Balamitra

National Adivasi Children's Traditional Knowledge and Science Congress

21–23 February 2010, Visakhapatnam

Dhaatri Resource Centre for Women and Children – Samata

Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh

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Background Concept

Science is an everyday experience in *adivasi* life. It is a science evolved from generations of wisdom and symbiosis with nature. Without the instinct of science, survival in an *adivasi* context would defeat human existence. In the *adivasi* life, science exists in understanding the elements of the universe and adapting these in their agriculture, in connecting with the forests around them, and in harnessing the diverse natural resources to meet their daily requirements. Science takes forms through social celebrations or superstitions, in cultural entertainment or sport, in dialogue with the spirits or in communion with the gods. One can experience science in their music or dance, with their headmen or *guniyas* (medicinal healers). There is astronomy, physics, medicine, mathematics. There is poetry, art, law and politics—all forms of science disguised through culture. Most of all there is a philosophy of life that surpasses material definitions.

Yet, the *adivasi* child today is at cross-roads in education where their unique traditional knowledge receives little recognition from the mainstream society so much so that they themselves have lost the dignity of this knowledge. Innumerable forms of scientific practices and knowledge are dying today for lack of due recognition that it deserves. While the country is moving ahead with new forms of development and it is necessary for the young *adivasi* generation to participate in these inclusive growth models, it is equally important that the country gives attention to strengthen and protect the invaluable traditional wisdom possessed by the *adivasi* ancestors. In the current context of global environment crisis and global negotiations on climate change, the need to consciously promote *adivasi* traditional knowledge rests with government, educational institutions, science and research institutions and civil society organisations.

Strengthening this scientific knowledge can best be pursued through the involvement of *adivasi* students and assisting them in not only understanding their ancestral wisdom, but in also making use of their access to mainstream knowledge and tools to improve on their traditional sciences and to help them grow with a consciousness of sustainable development. While a lot of this wisdom still continues to be alive in young *adivasi* children, a need to sensitise and make it relevant to the mainstream children for whom science and environment are mainly confined to the text books. An interaction between them and urban children would be an enriching experience for both.

And therefore, emerged the concept of holding an Adivasi Children's Science and Traditional Knowledge Congress.

Who we are

Dhaatri is a Resource Centre for Women and Children working in Andhra Pradesh (AP), in close association with **Samata**, an advocacy organisation fighting for *adivasi* rights. Our central focus is on strengthening *adivasi* knowledge and education. A conscious effort to enable *adivasi* children grow up with a respect for their traditional wisdom is the emphasis of the *Balamitra* (=friends of children) *Badis* (=schools) that are *adivasi* community education centres supported by Dhaatri and local community-based organizations (CBOs). We work on education, curriculum development, research on *adivasi* science and knowledge and undertake grassroots level training.

- The A*divasi* Children's Science and Traditional Knowledge Congress was held in Visakhapatnam, AP, in February 2010.
- The Congress was organised by Dhaatri the Resource Centre for Women and Children -Samata, with the assistance of four CBOs working in Visakhapatnam and Srikakulam districts of AP.
- The CBO Adivasimitra works with the *adivasi* communities of Paderu and Hukumpeta *mandals* of Visakhapatnam district. They coordinate the running of 13 schools through two Field Resource Centres at Poolabanda and Kamayyapeta.
- The CBO Sanjeevini works in Araku and Dumbriguda *mandals,* Visakhapatnam district, facilitating 14 schools through its Field Resource Centre at Killoguda, along with their main activity of community development.
- The CBO TERDS has five schools in Hukumpeta and Anantgiri *mandals* of Visakhapatnam district.
- The CBO Velulgu Association works with the *Savara* communities in Kotturu and Seethampeta *mandals* of Srikakulam district. The education programme is newly introduced in 6 villages and they facilitate it through their Field Resource Centre at Eppaguda.

The Congress was organised for *adivasi* students of government schools, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) run schools from across different States that have a predominant *adivasi* population.

Aims of the Congress

1. To make the *adivasi* children conscious of their traditional knowledge and practices in their own communities as well as in other communities.
2. To make them aware of the importance and relevance of these practices and thereby, instill a sense of pride and confidence.
3. To encourage them to seek solutions for addressing present day problems using traditional knowledge and improving on it.
4. To foster a sense of solidarity amongst children from various *adivasi* communities/ regions.
5. To strengthen awareness of the scientific traditions and wisdom of *adivasi* communities among mainstream students and the public.

The format that was proposed

The Congress was held over a period of 3 days. The participating schools sent a team of 6–8 children each aged between 12 and 15 years who were accompanied by 1–2 teachers/guides each. In the run up to the Congress, each team was asked to conduct a detailed survey to document as many traditional practices/technologies as possible. While these could pertain to any field, emphasis was laid on subjects such as farming practices, soil and water conservation methods, biodiversity, diet and nutrition, traditional medicine, metallurgy, tools and implements, weather prediction to name a few. The team was expected to try and find out the history of the particular practice, its prevalence, changes if any in recent times and their impact and each team was required to present at least 8–10 such knowledge points. Each

team had to prepare a detailed report as well as a brief presentation (20 min) based on their survey. As far as possible, the teams were asked to forward a summary of the report and presentations in advance (15–20 days) and come prepared for giving a demonstration of these practices/technologies.

The Congress was conducted through multiple activities like exhibitions, group presentations, group seminars, documentary films, sports and cultural events, and interactive sessions with experts as well as students from mainstream/city schools. The schools were encouraged to exhibit material, food/crops, medicines/plants, literature, visual media, models/maps, produce from the forests and villages, working models of tools, crafts, sports/hunting gear, designs of technology, textiles and any other material relating to traditional knowledge. The students were asked to use theatre, folk arts and music to share their knowledge. These activities were to ensure that the teams had an opportunity to share their knowledge, had opportunities to learn and dialogue with other *adivasi* students as well as others who attend the Congress, be able to reflect on the experience and take back learnings from other *adivasi* communities. All the sessions were multi-lingual to the extent possible.

Guidelines given to schools to prepare for the Congress

Teachers were to work with the students in documentation of traditional knowledge (it was expected that teachers use their discretion to simplify the following subjects and help students prepare their presentations keeping in mind the age group of students and their level of understanding the subjects. The subjects mentioned were merely to provide a wider scope for participating schools to prepare their presentations.)

The presentations were expected to be fully based on field data and documentation. The participating schools had to plan their projects and presentations by having discussions/interviews with village/hamlet elders, traditional gurus, local healers, musicians, artists, community experts especially in consultation with grandmothers and women, and compile the knowledge and information gathered for proper presentation. The schools were therefore given 2 months of preparation to attend the Congress.

Suggested themes for presentations

1. Agriculture/Food security: In many *adivasi* communities agriculture is the main occupation. The local community has been practising farming for generations and has developed certain scientific methods based on their evolved practice. With the onset and popularisation of modern day agriculture often these practices are underestimated and considered primitive. But lately it has been realised that many such practices are extremely valuable practices based on years of observations, experience and experimentation. These practices are often more adaptive to the local soil, water and climatic conditions. Such practices have a scientific base and can aid in maximising the production and yield or help provide solutions to present day problem of increasing food security. Most often they are not only ecologically sound but also economically sustainable as the primary aim has been food security and sustenance.

These practices could range from land preparation to sowing and harvesting, cultural practices, diverse cropping patterns, seasons, local crop varieties, pest management practices, herbal pesticides, drying and threshing, storage of seeds and grains, preservation, processing, tools and equipments, etc. The practices are also based on customary laws to ensure conservation and protection.

2. Water and soil conservation: Different indigenous methods of soil and water conservation have been practiced by different communities. The traditional watershed development techniques, efficient use of water resources, protection of springs, soil conservation and regeneration practices, water harvesting and storage structures and water management practices were also to be documented.

3. Energy: The traditionally used sources of energy for cooking and lighting and also for other operations like transport, drying, threshing, etc were to be listed. Models of traditional stoves or *chulhas* were also to be included.

4. Ecological and biodiversity conservation practices: The *adivasi* communities have traditionally been contributing to maintaining ecological balance and conservation of biodiversity of the local area. Many *adivasi* communities had their own social and legal systems of forest conservation to address the local habitat requirements. Participant schools were asked to document their local biodiversity, local practices and institutions of conservation, how this biodiversity is linked to their domestic and cultural needs, any changing trends and threats impacting traditional conservation practices and how local communities perceive these changes.

5. Traditional medicine: The *adivasi* healing practitioners have often been observed to perform wonders with their locally prepared herbal medicines. Some of them are also specialists in certain plant species/ailments. They have evolved this knowledge through generations of practice combined with cultural beliefs and in most situations, are the only medical service providers. Growing lack of faith and misconceptions coupled with degenerating ecosystems and dwindling number of practitioners is creating a threat to this knowledge. Students were asked to document these practices, interview healers and record the local knowledge, threats to this knowledge and how they can think of ways to revive/strengthen this knowledge.

6. Diet and nutrition*: Adivasi* food habits are based on local food from their land and forests, which are seasonally available. Their diet is based on respect for food security depending on seasonal requirements, traditional cooking practices and recipes that provide nutrition, preservation of food and their understanding of the nutritive values of these food items. Students were expected to work with women and grandmothers in documenting the diet and cooking practices.

7. Traditional calculations*: Adivasi* communities have local knowledge of time and spatial measurements and astronomy that helps them plan their agriculture, land development and contour planning, food production, festivals, harnessing of other natural resources, and other daily usages of calculation like prediction of weather.

8. Metallurgy/weaving/fishing/house construction/hunting/pottery: Techniques for extraction of metals and their forging, use of metals for various purposes, weaving, dyeing, traditional occupations like pottery, the science of house construction based on local resources and environment, fishing practices—these were some traditional knowledge systems that the participants were required to explore and present either in the form of models, physical demonstration of artisan work, hunting strategies, tools or laws.

9. Music, art, languages, folklore and history: *Adivasi* communities are most known for the wealth of poetry, music, traditional arts and folklore which are rich expressions of culturally unique societies. Most languages, histories and art forms are oral or visual in nature and learnt through practice and hereditary learning. Participating schools were asked to document and present these art forms at the Congress through any traditional medium of expression, or document their languages and literature in written or pictorial forms.

10. Traditional sports: Participants could bring with them/demonstrate at the Congress their traditional games and sports which are original to their communities or region. Some of the traditional games are being forgotten with the introduction of modern sports like cricket. Many of the traditional games are designed in a manner that children develop sensory motor skills, sharpen their physical and mental faculties, develop creative skills for using the natural resources around, and provide an enormous recreation opportunity for children**.** The Congress aimed to encourage the *adivasi* students to show their skills and teach these games to other children who will be participating.

Preparing for the Congress–Challenges

The idea to hold a national level Congress for *adivasi* children came up while we were discussing the yearly winter camp which Dhaatri organises for the *adivasi* children of the villages where the *Balamitra Badis* are located. As the basic objective of working with the *adivasi* children in these remote clusters was to strengthen their traditional knowledge through activities beyond the classroom, the winter camps were planned with the focus of enabling understanding of traditional science in the daily life of *adivasi* communities. We had initial meetings with the four Field Resource Centres run by the CBOs on how to involve the children in planning for science presentations on different themes. The diversity of topics and ideas that the teams came up with made us all feel that, instead of having small local camps like earlier, we could bring the children of different areas together in Visakhapatnam, to enable a wider sharing between them on sharing of local practices. This idea further developed into a larger plan to include the programme to *adivasi* children from other States and different districts in AP. It was a big challenge as we had no funds for a national level programme. Initially the SNDT University in Mumbai came forward to collaborate as the concept was found to be unique, but later withdrew as they could not raise the resources. Encouragement from the Tata Social Welfare Trust gave us the confidence to go ahead with the programme and the spontaneous response from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) came as a huge relief to us. The positive response that also came from the AP Tribal Welfare Department that agreed to send their Gurukulam schools and sponsor their participation and the enthusiasm from NGOs who wanted to participate with their children was a positive indication for a programme of this nature.

A concept note was prepared and sent to various NGOs working on *adivasi* education with guidelines to suggest how they could plan for the Congress.

While the idea was well received, some of the NGOs who wanted to come had to drop out due to examinations and year end academic preparation. As this was the first programme of its kind, we were asked to have very few expectations especially from government schools as the normal science congress methodologies centre around modern day science experiments that are presented by schools. The time lapse in being able to communicate to government schools due to procedural delays was another reason for problems in getting across the concept to the participating students. However, the network of education centres with the CBOs through the *Balamitra* schools who were eagerly preparing for the Congress with exciting themes and models gave us the confidence that the Congress was meant to be a process of experience and consciousness raising on *adivasi* wisdom and science rather than a formal presentation as provided in our guidelines.

A preparatory camp for Balamitra children and teachers at Kamayyapeta: December 2009

Undeterred, the children of Balamitra Education Programme, along with our Field Resource Centre teams, teachers and government school children of Kamayyapeta village took up a field level study of various aspects of *adivasi* life. The children and teachers formed groups and took up tasks of going around the villages, collecting samples, meeting elders and getting information, recording and documenting every bit of information that they could collect. Biodiversity mapping, traditional medicine, house construction, water resources, agricultural practices, etc., were topics covered during the education tour. The information thus collected was reorganised and we used these as a baseline for our presentations.

This experience, to an extent was an eye opener for the children but it was gratifying to observe that the children of *Balamitra* had quite an extensive know-how of the *adivasi* traditions and knowledge. The biting cold of the January in the hills did not curb the intent and eagerness of the children and the team to review their knowledge. This exposure trip paved the foundation for a well represented presentation as well as the final concept of the Congress.

With a clear understanding of what we wanted from the Congress, we went ahead talking to schools, NGOs, officials of State and central government tribal departments and the response we got was unanimous.

Preparing the venue and food

As this was a large gathering of *adivasi* children, we initially wanted to organise it in an *adivasi* village which is the ideal venue for understanding traditional knowledge. However, for the sake of logistics and safety, we decided upon Visakhapatnam. We found it difficult to find a venue suitable and economically affordable for conducting a programme for such a large gathering. Hence, we decided that the Balamitra Model School located at Sagar Nagar was the ideal location and, for a change, we decided that *adivasi* children can take the liberty to use the public space around the school at least temporarily, as they are otherwise, normally used to being silent spectators to outsiders encroaching on their lands.

Our focus of the Congress being *adivasi* traditions and culture, we took great care in giving it a traditional touch on all fronts. The menu was prepared very carefully, keeping in mind their traditional diet. *Adivasi* elders from the villages Samata works in volunteered to take responsibility for preparing food for all the participants. Freshly harvested material was procured from the villages, which were organically grown using traditional practices. It was

appreciated and relished by the participants. For some who are not familiar with traditional *adivasi* food, it was a different, maybe a strange experience.

Participant schools

The target audience was school going *adivasi* children from different parts of the country. However, some children and youth who are not attending school but undergo education through their natural form of learning, also participated. Students and teachers from Gujarat, Maharashtra, Orissa and AP took part in the 3 day Congress. Basha Academy, Tejgarh, Gujarat, Kedi School, Dharampur, Gujarat, Government Ashram School, Rohad under Shikshan Mitra, Maharashtra, Nari Suraikhya Samithi, Orissa, Odissa adivasi Manch, Orissa and 10 schools under the AP Tribal Welfare Residential Schools from AP, students from the villages of Araku, Paderu and Kotturu *mandals* coming under the Field Resource Centres of Bthe alamitra Education Programme of Samata participated in the event. A gathering of over 220 children and teachers/educators spent the 3 days at the Congress sharing and learning from each other's experiences and practices. Teachers and experts from relevant fields enhanced the experience with their inputs. Children from mainstream schools of the city could have an insight into the way of life of their *adivasi* contemporaries. They could be seen interacting with each other and understanding a way of life which is totally alien to them.

Congress sessions

The Congress was conducted through multiple activities like:

- Exhibition stalls of traditional knowledge withpPresentations by students
- Group discussions
- Art workshops
- Cultural events
- Sports events
- Traditional cooking
- Theatre and drama
- Presentations by experts
- Workshop with teachers and educationists

Each of the schools had put up stalls, bringing with them display samples and models on the various topics of traditional practices pertaining to the village life of each of their communities. Some of the important topics covered at their respective stalls by the students as well as at the group discussions conducted during the Congress were agriculture, housing, diet and nutrition, biodiversity, water and environment, tribal arts, mathematics and

astronomy, and forest management. Group discussions were initiated by experts from each category and the children presented the compiled information.

Art, craft, music and dance were given equal weightage, which was of course very enthusiastically attended. Workshops on all the 3 days under the guidance of experts ended with display of handmade items by the children. A fusion of *adivasi* songs from different regions and an impromptu play as part of the theatre workshop were highly appreciated by the audience. The heterogeneous grouping of children gave the children the added advantage of interacting with each other and exchanging ideas and views.

A unique activity planned was a cooking demonstration by the children themselves on the traditional *adivasi* diet. The children came up with interesting recipes and cuisines which in itself was a feast for the audience. Expert comments on the ingredients, nutritional value and taste by tasters from the audience was a great encouragement for the children. These recipes are collected and we intend to bring out a recipe book of traditional *adivasi* diet and its nutritional value.

A cultural event was held on the evening of the second day. The students showcased their traditional dances and music and entertained the guests who later actively participated in the *Dhimsa* which went on late into the night.

Resource persons

No gathering of such stature is complete without the assistance and know-how of people in their respective areas, considering the topics selected for the children to reflect upon. The following people came as resource personnel to share their knowledge and expertise with the children.

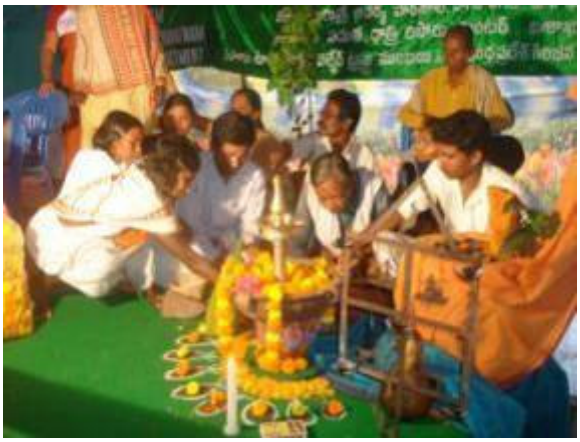
- Mr. Kishan Rao, Consultant, agriculture and organic farming practices, Hyderabad
- Dr. Jayarama, Gandhi Naturopathic Medical College, Hyderabad
- Dr. Venugopal, Botanist and expert on tribal medicinal plants, Hyderabad
- Ms. Shruti Devi, Social activist
- Prof. Kameswar Rao, Department of Environmental Studies, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam
- Prof. Sudhakar Reddy, Department of Fine Arts, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam
- Students of Fine Arts, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam
- Ms. Padma Ramanan, Teacher in Physics, Timpany School, Visakhapatnam
- Ms. Annapurna, Principal and educationist, Jassver School, Visakhapatnam
- Dr. Srishubha, Paediatrician, Visakha Children's Hospital, Visakhapatnam
- Ms. Deepa More, Environment Consultant, Visakhapatnam
- Mr. Devullu Pachari, Director, CBO Sanjeevini, Visakhapatnam
- Ms. Ammaji, Social worker, CBO Sanjeevini, Visakhapatnam
- Ms. Raji Devullu, Visakhapatnam
- Ms. Jayshree Hatangadi, Freelance consultant, Visakhapatnam
- Brig. P. Ganesham, Coordinator, Honey Bee Foundation, AP
- Mr. Balanna, Basket weaver from Kamayyapeta, Visakhapatnam
- Mr. Raghuramu, Potter from Kamayyapeta, Visakhapatnam

Programme Details

The Congress

The Congress was organised for the *adivasi* children from a cross section of our country which boasts of an 8 percent of *adivasi* population. Students, teachers, resource persons and experts in the field of agriculture, medicine, education, tribal studies and grassroot level activists totaling close to 400 people attended and actively participated in the Congress.

The Congress was held over a period of 3 days from 21–23 February, 2010 at Sagar Nagar, Visakhapatnam, AP, India. The inaugural session which was rich in *adivasi* traditions was a memorable occasion. *Adivasi* elders of Niyamgiri hills of Orissa belonging to the *Dongria Kondh* community made a traditional invocation to the Almighty. The children added vigour and tempo to the air of auspiciousness with the rhythmic beats of traditional percussions such as *thudumu, kiridi, dappulu* the *ghodyachi kaathi,* and *kirchi*. It was a true blend of *adivasi* communion with children from different States taking part in creating a truly *adivasi* atmosphere. The Congress began with each of the participant schools lighting a lamp at the altar to the accompanying beats of drums.



The Congress was formally inaugurated by a 92 year old *adivasi* lady from Gujarat, Dassariba, who had taken an active part in the freedom movement alongside the Father of our Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, and who also has the distinction of giving Kasturba Gandhi the first lessons in reading and writing. Mr. DV. Subba Rao, former Mayor of Visakhapatnam and a leading advocate, Mr. EAS. Sarma, former Union Secretary and a social activist and Mr.Ashok Chaudhari, an *adivasi* leader and social activist from Gujarat graced the occasion.

Ravi Rebbapragada, Executive Director of Samata, in his welcome speech reiterated the need for quality education for *adivasi* children and the motivation behind Samata's intervention into the field of tribal education and a qualitative programme for the *adivasi* children of Eastern Ghats. Mr.EAS. Sarma encouraged the children to set their sights and efforts into becoming educated youth since education was the only asset that would put them in good stead in future and that would, in turn be the road to progress to, and in their community. Bhanumathi Kalluri, Director of Dhaatri Resource Centre for Women and Children-Samata, apprised the participants and guests regarding the significance of organising such a Congress. The main agenda of the Congress was to bring awareness about the traditional knowledge that an *adivasi* child imbibes from an early age and to have a sharing of the various traditional practices amongst the participating children.

