"SUCCESS ATTENDS WHERE TRUTH REIGNS"
- Gandhiji’s Message on the inauguration of Gandhigram in 1947

Gandhigram Trust
NEWSLETTER

January - March, 2013
Our vision: Wholistic village development as envisioned by Mahatma Gandhi

HANDS JOINING TOGETHER

Gandhigram which was started in 1947 as a single unit by Dr.T.S.Soundram and Dr.G.Ramachandran has now grown into a cluster of institutions. In spite of different organization structure, the institutions keep in track the vision of the founders and follow the tradition and culture they have built.

The Governance pattern of the organizations is built in such a way that they are interlinked. We now feel in addition to interlinking there should be an informal structure with common culture, common tradition and common goals. We are thankful to Dr.D.K. Oza, former Vice-Chancellor of Gandhigram Rural Institute (GRI) and Padmashri Smt.Renana Jhabwala the present chancellor of GRI, who have taken efforts for strengthening the working relationship between Gandhigram Trust, GRI and Gandhigram Institute of Rural Health and Family Welfare Trust (GIRH & FWT). This has led to the formation of working groups for developing the common vision and future programmes of Gandhigram.

Dr.D.K.Oza has also donated Rs. one lakh towards creating a corpus fund and the interest amount will be utilized for conducting seminars involving all the three institutions.

Model Village Panchayat with Gandhian Ideology

Gandhigram, with the support of all the sister institutions has proposed to work in the neighbourhood panchayats to make them as model panchayats with Gandhian Ideology. To start with, Samiyarpatti Panchayat has been selected for developing it as a model. As a part of the model village panchayat developing programme, 25 youth
volunteers from Samiyarpatti were trained on 15th and 16th February 2013. Smt. R. Revathi, Director, Extension Gandhigram Trust organized the training programme and the resource persons were from the GRI, Gandhigram Trust and GIRH&FWT. Dr.S.K. Gopal, Asso.Professor and Head of the Dept. of Extension Education GRI would coordinate the model village panchayat project under the auspices of all the three institutions of Gandhigram.

CELEBRATIONS AT GANDHIGRAM

Kasturba Day Celebrations at Gandhigram Trust

Kasturba Day was celebrated on 21st and 22nd February 2013 at Gandhigram Trust. On 21st evening the day was celebrated at Kattunaickanpatti.

Dr. J.V.P. Gunasekaran addressing the village people

The function was co-ordinated by Kasturba Hospital. Dr. J.V.P Gunasekaran, District Appointing Officer, Food Security and Medical Administration, Dindigul enlightened the audience with Kasturba’s simple life and patriotism.

A special sarvodya prayer was organized on 22nd February 2013 at 7.30 am at Dr.T.S Soundram Manimandapam. The students of Kasturba hospital and Kasturba Sevikashram Special Hr.Sec.School gave talks on the special characteristics of Ba. This was followed by Women’s meet for the employees of Gandhigram institutions. Smt. Malarvizhi, Member, Child Welfare Committee, Dindigul spoke about the values to be followed in life and about women empowerment.

Selvi. Vaitheeswari of Sevikashram receiving the award from Dr. R. Kousalyadevi, Life Trustee.

A public meeting was convened at Kasturba Hospital at 6.00pm. Smt. Mallammal Professor, Gandhian Thought and Peace Science, GRI and Smt.Malavizhi, Lecturer in Health Science, GIRH and FWT gave special address. Dr.R. KousalyaDevi, Life Trustee distributed the prizes to the outstanding students of Sevikashram Spl. Hr.Sec.School and Sowbhagya Illam.

The Best Extension Worker Award has been given to Smt. K.Muthumary, field worker, Palani for her contribution in creating a vibrant federation with more than 40 self help groups. An excellent cultural programme was rendered by the students of Gandhigram Institutions.

National Female Children’s Day

National Female Children’s Day was observed on 24.01.2013 at Sowbhagya Illam. Smt.R.Revathy, Director Village Extension

“Man becomes great exactly in the degree in which he works for the welfare of his fellow-men.”

- Gandhiji
Gandhigram Trust addressed the children about the social problems, adolescent health and hygiene and nutrition.

150th Birth Anniversary Celebrations of Swami Vivekananda

150th Birth Anniversary celebrations of Swami Vivekananda was held on 7th February 2013. Shri.N.Krishnamurthy of Vivekananda Kendra inaugurated the celebrations in a special meeting convened for the staffs of all the institutions of Gandhigram. He elaborated the teachings and philosophy of Swami Vivekananda - his vast knowledge of eastern and western culture, as well as his deep spiritual insight, fervid eloquence, brilliant conversation, broad human sympathy and colourful personality.

