

Shared Blessings Odisha Update

JUNE 2017

Summer holidays are coming to an end in Odisha. Our children who had gone home after the schools were closed for summer are returning to Dasmantpur this week. For most, academic year starts soon.

We have received a nice report from Behera about the progress our children have made.

As reported earlier, two girls students, Sarita Sagar and Bhagyabati Jani, have successfully completed their 10th Standard Board Examination which was held March 2017. Their future plans are not finalized at this time. IDS staff spent time discussing their future with the girls' families as well as with the girls as to which direction they should take with their academic journey. Both families feel that the best option would be to pursue a career in nursing; if that does not materialize, the girls would go into pre-university program similar to the one our other children in Bhubaneswar are pursuing. We are looking into all options, including taking into consideration what Bhagya and Sarita are interested in, and will make a decision based on the girls' choices. IDS should be filing applications at various schools in the near future.

The last year education session ended in April. All of the students of AGPV have successfully been promoted into their next higher classes during the year 2017-18. The details are as follows:

Class wise strength (2017 -2018 educational year)			
Class /Standard	Nos. of student		Remarks
	Boys	Girls	
I	1	0	
II	2	1	
III	1	1	
IV	2	3	
V	2	3	
VI	2	4	
VII	5	6	
VIII	8	9	
IX	3	3	
X	0	2	Matriculated

Status of Students in Higher Studies:

After staying all most one year in the KISS college-Bhubaneswar, **Mamata Jani, Sara Muduli and Uja Jani** returned during the first week of May to their village to spend their summer vacation; they will go back to their college after the 20th of June around the time college reopens. While sharing experience in their stay at KISS college, all three expressed that though it was initially very difficult being away from family and friends as well as adjusting to a new living

situation, they adapted to the new situation and environment well. They report that they are all enjoying being at the college and doing well in their studies.



Mamata, Sara and Uja during an outing in Bhabaneshwar.

We are extremely proud to report that **Amanath Jani** successfully completed 12th Standard and scored well in his finals. He will now continue his studies at KISS college to attend his undergraduate studies. Amanath will be studying Sociology and Political Science as his major. Amanath is also home for summer vacation and will be returning to Bhubaneswar by the end of this month. Our first child to attend higher education, Amanath wants to become an officer in the future (in the government sector.) He continues to act as an excellent role model to all of our other children.

Fakir Jani has adjusted both with the study and college environment. As per the opinion and staff of the college, Fakir has become a changed boy, and is very much interested towards his study. Recently, he visited his mother and village during summer vacation and has already gone back to the college to resume his study. It is anticipated that Fakir will be finishing his studies later this year; we look forward to reporting about his first employment and success beyond.

Two other boys in higher studies, **Kumuti** and **Padaman**, are reported to have had a more difficult year. As they are away from familiar environment, and going through many changes, they have struggled to adopt to the changes and challenges. It is similar to what one of our other children went through last year; it is hoped that with support and time, they will also settle down and make the most of the educational opportunity.

We had three children who for various reasons dropped out of the school. These older children have a tough future ahead of them due to their age and not matriculating. Behera and IDS are committed to all children whether they are academically successful or not. So now, we are looking at technical training for the two boys, **Chakra** and **Sukanta**, so they can become productive members of the society and become financially independent. One girl, **Sadamani**, returned to her village and got married. We are trying to find reasonable employment for her and husband at this time.

Before the summer vacation started, the children actively developed and participated in taking care of the kitchen garden. Different vegetables like papayas, (unripe papayas are used as vegetables) beans, pumpkins, green leaf like spinach, brinjals, tomatoes, chilies have been harvested and used for school kitchen. Seeing the results of their hard work is motivation for the children to eat the vegetables!



Papaya trees

As it takes place each month, parents and guardians of our children attended the meeting held on school premises. The discussion mainly centered on the study plan, present learning of children and role of children during summer vacation, other small issues and higher study plan for students.

Health camp was conducted at the school campus and all student were checked their health; those in need of any medical attention were provided medicine and treatment as per advice of the doctor.

School Construction: After the initial offer of funding the school construction for the second floor and other improvements, the IT company has informed AGPV that the matter is on hold for at least a few more months due to unexpected emergency situation in another other area of their philanthropy. We are optimistic that they will release the funds in the near future so we can begin the construction.

Fundraising: A yard sale was held on April 29th in the Sacramento area to raise funds for the solar panels for the school. Lots of wonderful things were donated by many supporters. The event was quite successful, and we raised \$700. Many donors who wanted to support the event and cause donated more than \$1,200 for the project. We now have to wait for the second floor to be built before the solar panels can be installed on top of the building.



We are planning to have a dinner/auction in November. Our last one was quite successful; we are hoping to do better this time. We have quite a few wonderful items on the auction block already. Details will be coming during the next few months. Hope to see you all there.

Shaila

Odisha Program Manager