Participating schools and their exhibits:

A host of stalls exhibiting various aspects of *adivasi* life were put up by the participating schools. The children of most of the schools had displayed a variety of items including medicinal plants, agricultural implements and products, hunting tools, bird traps, models of traditional houses, raw materials used for construction, traditional art and craft forms, musical instruments, traditional oil extraction units, seed storage units, a season calendar and much more. The presentation, which was projected on to a live LCD screen, facilitated direct viewing of each and every stall. (*Details of these presentations are given in Section II of this report).*

1. Balamitra Model School, Visakhapatnam

The presentations started with the Balamitra Model School, Visakhapatnam. Balamitra Education Programme is a Samata endeavour to bring quality and contextual education to the *adivasi* children of Visakhaptanam and Srikakulam districts. The Balamitra Model School, which is a resource centre cum lab school is part of a larger education programme with 40 village schools that cater to the children of the hills. Children belonging to *Bagata, Kondadora, Nookadora, Porja, Valmiki* and *Mali* communities enjoy the benefits of the education programme till Class III. The Balamitra Model School currently has Classes III, IV and VI and houses 52 children from the hill top villages.

Their presentation showcased a comprehensive depiction of their everyday life and practices. They presented:

- An agriculture seasonal calendar which illustrated the crops in each season, month and the festivals connected with it, type of land where these are grown, cultivation practices, harvesting and storage.

- Models of traditional houses, their construction pattern and the raw materials used were clearly explained by the children.
- Water sources, harnessing water for agriculture, and resource utilisation methods were demonstrated through the model of a mini-watershed.
- Household items used for domestic purposes like knives, grinding tools, cooking material, and food items were also kept on display.

- Also kept on display and sale were items of art and craft material made by the students using waste and domestic material.

2. Government Ashram School, Rahod, Maharashtra

Shikshan Mitra, an educational programme of Maharashtra Institute of Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (MITTRA), an associate organisation of Bharatiya Agro Industries Foundation (BAIF), Pune, Maharashtra works with 83 government run ashram schools to improve quality of education and to supplement regular curriculum with building awareness of traditional *adivasi* knowledge. *Kokani, Bhil* and *Mawachi* communities benefit from this programme at the Rahod Government School. *Bhilori, Mawachi* and *Kokani* are languages spoken by these *adivasi* communities and they have a rich culture and tradition, which was showcased at the Congress.

The children of Government School, Rahod, Maharashtra, belonging to the *Kokani adivasi* community spoke about the rich *Kokani* culture, their festivals, customs, musical instruments and their traditional songs.

- Their display had a unique array of traditional musical instruments which they use during their festivals. Their main festivals, *Vinayak Chathurthi* and *Holi* which they celebrate with great fervour have religious as well as community linked connotations. The musical instruments *kirchi, pawri* and *ghodyachi kaathi* were unique in their shape and structure and also had a distinctive quality of resonance. It was heartening to see the children adept at playing traditional music.
- They also showcased a set of locally grown seeds in their villages which they are encouraged to collect from the villages to promote not just awareness but also to sustain the otherwise depleting quality of organically grown seed varieties. A seed bank which the school has taken initiative to start has a wide variety of seeds which are slowly disappearing. The children are encouraged to cultivate them and enhance production of such seeds which are in danger of dying out. Parents who come to visit the children are also encouraged to take the seeds from the seed bank for their agriculture in order to strengthen their food security. The students spoke about how they undertake surveys on farming and local practices when they go home during the vacations.

3. Poolabanda Field Resource Centre, Adivasimitra CBO, Visakhapatnam, Samata, AP

Poolabanda Resource Centre, a field level coordination centre of the CBO Adivasimitra had come up with a veritable source of traditional indigenous resources. Adivasimitra has been working with the *adivasis* of the Eastern Ghats, Visakhapatnam district, AP, empowering them on land rights, food security and education. The team at Adivasimitra oversee running of 14 *Balamitra Badis* in Hukumpeta and Paderu *mandals*. Poolabanda Resource Centre's area of activity is in Paderu *mandal*. The main topics of presentation were:

- Traditional food and processes of cooking: A variety of forest produce consisting of different kinds of tubers, roots and leaves which they depend on during the lean months of cultivation, the organically grown vegetables, the cooking utensils, an assortment of

cereals and pulses were on display. A unique lid made of *adda* leaves, which is used to hold the steam in the pot while cooking caught the attention of everybody.

- Traditional varieties of oilseeds and processes of oil extraction: A very conventional but at the same time scientific oil extraction unit which they use in every household to extract oil from castor, gingelly, mustard and other oil seeds was displayed. A point of observation was the use of castor oil as edible oil which is a rare occurrence. This usage is unique to the hill tribes in their traditional sweetmeat preparations, which is considered to have some inherent strengthening agents. It was also noted by the expert that in the modern medical concept castor oil is not considered as healthy as edible oil. This piece of information throws light on one of the many traditional practices that the *adivasis* of the hills follow.
- Traditional puppets made from locally available material and mounted on a wooden stick which is unique to this area was a part of the display. Puppet shows are held during the *ittukula pandaga*, an important festival in the *adivasi* communities of Coastal Andhra.

4. Eppaguda Resource Centre, Velugu Association CBO, Srikakulam, Samata, AP

Eppaguda Resource Centre is a field level coordination centre for education at Kotturu *mandal*, Srikakulam, and is the monitoring arm of the CBO, Velugu Association. The Eppaguda Field Resource Centre team takes care of six *Balamitra Badis* in the remote villages. *Adivasis* belonging to the *Savara adivasis*, which is the majority *adivasi* community in the agency areas of Srikakulam and Vijayanagaram districts, participated. *Savara* is a unique *adivasi* community rich in traditional knowledge, indigenous language and culture. The students from Eppaguda made presentations on:

- Traditional gods and temples, festivals and religious beliefs
- Traditional *Savara* art and the seasonal calendar depicting the philosophy behind the art
- Hunting tools and methods, bird and animal traps
- Traditional seeds and agricultural practices

The presentation of Eppaguda Field Resource Centre was unique in the culture and traditions of the *Savara* community. *Savara* art, which has many religious and cultural connotations, was the attraction of the display. This art, besides being distinctive in its form and structure is significant in its depiction and sanctity. This pictorial form displays the annual calendar of events from the time of *kottha amavasi* (new moon) and is drawn on the walls of the houses after days of penance. A typical wall painting would tell the household the schedule to be followed during festivals, rituals, farming practices, etc.

5. Kamayyapeta Resource Centre, Adivasimitra CBO, Visakhapatnam, Samata, AP

The Kamayyapeta Resource Centre, a field level coordination centre of CBO Adivasimitra works with *adivasi* villages of Hukumpeta *mandal*, Visakhapatnam district, AP. Children belonging to *Nookadora* and *Kummara* tribal communities participated in the Congress.

The group presented extensive information and material belonging to their villages. The confidence with which the students presented the information was well applauded by all. The topics they covered were:

- Agricultural implements
- Fishing practices and nets
- Natural colours and their uses
- Agricultural and forest produce
- Medicinal herbs
- Hunting practices: Innumerable models of bird and animal traps were put up in this stall.An array of hunting tools, bird traps, fishing equipments and their usage was explicitly explained by the children. Pictorial illustration of hunting habits, practices explained clearly the methodology used and it went down well with the participating schools and the experts.

6. Killoguda Resource Centre, Sanjeevini CBO, Visakhapatnam, Samata, AP

The Killoguda Resource Centre, a field level monitoring and coordination centre of CBO Sanjeevini that works with the *adivasi* villages of Sovva area, Araku, Visakhpatnam district, AP. Sanjeevini has been working with the *adivasis* of Sovva area which has a rich agricultural background. Organic farming, forest management techniques and education are some of the areas they work on.

The Killoguda centre had…

- A wide display of organic farm products, hunting implements, indigenously designed bird traps, rat traps and fishing gears.
- Models of farm tools, traditional headgears used while working in the fields, variety of cereals, pulses and vegetables with information about the season, availability and traditional usage, methods of storing seeds, etc., had been displayed.

Killoguda area has taken up an innovative and indigenous system of forest management. They have formulated a set of rules, management and punitive actions in case of non-adherence of the specified pattern of management. The presentation included a pictorial

collage of different steps they implement to check forest mismanagement and the tools that come in handy for the Forest Guard.

7. Jattu Trust Bhavasamkhya Sevasramam, Viajaynagaram, AP

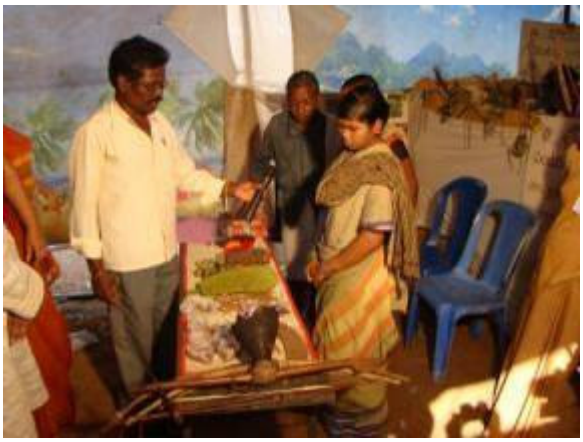
Jattu (Justified Action and Training for Tribal Upliftment) Bhavasamkhya Sevasramam, Parvathipuram, Vijayanagaram district, AP, works with *Jatapu, Savara, Gadaba* and *Kondadora* tribal communities. The organisation has among its activities a novel field school programme called the '*Badinundi Polambadiki'*, non-pesticide management and promotion of organic farming in villages, bridge courses and literacy programmes for *adivasi* children, production of bio-fertilisers and organic pesticides and handmade paper products.

The presentation of this school focussed on

- The medicinal plants, organic pesticide and medicinal preparations.
- Booklets on medicinal herbs, forest species of plants and medicinal preparation published by their organisation.
- Articles made from handmade paper.

8. Odissa Adibasi Manch, Orissa

Odissa Adibasi Manch is an organisation working for the rights of *adivasis* threatened with displacement by the Vedanta mining company, in Rayagada district, Orissa. The group had participants from the *Dongria Kondh* community who reside in the Niyamgiri hills.Their displays included:



- Traditionally grown vegetables, seeds and their hunting tools which are part of their daily lives.
- Wild fruits, *tunika pandu*, a sweet fruit like sappota unique to this area
- Traditional embroidery work on shawls with naturally coloured threads that is an identifiying ensemble of the women of *Dongria Kondh*
- *Sarangi* an indigenous traditional musical instrument. One of the elderly participants who had accompanied the children demonstrated how to play the *sarangi* with a song singing the praise of the Niyamgiri hills.

9. Andhra Pradesh Tribal Welfare Residential (APTWR) Schools

Ten schools under the AP Tribal Welfare Department from Khammam, Warangal, Krishna and West Godavari districts of AP participated in the Congress. *Kondadora, Koya, Erukula* and predominantly *Lambada* tribal communities were represented by these schools.



- **Bhadrachalam APTWR School**, Khammam district for girls spoke about the traditional crops grown in their areas, the growth patterns and their nutritional values. They had a large collection of seeds and samples of agricultural products which the girls explained in detail. They spoke about the Koya community who live in the plains of Ratnakambali, their simple way of living, their traditional attire and housing.
- **Visannapeta APTWR School**, Krishna district, presented a brief history of the *Lambada* community, their history and festivals. They reiterated the use of specific medicinal herbs used traditionally by them. Leaves and roots which are used in treating snake bites and in treating kidney stones elicited lot of interest. The students also wore the traditional attire of the *Lambadas*, to showcase the rich tradition of the community. The *Erukula adivasis* specialise in traditional astrological predictions through face and palm reading. A girl from the *Erukula* community demonstrated the weaving of bamboo baskets which is the main livelihood of the Erukulas and is an integral paraphernalia of the fortune teller.
- **Maripeda APTWR School** had a host of forest produce, leaves, roots and farm products displayed. The boys were adept at explaining the cultural, medicinal and nutritional significance of each of the displayed items.
- **Warangal APTWR School** for boys presented certain traditional medicinal roots, leaves and plants and their uses.
- **Chinthur APTWR School** for boys had on display crafts made from bamboo reeds and samples of agricultural products and herbs used in preparing local medicines in cases of general ailments.
- **Buttaigudem APTWR School** displayed a variety of herbal medicinal plants, leaves and roots used in preparing medicines for people as well as livestock. They also had a section on oil extraction of niger, its availability, process, uses and implements used traditionally in the villages. The girls explained about the varieties of seeds and the nutritive value of these food produce grown traditionally.
- **Sudimalla APTWR School** had brought a variety of forest grown tubers, roots and leaves and spoke about the availability, usage and nutritional values. Artistically made bamboo products, fishing equipment, ornamental head gears which they wear during festivals and traditional celebrations were part of their display.

- **Kuravi APTWR School** made a presentation on the processes of agricultural practices and the rituals attached to farming and harvesting. They spoke about the festivals, food habits and crops grown.
- **KSD Site APTWR School** presented a variety of medicinal herbs used traditionally in their communities.
- **KR Puram APTWR School** for boys also participated. They explained the traditional dance and drama, the musical instruments like drum made out of tamarind wood and toys made from palm leaves. They also spoke about their eating habits and a unique combination of rice with honey.



10. Grama Viakasa Saradhi Upper Primary School, Visakhapatnam, AP

Gram Vikasa Saradhi (GVS), Raavikamatam, Visakhapatnam district, works with the *Gadaba* and *Mannedora adivasis*. *Gadaba* is a indigenous language which is slowly being replaced by Telugu. GVS is making efforts to revive the language and bring it back into the present generations vocabulary.

The children had come up with models of traditional houses made of bamboo.

11. Kedi Residential School, Valsad, Gujarat

Kedi Residentail School is an education programme of Kaivalya Trust, Dharampur. The core philosophy of the school is to reach out to *adivasi* girls who have dropped out of school or never had the opportunity to go to school, and provide relevant formal education along with vocational training to the children of *Kokani, Varli, Kolcher* and *Gamit adivasi communities*. They have, at present, 85 girl students who come from surrounding villages. At Kedi, education is about addressing issues of hands on learning versus textual learning, experiential learning versus rote learning, and learning for life skills versus learning for the examinations. They are trying to develop a scientific perspective along with inculcating the awareness for disease prevention, hygiene, literacy, and environmental preservation in students and their future generations.

Their presentation focused on the famous *Warli* art work of the *Warli adivasis*.

12. Vasanth Nivasi Shala, Tejgarh, Gujarat

Vasanth Nivasi Shala, Tejgarh, Vadodara district, Gujarat, have children from the

Vulnerable Tribal Groups (VTGs) *Rathavi, Nayka, Dhanak* and *Vaali*. It is a part of the Adivasi Basha Academy which, in collaboration with Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), runs post-matriculation courses and conducts research in tribal studies and also runs an in-house school. They are giving equal weightage to *Rathavi* which is the spoken language of the *adivasi* community. The school had a photo gallery of various *adivasi* communities, their lifestyle, attire and ornaments, traditional houses and the decorations, festivals, celebrations, handicraft and agricultural implements and crops grown in their areas.

13. Kiroda Basini Kanyashram, Angul, Orissa,

A residential school run by Nari Surakhya Samithi, Angul, Orissa for the children of the *Kuda adivasi* community, for whom this Congress was an exposure.

14. Children belonging to the *Kondadora* community of **MPP and ZPH School,** facilitated by the **Centre For Humanitarian Assistance Trust (CeFHA),** Kotauratla *mandal*, Visakhapatnam district, AP, also participated in the Congress**.**

Thematic Grouping and Discussions

A gathering of children from diverse background and geographical areas is bound to have linguistic as well as social inhibitions to blend or share views and ideas. Accommodation was arranged keeping this in mind, but a more effective way to bring these children together to get to know each other and exchange views on their traditions and culture was to introduce sessions where all of them could actively take part. Themes were selected and groups were formed making sure that each school was represented in the groups.

Forest, agriculture, traditional medical practices, season and land based diet, indigenous methodology of calculating times, season and its influence on their way of living are unique to the *adivasi* way of life. Farming methods practiced over generations; indigenous methods of efficient soil and water conservation; protection of springs; protection of the environment and the need for managing the forest which is their mainstay; designing and constructing houses; traditionally developed medicinal preparations—all these were taken into consideration when themes were selected for bringing together children from different communities and States to compare and share views on practices followed by their ancestors and the evolvement in these areas over the years.

Guidelines were given to the facilitators to enable a group participation and interaction. The following suggestions were given as points for discussion on each topic to facilitate the resource persons anchoring each of these groups.

Suggested framework and discussions held

Housing: Resource person-Deepa More; Moderator-Geetha

Methods of traditional housing—The natural material used, advantages/disadvantages with respect to local climatic conditions, protection from natural enemies, durability, effects on environment, skills required for traditional house construction, were there any particular families/castes/occupational groups responsible for house construction, social customs, festivals, ceremonies and beliefs practised before and after construction, seasons when different types of material were procured, who decided these, what were the traditional laws and customs, termite control, what was traditionally used to prevent or cure.

Modern (present day) housing—Resources used, advantages/disadvantages.

Current problems in each of the participant areas —Construction cost, availability and access to housing material and resources, availability of labour, transportation, link between forest degradation and changes in housing patterns, government schemes and influence over these changes.

Innovations—Finding solutions for the above problems by using concepts from both the methods.

Housing: Discussion points from students

The discussion on housing focused on the various raw materials used in traditional houses, the construction processes, the availability and procurement of material and the advantages and disadvantages of traditional mud houses. The wood used for beams and central poles is procured from the forests and are left to soak in either rain water or the nearby streams to season them before use. Measurements are taken using *adda* vine and traditional methods of measurement are used. The children mentioned that the house building activities start in the month of January, after the *Sankrathi* festival and end before the monsoons. Most of them agreed that the mud houses gave better comfort compared to the houses built using cement and asbestos roofing.

Diet and nutrition: Resource persons-Dr. Jayaram and Dr. Sri Subha; Moderators-Sivaratnam and Poturaju

Traditional diet—Various grains, millets, vegetables, animal products, etc., used in traditional diets, what kinds of food were/are eaten in what form, how were they preserved, how were they cooked, (can also discuss fermentation and chemical processes), why do you think this was so, what was eaten raw, dietary beliefs (for children, pregnant women, after delivery, etc) importance of the traditional diet with respect to local climatic conditions, seasonal availability, what kind of food was eaten in what seasons, what food was grown, what was brought from the forest, what was hunted, in which seasons what kind of animals were hunted/fishing and why, what rules did elders have for harvesting,/before eating, nutritional requirement according to age and , food during marriages, who cooked/brought this food, food during illnesses, affordability, did they have food round the year, how and what did they eat during lean months.

Present day diet—Change in diet, do they remember any food they ate in their childhood which they do not eat regularly now, reasons and effects, changes because of being in government hostels, influence of markets/*santas*, who are bringing these changes (Integrated Tribal Development Authority, private agents, companies, influence of out migration), good and ill effects, affordability, what food do they get in *santas* nowadays, do they barter or purchase in cash, what kind of food do they regularly purchase from the *santas* for basic food, for snacks, for giving as gifts in marriages, and festivals.

Current problems—Lack of food, lack of varieties in food, difficulties in getting food from forest, land, hunting, malnutrition, health problems, national food security, are there any deaths/suicides witnessed due to lack of food.

Significance of traditional diet in finding solutions to the above problems, improvisations those children can think of or ways for revival of traditional diet habits and customs.

Food habits and impacts: Discussions points from the children

The discussion started with differences in the lifestyle of previous generation and the present, so also the urban lifestyle. They appreciated their elders' way of living which was need based. They used to cultivate only to support themselves and not for generating income. For the lean months, they used to store the excess food items cultivated during the farming season. These were also shared with the community. Agricultural practices were a collective effort of the community rather than individuals. They believed in barter system and felt that it was a better way of living since there was sharing among the people. But at present they feel that the food is available in the markets, but they do not have enough money to buy them. Food habits were planned according to the daily cycle. The expert at this juncture mentioned the importance of maintaining a natural body clock to have a healthy life. They commented that the present day lifestyle is very self-centred and people are more concerned about their earning; they felt that commercialism has set in into the village life.

Biodiversity, water, energy and environment: Resource persons-Dr.Kameswara Rao and Jayshree Hatangadi; Moderators: Bucheswararao and Simhachalam

Significance of biodiversity and water conservation—What is habitat in *adivasi* children's understanding and relationship between different natural resources and organisms, how is biodiversity of *adivasi* village different from the city, human dependency on the biodiversity in *adivasi* life and the diverse uses that man makes of these for food, living, health, medicine, economics, religion and celebrations, etc. By default conservation in the past by *adivasi* ways of living, traditional *adivasi* wisdom and environmental awareness

Water and significance—Sources, seasons, conservation, who else uses our water beyond our village (dams, electricity, etc), water harvesting for agriculture, drinking in each of their villages, purification of water for drinking, current problems and impacts on their life

Current problem and crisis—Due to degenerating environment in *adivasi* life, significance at community level, national level, global level, the wide web of impacts that they can imagine, why this crisis, local innovations that they have seen in their villages or elders at present, new ideas for follow up when they go back to their villages.

Enivironment and resources: Discussion points from children

The discussion started off with an introduction to the environment around them, the differences in the landscape and availability of resources. They identified the differences in their way of living due to the change in environment over the years. A student from

Khammam mentioned about the air pollution thanks to the BPL factory in the Logulapalli village from where he hails. The children were aware that cutting trees down in the forests have a negative effect on the environment. At this juncture, they were apprised by the resource person about global warming and the significance of conserving forests. They also discussed about the available sources of water and effect of depletion of forests on water resources. A few of them mentioned that tap water facility is made available in some of the villages, but most of them depended on ground well or nearby rivers for daily supply of water.