The public meeting was inaugurated by Shri. M.R.Rajagopalan, Managing Trustee and he emphasized that the students and others should have self-confidence to achieve the good result. Shri.N.Krishnamurthy compared the value system of Vivekananda and Gandhiji and highlighted that Gandhiji practiced many of the former’s teachings to achieve the freedom. Selvi. P.Nisanthini from Thambithottam Hr.Sec.School, made the audience spell bound by her speech on Vivekananda.

International Women’s Day

International Women’s Day was organized on 8th March 2013 at Dr.T.S.Soundram Manimandapam. Shri. P.Anandakumar, Professor Dept. of Tamil, GRI gave a special address. He indicated the UN theme of Women’s Day 2013 as ‘A promise is a promise: Time for Action to end violence against women’. He narrated the historical perspective of the development of patriarchal society from matriarchal society. Shri. M.R.Rajagopalan Managing Trustee stated that women should act with boldness and courage when they face violence. This day was also celebrated by Self Help Groups Federation under Gandhigram Trust at nearby villages.

“That service is the noblest which is rendered for its own sake.”

- Gandhiji
EDUCATION

The skill of reading in students is further strengthened by purchasing books worth Rs. 4,000/ - for each educational institution from the primary level to the college level.

Thambithottam Hr. Sec. School

The dream of providing a smart class to the students of Thambithottam Hr. Sec. School came true by installing a LCD projector, a screen and an inverter.

The building up of scientific attitude among students is the need of the hour. The staff members from the physics department of GRI demonstrated simple physics experiments for the students at the middle school level.

Lakshmi College of Education

- A State Level Workshop on ‘Communication Skills’ was organized by Ms. M. Umamaheswari and Ms. K. Dhanalakshmi on 1-2-2013.

- Dr. S. Nirmala Rani, Dept. of Tamil, GRI gave and invited talk on ‘Vazhvialum Magalir Dhinamum’ on March 8th 2013 as a part of women’s day celebration.

- Dr. R. Uma, Associate Professor in Physical Science, Lakshmi College of Education attended a two-day International Seminar on ‘Environmental Education for Sustainable Development – A New Paradigm’ held at St. Justin’s College of Education on 22nd and 23rd March, 2013 and presented a paper on ‘Traditional Practices in TamilNadu for Sustainable Development’.

SOCIAL WELFARE

- Selvi. Jeyageetha from Sowbhagya Illam participated in painting competition conducted by THE HINDU at Madurai

- Twenty Children from Sowbhagya Illam participated in a children’s camp held at Karl Kubel Institute for Child Development and Education and secured 2nd rank and a shield.

- The close associate of Dr. T. S. Soundfram and the first Superintendent of Sowbhagiya Illam

Dr. B. Manivannan Training the students in communication skills.

Our Children with Jubilant Smiles

“Our best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.”

- Gandhiji
Annai Sarala Remembrance Day was observed on 5th March. Old students of the Home attended the meeting and shared their memories with the children.

- A meeting was conducted for Balwadi Workers at Thiyagi Palanichamy Hall on 16.03.2013. Mr. K. Shivakumar, Secretary, Gandhigram Trust presided over the meeting and distributed the learning and play materials. An incentive amount Rs. 300/- to each teacher and Rs. 200/- to each helper were paid.

**Kasturiba Sevikashram Special Hr. Sec. School**

As per the Instructions of the District Educational Officer the re-roofing work of a classroom of Sevikashram Spl.Hr.Sec.School was completed and the class room is now in use from 13.02.2013. The Madras Cement Works had contributed 200 bags of cement for this renovation work.

**Avvai Ashram**

A medical Camp was organized for the inmates of Avvai Ashram and Santhi School at Avvai Ashram by Madura Coats. Blood test was conducted and the results revealed that though the haemoglobin content of the inmates is found between 9 and 11 units the children are maintaining a good health.

**EXTENSION**

**Land Rights**

Meeting on land rights was held at Gandhigram. Shri.P.V.Rajagopal of Jan Satyagraha and Padmashri Krishnammal Jeganathan interacted with farmers and SHG members. The Gandhigram Trust congratulated Shri. P.V.Rajagopal for signing in an agreement on land reforms between the Ministry of Rural Development and Jan Satyagraha, which is a historical achievement which will help to get clearer ideas on National Land Reform Policy and statutory backing to the provision of agricultural land and homeland.

**Women Empowerment**

Smt.Renana Jhabwala of SEWA participated in a meeting held on January 8th 2013, arranged by

"Live as if you were to die tomorrow.
Learn as if you were to live forever."

