensitivity and vulnerability, combined with low adaptive capacity. Climatic alternation in Jharkhand is becoming fairly perceptible and the changes are far more evident now. As a result of climate change extreme abiotic factor like high and low temperature, salinity, osmotic stress, heavy rain, floods and forest damages are posing serious threats to crops production.

The state of Jharkhand is a very important state which retains beautiful forests with a diverse flora and fauna and huge mineral reserves. Poverty is one of the biggest issues of this state as it has acute tribal dominated areas which have never been seriously tackled politically, socially and administratively. The agriculture and forests of this state which are the biggest contributors to the livelihoods of the rural people have been suffering due to a lack of clear cut policies on climate change. The poverty eradication and tribal development plan in Jharkhand are ineffective because they do not give significant results due to poor implementation and execution. In our meeting with the villagers we always discuss the issues related to the forest, agriculture & horticulture, environment & water resources. We always pass on the information that we get from different sources to them. Many farmers are utilising the scientific way of farming to improve their crops. This is a good sign for future.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The situation of Covid pandemic is so far under control in India. The total number of new cases have been recorded during the last 24 hours is around 12000. There is a slight increase in the growth rate of the pandemic. It is around 16%. But due to the vaccination and precautions taken by the people we were able to control the rapid spread of virus in the community. Last two months have been very important for the country due to the festivals. People were scared of the spread of virus once again because of the crowd gatherings during the festivals. People are aware about it and taking all precautions and following the Covid protocol to avoid infections while going out in the offices and in the markets. Considering the low intensity of virus spread the government has decided to open schools and colleges with the option that those who do not want to go to schools can study through virtual platform. Markets are open now. There is slightly improvement in the growth of economy during this quarter. But the threat to spread of the pandemic is still there and we have to be careful about it. We have been discussing about it in our meetings with the villagers.

PRICE RISE OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES

People in India and in Jharkhand are very much worried about the price rise of essential commodities. The prices of Rice, Dal, Vegetables, Edible/Cooking oil, Cooking gas, Petrol, Diesel has gone up to 80 to 100 percent more than the last quarter. It is very difficult to arrange food for the family of a middle class people. Every one in the villages and in the cities are affected by

the price rise and living a stressful life . It is a matter of great concern. The government has given assurance to take all necessary steps to control the price rise of essential commodities.

ACTIVITIES OF JAGRITI VIHARA

During the period of this quarter we organised meetings with the villagers to know the situation in the villages and the need for the people. In our meetings with women groups our female animators discussed the problems of their family, health & hygiene, education of their children etc. and tried to find the ways for their solutions. We organised two health camps at the health centre of Jagriti Vihara. About 200 people were examined in this camp and given proper medicines. We also distributed food articles to the poor and needy people of the villages around Jagriti Vihara. The awareness programme for Covid-19 is still going on.

We had meeting with the volunteers to strengthen their capabilities to execute the work in a proper way. We are all set for the start of the tailoring project for SHGs . We have discussed with the village representative for another projects for the SHGs . We will make another plan for them in near future.

The road inside the campus of Jagriti Vihara has been broken once again due to excessive rain fall. It was repaired earlier. Some more trees have fallen down. Some parts of the compound wall has become curved and can fall any time. These are a few things happened due to the heavy and unusual rain fall .

Everything else is alright at JV.

With warm greetings from all of us at Jagriti Vihara

Rajesh