Herbal medicines: Resource person-Dr. Venugopal; Moderators-Prabhavati and Ramchandar

What is well being and health in adivasi village—What causes/beliefs are attributed for ill-health, who is responsible for good health in the village/role of healers and what are their other roles (priests, headmen, astronomers, etc).

Traditional healing methods—Used by elders in your village for common and specific problems, how the *adivasis* would have acquired the knowledge regarding medicinal properties of plants, how was the knowledge preserved and passed on to the next generations, significance of oral conservation and need for documentation.

Modern medical science—Advantages, disadvantages.

Importance of the traditional knowledge —Significance in the modern world with respect to present day health problems, importance of conservation of this knowledge, increasing ignorance and disrespect for *adivasi* knowledge, how do they combine traditional healing practices with modern medicine in their home/village, ways to strengthen these practices through innovation.

Medicinal plants: Discussion points from students

The children could list out a variety of plants used in traditional curative methods of illnesses. Most of them opined that even now these methods are followed in most of the villages. The resource person spoke about the connection between the fauna and the flora in the preparation of medicines. Every plant possesses medicinal property and it is for us to explore these qualities and use them effectively. The children mentioned that the traditional medicines do not have any ill effects of modern medicines, though the curative process may either be delayed or ineffective. *Yajjodu, manthragadu, bhagat, guruvu, guniya, manthrasaani, mandulodu, manthraalodu* and *naattuvaidyudu* were some of the local names given to the medicine man or woman. Some of the medicinal preparations familiar to the children were the use of *nelleru kaadalu* (tendrils) paste, *isaka thimmiraaku* (leaves) extract with goat milk for repairing fractured joints or limbs, *nelausiri* (*Phyllanthus fraternus*) extract for dysentery, *padimichekka* (bark) paste for indigestion, *nelavemu* paste for scabies and *kagu nooni* (pongamia oil) for treating skin diseases and head lice.

Mathematics and astronomy: Resource person-Padma Ramanan; Moderator-Suniti Goday

Day to day mathematics—What aspects of *adivasi* life is linked to mathematics, how did it evolve in *adivasi* communities, what units and types of measurements are used in traditional life, what instruments/tools/calculations are used in different activities, measuring land for agriculture, contours for farming, village boundaries, measurements for house building, distances to forest or anywhere else, time, seasons, annual calendars, history of time and stories regarding time, age of man (kind), weights, dealing with markets, assessment of

climate, predictions, significance of stars in *adivasi* life, assessment of time linked to movement of animals, understanding speed, using speed in hunting practices, understanding temperature and assessment of temperature, divisions, fractions and their calculation, measuring three dimensional objects, are there specific persons/experts for any of these in the community, what is happening to them today.

Problems in coping with outside world—With traditional calculations, exploitation identified by the children (for example, in *santa*/market), how much of modern arithemetics and calculations used in their villages, what are the traditional measures that they do not see today, the children's perspectives on balancing the two mathematics.

Traditional measures and measurements: Discussion points from students

During the group discussion on mathematics and measures in day to day life of *adivasis,* some locally used units and practices of measurement were discussed. *Moora* is a unit for measuring length (houses, cloth) used by *adivasis* of coastal AP which is approximately half a hand. The same unit is also mentioned by participants from Maharashtra which is called as *ekhati* in Marathi. *Kuncham* is a unit for measuring rice and pulses. In the discussion about measurement of time, the method of reading time using the length and position of shadows, which was always their elders' practice was demonstrated by the participants and they could do an approximate calculation of time. Though the children could not say much on prediction of weather and seasons, a participant from Maharashtra mentioned the appearance of a flock of birds of certain species just before onset of winter. The connection between stars, constellations and seasons was not much explored by the participants but an *adivasi* elder who also attended the discussion listed out the 27 constellations in three languages *Koya, Telugu* and *Oriya* for the participants.

Tribal Education: Resource persons –Annapurna Devi and Rajashree Tikhe Moderators-Swaroopa and Lakshminarayana

What do children visualise as a school—What do they feel are the needs, how were they met traditionally, what kind of education did their parents receive, what was the purpose of education for them, what is the purpose now, so how should the education structure be developed and what are their education, livelihood, employment and knowledge aspects that need to be included, are there aspects of indigenous knowledge that they feel should be included in modern day education, what are the problem they face in their schools (pedagogic, infrastructure, syllabus, material available, health, safety and security, safety especially of girls, assessment formats), what kind of recommendations can we give the government on tribal education for primary education and for higher education/vocational education.

Tribal education: Discussion points from students

The current situation of tribal education and the needs to improve the quality was emphasised in the discussion. The quality of education deferred from remote villages to villages closer to urban areas. Literacy was at a low level in the interior villages as compared to roadside villages. The education in such cases centred around the traditional knowledge and wisdom of their elders, through observation and imitation. It was the necessity for survival that forced them to learn the nuances of agriculture, hunting or any other means that gave them livelihood. Astronomy and medicinal plants were an integral part of their daily life. They learnt about various medicines, the changes in seasons and reading time through imitating the elders. It was more of 'living Science' rather than Science learnt from text books. The children expressed the need to include traditional knowledge of their elders along with

modern 'education'. The children's opinion of the present day status of education gave some interesting food for thought. They felt that currently what they learn are from the written facts in the text books whereas the same was learnt by their elders through keen observation of nature and the changes that occur, for example, how one needs a rain meter or a weather cock to predict rains whereas the elder generation could predict them by observing nature. A boy from Gujarat mentioned about the observation on the commencement of rainy season when the second flowering of tamarind drops. They also noted that the literacy rate was much lower in cases of women of their community compared to men. This could be because the girls were either needed at home to take care of their siblings or that they were married off at a very young age. Poverty was another main factor responsible for lack of schooling amongst the *adivasi* children.

Another point of discussion was on the reasons for drop outs from schools. Most of them were unanimous in their opinions on this. At primary level they were scared of corporal punishment and teacher absenteeism which makes them lose interest in studies. Lack of infrastructure in schools, unimaginative methodology and teaching were other problems mentioned. At the high school level it was mostly distance, fear of exams, language problems in the initial years of schooling, not being able to cope up with high school syllabi because the primary education was not effective and qualitative enough or not available in the interior villages. Some children mentioned that the interest in pursuing higher education was mainly because of the facilities that they have in hostels, but some from the government schools in Visakhapatanm and Vijayanagarm districts felt that hostel facilities needed vast improvement, so also the need for having more schools for higher education. They also felt that a change in curriculum is necessary. *Adivasi* festivals, traditional knowledge and art, history of local *adivasi* leaders who have worked for the betterment of their community, traditional songs and medicine should also be a part of their syllabi. They felt that if vocational courses were introduced from Class V onwards rather than focusing on theoretical knowledge, students dropping out after Class X would have some livelihood options. Another interesting point raised by a girl from Gujarat was that they should be equipped with some tools on how to deal with the mainstream society, especially for children coming from remote villages. They appreciated the fact that the government is taking initiatives to promote literacy in *adivasi* communities through scholarships, free education, free bus passes, mid day meals and residential facilities, but they desired to have better infrastructure, quality of food, compassionate teachers having an aptitude and knowledge of teaching. A teacher knowing the local tribal language and traditions is another necessity felt by the children. Regular health check ups and health facilities at the schools could be an added advantage.

Most of them had aspirations about their future. They wanted to be lawyers, engineers and doctors too and expressed the need for using their knowledge and educational qualification to help their communities. Some of them had not given it a thought but were definite that they wanted to be self reliant.

Forestry: Resource persons-Gauri Kapre, Seema Mundoli and Devullu Pachari; Moderators-Padmini Balakrishnan and Balramdas

What does forest mean to adivasis—What kind of knowledge did our ancestors have, why do we go to the forest and what do we get for our house, for our livelihood and for entertainment and festivals, what kind of produce do we get in seasons, what is the status of our forest in our village today, what are the reasons for this status, why is *podu* cultivation not good today, what are the other resources, livelihoods affected because of degeneration of forests, what kind of interventions/programmes is the government taking up to address forestry problems, what do you think can be done for saving our problems of forests, what can we do for our village.

Forest produce and management: Discussion points from children

Most of the discussion centred around the availability of supplementary produce for their daily diet. Many of the children came up with the names of firewood, fruits, leaves, roots and tubers that they can avail from the forests. The differences in flora found in the Western and as well as Eastern Ghats were discussed and the children could identify the different fruits and vegetables that are grown in each areas.They spoke about the indigenous methods of forest management and *panchayat* laws formulated to preserve the forests. The people of Sovva area of Araku valley, Visakhapatnam, have formulated an indigenous community forest management technique. The Forest Guard is a youth from the community. The guard is selected by the community elders as per certain norms. *Bora* (a signalling tool made from horns of cattle), axe, long knife and ropes are entrusted with the Forest Guard and he is assigned to be on duty from morning till evening. He surveys the forest for any miscreants or any misdeeds by communities. They have formulated certain rules and regulations for forest conservation, and anybody flouting them will be punished by the community elders according to the punitive actions decided by the community. The Forest Guard continues to be responsible till he relinquishes the duties or till the community decides to terminate. This unique method of taking up responsibility for their own sustenance as well as the forest they live in is an exemplary system. Children from Gujarat also mentioned about a similar system where in they have certain rules and regulations to manage and preserve community forest resources. Anybody disobeying these rules or misusing them will be fined and also has to plant a sapling in lieu of the wood cut.

Agriculture: Resource person-Kishan Rao; Moderators: Mouni and Parashuram

What does land mean to us—How did our ancestors evolve using land and other resources, how did agriculture evolve in our villages, what kind of practices were/are followed, what implements, labour, other inputs are required in traditional agriculture, do you think it is sustainable, who played what role in agriculture and land management in the village/family, what are the changes you perceive and who are the players (climatic, economic, government programme, private companies, NGO, etc), how has this affected agriculture, what modern influences have come into your village and what benefits and disadvantages do you perceive, can outside interventions of agriculture be made or how should they be made, what was the traditional technology for different agricultural activities like livestock management, water conservation, seed storage and conservation, sowing, preparing the land, irrigation, pest management, harvesting, marketing, bartering, etc. What do you think are other changes like migration affecting social and other practices, what do you think can be done by you to help in improving the agriculture situation in your village, what should government do, what kind of agriculture or land management should be made, what innovations in rural technology are required to strengthen traditional indigenous farming and agriculture.

Agriculture: Discussion points from children

The focus of this group was mainly on the organic methods used in agricultural practices and the significance of using organic manure and pesticides as these were the practices in earlier days. The children were familiar with the various methods of agricultural practices, the processes followed and the crops grown in each of their areas. Fertility of the soil increases when manure is added and they were aware that dead and decayed matter enhances the fertility, but were not aware of the term 'organic matter'. The resource person apprised the children about the differences between organic manure and synthetically prepared pesticides and fertilisers. Samples of different kinds of soil and the differences in their quality were shown to the children. He explained that the soil with the maximum humus content makes

more nutrition and moisture available to the plants. The living organisms in the soil continuously convert the organic matter into humus and this makes the land more fertile. The application of synthetic fertilisers kills the microorganisms in the soil. The soil in the forests gets replenished by maximum organic matter; hence it is highly fertile. The same practices should be followed in our farming methods which was what the traditional practice was. It was an eye opening experience for the children and the presentation that followed had all the salient points discussed.

The discussions and our perspective

Children from each school were given the choice to join the groups according to their tastes and interests of the topics assigned. Each group had an expert in the concerned field as facilitator and one or more resource persons to help in documentation. The group discussions started off with a linguistically heterogeneous group of participants. The facilitators initiated the discussions introducing the topic, its purpose and wheeling it towards a possible conclusion of getting the children to actively participate and share their knowledge of each topic. Most of the groups took time to warm up to the topic, translations for the multi-lingual group took away most of the time and it was felt that the outcome of the discussion could have been more effective if we had smaller groups and assigned more time span for discussion. What we could gather from these discussions was that there was an awareness created in the minds of the present generation of *adivasi* children about the importance of being educated, the need for creating a knowledge bank on traditional practices of their elders. The Congress reinforced it with a need for keeping up their tradition and culture alive through incorporating them in mainstream education.

Workshops

It was not all Science and seriousness at the Congress. When children are around, it is imperative we find time for loads of hands-on creative work. Traditional *adivasi* life has no dearth of creative and artistic skills that reflect their imagination, philosophy, celebration of life, traditional forms of entertainment, sense of rhythm and symmetry and a love for positive use of energy, no matter how tough life is. To help children experience a glimpse of their ancestral creativity, different art workshops were planned to give diverse communities recognition.

With that in mind we designed and planned workshops for the children. As the morning sessions were intellectually heavy, the afternoons were devoted to these art workshops where children were divided into heterogeneous groups (again to facilitate interaction which is more possible through such activity-based sharing). The students had to continue in the same groups for all the 3 days and learn and demonstrate whatever they shared together during these 3 days. Everyday 2 hours were kept aside for these art and craft workshops. Pottery, basket weaving, *Savara* art painting, clay modelling, dyeing with natural colours, tribal songs, tribal dances, puppetry with material used by the *adivasis*, embroidery by Niyamgiri *adivasi* women were some of the workshops attended by children. A theatre workshop made them loosen up and the short on-the- spot act they put up in front of the large audience was a pleasant surprise.

Pottery

The pottery workshop was conducted by an elderly traditional artisan, a *kumhari* (potter), Raghuramu from Kamayyapeta village who taught the children how to use the wheel and make small lamps and pots in different shapes.

Basket weaving

Basket weavers from Cheedimetta village helped children weave intricate designs with bamboo and make small baskets. They also showed the children the process of slicing the bamboo into thin sheaves for weaving the baskets.

Savara art

Savara art is a very ritualistic painting done on the walls of the houses and for the *Savara adivasis*, it is not just an art but a year planner and calendar of events. It also reflects the precision with which they plan their life. They use traditional natural colours—white and black (made from powdered wood coal), yellow (from turmeric/yellow mud) and red (red mud)—to illustrate in picture the chronology of events related to the year, starting from the New Year. The *Savara* art is two dimensional and geometrical in patterns and people and animals are depicted by triangular forms. The students from other States and districts, who have never heard of the community *Savara*, got to learn about the culture, the nuances of painting and the significance of each event. At the end of the 3 days what came up was a visual treat. This session was facilitated by Jammaih, a traditional *Savara* artist and Gangadhar, Field Coordinator, Eppaguda Resource Centre.

Warli painting

The *Warli* painting is similar to *Savara* art. Its cyclical weave of life in its contours and style is unique to the *Warli* community of *adivasis* living in Maharashtra and Gujarat. Girls from Kedi High School, Valsad district, Gujarat, came forward to be art facilitators and taught a group of children the art of painting in the *Warli* style. *Warli* painting also follows

geometrical patterns as the central core, triangles depicting trees and human forms, circles for elements and a square as the central motif depicting a sacred place. The children came up with a set of well painted motifs after the workshop.

Embroidery

The *Dhongria Kondh* women and girls were the facilitators for this workshop. They showcased the traditional hand embroidery that they darn into their daily ensemble of clothes. Very skillfully and neatly done, these embroidered designs also have geometric patterns, mostly triangular. They use threads dyed with natural colours. The hand-woven shawls embroidered colourfully are a Niyamgiri woman's identity. The children learnt the art of sewing these simple patterns on a long cloth. Ammaji, one of our team members facilitated the workshop.

Clay modelling and *batik* dyeing

Fine arts students of Andhra University, under the guidance of their faculty, Mr. Sudhakar Reddy, facilitated workshops on clay modelling and *batik* dyeing. The clay modelling group came up with a variety of figures and the display had an array of animals waiting to be picked up. The children were taken through the processes of preparing colours from natural ingredients like *japra* seeds, *manjishta*, red mud, yellow mud, black mud, marigold flower petals, red sandal, and *karakai* seeds powder. *Sphatika* (quartz crystal) powder was added to boiling water, and into that they dipped cloth pieces tied at intervals with a string. This was taken out and dipped into coloured boiling water. These were dried and what could be seen was a set of *batik* designs in different shades and patterns. Most of the natural colouring materials were collected from the villages.

Music and dance

Music and dance are second nature to an *adivasi* child. Their natural form of expression is through singing and dancing. And each *adivasi* community has its own unique style of singing, dancing and drumming. Their percussion instruments also are distinctive. This session of music and dance was a conglomeration of various styles of singing and dancing.

A symphony of tribal songs: The music workshop incorporated the styles and songs of Gujarat, AP, Maharashtra and Orissa, and came up with a fusion of tribal songs. Vinayak Pawar and Rajulamma set the trend by blending songs in different *adivasi* dialects, assisted by our Field Resource Centre staff Ramchander and Lakshminarayana. The final product that emerged was a 10 min musical extravaganza.

A fusion of tribal dances: Dancing workshop was a riot of drum beating and keeping in step to various rhythms. Children from Maharashtra showed their prowess with *Lazims* and tribal musical instruments. *Dhimsa* by the children from AP had everybody joining in. The students from the government schools showcased traditional dances of *Koya* community and *Lambadis*. It was a true meeting of minds, step by step and at the end of the day, there was wholesome entertainment for the children. Jayshree Hatangadi facilitated the workshop.

Theatre workshop

Another interesting workshop the children attended was an impromptu theatre workshop facilitated by Shruti Devi, a lawyer and social activist. The theme and script was instantaneously designed, based on the elements of nature. And on the last day a short performance was put up depicting sounds from nature, reactions of an *adivasi* child who had, for the first time experienced city life and how the city lights and life overwhelms him. This workshop saw the children completely at ease, forgetting their inhibitions and language barriers. There was lot of noise, activity and body movement during the workshop.

We had divided the children into groups at the time of registration and given them names of trees found generally in the forests of Eastern Ghats. At the end of the 3 days a presentation was done by the children and the facilitator along with a display of articles hand crafted by the children and a fusion of tribal songs from different regions.

Cultural Events

Late evenings were kept aside for cultural events. All the children had come prepared with traditional dances and songs from their communities. The cultural activities went on late into the night and the children did not seem to tire of it.

- A *daangi* dance performed during the festival of *Holi* was staged by the girls from Kedi School, and this was resplendent with rhythm and amazing acrobatics.
- Boys from Maharashtra came in their traditional attire and showcased a traditional ritual during one of their festivals. It was a unique display of *adivasi* culture and musical instruments such as *kirchi, pawri* and *ghodyachi kaathi*. They perform this in praise of *Dongrya dev* (God of the hills) at the time of *Holi* and *Bailpola* (cattle festival). The costume worn at that time by the percussionists is specific to the musical instruments they play. Those who perform the dance have to follow certain regimes and disciplines like abstaining from eating meat.
- Students from the APTWR Schools showcased a traditional *Koya* dance, a folk dance which had a theme depicting *adivasi* life and *Lambadi* dances. Pre-recorded music gave a jarring note in some cases but there were schools which danced to traditional songs as is the custom in their villages.
- The Niyamgiri girls wove intricate designs with their feet to the soft yet rhythmic music played on the *sarangi*.
- *Dhimsa,* a traditional dance form of the *adivasis* of AP was performed by the Balamitra Children. This had everybody on their feet and the evening ended with the audience joining in.

On the last day, *adivasi* culture was depicted in the form of plays. Three dramas were performed:

- A role play on *adivasi* marriage rituals was put up by the children from the Field Resource Centre, Poolabanda.

- GVS Upper Primary School enacted a day in the life of a *Gadaba* family. *Gadaba* language is fast dying out among the present generation and this attempt at reviving it through songs and plays by the organisation is a commendable effort.
- *Adivasi* leaders, their stories of valour or their fights against oppression are the least represented in any of our History books. Alluri Sitaramaraju, a young revolutionary from East Godavari district, AP, was one such leader who inspired the *adivasi* leaders like Gantanna and Mallu Dora to fight against the British regime. This story was presented in the form of a play by the Balamitra Model School, Visakhapatnam, children.

Adivasi Food and Diet: A Demonstration

Wild greens, rich in nutritional and medicinal properties grown in the hills and found wild in the forests have been the staple diet for *adivasis* of the hills. Modern agriculture with its emphasis on high productivity is now badly affecting the health and economies of *adivasi* populations. The *adivasi* communities have had well-evolved traditions of nutrition and health based on the knowledge of the properties of forest herbs and meats. Forests have been their mainstay but of late cheap food products becoming easily accessible in the weekly markets are eroding the nutritious food of *adivasi* people at large.

At the Congress, we reserved a session only to focus on the dietary habits and nutritional value of traditionally prepared food in the *adivasi* areas. The children from each school participated in a cooking demonstration of various indigenous food items. It was a tasty treat for all present and there was a scramble around the mud pots used to prepare food items. The culinary expertise of the children was evident from the speed at which the pots became emptied. The proof of the pudding was shown definitely in eating it. The students were not only asked to give the recipe and cook the food, but to also give information about the nutrition and health aspects of the items cooked.