- Gandhiji
the federation office bearers and explained in detail the women empowerment programme of SEWA. Most of the women complained about the addiction to liquor of their male counterparts. Smt. Renana Jhabwala, suggested that the women should have the financial control of the family, so that they could reduce the funds spent on liquor. SHG members have assured that they would discuss this problem in their SHGs and federation meetings and also record the steps taken by them to have more control over their family income.

**Need Assessment Camps**

Under the ‘Pudhuvazhvu’ scheme need assessment camps were organized for physically challenged and economically down trodden people. Totally 30 camps were conducted at Nilakkottai and Silukuvarpatty regions from 10th January to 4th March 2013.

**Water and Sanitation**

World Water Day was celebrated at Ambathurai village on 22nd March 2013. The PRI members and SHGs participated in the function. The growing water crisis and a problem of identity within the water supply system was explained. Focus was laid on importance of fresh water and sustainable management of fresh water resources. Smt. Hema, Chief Guest from Bangalore shared her experiences on water management and expressed her views about the water crisis in rural areas. She emphasized that the women folk should protect the water sources and take responsibility of maintaining the water supply system.

**DST Core**

Group monitoring workshop of DST Core Support was conducted by the DST from 4th to 6th March at New Delhi. Shri. S. Murugesan and Shri. C. Krishnasamy have participated in the workshop and presented the progress of DST core activities for the past three years. Further, a future project proposal was also presented for the next three years (2014-16) giving importance to the following activities.

1. Developing sectional warping.
3. Demonstration and dissemination of dye yielding plants.
4. Development of model napkins with wings.
5. Standardization of poly herbal formulation (Siddha & Ayurvedic products)

**“Nearly everything you do is of no importance, but it is important that you do it.”**

- Gandhiji
EMPLOYMENT GENERATION

Lakshmi Seva Sangham

A National level Training programme in Herbal Medicine Siddha/Ayurveda sponsored by Directorate of Forest Based Industries, KVIC Mumbai to its staff from different states was organized by Dr. Soundram Community College and Lakshmi Seva Sangham of Gandhigram Trust from 7th to 13th January 2013. Development Officer Dr. P.K. Gupta, KVIC inaugurated the programme and explained the participants about the significance of the training which includes theory, practical and exposure visits to various places- herbal garden, herbal processing units in Gandhigram, Lakshmi Seva Sangham, Madurai and Papanasam in Tirunelveli district.

Khadi & Village Industries

A one day State Level competitions was jointly organized by Khadi and Village Industries Commission and Lakshmi College of Education through People Education Programme on 11.02.2013. Shri. M.R. Rajagopalan, Managing Trustee, Gandhigram Trust inaugurated and stressed

the importance of Khadi and development of Rural Industries. Shri. Vasirajan, Development Officer, KVIC gave key note address. Shri. R. Arangannal, General Manager, DIC, Dindigul felicitated the function. Elocution, paper presentation and essay writing competitions were held and winners were given Khadi Products of worth Rs. 1000/- and Rs. 750/- as prizes. 160 students participated in the programme.

A weaving shed cum residence is under construction for the weavers of Gandhigram Khadi Trust. The construction work has already been commenced.

Shri. P. Arumugam, Dy. Secretary and Shri. V. Narasimhan A.O. Khadi Trust visited ‘Bapu Kutil’ at Sevagram where Mahatma Gandhiji established the Ashram. It is planned to replicate ‘Bapu Kutil’, at Gandhigram.

Dr. Soundram Trust

The first meeting of council of mentors of Dr. Soundram Centre for Art, Skill and Knowledge (SCASK), as Ms. K.S. Neela as Chief Mentor was held on 04-01-2013. In the meeting it was decided to identify the talents of the children in arts, identifying their skills, developing those skills and also build their knowledge capacities. A council of children has been formed with Ms. Rohini of Sowbhagya Illam as its coordinator.

In order to propogate the usage of Sanitary Napkins in Dharmapuri areas free samples of our napkins were sent to Tribal Health Initiative Sittilingi. Dr. Lalitha Regi, Managing Trustee of Tribal Health Initiative is entrusted in this task.

The weak can never forgive.
Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.”

- Gandhiji
A vocational training centre for preparing value added products in rice was opened at Avvai Ashram, Sivasailam. It will provide employment opportunity to rural women and it will give training for the mentally challenged persons above 14 years of age.

Two staff members from Avvai Ashram, Sivasailam participated in the training programme on ‘Maintenance of Registrars and Records’ in the Children’s Home under ICPS organized by NIPCED Bangalore from 12th to 14th February 2013.

