

Exploring the Villages



First look of the working area

Day 2 of the RIP 2016 brought the 1st Field Visit of the eight Project Groups to their assigned villages, viz. Baliya, Bangra Ujjain, Banthu Shriram, Gonthi, Jamapur, Narendrapur, Ruiya Bangra, and Sanjalpur. Every Group was accompanied by a volunteer from Parivartan and was met with a local volunteer at the village, both of who were to provide route guidance and facilitate the students' interaction with the community. The prime purpose of the 6-hour visit was to capture "the first look" of the working area.

The target was to collect visual impression and basic information on the physical environment of the locale. To accomplish this, the Groups met up with native villagers with help from the volunteers, and tried to garner basic understanding of the village in addition to collecting primary data for further work. Once the core group of 'friends' from the village were established, the Project Groups sub-divided themselves to visit the various households and interact with the community. Care was taken to cover four main groups: women, farmers, marginalized community, and persons with disability. Strong emphasis was given to put earnest efforts for 'making friends' with the villagers to understand their life and

problems, and to gain their trust which could lead to constructive collaborative action for development.

On the basis of the impressions the sub-groups gathered, each Group mapped their village, and attempted to identify the key socio-economic issues of the area. Most young participants were in a village for the first time, so there was plenty to observe and imbibe. Villagers were by and large friendly and forthcoming, however at places there was reticence amongst the womenfolk in conversing with strangers. Caste conflicts, improper waste disposal and non-functional government institutional services were commonly encountered. Towards the end of this visit, the Groups had sufficient information to profile their village, and lots of questions to explore the following day.

Upon returning to Parivartan campus, all the eight Groups shared their perceptions and experiences of the day during the Retrospection session. The day ended with the students sitting in *Sabhaghar* and talking about what they saw and felt in the field on the first visit. They discussed the culture change they observed between the villages and the cities. They were able to visualize the difference between the two societies, and were hopeful of having a more productive day the next time.

Highlights October 24 | Day 2

- Exploring the villages - First Day
- Indian Folk Dance Concert:
Mayurbhanj Chhau by Mayur Arts Centre
- Sports for Development
Manoeuvre - *Cone Par Nishana*
- *Face to Face* with a progressive farmer



Observing & sharing perceptions

Face to Face with a Progressive Farmer



Sudhanshu Kumar encourages students to take interest in agriculture

Experience and expertise are the best ingredients for inspiration – this is the adage behind the *Face to Face* session through which students get the opportunity to interact with a guest speaker who has worked at length in the field of rural development.

This session had the students interacting with Sudhanshu Kumar, an agricultural entrepreneurship specialist and social worker in the Samastipur district of Bihar. He is also the headman of his village Nayanpur for the last 4 terms. Kumar is a History post-graduate from Delhi University who has devoted past 28 years to farming. He is nationally acclaimed for producing exceptional quality of maize, litchi and mango.

The guest speaker delivered his talk on the topic *My Experience as an Agricultural Entrepreneur*. Kumar spoke about his journey from the village to the cities and then back to the village again, enumerating the challenges he had to face from his friends and family. He also spoke about the innovations and ideas he employs to increase the yield of crops and help the agriculture industry in his area flourish. He went into deeper details on the different kinds of farming methods, and stressed on the usage of Hydroponic and Aeroponic techniques in cultivation.

The talk was followed by a Q&A session wherein students received encouraging responses to their insightful queries.

Cone पे निशाना



Sharpening the aim

The sports surprise organised by the Youth Mentors from Magic Bus India on Day 2 was *Cone Pe Nishana*. The objective of this game was to target a set of cones using a football. As interesting as it sounds, the game elicited some serious fun and lots of giggles. The students really had a good time with this activity in which they were able to hone their targeting skills.

Others youngsters who preferred badminton, football and volleyball were found happily occupied in the ground during this 60-minute slot for recreation.

Dance Concert: Mayurbhanj Chhau by Mayur Arts Centre

The second performance in the series of SPIC MACAY lec-dems at RIP 2016 was the *Mayurbhanj Chhau* concert performed by the exquisite troupe from Mayur Arts Centre, Bhubaneswar. This is a popular Indian folk dance form native to the Mayurbhanj district in Odisha. It celebrates martial arts, acrobatics and athletics, requires high energy, and is thereby physically quite demanding. The performing troupe consisted of 15 members, and was under the guidance of artist Pradeep Mishra.

Chhau performances usually revolve around themes found in Shaivism, Shaktism, and Vaishnavism. The dance mainly enacts stories and excerpts from the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the Puranas among other Indian literature.

The concert comprised of three pieces through which the dancers mesmerized the audience. The first piece titled *Garud Puran* was in praise of Lord Vishnu, the second one was titled *Sagar Milan*, the third and final piece of the evening titled *Chakravyuh* depicted an episode from the Mahabharata.



Graceful steps bring alive the *Garud Puran* (above) and *Sagar Milan* (below)

Talented troupe of Mayur Arts Centre enacting Mahabharata's *Chakravyuh*