Some of the traditional dishes prepared by the children were *chollu* (millet) *thoppa, chollu pittu, chollu ambali, jonna roti, chollu kudumulu, chollu attulu, varipindi thoppa, boddhakkoora chutney, ganji chaaru,* sweet *kichdi, varipindi lapsi* and *urud dal* chutney. The children explained the ingredients, the method and nutrition values of the dishes they prepared. (*Recipes given in detail later in the report*)

Adivasi Traditional Sport

Traditional sports is another aspect of *adivasi* life which is dying out fast with the advent of urban games like cricket, football, hockey and the like. For the *adivasi* communities, hunting has a religious, cultural and recreational connotation. A bow and arrow console is their constant companion. An archery contest hence had to be part of the Congress. The target was an egg, which is integral to the *ittukula pandaga* of the Eastern Ghat *adivasis*. Their prowess at shooting an arrow could not keep the egg in shape for much longer. *Ittukula pandaga* is a festival which falls in the month of April. It is a month long festival celebrated by the villagers in the *adivasi* belt of Araku and the nearby hills. This *pandaga* (festival) is a symbol of their jungle lifestyle when men used to go hunting for food every day. The men are sent to the jungle to hunt a game during this month to the accompaniment of traditional rituals and celebration. Prior to the hunting trip, the men have to prove their sharp shooting skill by performing before the village crowd and the priests by aiming at a host of eggs kept on display. The more eggs shot on target, the better game they will bring back home, is the belief of the villagers. The women and children wait anxiously for the return of the 'brave hunters' at the village and if they come back with nothing the hunters are given a 'booing' welcome. The women and children take pleasure in dousing them with muddy water and the like to put them to shame. So it becomes a point of prestige to prove their mettle at hunting. Children also join the elders, at times in the hunting trips and get a feel of their ancestors' lifestyle. The hunted game is distributed equally among the villagers and the night ends with good food, songs and *Dhimsa* dances where every villager takes part.

Workshop with Teachers

On the third day of the Congress, a parallel session was organised for the teachers, educators and NGO representatives, chaired by Ashok Chaudhari and Bhanumathi Kalluri. The purpose of the session was to have a discussion on the recent Right To Education Act and the need for integration of *adivasi* knowledge into policy and curriculum of the government schools and how to make education more meaningful to the *adivasi* child.

Ashok Chaudhari, Director, Adivasi Basha Academy, Tejgarh, Gujarat, initiated the discussion on the need for incorporating science into the education process, the introduction of creative education through fine arts and bringing productive activity into education which is connected closely with the life of an *adivasi* child. He reiterated the necessity to have a curriculum which has a strong connectivity with nature

and the environment that a child lives in. A curriculum giving importance to the *adivasi* dialect is necessary to connect with an *adivasi* in the initial stages of education. Our efforts should realise the lofty dreams we give the *adivasi* children.

Bhanumathi Kalluri gave a brief insight into the work that Samata is doing with the *adivasis* of AP and the background behind organising the Congress. While introducing the philosophy of *Balamitra* Education Programme, she urged the need for providing contextual primary education to the *adivasi* children for whom education happens naturally from their surroundings and everyday life. To enable the *adivasi* child to connect with learning from text books, it is necessary to formulate a curriculum which is inclusive of *adivasi* knowledge, history and more importantly their mother tongue, especially at primary level. What we find in the mainstream syllabi is a contradiction to the knowledge that they attain from living in the lap of nature where science is a part of their everyday life. So also a teacher fraternity who are motivated and well trained to the needs of the *adivasi* child is the need of the hour. *Balamitra* has the advantage of being independent and has the freedom in creating a curriculum without having to fall under the limitations of a mainstream curriculum. But, also that these methods are replicable in government schools with due sensitivity to the issue was also a point to note.

Rajashri Tikhe of Shikshan Mitra programme in Maharashtra observed that these objectives form the focal point in their work also. Shikshan Mitra works with the government schools as a supplementary programme. Their education programme is consciously working with the system with the belief that unless we work with the system, it is difficult to bring any changes, the limitations not withstanding. They are trying to bring in a gradual change in the system by supplementing formal education with life education by intervening in the areas of agriculture, health and social awareness. Project-based activities, both at the village and school levels have been going on as a parallel methodology but now they are in the process of incorporating them into the mainstream curriculum. Such activities are planned in such a way so that the children become the change agents who bring awareness and connectivity to the outside world and *vice versa*. A relationship where they mutually contribute as a way of strengthening the bond between tradition and mainstream society of children is an effective methodology.

Bhupinderbhai of Kedi Residential School, Dharampur, Gujarat, said that the Kaivalya Trust under which their programme is conducted, focuses on *adivasi* girls who have dropped out of schools at an early age. At Kedi School, education is about addressing issues of hands on learning versus textual learning, experiential learning versus rote learning, and learning for life versus learning for the moment. They are trying to develop a scientific perspective and vocational expertise along with formal education. He felt that there is a need to introduce fine arts, which is an integral part of an *adivasi* child, as a strong medium to make learning effective. In most cases the children know more about science than the teachers themselves but the terminologies which a mainstream text book introduces are alien to them This acts as a deterrent to their understanding of a subject which is otherwise fundamental to their way of life. The present education system suppresses the creativity of a child by restricting the child to conform to an unimaginative curriculum.

The teachers from the APTWR Schools agreed that they also found a lack of interest in classroom learning because of the syllabi which do not have any direct significance in their day to day life. Language and unfamiliar surroundings and lifestyle in the government run schools added to the rate of drop outs. They felt that, though the government has taken steps to introduce education even in remote *adivasi* areas, the curriculum should correspond to the way of living, resources and traditional knowledge. One of them expressed his doubts on this perspective of bringing *adivasi* traditions into the curriculum. Should we make a choice to rewrite curriculum to suit the *adivasi* temperament and living instead of helping them deal with the mainstream society which is surging forward? The general consensus was that there was a need to revive these traditions and knowledge incorporating them into the mainstream curriculum. These were unanimously observed by all the teachers present at the session. The Congress was an effective platform to instill the significance of their culture and traditions and, an opportunity for the children to incorporate the valuable knowledge systems into their lives as well as that of the mainstream society.

Rural Innovations

An interesting segment of the Congress was the presentation made by Brig. Ganesham of Honey Bee Foundation, which is an organisation working on promoting rural innovations and encouraging farmers and children to think of innovative and simple designs using resources available locally in their surroundings. Brig. Ganesham conveyed the message through film clips of certain innovative ideas developed by rural people and this was very well appreciated and it excited many of the teachers present.

Water is a critical resource, which needs to be addressed seriously, especially in areas where *adivasi* communities reside. They have to walk miles and miles to fetch water and it is always either the women or children who end up carrying heavy loads on their heads. An innovation that was shown, which attracted the attention of all the children, was a water carrier which takes away the load from the heads and shoulders. More such clips held the attention of the children and the teachers alike.

The need for bringing the valuable traditional knowledge of elders into the forefront, at the same time improving upon them to make life easier was stressed at the session. If this is done with the available resources in the villages, it would add more value and easy access to all the people in the villages.

A programme for children under the National Innovation Foundation (http://www.nif.org.in) which supports grassroots innovations was introduced to the audience. Children were encouraged to send any innovative ideas that they could come up with so that a sustainable and creative society is developed at the grassroots level.

Closing Ceremony

The 3 days of togetherness, sharing, learning and interacting came to an end on the evening of 23 February. The schools, teachers and children were given a certificate of appreciation and participation by the Executive Director, Mr. Ravi Rebbapragada. Bhanumathi Kalluri proposed the vote of thanks to all the participants, organisations and schools who participated. Special mention and gratitude was expressed to the kitchen team headed by Subba Rao from Peddamallapuram, AP, who is also a board member of Samata.



Reflections and Feedback

Adivasi life follows a philosophy which surpasses all material definitions. They invent, evolve and practise methodologies and technologies which are in many ways alien to the modern world. These traditions are long dying with the interventions of what we call modern technological practices. But Dhaatri and Samata's central focus of work is in strengthening *adivasi* knowledge and education. This is reflected in the education programme, Balamitra which is an effort to consciously bring the traditional knowledge into the curriculum and a self esteem in the valuable wisdom of their elders.

The *Adivasi* Children's Traditional Knowledge and Science Congress was an attempt in giving an opportunity for the *adivasi* children to involve in a dialogue within themselves on the value of life that their ancestors left behind. It was an occasion where they could understand the scientific temperament of their ancestral practices, even without having a formal education. It was also an event where they could interact, observe and contribute to improving their awareness without having to compromise on their vast traditional knowledge. We had envisaged this Congress to be a platform to meet, greet and treat each other to 3 days of togetherness while sharing the best practices of *adivasi* life.

The 3 day Congress was envisaged, as an extension of a children's camp which we were to plan at the village level for the school going *adivasi* children. The idea, when mooted was taken with lot of apprehension, not for lack of organising ability, but for the lack of time. But the decision to go ahead seemed to have gone well looking at the reception to the idea. The AP Tribal Welfare Department cooperated by sending children from 10 schools; NGOs from Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa joined in with a contingent of about 150 children. Teachers, educators and experts accepted our invitation with enthusiasm and took part in the Congress to facilitate, to advise and enable discussions during and after the Congress.

The Congress reflected tradition, at the same time keeping the gravity with which we envisaged it. The elders of *Dongria Kondh* community from Niyamgiri hills of Orissa made the opening a memorable one as it unveiled from the beginning, the spirituality in *adivasi* life. The participation of the children was total. It was gratifying to see the exhibits brought

by the schools and organisations had reflected to a great extent the rationale behind the Congress.

The group discussions did not have the expected effect as it was a multi-lingual group and translations took up much time. The children took considerable amount of time to warm up to the topic and the time assigned was insufficient. However, again, this was organised more for the experience of interaction than with the intent to bring outputs from the children.

This was the first of its kind endeavour in bringing *adivasi* children together under the same umbrella to create an awareness and respect for the traditional wisdom of their ancestors. It was also an arena where the children were exposed to the scientific temperament of the practices followed in ancient times by the experts. It helped open their minds to the valuable knowledge which had been passed down to them over the ages and that this learning has equal or more significance to the text book knowledge that seeped into them from the school curriculum.

The strong effort in building a medium of interaction for children from different cultures but still having a common bond was made with the intention of giving a platform for sharing knowledge and awareness. For an effort which was first of its kind, we can definitely boast of having created a small community of children who have become conscious of a culture and knowledge system that has been in existence from time immemorial. A quantitative outcome may not be what we might look for at present from this Congress, but we are happy that we have inculcated a sense of pride, respect and consciousness in their ancestors' wisdom and understanding.

The feedback from the participating schools and the resource persons also reflected the need for such programmes which would give food for thought to the young children. The structure and content of the Congress was highly appreciated by the participants. Time constraints were a mild deterrent to achieving all that we envisaged in the 3 days. Apart from that, the turn out at the Congress was less than expected as, for most of the schools from Chattisgarh, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu as well as schools in the northeast it was the year end school assessments. A larger and wider attendance would have definitely made this Congress a more successful one in terms of exchange of knowledge.

For the students and teachers from government Gurukulam schools, it was a new experience as they were only used to science exhibitions related to text book topics. They were initially very disappointed that they did not get proper intimation about the Congress in advance and that they were not told that this was the nature of the programme. The students felt disappointed that, had they been apprised of the programme properly, they could have prepared their presentations based on the traditional themes. However, it was heart warming to see that, enthused by the other groups they made *ad hoc* presentations of their traditional knowledge and made up for lack of material from home. The other disappointing aspect was the lack of diversity in the representation of *adivasi* communities, especially from the VTGs from the AP government schools, as this would have given a wider experience and enabled greater sharing. The fact that most of the *adivasi* students who participated were from an urbanised situation, was both an advantage and disadvantage. There was limited understanding of traditional knowledge practises as they are alienated from these practices. However, the Congress helped them develop a new respect for what is traditionally practised about which they have been made to feel insignificant, by the outside world. The renewed interest to go back and understand their traditions and also spread it among other students was a learning for the students as well as teachers. All of them wanted that the Congress be followed up at their local areas and wanted to conduct smaller level programmes with more children from each area. This was also reflection for teachers of government schools where

the schools do not have facility either through curriculum or material, for strengthening *adivasi* knowledge within or outside the classrooms. Even the fact that they do not have musical instruments locally used by the communities came out during the discussions. The traditional *adivasi* dances performed by some of the schools, reflected a dilution in the original forms and unfortunately depict a false impression of *adivasi* folk music. This has to be addressed, especially in government schools, where *adivasi* music forms are being distorted through urban influences.

The emotional appeal made by Dr.Venugopal captured the essence and objective of the Congress and we hope that the schools that participated have carried this essence with them and will spread it wider among their communities. He reiterated the valuable knowledge levels that the *adivasis* possess about traditional medicinal practices and the importance of carrying it forward. People around the world have realised this and are making efforts to come back to these traditional practices. He stressed on the need for proper documentation of the ancestral knowledge, most of which are dying out. It was the responsibility of the present generation of *adivasi* children to show the world that they are the custodians of the knowledge and practices of their ancestors. His fervent appeal to the children was that they must live with pride that the knowledge possessed by their ancestors', and traditional wisdom and practices have paved the way for present day technologies. He also said that the need of the hour is to institutionalise the *adivasi* traditional knowledge on medicines by opening up an institution dedicated to *adivasi* medicinal practices.

Our Gratitude to the Supporters

The Balamitra Badis Education Programme is supported by the Tata Social Welfare Trust and the idea of organising a national level children's congress was supported by Tara Srinivas who enabled this process with prompt follow up from their end. We express our heartfelt gratitude to the Trust for supporting this endeavour.

UNICEF, India, came forward spontaneously to support the Congress. We thank UNICEF for accepting our request. We appreciate their support for the film and the interest expressed in taking such a process forward through building communication skills among *adivasi* students.

The AP Tribal Welfare Department showed much interest in making the event a collective effort and deputed 10 schools under it for the Congress. Our special thanks to Shri Chinaveerabhadrudugaru, Additional Director, AP Tribal Welfare Depratment for his encouragement and moral support in ensuring the participation of Gurukulam schools and patiently following up on procedures required for this.

We appreciate….

- The spontaneous help that came from Mr.Subbarao *garu*, President of Samata, and his team for cooking delicious meals for all the participants.
- The total involvement of the CBOs Sanjeevini, Adivasimitra and Velugu and their Directors, Devullu *garu*, Manmadha Rao *garu* and Sanjeevi Rao *garu* respectively.
- The Killoguda Field Resource Centre team of Ramchander, Naidu and Potturaju, the Poolabanda Field Resource Centre team of Sivaratnam, the Kamyyapeta Field Resource Centre team of Kesava Rao and Buchcheswar Rao, the Eppaguda Field Resource Centre team of Balram Das, Gangadhar and Chinnammudu and all the village school teachers for showcasing effectively the *adivasi* traditional knowledge. Their exhibits gave a complete picture of the Congress theme.

- The assistance of all the eminent resource persons who accepted our invitation and became a part of the Congress.
- K.Prabhavathi, Padmini Balakrishnan,Seema Mundoli,Suniti Goday, Gauri Kapre and Balamitra Model School teachers (Geetha, Dhanalakshmi, Swaroopa and Simhachalam)who documented each and every activity of the 3 days systematically and painstakingly. A special thanks to KV. Sitaramaraju, Field Coordinator, Balamitra Education Programme for his sustained and committed work pre, during and post the conference**.**
- The staff of Balamitra Model School, Visakhapatnam for their undying enthusiasm, hard work and implementation of the projects.
- The students of Balamitra and the Field Resource Centres for showing us that *adivasi* wisdom and knowledge are safe with them.
- Our volunteers from Germany, Research associates Vinayak Pawar and Riya Mitra for all the help on-site.
- GVS Ravishankar and Vijay M for their editorial and technical support during the Congress and in the documentation process.
- All the participants who came for the Congress, educating us on their various cultures, knowledge and traditions.
- The Samata team for always standing by us in any venture that we take up.

Bhanumathi Kalluri, Director, Dhaatri Resource Centre for Women and Children-Samata, speaking at the Congress

Dassariba addressing the gathering

Lighting the lamps by the participants from Niyamgiri

A section of the participants

Water spring… a model from the Eastern Ghats

Crop calendar, prepared by Balamitra Model School

Presentation by APTWR School, Sudimalla

Presentation by APTWR School, Maripeda

Presentation ..Balamitra Model School, Visakhapatnam

Organically grown vegetables

Presentation, APTWR School, Chinthur

Sarangi…a *Dongria Kondh* musical instrument

A display of indigenously grown products by Jattu

Presentation by APTWR School, Kuravi

Hunting equipment, Killoguda Field Resource Centre

Display of traditional crops, Killoguda Field Resource Centre

Presentation, APTWR School, Buttaigudem

Indigenous tools and implements, Kamayyapeta Field Resource Centre

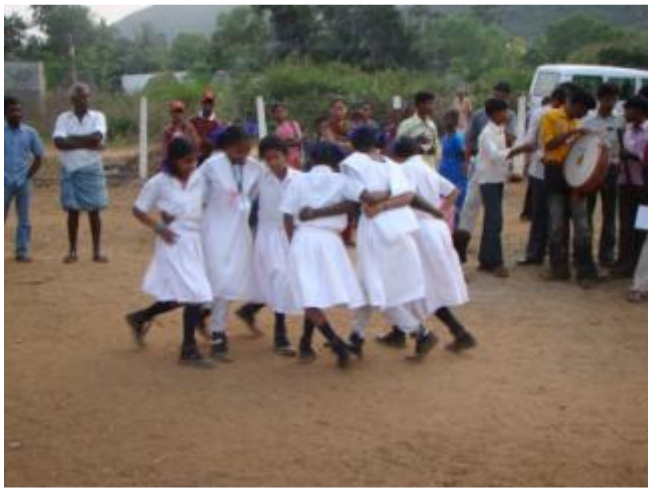
Warli painting , Kedi Residential School, Gujarat

Girls from APTWR School, Vissannapeta interacting with Dassariba

Presentation, APTWR School, KSD Site, (Boys)

Kolattam by GVS Upper Primary School

Art workshop



Dance workshop

Basket weaving

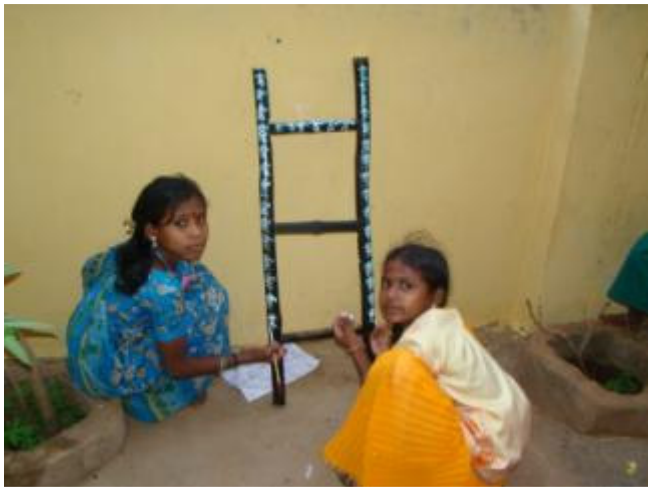
Paper Mache workshop

Traditional embroidery workshop by Niyamgiri women

Natural colour dye preparation

Group discussion on forestry

Cultural programme in the evening



Painting workshop

Preparing for presentation

Group discussion on tribal education

Group discussion on maths in the *adivasi* context

Presentation on traditional medicine…with resource person, Dr. Venugopal

Savara art being unveiled

Children in an art workshop

Children demonstrating a traditional bird trap

Alluri Sitaramaraju, a play by Balamitra Model School

Traditional rituals performed by *Kokani* community, Shikshan Mitra, Maharashtra

Girls singing traditional song

Girls from Kedi Residential School, Gujarat performing the *daangi* dance

Dhimsa at night

Ready to serve…

Happy after a hard day's work… the on site team

Receiving certificates from Ravi Rebbapragada, Executive Director, Samata

Section II

Adivasi Traditional Knowledge Compiled by Children

An *adivasi* child is a treasure chest of knowledge imbibed from his/her elders naturally. The daily life of the *adivasi* child is rich with the adventures of discovering nature and living with nature. From the moment they wake up and climb the trees to get their 'tooth-brushes' to their bathing in the stream while catching crabs and fish, hunting birds while grazing cattle, walking excitedly to the weekly market carrying pumpkins and jackfruits, and ending the day with rhythmic dances of their ancestors—every moment is an education of the body, the heart and the soul. The forest has a wealth of play material that the children use to make little toys, bows and arrows, rafts and boats, flutes of bamboo and coloured mud for decoration; the list is infinite as is nature. Thus, Science is experienced in its natural forms, an understanding of the elements of the Universe through their agricultural practices, in harnessing the water, collecting forest produce or learning to build a house or to deal with wildlife. They also learn, unconsciously, the philosophy of enduring hardship and challenges. This is passed on by observation, imitation and through following their wise and knowledgeable elders.

The theme of the Congress and hence the presentations by the children concentrated on this knowledge of the *adivasi* children. We were not disappointed with the outcomes, as the thematic presentations and exhibits largely showed evidence of the traditional wisdom that is still alive in the *adivasi* villages.

We present below a wide variety of the presentations and to an extent the scientific basis for the practices. We would like to mention at this juncture that the information collected and recounted by the children at various stages is the basis for this compilation. The resource persons and experts have been helpful in analysing most of the practices followed by the *adivasi* elders and explain the scientific significance behind most of them.We have tried to compile all these under this section on 'Traditional Practices Presented by the Participants'.

Traditional Practices Presented by the Participants

Housing

Traditional houses

The conventional house building process starts with particular rituals followed by selection of land, material collection and preparation, actual construction and decoration. According to the traditions, the process starts only after consultation with the *Gurugadu* or *Moorthagadu* or *Disari* (village spiritual man) regarding *Muhurtam* (an auspicious time) for the house building and the selection of land.

To confirm whether the chosen land is suitable for building the house, a special practice is followed by the *Gurugadu*. He plasters a small portion of the land with cowdung and keeps five grains of rice on the smoothened land. The

place is left untouched overnight, covered with an *adda* (*Bauhinia* sp.) leaf cup or a *pramida* (a mud lamp). The land is considered suitable for house construction if the grains remain untouched till next morning else they are advised to find another place. The concept behind this could be to find out if the land is infested with termites or other insects or beings which would at later stages prove detrimental to the structure of the mud houses. The rituals are then followed on the selected land on an auspicious day.