Dr. R Uma, Associate Professor in physical science Lakshmi college of Education attended UGC-SAM workshop on ‘Capacity Building of Women Managers in Higher Education’ held at Gandhigram Rural Institute from 4th to 8th February 2013.

Dr. Hong Chea from Cambodia visited Sowbhagya Illam and interacted with the children on 17th February 2013.

Two ceiling fans were donated to Thambithottam Hr. Sec. School from Karur Vaisya Bank, Chinnalapatti.

Shri. V.K. Anna’s Grandson Shri. S. Sathish Kumar mobilized Rs. 78,988/- for Sowbhagya Illam.

One of the Ex. Ward of our Children’s Home Mr. K. Murugan, Civil Engineer donated Rs. 10000 and Rs. 15000/- on two occasions.

Mr. Narsiman who is working at Gandhigram Rural Institute, Gandhigram mobilized Rs. 30000/-. Mr. Anathanarayanan donated Rs. 1,00,000 to provide solar light system in the main building of Sowbhagya Illam.

Amabhairai Creche Centre was renovated by Frank Waitzer and Julia Waitzer and their friends, Austria at the cost of Rs. 1,00,583/-

A new Guest House named Sharada Illam was opened on 01-02-2013 at Kasturba Hospital. Selvi K.N. Charumathi and her relatives donated Rs. 10 lakhs for this construction.

Gandhigram Trust thank the above donors for their magnanimous contribution.

Shri. N. Krishnamoorthy from Vivekananda Kendra Kanyakumari visited Sowbhagya Illam and interacted with children through stories and motivated them on 7th February 2013.

Mr. Mudit Jain and his family members and the workers of DCW visited Santhi School for Hearing Impaired on 16th March, 2013.

Ms. Mariya from Netherland and Ms. Thilagavathi from Save Trust, Chennai visited Samiarpatti village on 27th March 2013 and interacted with the users about the water consumption.

“There is a sufficiency in the world for man’s need but not for man’s greed.”

- Gandhiji
**Our young achievers**

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<tr>
<th>Name of the Institutions</th>
<th>Name of the Student</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Prize / Award</th>
<th>Level / Donor / Sponsor</th>
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<td>Santhi School for Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>K.Praveen kumar</td>
<td>200 mts running</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; prize</td>
<td>Thirunelveli District</td>
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<td>U.Esakidurai</td>
<td>100 mts running</td>
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<td>Sheik Mohammad</td>
<td>100 mts running</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; prize</td>
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<td>M.Manikandan</td>
<td>Long Jump</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; prize</td>
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<td>Sowbhagya illam</td>
<td>R. Shanmugapriya</td>
<td>SSLC</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; prize</td>
<td>Sri.Annamalai “The Hindu”</td>
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<td>S. Latha</td>
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<td>The Ullas Trust of Polaris” Chennai</td>
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<td>Model making</td>
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<td>C. Jeyanthi</td>
<td>Paper Presentation</td>
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<td>V. Padmakarthika</td>
<td>Millet Feast</td>
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"Always aim at complete harmony of thought and word and deed. Always aim at purifying your thoughts and everything will be well." - *Gandhiji*
Jagannathan, a Sarvodaya leader and the Bhooman movement spearhead in Tamil Nadu, along with Krishnammal, was a lifelong activist for sustainable development who worked with the downtrodden, especially for Dalits and the landless. In 1981, the Jagannathans started the ‘Land for Tillers’ Freedom - (LAFTI)’, with the aim of purchasing land from landlords for redistribution and registration of pattas in the name of women. By 2007, LAFTI had transferred 13,000 acres of land to an equal number of families. Jagannathan is a recipient of many awards, including the Jamnalal Bajaj Award. He was chosen for the Padmashri in 1989. On February 12th 2013, Sankaralingam Jagannathan passed away at Gandigram, Tamil Nadu at the age of 100. We pray for his soul to rest in peace.

We regret the sad demise of our Trustee & Freedom fighter Shri LKB Lagumiah at the age of 100 on 16.04.2013. He was born on 02.10.1913. When Dr. Soundram Amma was searching for a suitable site to establish Gandhigram in the year 1947 Shri LKB Lagumiah voluntarily donated the present site viz., 25acres of land and Rs.25,000/- for construction of building. He took part in the freedom movement and courted arrest many times. His death is a great loss to the community of Chinnalapatty in general and to Gandhigram in particular. He has all along been showing keen interest in the growth of Gandhigram Trust guiding us and helping us by his generous donations for various activities. Gandhigram Trust honoured him on 2nd October 2012 on his Centenary celebrations. We pray for his soul to rest in peace.