The measurements for the house are taken with the help of *adda* (*Bauhinia* sp.) vine; the size is decided depending on the number of household members and the need of the owner. The construction activity starts after laying a *punaadilu* (foundation) followed by the mud walls for which red soil is used. The soil dug is mixed with water and cow dung thoroughly. The next morning the mixture is stamped for at least 4 hours until it is smooth and homogenous. For fast construction of walls a bamboo frame is first raised by weaving bamboo sheaths horizontally on bamboo poles. The mud plastering is then done on this frame.

The wood selection for the *vaasalu* (the beams) and the *nitti ratta* (the central pole) is done carefully. For the beams, wood of *maamidi* (mango*), neredu* (Java plum), s*ampangichettu* (champa), *maddichettu* (*Terminalia* sp.), *tadichettu* (palm), *karakuchettu* (*Millingtonia* sp.) is used. The seasoning of the wood logs for beams is done either by letting them stand in rain water for 2 months or soaking them in a water body for 1 month. They are then dried in the sun for 2–3 days before using in construction. The wood is generally cut during October as they believe that the tree trunks will be matured fully and also be devoid of any termite or insect attack. Another reason for this could be that the tree trunk needs to be seasoned before the construction of the house begins, which would be after the festival of *Sankranthi* (in the month of January). This would give ample time for proper treatment of the wood and would make it last longer.

The *nitti raata* (the central pole) is a straight pole which should bear the weight of the whole thatch on top and should last longer. Wood of the *nerudu* (Java plum), *thangedu* (Iron wood), *maddichettu* (*Terminalia* sp.) *peddabusichettu* (*Clerodendron* sp.), *karakuchettu* (*Millingtonia* sp.), *tangeduchettu* (*Cassia auriculata*), *panasachettu* (jackfruit), *nallamaddi* (*Terminalia alata*) is mostly used. While raising the central pole a 2'x2' pit is dug. This pit is first filled with a layer of sand and stones and then with soil. The soil around the pole is then tightened with the help of a *gunapam* (crowbar). The layer of sand protects the pole from termite attack.

For making the roof, woven bamboo frames are raised on the support of beams and the central pole. The variety of grasses like *dabbagaddy, eethagaddi* (date palm leaves), *koperigaddi, palagaddi* and *bontagaddi* can be used for thatching. The grass bundles are woven with the bamboo sheath and then tied with the help of the *adda* (*Bauhinia* sp.) vine.

It was mentioned that the kitchen of the house is generally positioned towards the *agneyam* or southeast corner of the house. The kitchen smoke is allowed to fill the house so that it seasons the beams and prevents them from rotting. It also helps in protection of seeds from pest attack, which are generally hung or stored on a loft above the stove so that they can get fumigated.

A mark of unity among the community is evident during house construction. Labour is shared among the people. The community decides the number of houses to be constructed in that season. This is so that the people in the community can share labour and materials with each other.

The students of Balamitra Badis had exhibited different house models along with some house construction tools like *gunapam* (crowbar), *paara* (spade), *katthi* (knife), *baditha* (pickaxe),

kodavali (sickle*), rampam* (saw) and *mekulu* (nails).

The display also showed the traditional practice of pumpkins stored on the roof and *jonna* (corncobs) hung above the *poyyi* (a mud stove). A few household articles like *rokali* (a rice pounding rod), *guntam* and *thiragali* (stone grinders for pounding *ragi* and *sama* respectively), *khanni* (a rope for tying cows), *dhokulu* (spoons made from dried gourds), *chibb*i (a bamboo basket for straining rice), *jelleda* (a sieve for *ragi* and *sama*), *sannarai* (a stone grinder for spices), *dipamgudi* (an oil lamp), *thatta* (bamboo basket), *cheta* (winnow pan made from bamboo) were also displayed.

Traditional medicine

Medicinal plants

Many specimens of medicinal plants were displayed by participants of Visakhapatnam district. They also stated the traditional medicinal uses of most of these specimens.

Local name	*Botanical name/ Common name*	*Hindi name*	*Description and use*
Nagasagaram	*Phragmites karka*/Large Naunal	*Nal/Narkul*	Roots are used to treat snake bite and are administered as single or multiple dosages.
Pothuchakka			Internal intake and external application has curative effect against stomach ache. Dosage is three times a day.
Kagu or *Kaanuga*	*Pongamia pinnata*/Pongamia	*Karanj*	Seeds when mixed with *pedda vepa* and *pedda dhonda* (wild neem and wild gourd) are effectively used for treating scabies. Leaves are used for treating dog bite. Oil is used for treating swellings on hands and legs. Bark powdered, made into juice and mixed with sugar is used treating stomach ache.
Kalabandha	*Aloe vera*	*Ghrit Kumari*	The internal intake of this medicine is believed to be remedial for headaches while its external application is used to treat heal burns and eye infection.
Beemudujetta	*Asparagus racemosa*/Wild asparagus	*Satavari*	It is used as a paediatric medicine to treat stomach ache. Both intake and external application is done.

Local name	*Botanical name/ Common name*	*Hindi name*	*Description and use*
Kurukutichekka			It is locally used to treat jaundice and is to be taken with water.
Nallausari	*Phyllanthus amarus*	*Jar amla*	Used to treat jaundice and blood motions. When boiled in water the solution is good for stomach ache. The leaves are ground to a paste, tied in a cloth and the juice then poured into the ears to treat migraine. This needs to be done for 3 days.
Tellajilledi	*Calatropis procera*/White swallow wort	*Asfed ak*	It is used in the treatment of scabies and wounds.
Dissuganneru			Skin diseases like ringworm and scabies can be treated with the help of this medicine.
Ummetha chettu	*Datura metel*	*Safed datura*	Fruit used for treating burns. External application of fruit juice used to treat skin diseases like scabies. Leaves also have medicinal value
Nepalam	*Jatropa glandulifera*	*Junglee erandi*	Brushing with the stem is used in trating tooth decay.
Chitramulam	*Plumbago zeylanica*	*Chita*	The decoction of stem and root is used in treating oedema, paralysis and rheumatoid arthritis.
Maddichettu	*Terminalia arjuna*	*Arjun*	Bark decoction used in treatment of heart problems
Vepa	*Azadiracta indica*/Neem	*Neem*	Leaves are used in blood purification and treating skin infections. Bark is used to improve blood circulation. Roots and fruit also used as medicine.
Modugu	*Butea monosperma*	*Dhak*	Leaves and flowers used to treat cuts, wounds and general weakness.
Tellatumma	*Accasia leucocephala*	*Safed babul*	Used to reduce bad breath.

Local name	*Botanical name/ Common name*	*Hindi name*	*Description and use*
Maredu	*Aegel marmalos*	*Bel, Bilva*	Fruit pulp used to treat loose motions
Kodipunju chettu	*Anisochilus carnosus*		Crushed leaves used to treat deep cuts from using iron tools
Aarichettu	*Bauhinia racemosa*	*Mawal,* *Ashta*	Used in treating diarrhoea
Trumanu	*Anogeissus latifolia*/Axle wood	*Bakli/*	Stem bark decoction used to treat cough
Besiaka dumpa			Boiled tubers used to treat ulcers
Saraswati akulu	*Centella asiatica*		Used to improve voice clarity and as a cooling agent. Leaves soaked in milk for 1 day, dried and powdered. Taken every night for 40 days this helps to improve memory.
Kuttu veru			Fresh roots used to treat diarrhea
Nemali adugu	*Vitex altissima*	*Myrole*	Stem decoction used to treat snake bites
Nelavemu	*Andrographis paniculata*	*Kiryat,* *Chiraita*	Whole plant used to treat diabetes and viral fever
Tuinki leaf	*Diospyros melanoxylon*	*Tendu*	Effective for blood pressure
Gundi veru			Used to relieve stomach ache
Torivelaga chekka	*Limonia crenulata*/Dog wood apple Musk deer plant	*Beli*	Used to treat oedema and sprains
Nelagummadi	*Pueraria tuberose*		Medicine used to increase milk production and sperm count
Castor	Ricinus communis	*Erandi*	Seeds and oil used to treat backache and digestive disorders
Tati beradu	*Borassus flabellifer*		Pound, mixed and drunk with water the mixture helps relieve pain
Pedda ringelu chakka			Pound and mixed in animal food

Local name	*Botanical name/ Common name*	*Hindi name*	*Description and use*
Chillagingelu	*Strychnos potatorum*	*Nirmali*	It is used as a stain remover. If rubbed on skin gives warmth to the body.
Tindikaya			Used as a spice
Moltadu			Roots mixed with garlic, pound and made into a juice helps relieve headache
Yerragingelu			Used as an ornament
Kunchikayalu			If grated and released in a stream it causes death of fish. Used to thus catch fish.
Arabigandi akulu	*Colocasia* sp.	*Arbi*	Used to treat ear pain
Dalchinchakka	*Cinnamomum zeylanica*	*Dalchini*	Used to treat mouth ulcers
Tulasi	*Ocimum sanctum*/Basil	*Tulasi*	Ground leaves used to treat wounds. Juice used to treat fever, cold and cough.
Vavili chettu	*Vitex negundo*	*Nirgandi*	Leaves used for treating scabies. Seeds used for treating ear infection. Roots used for treatimg fever.
Vemmpalli chettu	*Tephrosia purpurea*	*Sarpanka*	Roots used to treat scorpion bites, to increase memory power and to treat cold.
Neerulli	*Allium cepa*/ Onion	*Pyaz*	Juice used to treat hair loss, bleeding from nose and ear and teeth infections.
Allaneredu	*Syzygium jambos*	*Gulab jamun*	All parts are used as medicine. To treat diabetes, blood pressure, cold and throat pain
Kothimeera	*Corlandnum sativum*	*Dhaniya*	Different parts used to treat cough, fever, digestive problems and vomiting.
Nalla tumma chettu	*Accacia* sp.		Gum used to treat cuts and wounds. Leaves used to help blood clotting.
Thirjju thiga (gudubee)(amruthal			Juice used to treat diabetes, vomiting and cough.

Local name	*Botanical name/ Common name*	*Hindi name*	*Description and use*
ata)			
Arati chettu	*Musa paradisiaca* /Banana	*Kela*	All parts are used as medicine
Uttareni	*Achyranthes aspera*	*Chirachitta* *Puthakunda*	Flower used to treat scabies and lethargy. Leaves help in blood clotting, and treating scorpion and mouse bites. Roots used for treating insect bites. The whole plant is washed and ground well. The paste to is dry heated till it is burnt. The burnt ash is then mixed with honey and taken day and night for weight loss.
Oodugu chettu	*Alangium salvifolium*	*Akola*	Used to treat diarrhoea
Karakaya	*Terminalia chebula*	*Harir*	Powder helps in blood clotting and cleaning wounds.
Thangeda chettu	*Cassia auriculata*/Senna	*Tarwar*	Seeds, flowers and bark used in treating several diseases mainly skin diseases, eye infection, urine infection and motions.
Dhonda pandu	*Coccinia* sp.		Leaves help in blood clotting from nose bleeds.
Guntagalagara (bangaraja)(kesaraju)	*Eclipta prostrata*	*Mochkand*	Roots used to treat urine infection
Jilledu chettu	*Calotropis gigantea*	*Mandar*	Flowers are used to treat skin infection and body pains.
Konda Pindi	*Justicia glauca*		Roots ground and mixed with water and drunk used to treat kidney stones.
Gaccha kai			Leaves useful in treating urinary infection in children
Nalleru *Dhulagunda*	*Cissus quadrangularis* *Tragia involucrata*	*Hadjera* *Barahanta*	Bark used to treat fractures, cough and fever Seeds used to treat scorpion bite and scabies

Local name	*Botanical name/ Common name*	*Hindi name*	*Description and use*
Nelamulaka	*Solanum surattense*	*Kutia*	Roots used to treat liver infection and kidney stones.
Neelaveni			Two spoonfuls of the dried and powdered bark mixed with water and taken after lunch or dinner is recommended for treating blood sugar. Root powder taken with curd is useful in treating kidney stones. Also believed to be helpful for treating fever.
Boppai	*Carica papaya* /Papaya	*Papita*	Latex from bark used for treating skin diseases like scabies. Raw fruit latex mixed well with sugar and taken on an empty stomach is used to treat infective diarrhoea.
Relakai	*Cassia fistula*	*Amaltas*	Ground leaves mixed with buttermilk and applied externally for treating skin diseases. Also used for treating jaundice.
Chencheli aakulu	*Digera muricata*	*Latmahuria*	Leaves are first ground finely, kept aside for an hour, then mixed with heated oil and applied for *kancherlu.*
Jatapue akulu and *Dhonda*			Leaves are ground and the mixture is tied around the wound for 3 days
Nimma veru, jinna chekka (Adondakai) chekku	Lemon and Java plum		Ground together and mixed with sugar is given to children to treat stomach ache, jaundice and fever.
Nakka modudumpa	White coloured onion like bulbs		Used mainly to treat boils on the skin and body pain. Bulbs are roasted on coal, ground to a paste and applied on the affected part. It should never be taken orally as it might cause death.
Tella jilledu	*Calotropis* *Procera*/Swallow wort		Latex from the leaves is applied to treat boils or any other skin ailments. It should never be taken orally as it might cause death.

Local name	*Botanical name/ Common name*	*Hindi name*	*Description and use*
Tella Miriyalu, Sonti ,Manchi jeelaaorra	White pepper Dried ginger	*Jeera*	Ground into paste, mixed with coconut oil and applied over the entire body is used to treat jaundice.
Enuka thammadakuni			Ground to a paste and tied around affected area for treating fractures
Neredu chettu	Java plum	*Jamun*	Bark ground, mixed with milk and drunk is used for treating fractures
Miriyalu	Pepper	*Kali mirch*	Powder mixed with milk and taken is good for treating sore throat
Yalukakai	Cardamom	*Ilaichi*	Powder mixed with milk and taken is good for treating sore throat
Jilledu			To remove thorn, latex applied to the affected area
Hingua	Asafoetida	*Hing*	Mixed with mother's milk this is used for relieving stomach ache in babies
Nalla tadi			Used to treat asthma and anaemia
Sarpa gandi	*Rauvolfia serpentina*		Used to treat fever
Bodasarum	*Sphaeranthus indius*	*Mundi,* *Gundi*	Paste made from leaves used to treat cold by applying it on the forehead. Inhaling hekps clear relieve cold. Juice mixed with milk and sugar taken in the morning and evening helps cure diarrhoea
Maasupatri	*Teramnus labialis*	*Mashoni*	10 ml of the juice of the leaf taken thrice daily helps treat malaria. Dried leaves are burnt to keep mosquitoes away. 10 drops leaf juice taken twice daily for 3 days helps cure cough among children

Agricultural practices

Podu cultivation

Shifting cultivation, locally called as *podu* cultivation was followed traditionally as a main cropping system by most of the hill tribes in Andhra Pradesh. The shifting cultivation was done by clearing the forest slopes of stones, bushes and big trees and then burning the fallen leaves and plant material. In the original sustainable practice the big trees were not rooted out completely but were half cut so that the land surrounding it was available for 3–4 years for cultivation. The land was prepared methodically and contour bunding was done with the help of stones and sticks on hill slopes. The mixed cropping system inclusive of short duration paddy (*metadhanyam*), millets, *uluvalu* (gram), many varieties of *chikudu* (beans*), bobbaralu, kondakandulu,* etc., was generally undertaken in *podu* cultivation. No chemical fertilizers were used these crops. After 3–4 years the land was left fallow for rejuvenation.

A traditional way of treating seeds before sowing was mentioned by some participans. The seeds are soaked in water for some time, dried in the hot sun and then sown in the field.

The various agricultural tools like *paara* (spade), *gunapam, katthi* (knife), *goddali* (axe), *kodavali* (sickle), etc., were displayed by the team.

Irrigation and *podu* cultivation

The hill farming in this area is an excellent example of soil and water conservation techniques. A clay model of a hill was exhibited in order to demonstrate the irrigation technique used in *podu* cultivation. *Podu* farming or shifting cultivation is a conventional rainfed practice of farming. The water flowing from the hilltop through streams is very efficiently circulated amongst the fields from the top to the bottom of the hill. For farming on the hill slopes neat contour bunding is done. The bunds are secured with the help of stones and sticks. The crops cultivated are also selected according to their water requirement. The less water requiring crops like *adasulu* (niger seeds), pulses, *metadhanyam* (short duration less water requiring variety of paddy), etc., are grown on the upper hill slopes, while the crops with higher water requirement are grown at bottom of the hill (eg. paddy, vegetables etc.).

Traditionally grown crops in *adivasi* areas

Andhra Pradesh

The extensive display of biodiversity rich traditional agriculture was showcased by the teams of students. The specimens of seeds were neatly exhibited and properly labelled. Following is the brief description of the crop varieties displayed.

Local name and Telugu name	*English*	*Hindi name*	*Season*	*Uses/ Description*
Vadrulu or *Vari*	Paddy	*Dhan*	Sown in June/July harvested in November/December. If water is available second crop from January to April/May	Varieties grown: *Metadhanyam* (grown in *podu* cultivation), *chinnadhanyam, saandhanyam, chippidhanyam,*

Local name and Telugu name	*English*	*Hindi name*	*Season*	*Uses/ Description*
				peddadhanyam, budamalu, yerradhanyam, mudimadhanyam
Cholu	Finger millet	*Ragi*	Sown in August and harvested in October. If water is available sown in October and harvested in December/January.	Consumed in the form of *ambali* (a drink) Varieties grown: *Chinna cholu* and *pedda cholu* Grown in *podu* and also in dryland (*garuvu*)
Sama	Little millet	*Sawan*	Sown in June/July. Harvested in September/October. If water is available sown in October and harvested in December/January.	Cooked like rice. Varieties grown: *Mai samalu* and *pedda samalu* Grown in *podu* and also in dryland (*garuvu*)
Korrabiyam	Foxtail millet	*Kangani*	Sown in June/July. Harvested in September/October. If water is available sown in October and harvested in December/January	Grown as mixed crop with *ragi*, *sama* and *jonna*. Varieties grown: *Korralu* and *nalla korralu*
Jonna	Sorghum	*Jowar*	Sown in June/July. Harvested in September/October. If water is available sown in October and harvested in December/January	Used for eating in the form of popped seeds Varieties grown: *Kaijonna, pacchajonna, telljonna* Grown in *podu* cultivation
Gantelu	Spiked	*Bajara*	Transplanted in June.	Cooked like rice.

Local name and Telugu name	*English*	*Hindi name*	*Season*	*Uses/ Description*
	millet		Harvested in August	Varieties grown: *Chinna* and *pedda*
Mokkajonna	Corn	*Makai*	Sowing in June Harvested in August/ September	Only used for fresh corn cob or grown for seed purpose.
Chikudu	Beans		Three crops taken in a year—June, August and December/January	Fresh pods used for curries while dried seeds used for *dal*.
Bobbaralu			Sown in July/August. Harvested in November/December	Used for curries and *dal* Varieties grown: *Chinna bobbaralu, pedda bobbaralu, timmerelu* (very small)
Kontimali	Rajma	*Rajma*	Sown in September/October. Harvested in November/December.	Varieties grown: *Tella rajma, yerra rajma, nalla rajma*
Vuluvalu	Horse gram	*Kulthi*	Sown in June/July. Harvested in November/December. Sown in August/September. Harvested in December/January.	Grown as intercrop with *ragi*. Eaten as a snack after frying. Also used for making *ganji* or porridge Varieties grown: *Nalla vuluvalu,tella vuluvalu, gurram vuluvalu*
Kondakandulu	Red gram	*Arhar/Tur*	Sown in June/July and harvested in December/January.	Used for *dals* and curries.
Kommu senagalu	Chickpea /Bengal	*Chana*	November	Used in snacks

Local name and Telugu name	*English*	*Hindi name*	*Season*	*Uses/ Description*
	gram			
Minumulu	Black gram	*Urad*	August to December	Used for making *idlis*
Batani	Peas	*Mutar*	October to January.	Both *pachhi* (fresh) and dry used.
Soya chikudu	Soyabean	*Soyabean*	November to February	Used for curries, sold as dry grains
Poddi tirugulu puvvulu	Sunflower	*Surajmukhi*		Used as oil seed
Aavulu	Mustard	*Rai*	Sown in June/July	Used for tempering curries and *dals*.
Veru senega	Groundnut	*Moongphali*	Sown in June/July harvested in Ocober	For oil and sweets and chutneys
Kothmira	Coriander	*Dhaniya*		Used in preparations like pickles and curries
Jeealkarra	Cumin	*Jeera*		Used as a spice
Pasupu	Turmeric	*Haldi*	January/May	Used as a spice
Konda allam	Ginger	*Adrak*	January/May	Used as a spice
Miripakayalu	Chiilli	*Mirchi*		Used as spice, both types grown Endu mirchi (Red chilli) and Pachcha mirchi (green chilli)
Gasagasalu	Poppy seeds	*Khus khus*		Used as a spice
Miriyaly	Pepper	*Kali mirch*		Used as a spice
Bhendakaya	Ladies finger	*Bhindi*	November to February	Used for making curries
Pedda chikudu	Beans		November to February	Used for making curries

Local name and Telugu name	*English*	*Hindi name*	*Season*	*Uses/ Description*
Goru chikudu	Beans		November to February	Used for cattle
Nalla beans	Beans		November to February	Used for making curries
Jottalu	Double beans		November to February	Varieties grown: *Tella jotta, yerra jotta, kabarajotta*
Chamadumpa	Colocasia	*Arabi*		Used for making curries
Chilikada or *tiyya dumpa*	Sweet potato	*Shakar kand*	Planted in November/December. Harvested in March	Used for making curries
Chedadumpa	Type of yam		Planted in November/December. Harvested in March	Used for making curries
Kafi pikalu	Coffee seeds	*Coffee*		

Along with the crop varieties an array of conventional agricultural implements like *naagli* (wooden plough), *patte balle* (wooden leveler), *rokali* (a rod conventionally used for pounding paddy, sama, etc.), *kodavali* (sickle), *visururai* (a traditional hand operated *dal* mill), *pachchi goddali* (a tool devised for stitching *bidis* or local cigarettes) were also displayed.

Orissa

Crops grown include *jonna* (sorghum), *kandulu* (red gram), *adusulu* (niger seeds), *channa* (Bengal gram), *suvva*, pulses, *chikkudu* (beans), jackfruit, tamarind, *pasupu* (turmeric), gooseberry, *kaagu* (Pongamia), *adda pikalu* (*Bauhinia* sp.) and *tumika pandu* (fruit of *Diospyros* sp.).

Gujarat

Crops include paddy, *ragi* (finger millet), white and red *sama* (little millet), *Kulthi* (horse gram), *urad* (black gram), *chavli* (cow pea), *kharsavi* (for oil), *tur* (red gram), etc.

They also do farming on hills.

Maharashtra

Government Ashram school, Rohad, Maharashtra (district Dhule) group had displayed specimens of various local crops in their area

Name of the crop	*Local name*	*Details*
Paddy	*Bhat*	Varieties grown: *Davadya*—More water required, high yielding. *Gudya bhat*—Short, less water requirement,high yielding *Kollim*—Very tasty variety *Kusha33, Bhatadya*
Maize	*Maka*	Requires less water; Used for bread, oil
Finger millet	*Nachani* or *Nagali*	Requires less water; light soil
Common millet	*Varai*	Displayed three local varieties; less water required; alternative to cereals during fasting
Black gram	*Udid*	Intercropped with any other crop
Cow pea	*Chavali*	Requires less water
Bengal gram	*Chana*	Requires less water
Horse gram	*Kulith*	Requires less water; light soil
Pearl millet	*Bajra*	Requires less water
Pea	*Vatana*	Requires less water
Sorghum	*Jwary*	Crop can be taken biennially
Soyabean	*Var Sulya*	Intercropped with any other crop.
Red gram	*Tur*	Intercropped with any other crop; requires less water
Amaranthus	*Rajgira*	Requires less water; alternative to cereals during fasting

The crop calendar

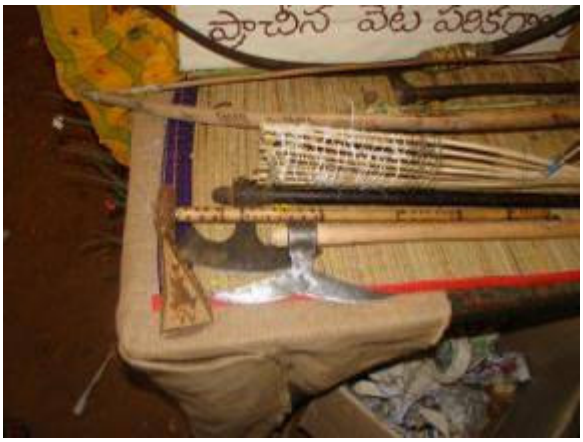
A circular *rangoli* depicting *Kaal chakra* or crop calendar was displayed at the stall presented by Balamitra Model School. All the traditional festivals falling in each month with the crops available during that time were neatly stated in the calender.

English month	***Telugu month***	***Festivals celebrated***	***Crops available***
January	*Pushyam*	*Pushaporab (Sankranthi / Pongal), puli pandaga* (tiger festival), *varalu pandaga, pachchakandulu pandaga*	*Vari* (paddy), *chholu* (*ragi*/finger millet), *kondakandulu* (wild red gram), *pasupu* (turmeric), *gantalu* (*Bajra*), *babbaralu, pesarlu* (green gram), *chilkkulu* (beans), vegetables, *jonna* (*Jowar/sorghum*), *karrapindalam* (tapioca), *allam* (ginger)
February	*Magham*	*Vitthanalu pandaga* (seed festival), *puvulu pandaga* (festival of flowers), *toku pandaga, solapur pandaga, Nandi pandaga* or *pasavulu pandaga* (festival for animals)	*Nellajeedi* (marking nut), *chipurulu* (broom grass), *poppudinusulu* (pulses), *usurikaya* (gooseberry), *puvulu* (flowers)
March	*Phalgunam*	*Nandi pandaga, kottaamavsya* (*Ugadi* or Telugu new year), *anapu pandaga, maamidikottala* (new mango festival), *phalun pandaga, poganporab, olikalachadam*	*Vippimogga* (*mahua*), *maamidikayalu* (raw mangoes), *chintapandu* (tamarind), *nellajedi* (marking nut), *chipurulu* (broom grass), *chilakadumpa* (sweet potato)
April	*Chaitram*	*Ikkala pandaga* or *viting pandaga* or *chayaporab, ujjammadevat pandaga, perantalla sambarallu,* *vippa podu vyavasayam prarambham* (beginning of the *mahua* podu farming)	*Maamidi* (mangoes), *panasa* (jackfruit), *tiyyadupa* (sweet potato), *korralu* (foxtail millet), *judumalu* , *jeedi* (cashew)
May	*Vaisakham*	*Modakondamma pandaga* (Festival of mother goddess), *vitthanalu pandaga* (seed	*Vari* (paddy), *panasa* (jackfruit), *jeedi* (cashew), *velluli* (garlic), *allam*

		festival), *vaisakha pandaga* *Tolakari prarambham* (with first showers sowing activity starts)	(ginger), *pasupu* (turmeric), *maamipandu* (mangoes)
June	*Jyestham*	*Tenakapandaga* (mango stone festival), *moolapandaga, podulo vittanalu jalltta* (seed sowing done in *podu* cultivation)	*Anasa* or *nelapanasa* (pineapple), *nimma* (lemon), *panasa* (jackfruit)
July	*Ashadam*	*Mokkala pandaga* (sapling festival), *ashad pandaga (gramdevata pandaga)*	*Seethaphalam* (custard apple), *anasa* (pineapple)
August	*Sravanam*	*Omkar pandaga, korrakottapandaga, nagli pandaga* (festival of plough), *varintalu* (transplanting of paddy seedlings in main field)	*Mokkajonna* (corn), *korralu* (foxtail millet)
September	*Bhadrapadam*	*Korrakottapandaga*	*Korralu* (foxtail millet), *ootalu* (millet), *chholu* (*ragi* or finger millet), *metadhanyam* (a short duration less water requiring type of paddy), *ramphalam* (*Annona* sp.) , *mokkajonna* (corn)
October	*Aswayujam*	*Dussera, diyal (Deepavali), nandamma devata pandaga* (mother goddess festival), *kundemkottala pandaga, Dosaporab, Bali pandaga*	*Samalu* (little millet), *korralu* (foxtail millet), *jonnalu* (sorghum or *jowar*), *verusenega* (ground nut), *chholu* (*ragi*)
November	*Kartikam*	*Samakotta pandaga, sankudevunipandaga*	*Jonalu* (sorghum or *jowar*), *gantalu* (bajra), *banti puvulu* (marigold), *timmerulu* , *samalu* (little millet), *kandi* (red gram)
December	*Margasiram*	*Gangalamma pandaga* (water festival), *chukkala pandaga, (Aagampandaga), kandi pandaga* (red gram festival)	*Vari* (paddy), *chholu* (*ragi*), *allam* (ginger), *minimulu* (black gram), *nuvvulu* (seasame), *vuluvalu* (horse gram), *rajma*, *kodakandulu* (wild red gram), *chikkulu* (beans), *korralu* (foxtail millet), tomato.

Hunting practices

Hunting equipments



Hunting is an important aspect of an *adivasi*'s life. The participants presented various hunting tools and equipments used by them. These included *katthi,* a knife used for cutting trees and meat; *surakatthi,* a knife used for killing animals; *baanam villu* or *intibadda* or *gaalisadunu* (bow and arrow) used for hunting wild boar and birds; *goddali,* an axe used for cutting firewood and also hunting animals; *parchi goddali* (axe), *parasu or gandra goddali* (a light weight axe), *gagadu katthi* (long knife), *ballem* (spear), and *tupaki* or gun used for shooting animals. *Thuppi,* a tool made by tying bamboo sticks together for killing rats, iron wire, *kondakundakam* (a net trap for animals), *pasi* (*adappa*) were displayed. To hunt wild boar, goat and deer use of net and spear or bow and arrow or light weight axe is used. The iron wire is used for trapping different animals like boar, rabbit, deer, wild cat, etc., while the net can be used for trapping wild boar as well as for fishing.

Badita or *duddikarra* (a long, thick wooden stick) carried during hunting helps them in hitting the animals.

For catching birds different bird traps are made. One such bird trap, an example of simple mechanical apparatus made from locally available material was presented. It is hidden on the tree with some grains in it. When the bird comes for the grains the door of the trap gets shut trapping the bird. The sling shot and the double string bow is also used for killing birds. *Valla,* a special trap made by curved bamboo sticks woven together by a thread net to catch *pooridi pittalu* (group of small birds), was another set of tools displayed. A few indigenously prepared traps like *kujjelu* and *ethilu* used for hunting animals, ducks and other birds, and *uppaadi* for hunting ducks were also on display.

Fish is an important diet in *adivasi* life. The *gallem* or fishing rod, *chapalu pattevela*, a fishing net, is used for fishing. *Thirri* (a basket made of bamboo) is used for catching fish by the *Koya* community residing near Godavari.

An elaborate exhibition of the hunting tools and traps was presented by Kamayyapeta, Poolabanda, Eppaguda and Killoguda village participants. It was mentioned that maximum hunting activity is done in the months of April and May. This could be because it is a slack farming season and they depend on the supplementary diet like meat and forest produce.

Oil seeds and oil extraction

Like millets and pulses the local diet is also rich in variety of oils used. *Adasulu* (niger), *nuvvulu* (sesame), *kagu* (pongamia) and *aamudam* (castor) are some of the main oil seeds used for oil extraction.

Oil extraction methods

The methods used for extracting oil are very peculiar. The oil extraction unit, a fine example of simple mechanical device, made up with the help of wood press and *tati buttalu* (small baskets made from palm fibre) was exhibited by the Poolabandha team. The crushed seeds

are boiled in mud pots. While boiling the pot is covered with a specially woven lid from *adda* leaves. The boiled and strained content is then kept in *tati buttalu* (palm fibre basket) and pressed in two wood logs to yield oil which is collected in a small mud container.

Traditional method of extracting amudam nune or castor oil

In olden days a unique method was used for extracting oil from castor seeds. The seeds after harvesting were washed with water. After drying they were roasted and then ground with a stone grinder. The powder is then mixed with water and kept for boiling. The layer of oil accumulated on the top was collected dexterously with the help of hen or eagle feather from time to time. The extracted oil was stored either in a glass bottle or a mud container.

This oil is mainly used for lighting *diyas* for *pooja* (worship). It also has medicinal properties. During fever it is applied as head massage and is used in treating digestive disorders. Besides this, in this area the castor oil is utilised in traditional cuisine which is rarely observed.

Traditional method of extracting kagu nune or pongamia oil

The *kagu* or pongamia fruits are collected from the trees and are beaten by sticks to extract seeds. The seeds after sun drying for 2–3 days are ground with the help of a stone grinder and sieved to obtain a fine powder. The powder is then spread over a bamboo or date leaf mat, sprinkled with water and gently mixed. This mixture is kept in *adda* leaf bowls and steamed. A small palm fibre basket or cloth is taken and the steamed content is collected in it. A small piece of jaggery is kept below the basket. The oil is then pressed out by pressing with a heavy stone.

The pongamia oil is well known for its insect repellent quality. While going in the forest the oil is applied over the skin for protection against mosquitoes and other insects. It is highly effective against head lice infestation and its external application on stomach is said to treat stomach ache.

Traditional food

Adivasimitra team from Poolabanda made a presentation on traditional food. The traditional *adivasi* diet is inclusive of many cultivated varieties of grains, fruits and vegetables as well as it is well supported by the collected food from forest like roots and tubers, wild fruits and pods, leaves, flowers, honey, etc. The variety in *adivasi* diet shows the richness of biodiversity that contributes to the food security. The participants from Poolabanda had displayed many food items and had also exhibited various traditional cooking vessels, mud stove and oil extraction units.

Cooking vessels

Traditionally only mud pots and mud stoves were used for cooking and storing the food. For storing the food the mud pots were hung above the ground with the support of sticks using wooden fibre/thread.

Variety of food used in traditional cooking

Apart from rice (*Oryza sativa*) the traditional cuisine includes lot of minor millets like *sama* (little millet, *Panicum milliare*), *ragi/cholu* (*Eleusine coracana*), *korra* (foxtail millet, *Setaria italica*), *jonna* (*jowar*, *Sorghum bicolor*) etc. Raw jackfruit (*Artocarpus heterophyllus*) and pumpkin (*Cucurbita* spp.) are common vegetables in local food. It was mentioned that along with the pumpkin fruit the flower and leaves of pumpkin are used for making curries. It is locally believed that the pumpkin leaves are beneficial for the eyesight.

Amchedi puvvulu, a wild flower and *mandikurra*, a wild leafy vegetable which are only seasonally available (February–March) are collected from the forest for preparing special traditional recipes. *Mandikurra* is traditionally used as a remedy against germs.

Many types of roots and tubers also form an important part of their traditional diet. Specimens of *dumpa* (potato), *tiyya dumpa* (sweet potato), *kandadumpa*, *vaderudandem*, carrot, *karradumpa* (tapioca), *kummulu* (a wild tuber) and *vedurudumpa* were displayed by the team.

Various seeds and pulses like *kondapendalem, tamatamalu, kondulu, yerrachikulu, kondakundulu, timmerulu, tellauluvalu, babbaralu, gumadipikalu* (pumpkin seeds), *nallauluvalu* and *adda pikalu* (*bauhinia* seeds) enrich the diet in taste and nutritive value. The *adda pikalu* (*bauhinia* seeds) are believed to be highly nutritious and have a special status in local food and culture.

Honey collected from tree holes mixed with rice is a staple diet of the *Koya* community. *Saddimotta* or *saddi annam* is a breakfast dish made from the previous day's rice and *ganji* (rice soup) which is eaten with onions and green chillies. This is considered very nutritious and cooling during summer months as they work in the fields. For *Koya* community, fish is an integral part of their diet thanks to the proximity to the Godavari river.

Forest produce

Along with agricultural produce the various items collected from the forest form an important part of *adivasi* food and economy. Sanjeevani team's exhibition had showcased many such produce collected from the forest. Other teams of Andhra Pradesh also commented on the collection and use of the various items collected from the wild.

They had displayed a few medicinal plants like *vasadumpa* which is used as protection from spirits, *ronbelli* used as a remedy against toothache and *karakkaya* which is used as medicine for cold and cough.

Amongst the food items collected from the forest, many wild tubers like *nagalidumpa, pindidumpa*, *eethadumpa, kondadumpa, thegadumpa, batridumpa, tiyyasaridumpa, chedudumpa, taragayi (vaimudumpalu), nilludumaplu* and *modugadumpalu* which are used either for making curries or in other preparations were exhibited.

A platter of fruits collected from forest had *panasa* (jackfruit), *boppai* (papaya), *usuri* (gooseberry), *sitaphalam* (custard apple) and *ramaphalam* (*Annona* sp.) which are relished in raw or other forms. Some wild vegetables like *rassagummadi* (wild pumpkin) used for making curries and *tellagummadi* (a variety of pumpkin) used for preparing *pakodi* like

snacks, leafy vegetables like *maandikura, gummidi aakulu, bommatentemkoora, mullukkoora* and *Gaddasaarikkoora* were also on display. A special food item presented was an edible worm called *eethapurugu/eethabiding* which is found inside the roots of tender date palms.

Other forest produce like *kagu pikalu* (pongamia seeds used for oil), *kunkudukaya* (soapnut), *chintapandu* (tamarind), *kondakarivepaaku*(curry leaves used as spice), *pippallu* (roots used), *cheepuru* (wild brooms), *nalla jeedi* (marking nut), *poduchakka, naramamiditokka, bathri, indiga pikalu, guluvinda, kanchedipoovvu*, *dhoopam* (used in worship), *chamdur (sindhur), sikaya* (*shikakai* used for bathing and washing clothes), *japra* (seeds used as natural dye) etc. Besides, *dippa* a water mug made from wood, and *pooda,* a seed storage basket, which comes in handy in their day to day work were also presented in the exhibition.

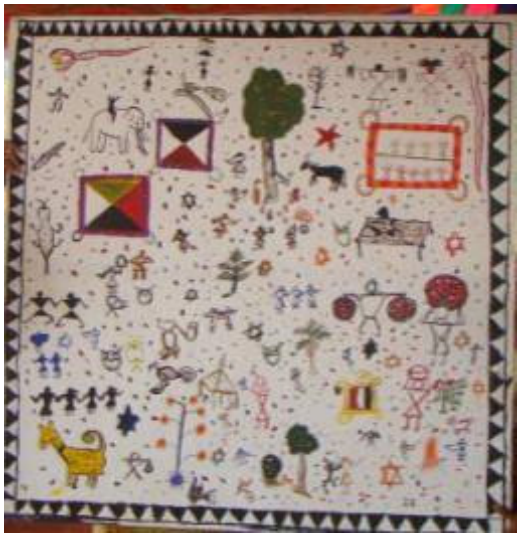
Adda is a wild climber (*Bahunia* spp.) which is of considerable importance in an *adivasi*'s life in this area. The seeds, *adda pikalu,* are considered highly nutritious and are used in special preparations. Its large sized bi-lobed leaves are used for making various items like plates, bowls, glasses, *gidugu* (an umbrella or hat used for protection against rains), a basket particularly used as a cover or a lid while preparing a steamed snack called *ragi pittu* etc which were displayed in the exhibition. The *adda* vine being strong is used in house building. It is also used for taking measurements at the time of house construction.

Many items made from wild gourds or *dhoku* were exhibited. The *dhokulu* or gourds are consumed when they are raw and after drying are put to many uses. The peculiar shape of *dhoku* allows it to be used for many things. *Dhoku* bottles made with bigger size *dhokulus* are used for storing oil and other liquids. *Dhoku* spoons are made by carving a hole on one side of small size *dhokulus* which are used for stirring and serving

Traditional art

The *Savara adivasis* from Srikakulam are known for their *Savara* art. The display of *Savara* art, and the traditions and rituals scrupulously followed by the *Savara* people was the main content of their presentation. The traditional musical instruments, hunting equipments, a model of a temple and *Savara* script were also exhibited by them.

Savara art



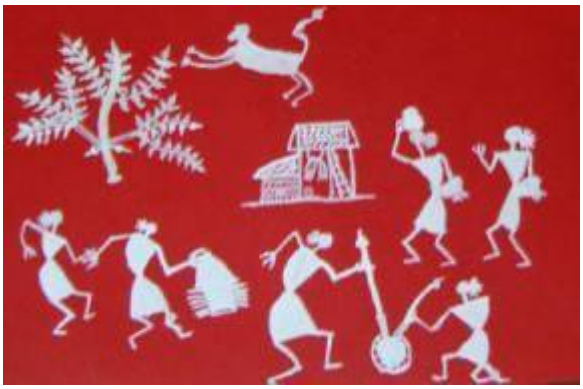
The *Savara* art is not just a painting but it is a display of various activities and festivals to be performed during the year and it acts as the traditional calendar. It has special significance in their lives. The *Savara* painting is done on the walls of every household of the village at the beginning of a new year (*kottha amavasya* or the new moon of *chaitra masam*). The detailed description of how the *Savara* painting is made and its significance in their life was stated by the team. The village members meet the local priest a few days before the *kottha amavasya t*o find out about the *muhurtam* or auspicious time for the *kottha amavasya* or *Ugadi* festival. A goat or a chicken is offered to the priest so that he tells the exact day for starting the painting. The person who takes up the onus of painting has to be on a fast till the painting is completed. He can finish the painting either in one day or else only on odd number of days (day three, day five, etc). During all these days of the painting the fasting continues till he completes the whole calendar.

The painting starts with the sun and a snake depicting *surya grahanam* or the solar eclipse. The beginning of the painting with a picture of the sun signifies the importance of the sun in the existence of human life. Along with the sun all the other things in nature are worshipped and are drawn within the limitations of the square motif. *Savara* art follows geometrical patterns to depict various characters, events and natural elements. Triangles, squares and circles are the main emblems that represent human forms, trees, land and elements.

According to *adivasi* tradition many festivals are celebrated throughout the year. All the crops, fruits and vegetables are first offered to the Gods before partaking it for daily consumption. This is a celebration and it happens seasonally, sometimes monthly or even weekly. It is believed that if they forsake rituals further harvests will not be good. The year starts with *maamidipandaga* (mango festival) celebrated before the first mango fruit is consumed. This festival coincides with the *Ugadi* festival of AP. A myth about losing ones eyesight on failure of performing this ritual is strong amongst the local people. The other festivals follow as the year passes. All these festivals are depicted on the wall in pictorial form. If some special festivals fall during that year, these too are added to the painting. Such festivals could be *puli pandaga* (tiger festival, a festival celebrated to overcome ailments), *chukkala pandaga* (a ritual performed before going for second marriage after death of the first spouse), *aagam pandaga* (a special festival celebrated once in 12 years for offering respect to the departed souls which signifies abundance), etc.

Besides this the regular activities in *adivasi* life like hunting, agriculture, *dhimsa* (a local folkdance), etc., are also drawn. Hence the complete *Savara* painting serves as a pictorial calendar of the year.

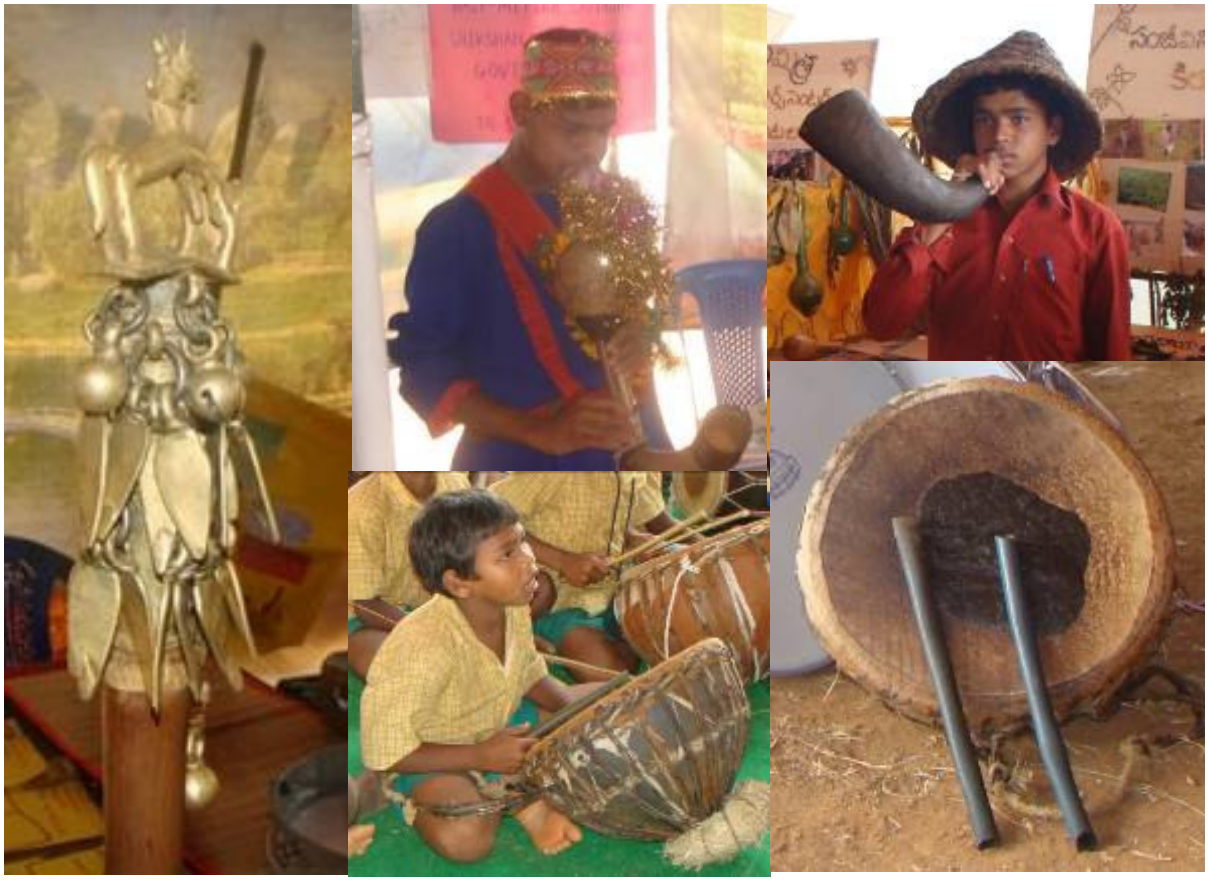
Warli painting



Warli paintings of Maharashtra have similar contours and patterns as *Savara* art. This form of art is specialised by the *Warli adivasi*'s residing in different districts of Maharashtra. Every community has its own mode of expression to depict emotions and wisdom that they desire to pass on to the next generation. One such unique mode of expression is *Warli* art. Each generation of *Warli* artist women known as '*suhasini*' are trained by their ancestors till they master the art and accept responsibility to keep the age old art alive. These *adivasi* art forms are on the verge of becoming extinct and with it, age old wisdom, craft and cultural heritage will also be lost forever. *Warli* art also follows geometric patterns—circles representing sun and moon, trees, mountains and human forms represented by triangles and squares depicting land or sacred places.

Besides this, the Pooladanda stall had displayed a traditional puppet. This is a special puppet used in *ittukala panduga* (a festival celebrated before the sowing of the new crop). The puppet is mounted on bamboo and moves with the movement of the bamboo. The puppet show is performed from house to house and money or grains are collected as a tradition.

Traditional musical instruments



The *Savara* team exhibited two of its traditional musical instruments. A flute and a string instrument called *veena* made of locally available material. The flute is made from bamboo while the *veena* is made by attaching a small mud cup to a stick on which a wire or a string is stretched. A small bow is used for playing this instrument.

The *Dongria Kondh adivasi*'s from Niyamgiri use a stringed instrument called *sarangi.* The *sarangi* has an open cup made out of gourd attached to a bow of wood and tied with a string. It is played by strumming the string with one hand while the other hand is used to rhythmically drum on the gourd cup.

The *thudumu, kiridi* and *dappu* are native to the *adivasi* communities of AP. The *thudumu* is a made from a large mud pot, the mouth of which is tightly bound with a piece of hide. A *kiridi* is a smaller version of the same.

Eela, is a flute/whistle made from palm fronds, which is blown during marriages. The sound of this is considered auspicious. This was presented by KSD Site School students of Khammam. The drum (*dholak*) made out of tamarind wood covered with animal hide is also a percussion instrument seen in these areas.

In Maharashtra, the *ghodaychi kaathi* is made of a rounded wooden stick with a brass horse mounted at the top and small bells tied around it. This piece of instrument heads the orchestra at the time of any festival or *jathra. Pawri* is another traditional wind musical instrument made from dried gourd with a rubber mouthpiece to blow. The gourd has a flute attached to it which gives a unique conch like sound when blown. *Kirchi*, another speciality of the *adivasis* in Maharashtra is a percussion instrument.

Efficient household water use and use of non-polluting soap for washing

The water for household activities is also used very efficiently. The water used for washing the rice or vegetables is poured in a big clay or rock basin. This water is given to the cattle for drinking as it is considered to be healthy for the cattle.

Previously when the use of soaps had not reached these remote hill areas, conventional or natural washing material was used. Most of them being natural, they are non-water polluting and also healthy.

Activity	*Natural material and methods used*
Bathing	Scrubbing with porous stone, use of *shikakai* and soapnut.
Hair wash	Use of *shikakai,* fine grey clay or ash made from the inner sheath of banana stem. Use of *mangachakka*, bark of common emetic nut (*Randai spinosa*) tree. The bark is ground to a fine paste, mixed with water and this is applied to the hair. This makes the hair soft.
Washing clothes	The cotton clothes are boiled in water with ash, then beaten on a rock and washed with fresh water.

Recipes of Food Items Prepared at the Congress

The cooking demonstration by the students showcased many traditional *adivasi* recipes of food items. We have compiled a few of the recipes below.

1. *Chollu ambali* (*ragi* porridge)

Ingredients

Ragi powder, water, salt

Method of preparation

Grind *ragi* seeds and sieve to get a fine powder. Mix the powder in a mud pot and store overnight. In the morning, add hot water to this and boil over stove stirring constantly until a paste is formed.

Another method is to first mix *ragi* powder thinly with water at room temperature. Boil water and salt. To this add the *ragi* mix. Stir continuously to avoid curdling. Boil for about 10 mins and serve.

2. *Chollu pittu*

Ingredients

Jaggery, salt, *ragi* powder, water

Method of preparation

Make a dough of *ragi* powder, jaggery and salt as is done for making *chapathis*. Boil water in a pot covered with a cloth. Make small balls and spread the dough over the cloth. Cover and steam

Another method is to mix *ragi* powder and jaggery without water. Fill the mix into apot. Cover tightly with a cloth and steam by keeping it upside down on a pot of boiling water. It is ready to eat when one gets the cooked flavour.

3. *Chollu thoppa*

Ingredients

Ragi powder, jaggery, salt, water

Method of preparation

Boil water. To this add a pinch of salt as well as jaggery. Add the powder slowly, stirring all the time on slow fire to avoid curdling till it becomes thickened. This is ready for serving.

4. *Chollu kudumulu*

Ingredients

Ragi powder, jaggery, water, *adda* leaf

Method of preparation

Boil water in a wide vessel or mud pot. Cover pot with dry grass. Make a dough of ragi powder with jaggery and a pinch of salt. Divide the dough into small balls or any desired shape, fold in *adda* leaves and steam over boiling water.

This can be made with adding any pulses while mixing the dough. The pulses have to be soaked beforehand.

5. *Chollu attulu/rottilu*

Ingredients

Ragi, jaggery, salt, water

Method of preparation

Make a dough of *ragi* powder, jiggery, salt and water. Make small balls and spread them with hands on a flat surface as is done for *chapathis*. Roast either on a flat plate or an upside down mud pot.

For *Chollu attulu*, the dough should be made as for *dosa* and fried in oil.

6. *Jonna roti*

Jonna roti is made using the above method but only with salt.

7. *Sama beeyam java/payasam*

Ingredients

Sama grains-1/4 kg, jaggery-1/4 kg, water, salt, milk

Method of preparation

Boil *sama beeyam* in water. Add jaggery and a pinch of salt to the boiled *beeyam*. Remove from stove, add milk and mix. Do not add milk into the boiling mixture as it may curdle.

8. *Pulugam dhoda*/sweet *kichdi/pappu java*

Ingredients

Rice-1 glass, *Moong dal* (green gram)-1/2 glass, water-3 glasses, jaggery

Method of preparation

Boil rice and *moong dal* in water. Add jaggery to the boiled mixture and remove from stove when water dries up.

9. *Pulla kushur*

Ingredients

Tamarind, water, dry chillies, turmeric powder, salt, chilli powder

Method of preparation

Boil tamarind juice with water for 10 mins. Mix dry chillies, turmeric powder, salt and chilli powder. *Pulla kushur* is ready to eat.

10. *Lapsi*

Ingredients

Rice powder, jaggery, water, oil, *adda* leaf

Method of preparation

Mix rice powder and jaggery sprinkling very little water. Heat a mud pot with a little oil. Add the mixture and cook by covering the pot with an adda leaf cup, under slow fire, stirring in between. This is served hot with a spoon of oil.

11.*Sajja gataka*

Ingredients

Sajja ravva-1 glass, water-3 glasses, salt

Method of preparation

Boil water in a vessel. Mix *sajja ravva* with salt and a little water and add this to the boiling water. Cook till it becomes thickened.

(Nutritional value in 100 gm *sajja*: Carbohydrates: 70%, proteins: 10%, fatcontent: 4%, thyamine: 8%, calcium: 25mg, phosphorous: 222 mg, iron: 4 mg.)

12. *Boddikkoora pachadi*

Ingredients

Boddikkoora-1/2 kg, red chillies-100 gms, oil-100 gms, tamarind-100 gms, onions-2 (big) , *jeera*-2 tsp, corainader-2 tsp, garlic-1 bunch.

Method of preparation

Heat oil in thepan, add red chillies, onions, garlic, jeera, coriander and fry. Keep aside. Add the *boddikkoora* in the rest of the oil and fry. Grind the *masala* and the *boddikkoora* on the grinding stone.

This dish is said to improve eyesight.

(Nutritional content: Vitamin A, riboflavin, vitamin C, calcium-220 gms

13.*Jowar roti*

Ingredients

Jowar powder, salt, water

Method of preparation

Make a dough of jowar, salt and warm water. Make into egg sized balls and spread into *roti* form and roast over fire.

A few more traditional recipes

The Poolabanda team also shared a few recipes from their traditional cuisine.

14. *Panasakaya* (jackfruit) curry

Remove rind and gummy latex from a raw jackfruit. Cut into small pieces and boil in water. Add chilli powder, salt and tamarind for taste.Temper with a little oil.

15. *Samalu*

Sama is minor millet commonly known as small millet that is a healthy alternative to rice. *Sama* after harvesting is pound and winnowed with the help of a *chata* (a special bamboo basket for winnowing). The cleaned *sama* is then boiled in water till properly cooked.

16. *Amchedi puvulu* curry

Amchedi puvulu is a wild seasonal flower. Shallow fry flower in oil with chopped onion and green chilies. Add red gram (*kandi pappu*) and fry for some time. Add chilli powder and salt to taste. Boil mixture in water and allow to cook for a long time.

17. *Maandikurra* curry

Maandikurra is a wild leafy vegetable available during the months of February/March. Boil leaves in water and strain. Cook in a little oil with chopped onion and chillies. Add salt and chilli powder for taste.

18. *Kummulu* curry

Kummulu is a tuber collected from the forest. Remove skin, cut into pieces and boil in water. Strain water from the boiled pieces, mix with chilli powder and salt and and shallow fry in oil with chopped onion and chilli.

Addresses of Participants

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2	APTWR School,K.S.D.Site (Boys)	Khammam	*Koya*	9490957278	K.Ramarao T.Nageswara Rao	The Principal, APTWR.School (Boys), Palvancha *mandal*, Khammam district-507 115, AP
3	APTWR School, Badrachalam (Girls)	Khammam	*Koya*	9490957270	K.Ramasubrahmanyam M Joseph John C.Basavakumari Nagalaxmi	The Principal, APTWR School (Girls), Bhadrachalam, Khammam district-507 111, AP
4	APTWR School,Chinthuru (Boys)	Khammam	*Koya, Kondareddy*	9490957272	KBG. Tilak G.Harikrishna	The Principal, APTWR School (Boys), Chinthur, Khammam district-507 126
5	APTWR School Vissannapeta (Girls)	Kirshna	*Lambada*	9490957255	D.Samatha Joshi	The Principal, APTWR School (Girls), Visannapeta, Krishna district, AP
6	APTWR School Warangal English Medium (Boys)	Warangal	*Lambada* *Koya*	9490957296	Ch.Mary	The Principal, APTWR.School (English Medium Boys) Yakubpura, Mills Colony, Warangal district, AP

S.N	*Name*	*Place*	*Tribe*	*Phone*	*Principal /teacher*	*Email / address*
7	APTWR School Kuravi (Girls)	Warangal	*Koya.* *Lambada* *Erukula*	9490957294	D..Madhavilatha MdVaseema	The Principal, APTWURJ College (Girls) Kuravi, Warangal district, AP
8	APTWR School Maripeda (Boys)	Warangal	*Lambada*	9490957311	N.Lurdhaiah K.Upender	The Principal, APTWR School (Boys), Maripeda, Warangal district, AP
9	APTWR School K.R.Puram (Boys)	West.Godavari	*Kondareddy* *Koya*	9490957253	K.Prabhakara Rao	The Principal, APTWR School (Boys), Kotaramachandrapuram, Buttaigudem *mandal*, West Godavari district-534 311, AP
10	APTWR School Buttaigudem (Girls)	West Godavari	*Koya*	9490957249	K.Usha Kiran	The Principal, APTWR School (Girls), Busarajupalli, Buttaigudem, West Godavari district, AP
11	Velugu Association, Kothuru	Srikakulam	*Savara*	08946258841	Sanjeevarao	Kothuru *mandal,* Srikakulam district-532 455, AP
12	Adivsimitra, Poolabanda Field Resource Centre	Visakhapatnam	*Kammara* *Bhagata* *Kondadora* *Gadaba* *Nookadora*	9505170524	Manmadha Rao	Poolabanda village, Vantamamidi post, Paderu *mandal*, Visakhapatnam district, AP

S.N	*Name*	*Place*	*Tribe*	*Phone*	*Principal /teacher*	*Email / address*
13	Adivasimitra, Kamayyapeta Field Resource Centre	Visakhapatnam	*Kummara Nookadora*	9493417586	Manmadha Rao	Hukumpeta *mandal,* Visakhapatnam district-531 077, AP
14	Sanjeevini, Killoguda Field Resource Centre	Visakhapatnam	*Kondhu, Kutiya, Mali, Poorja*	9490991317	Devullu	Killoguda, Sagara post, Dumbriguda *mandal*, Visakhapatnam district-531 151, AP
15	CeFHA organisation	Visakhapatnam	*Mannedora, Kondadora*	9533106214	R.Ramalaxmi, G.Raju	Centre for Humanitarian Assistance Trust (CEfHA) Sainagar, Kotauratla *manadal*, Visakhapatrnam district, AP
16	JATTU Bhavasamakhya Sevashram	Vijayanagaram	*Jathapu,Savara Konda*	9440899365	G.Gowthami T.Tihili	Jattu Bhavasamakhya Sevasramam, Rayagada Road, Parvathipuram, Vijayanagaram district, AP
17	Adivasi Acadamy, Thejgarh	Gujarat	*Rathavi, Nayka*	02669290332	Ashok Chaudhari,Manishbhai, Rekhaben Chaudhari	Adivasi Acadamy Thejgadh (Bhasha), Vasanth Nivasi Shaala, Thejgarh, Chota-undhupur, Baroda, Gujarat
18	Kiroda Basini Kanyashram, Nari.Surakhya Samithi	Orissa	*Kuda*	9437728681	Bauri Bandhu Swain Mansi Malik Ausaya Jena Nirmala Sethi	Khirod Basini Kanyashram, Kotada PO, Chendipada block, Jarpada P.S, Angul district, Orissa

S.N	*Name*	*Place*	*Tribe*	*Phone*	*Principal /teacher*	*Email / address*
19	Odisha Adivasi Mancha	Orissa	*Dongria Kondh*	9437406825	Nabin Naiyak	Odisha Adivasi Mancha, U.P.School, Khambesi, Kuruli PO, Via Bisam, Cuttack, Rayagada district, Orissa.
20	Government Ashram School,Rohad (Shikshan Mitra, BAIF-MITTRA)	Maharastra	*Kokani*	9423012184	Rajasri.Tikhe Santhosh Pagare Manoj Nikam	Government Ashram School, Rohad, Sahri *taluk*, Dhule district, Maharashtra
21	Society of Grama Vikasa Saradhi	Visakhapatnam	*Gadaba, Mannedora*	9492826579	K.Prabhavathi, Ch.Satyavathi, E.Nageswar Rao	Grama Vikasa Saradhi, Kovilapalem, Tattabanda village, Ravikamatham *mandal,* Visakhapatnam district, AP
22	Kedi Residential School, Kaivalya Trust	Gujarat	*Kokani,Gamit Varli*	9428379774	Bhupinderbhai Chaudhari Saroj Chaudhari Mahendra Ganvit	Kedi Residential School Nagaria, Arch Nagaria, Dharampur *taluk*, Valsad district-396 050, Gujarat





Glossary

Adivasi: The term used to refer to the indigenous or tribal population of India (Sanskrit language *adi*=beginning; *vasi*=dweller).

Guniya: Medicine woman

Mandal: An administrative level in India below States and districts.

Panchayat: Literally means assembly (*yat*) of five (*panch*) wise and respected elders chosen and accepted by the village community. Traditionally, these assemblies settled disputes between individuals and villages.

Pandaga: Telugu word for festival

Dhimsa: A dance form of *adivasis* of AP

Kottha amavasi: New moon

Badinundi polambadiki: From the schools to agricultural fields (as schools)

Santa: Local market which happens once a week in the villages

Gurugadu: Village spiritual man

Moorthagadu: Village spiritual man

Muhurtham: Auspicious time

Pramida: Mud lamp used for lighting lamps

Punadilu: Foundation for house

Agneyam: Southeast corner (of a house)

Podu: Shifting cultivation

Rangoli: Colourful patterns drawn on the ground

Kaal chakra: Seasonal calendar

Chaitra: Telugu month which falls between March and April

Soorya grahanam: Solar eclipse

Ugadi: A Telugu festival. Literally means 'beginning of the era'. According to the Telugu calendar, the new year begins with the *ugadi* festival

Jathra: Festival

Bailpola: Cattle festival of Maharashtra

Itukkula pandaga: An *adivasi* festival which falls during the month of April in AP

Musical instruments

Thudumu: A percussion instrument made of a large mud pot covered with animal skin

Kiridi: A percussion instrument that is a smaller version of *thudumu*

Dappulu: A percussion instrument with animal skin tightly wound around a wooden circular frame

Ghodyachi kaathi: A wooden pole decorated with a horse and bells. This is used in the religious celebrations by *adivasis* of Maharashtra.

Kirchi: A piece of bamboo with serrations on it. This is played using a bamboo comb.

Pawri: A wind instrument made with a combination of dried gourd, bamboo (as in a flute) and bull horn.

Sarangi: A stringed instrument made from a dried gourd attached to a piece of bamboo and tied with a stretched string. This is played by strumming on the string with a thin bamboo.A *Dongria Kondh* musical instrument.

Lazim: A percussion instrument from Maharashtra

Note: The information collected for this document is primarily from discussions with teachers, students and participants of the Congress.We have tried to check for accuracy of the information to the extent possible. If, however there are any persisting errors, we would appreciate if you could write and provide us with the corrections. Please write to us at balamitranews@gmail.com.

Press Clippings

The woman who was Ba's teacher

B. Madhu Gopal

Dashriben taught Kasturba, who was unlettered, how to read and write at the Yerawada jail - Photo: C.V. Subrahmanyam

Unassuming: **Freedom fighter Dashriben, 93, a contemporary of Kasturba in Visakhapatnam on Tuesday.**

VISAKHAPATNAM: One word from Mahatma Gandhi was enough for this girl to give up her gold ornaments and free herself from the bondage of material possessions. A couple of years later she joined the freedom movement and remains a true Gandhian to this day.

Meet Dashriben, 93, a resident of Vedchhi in Surat district of Gujarat, who is here to attend the three-day National Adivasi Science and Traditional Knowledge Congress that concluded on Tuesday. A frail woman in a white cotton sari sans any ornaments, Dashriben is simplicity personified.

Admiration, pride

The admiration and pride were evident in her voice when she said in Hindi: "Gandhiji came to our house in 1924." At that time, she was only six years old. "I extended my arms to garland Gandhiji but couldn't reach him. He picked me up in his arms and saw the ornaments that I was wearing. Describing them as 'zanjeer' (chains), he asked me whether I would discard them and I took them off without any hesitation," she recalled.

Her son Ashok Choudhury who runs an Adivasi Bhasha Academy in Tejgarh in Baroda said: "She (Dashriben) joined the freedom movement in 1926 and also participated in the Dandi March in 1930." Dashrinben came in contact with Kasturba (Ba) in 1930, when she was studying at the Rashtriya Pathashala, started by the latter. In 1933, Dashri was sentenced to one year's imprisonment for participating in the agitation demanding closure of foreign textile shops.

Dashri and Kasturba were lodged at the Yerawada jail in Pune in 1933. Interestingly, Kasturba, who had started the Rashtriya Pathashala, didn't know how to read and write. Dashri taught her to read and write in jail. Mahatma Gandhi was surprised to see a letter from his wife. He promptly wrote to Dashriben congratulating her on being able to teach his wife.

"You have achieved what I couldn't myself," Gandhiji wrote, recalled Dashri. Six decades after India attained Independence, what is Dashri's impression of New India?

"The rich have become richer and the poor turned poorer," she said expressing regret at the sorry state of affairs. She is, however, proud that the nation had freed itself from British rule. "We sacrificed everything, now it's your (present generation) to launch another struggle to uphold that freedom," she added.

http://www.hindu.com/2010/02/24/stories/2010022454640400.htm

12 విశాఖ సిటీ 21/2/10 సూర్య

విలేకరుల సమావేశంలో మాట్లాడుతున్న భానుమతి

నేటి నుంచి

జాతీయ ఆదివాసీ బాలల శాస్త్రీయ విజ్ఞాన సభ

విశాఖపట్నం, మేజర్‌న్యూస్: గిరిజన, ఆదివాసీ బాలల కోసం అరుదైన కార్యక్రమంగా మూడు రోజుల పాటు శాస్త్రీయ, సంప్రదాయ విజ్ఞాన సభలను నిర్వహిస్తున్నట్లు సమతా స్వచ్ఛంద సంస్థ డైరెక్టర్ భానుమతి తెలియచేశారు. నగరంలోని విజెఎఫ్ ప్రెస్‌క్లబ్‌లో శనివారం ఏర్పాటుచేసిన విలేకరుల సమావేశంలో ఆమె మాట్లాడుతూ, అభివృద్ధికి దూరంగా ఉన్న ఆదివాసీలు, గిరిజనుల బాలలను చైతన్యపరచేందుకు ఈ కార్యక్రమాన్ని ఏర్పాటుచేశామని అన్నారు. ఈ కార్యక్రమానికి ముఖ్య అతిథులుగా మాజీ మేయర్ డివి సుబ్బారావు, గాంధీ సహచరి, గుజరాత్ రాష్ట్రానికి చెందిన స్వాతంత్ర్య సమరయోధురాలు దశరీబెన్, అదే విధంగా, గుజరాత్ రాష్ట్ర అదీవాసీ భాష అధికార సంఘం డైరెక్టర్ అశోక్‌చౌదరి హాజరవుతున్నారని చెప్పారు. సాగర్‌నగర్‌లోని బాలమిత్ర ఆదర్శ పాఠశాల ఆవరణలో జరిగే ఈ సభలకు గిరిజనుల సమస్యలపై పోరాటం చేసే వారితో పాటు, వివిధ రంగాల ప్రముఖులు, నిపుణులు హాజరై వారిని ఉత్తేజితులు చేస్తారని వివరించారు. అదే విధంగా, ఒరిస్సా, మహారాష్ట్ర, గుజరాత్, ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్‌ల నుంచి 40 ఆదివాసీ పాఠశాలల నుంచి 300 మంది వరకూ బాలబాలికలు ఇందులో పాల్గొంటారని, వారి ప్రిన్సిపాళ్లు, ప్రధానోపాధ్యాయులు, ఉపాధ్యాయులు కూడా హాజరవుతారని చెప్పారు. ఇపుడిపుడే గిరిజన విజ్ఞానాన్ని నేర్చుకుంటున్న ఈనాటి తరం గిరిజన బాలలు బయట ప్రపంచం పోకడలు గమనించడంలో సందిగ్ధంలో పడుతున్నారని, దీనివల్ల గిరిజన విజ్ఞానం తన ఉనికిని కోల్పోతోందని ఆమె చెప్పారు. అందువల్ల గిరిజన శాస్త్రీయ పరిజ్ఞానాన్ని పటిష్టం చేయడానికి గిరిజన విద్యార్థులను ప్రోత్సహించడం చాలా ముఖ్యమని అభిప్రాయపడ్డారు. కేవలం వారి తరతరాల విజ్ఞానానికే పరిమితం కాకుండా బయట ప్రపంచం పోకడలను అర్థం చేసుకుని దానిని కూడా సద్వినియోగపరచుకోవాలన్న సదుద్దేశ్యంతో ఈ సభలను నిర్వహిస్తున్నట్లుగా తెలియచేశారు. ఈ విలేఖరుల సమావేశంలో ప్రాజెక్టు కో-ఆర్డినేటర్ సుశీలభారత్ కమ్యూనిటీ రిసోర్సు డైరెక్టర్ కృష్ణబాబు, ధనలక్ష్మి, గీత పాల్గొన్నారు.

నేటి నుంచి ఆదివాసీ బాలల సంప్రదాయ విజ్ఞాన సభ

సాక్షి, 21/2/10

దాబాగార్డెన్స్, న్యూస్‌లైన్ : జాతీయ ఆదివాసీ బాలల శాస్త్రీయ, సంప్రదాయ విజ్ఞాన సభను ఈ నెల 21 నుంచి 23వ తేదీ వరకు నగరంలో ఘనంగా నిర్వహించనున్నట్టు సమత స్వచ్ఛంద సంస్థ డైరెక్టర్ కె.భానుమతి తెలిపారు. వీజేఎఫ్ ప్రెస్ క్లబ్‌లో శనివారం ఆమె విలేకరులతో మాట్లాడారు. సాగర్‌నగర్ బాలమిత్ర మోడల్ స్కూల్‌లో ఈ కార్యక్రమాన్ని నిర్వహిస్తున్నట్టు చెప్పారు. దేశంలో తొలిసారిగా గిరిజన బాల బాలికలతో ఈ విజ్ఞాన సభను నగరంలో నిర్వహిస్తున్నామన్నారు. విద్యార్థులకు గిరిజన సాంప్రదాయ, శాస్త్రీయ పద్ధతులను తెలియజేయాల్సిన అవసరం ఉందన్నారు. ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్, మహారాష్ట్ర, గుజరాత్, ఒరిస్సా తదితర రాష్ట్రాల్లోని 40 స్కూళ్ల నుంచి 300 మంది గిరిజన విద్యార్థులు, ఉపాధ్యాయులు, ప్రధానోపాధ్యాయులు పాల్గొంటారని చెప్పారు. ప్రారంభోత్సవానికి దశరీబేం(గుజరాత్)తో పాటు మాజీ మేయర్ డి.వి.సుబ్బారావు హాజరవుతారన్నారు. ఈ సమావేశంలో ప్రాజెక్ట్ కో-ఆర్డినేటర్ సుశీలా మదార్, విలేజీ స్కూల్ టీచర్ కృష్ణబాబు, బాలమిత్ర మోడల్ స్కూల్ టీచర్లు ధనలక్ష్మి, గీత పాల్గొన్నారు.

సాక్షి 22-2-10.

స్థానికం

ఆదివాసీ సంస్కృతి మహోన్నతం


జ్యోతి వెలిగించి సదస్సును ప్రారంభిస్తున్న స్వాతంత్ర్య సమరయోధురాలు ధవళీబా, సభలో ప్రసంగిస్తున్న డి.వి.సుబ్బారావు

- మాజీ మేయర్ డి.వి.సుబ్బారావు
- జాతీయ ఆదివాసీ బాలల విజ్ఞాన సభలు ప్రారంభం

[illegible]

మావేలే... మావేలే...

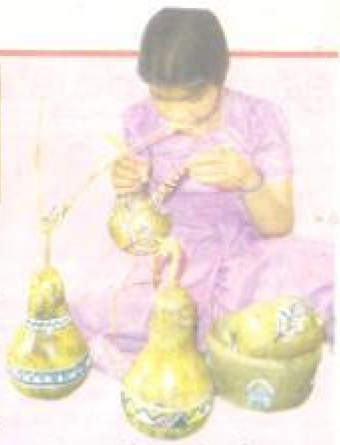
ఆదివాసీ బాలలు తయారు చేసిన జంతువుల నమూనాలు

విశాఖ బాలమిత్ర ఆదర్శ పాఠశాల విద్యార్థుల క్యాలెండర్

ఆదివాసీ విద్యార్థులు నిర్మించిన గిరిజన తెగల ఇల్లు

[illegible]

[illegible]



స్వహస్తాలతో బొమ్మలు వేస్తున్న గిరిజన బాలిక

Adivasi Congress to begin today

DC CORRESPONDENT

VISAKHAPATNAM

Feb. 20: A three-day National Adivasi Traditional Knowledge and Science Congress will begin here on Sunday. Over 360 children, teachers and headmasters will take part in the event.

Addressing newsmen, Samata Director, Ms K. Bhanumati, said, "The traditional knowledge possessed by tribals in various fields, such as astronomy, soil-conservation, agriculture, medicine, irrigation and various other fields will be show-cased. Our main objective is to expose mainstream children to this treasure trove of knowledge."

"We have various highly qualified and knowledgeable people from the various fields of science along with people from the tribal belt, in possession of traditional knowledge to supervise the event," she added.

Over 230 school children will participate in the event from various schools across the country — Gujarat, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh.

Former mayor D.V. Subba Rao, Dasri Behn, 95, Gandhian and freedom fighter and Ashok Choudhary, director of Adivasi Bhasha Academy, Gujarat, will inaugurate the event.

Ms Bhanumati further noted that Samata is running over 40 schools in Adivasi areas and that they employed local tribals to educate their brethren.

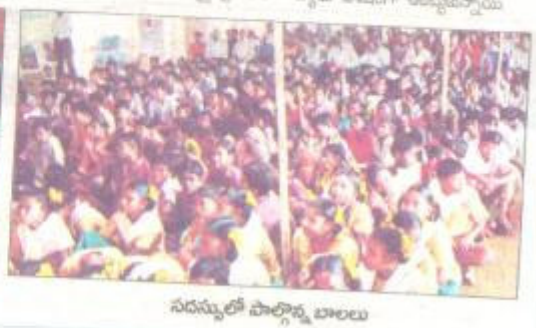
The Tata Social Welfare Trust and the AP Tribal Welfare Department will coordinate the event.

DC. 21/2/10

Eenadu - 22-2-2010

గిరిజన సంస్కృతి పరిరక్షించాలి

మాట్లాడుతున్న మాజీ మేయర్ డి.వి.సుబ్బారావు



సదస్సులో పాల్గొన్న బాలలు

ఆకట్టుకున్న ఆదివాసీ బాలల సైన్స్ మహాసభ

ఆకట్టుకున్న గిరిజన వస్తువులు

వస్తువులను ఆసక్తిగా తిలకిస్తున్న అబివేట్ స్కూల్ విద్యార్థులు

సాగర్‌నగర్, న్యూస్‌లైన్ :

సాగర్‌నగర్‌లో రెండు రోజులుగా నిర్వహిస్తున్న జాతీయ ఆదివాసీ బాలల శాస్త్రీయ సంప్రదాయ విజ్ఞాన సభలు నగరవాసులను ఆకట్టుకుంటున్నాయి. ఒరిస్సా, మహారాష్ట్ర, ఛత్తీస్‌గఢ్ రాష్ట్రాలకు చెందిన విద్యార్థులు వారి తెగలు, సంస్కృతీసంప్రదాయాలకు అనుగుణంగా తయారు చేసిన వస్తువులు అబ్బురపరుస్తున్నాయి.

ఈ వస్తువులను సోమవారం నగరానికి చెందిన పలు పాఠశాలల విద్యార్థులు, అధ్యాపకులు, పరిశోధకులు తిలకించారు. వ్యవసాయ పద్ధతులు, భూమి నీటి యాజమాన్య పద్ధతులు, జీవ వైవిధ్యం, గిరిజన సాంప్రదాయ వైద్యం, అటవీ వ్యవసాయ పద్ధతులు, వాతావరణ పరిజ్ఞానం అనే అంశాలపై 18 బృందాలుగా ఏర్పడి చర్చలు జరిపారు. అనంతరం చర్చించిన అంశాలను సభలో పూర్తిస్థాయిలో నివేదించారు. మధ్యాహ్నం నిర్వహించిన సభలో డాక్టర్ కొవ్వల హేమాద్రిస్ హౌస్ ఆఫ్ ట్రైబల్ మెడిసిన్ అండ్ హెర్బల్ రీసెర్చ్ డైరెక్టర్ డాక్టర్ వైజాల వేణుగోపాల్, ధాత్రి రీసోర్స్ సెంటర్ డైరెక్టర్ కె.భానుమతి, సమత ఎగ్జిక్యూటివ్ డైరెక్టర్ రెబ్బాప్రగడ రవి పాల్గొన్నారు. అంతరించిపోతున్న గిరిజన సంప్రదాయాలను పరిరక్షించాలని కోరారు. సాయంత్రం వివిధ రాష్ట్రాలకు చెందిన ఆదివాసీ గిరిజన విద్యార్థులు చేసిన నృత్యాలు ఆకట్టుకున్నాయి.

ఈనాడు - 21-2-2010

ఉనికిని కోల్పోతున్న గిరిజన శాస్త్రీయ పరిజ్ఞానం

న్యూస్‌టుడే, విశాఖపట్నం: ఉనికిని కోల్పోతున్న గిరిజన శాస్త్రీయ పరిజ్ఞానాన్ని పటిష్టపరచాల్సిన ఆవశ్యకత ఉందని 'సమత' స్వచ్ఛంద సంస్థ డైరెక్టర్ భానుమతి అభిప్రాయపడ్డారు. వీజేఎఫ్ సమావేశ మందిరంలో శనివారం ఏర్పాటు చేసిన విలేకరుల సమావేశంలో ఆమె మాట్లాడుతూ ప్రస్తుత ఆధునిక పోకడల నేపథ్యంలో తరతరాల నుంచీ సంక్రమిస్తున్న తమ సంప్రదాయ విజ్ఞానపు విలువలను గ్రహించే విషయంలో ఇప్పటి గిరిజన బాలలు సందిగ్ధానికి గురవుతున్నారన్నారు. ఈ పరిస్థితుల్లో వారిని చైతన్యవంతం చేసేందుకు ఈనెల 21 తేదీ(ఆదివారం) నుంచి విశాఖలో మూడు రోజుల పాటు జాతీయ ఆదివాసీ బాలల శాస్త్రీయ, సంప్రదాయ విజ్ఞాన సభను నిర్వహిస్తున్నట్లు ఆమె వెల్లడించారు. సాగర్‌నగర్‌లో జరిగే ఈ సభకు మన రాష్ట్రంతోపాటు ఒరిస్సా, మహారాష్ట్ర, గుజరాత్ నుంచి 250 నుంచి 300 మంది విద్యార్థులు, ఉపాధ్యాయులు, ప్రధానోపాధ్యాయులు, (ప్రిన్సిపాల్స్) హాజరవుతారని వివరించారు. జార్ఖండ్, ఛత్తీస్‌గఢ్ రాష్ట్రాల విద్యార్థులు కూడా రావచ్చని భావిస్తున్నప్పటికీ పరీక్షల కారణంగా సాధ్యపడక పోవచ్చునని తెలిపారు. జ్యోతిష్య, ఖగోళ, భౌతిక, వైద్య, రాజనీతి, న్యాయ, గణిత శాస్త్రాలే కాకుండా కవిత్వం, కళానైపుణ్యం కూడా ఆదివాసుల జీవితానుభవాల నుంచి పుట్టుకొచ్చినవేనని ధ్రువపరిచే విషయాలు, ఇలాంటి అనేక అంశాలను సభలో పాల్గొన్న వక్తలు వివరిస్తారని భానుమతి చెప్పారు. గిరిజన తెగలు, వారు ఆచరించే సంప్రదాయాలు, అనుసరించే పద్ధతులు, ప్రాముఖ్యతలను తెలియజేయడం ప్రధానంగా సభ సాగుతుందని వివరించారు. సంగీతం, కళలు, భాషలు, పూర్వీకుల సమాచారం, చరిత్రలపై వాస్తవాలను వెల్లడించడంతోపాటు సంప్రదాయ క్రీడల స్థితిగతులను తెలియజేస్తామని తెలిపారు. 'సమత' స్వచ్ఛంద సంస్థలో అంతర్భాగంగా ఉన్న 'ధాత్రి' పర్యవేక్షణలో జరిగే ఈ సభను మాజీ మేయరు డీవీసుబ్బారావు ప్రారంభిస్తారని చెప్పారు. గుజరాత్‌కు చెందిన స్వాతంత్ర్య సమరయోధురాలు దసరీబెన్, ఆదివాసీ నాయకుడు అశోక్ చౌదరి పాల్గొంటారని వివరించారు. 'ధాత్రి' ప్రాజెక్టు కో-ఆర్డినేటర్ సుశీలా మరార్ పాల్గొన్నారు.

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Andhra Pradesh - Visakhapatnam

Adivasi children showcase their skills

Staff Reporter

Three-day expo concluded at the Balamitra School

A total of 11 trainers from Niyamgiri, taught embroidery to 15 participants

The main objective is to revive the traditional knowledge of the Adivasis

— Photo: C. V. Subrahmanyam

Creative touch: **Tribal children presenting their skills at a programme in Visakhapatnam on Tuesday.**

VISAKHAPATNAM: Adivasi (tribal) children were seen engrossed in learning the techniques as Adivasis from Niyamgiri hamlet of Rayagada district in Orissa taught the nuances of creating beautiful designs on shawls.

The three-day National Adivasi Children's Science and Traditional Knowledge Congress that concluded at the Balamitra School at Sagar Nagar on Tuesday, gave them an insight into their ancestral wisdom besides helping them in making use of their access to mainstream knowledge and tools to improve upon their traditional knowledge. The congress was conducted by Dhaatri, a resource centre for women and children, in association with Samata, an advocacy organisation for Adivasi rights.

A total of 11 trainers from Niyamgiri, led by the group leader Naveen Naik, were seen teaching the art of traditional hand embroidery to 15 participants.

Vadake Sindhe, the Dongria Kondu tribal woman, was seen drawing the designs, she had embroidered on cloth, with crayons on paper. She drew the vertical lines neatly without the need for a scale. She was doing it to present them at the conference.

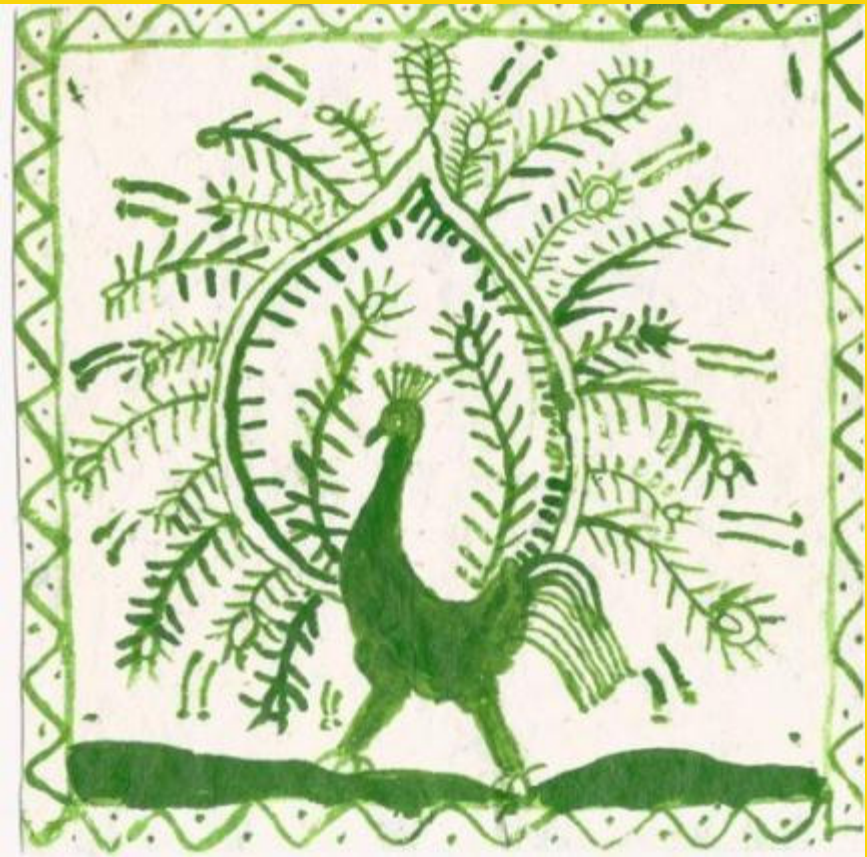
"The tribals of Niyamgiri do farming during the daytime and take up embroidery works during the evenings. They take about a month to complete the embroidery work on a shawl," said embroidery teacher of the host school P. Ammaji.

The beautiful designs reflect the skills of the tribals. "Their area (Niyamgiri) is also affected by bauxite mining. We came in contact with them during the agitation against bauxite mining in Visakhapatnam district," Ms. Ammaji said.

Swarupa, an art teacher, was seen teaching the participants to make art pieces with papier-mâché. "The paper pulp is applied even on cane baskets and allowed to dry. Then it's given a coat of varnish and paint. Paintings are done with water colours over them," she says. Swarupa, who is also a tribal, is doing her B. Sc (Biotech) II year at a private college in the city.

Director of Samata Bhanumathi said that the objective of the workshop was to revive the traditional knowledge of the Adivasis. A total of 230 children of Government and NGO-run schools from AP Orissa, Maharastra and Gujarat participated in the workshop.

Brigadier Ganesan, AP Chapter Coordinator of Honeybee Foundation also spoke.



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