



The Saga of Ekal's Awakening Movement in Andhra-Telangana



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Sanket Jain | 98200 98884
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Amar Bhansali | 98200 94440
amar@prismjewellery.com

Pranay Shah | 98200 28461
pranay@prismjewellery.com

Dharam Bhat | 98730 08510
dharam@prismjewellery.com

Raumil Sanghavi | 9833208447
raumil@prismjewellery.com

309 - 311 , A-1, Shah & Nahar Ind. Estate, Sitaram Jadhav Marg, Lower Parel (W),
Mumbai - 400 013, Maharashtra, India. Tel No.+91-22-43484348

EKAL PRAYAS

Reflecting the Spirit of Ekal Abhiyan

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Editor

Manju Srivastava

Co-Editor

Siddhartha Shankar Gautam

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(Himachal Pradesh, Jammu, Kashmir,
Ladakh, Punjab and Uttarakhand)

Art Consultant

Sandeep Kumar

Head Office

Ekal Prayas, 1st Floor, Plot No. 8

Local Shopping Complex, Okhla Phase-II
New Delhi - 110 020.

Phone: 011-4050 3331.

Fax: 011-4050 3332.

E-mail: ekalprayas@ekal.org

Awake, Arise and Achieve



Dear Reader,

Ekal Prayas is entering its 100th issue, and this remarkable journey has helped introduce Ekal Abhiyan to society. I extend my congratulations to all our discerning readers, workers, and my team.

Under 'Ground Zero', our colleague from Ekal Prayas, Siddharth Shankar Gautam, travelled for the first time to Andhra Pradesh and Telangana in southern India, where he witnessed first-hand the remarkable story of social awakening through Ekal. Despite the language barrier, our Ekal workers guided Siddharth, made his stay comfortable, and enabled him to reach remote rural areas. Their support deserves appreciation. I commend everyone for their efforts. In Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, significant changes have taken place through Ekal's Panchmukhi Shiksha, about which you will read this time, from education and values to self-reliance.

The Third Annual Meeting of Ekal Abhiyan was held in Delhi in an atmosphere of harmony and brotherhood, where extensive deliberations were held on Ekal Abhiyan's work agenda and action plan for the coming year. Besides this, the Annual Conference of Vanbandhu Parishad in Bhagyanagar will also be remembered for its meaningful discussions, introspection, and mutual dialogue.

Under Ekal Gram Sangathan, 'Ekal Ko Jaano' is taking Ekal Abhiyan to wider sections of society, while through the Rural Immersion Programme of Ekal Sansthan, college students are gaining first-hand experience of Ekal's Panchmukhi Shiksha.

The life of Shri Naresh Kumar, Chairman, Ekal Global, is an example of how, even as a philanthropist, one can remain connected to one's values and roots while working for society with a spirit of giving. Shri Naresh Kumar, who embraces everyone and makes them feel a sense of belonging, is a natural leader.

Apart from this, various events, programmes and activities have also kept Ekal Abhiyan vibrant. The month of September is dedicated to teachers, and our Acharyas/Acharyaas are the very backbone of Ekal Abhiyan. I extend my best wishes to all of them.

I look forward to meeting you again in the next issue.

Yours

Manju Didi

manju@ekal.org

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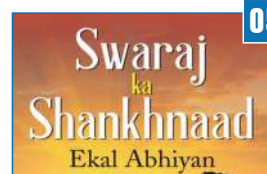


COVER STORY

**The Saga of
Ekal's Awakening Movement
in Andhra Telangana**

Siddharth Shankar Gautam

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Ekal's Historic Journey
(Excerpts from Swaraj Ka Shanknaad)



Ekal Rural Immersion...
Sunila Bhatia



40 Years of Trust ...
Rupa Agarwal, Secretary, FTS



FTS Launches Health ...
FTS, Kolkata

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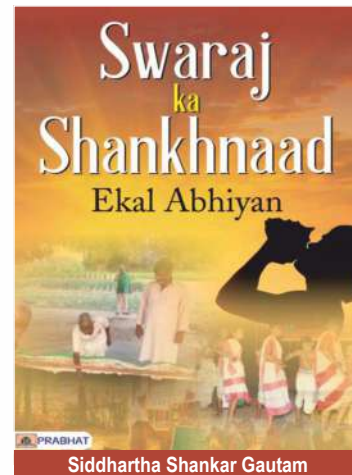
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Continued...

Since the Parliament of India passed the Right to Education Act, it has been debated what is the purpose of running the Ekal schools now? The government has allocated thousands of crores of rupees for its much-touted Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). Primary education has reached every village in the form of government schools. The children are also encouraged to join schools through schemes like Mid-day Meal. Then why should they come to

hand, we are imparting value-based education. How can vices prevalent in the government system compete with the values of the Ekal? The SSA only teaches three subjects (Language, Math and General Knowledge). The Ekal teaches four additional subjects (Moral Education, Health, Handicraft and Yoga-Sports). Thus, the Ekal maintains its edge and utility. Yes, we have noted a difference. When we started the Ekal 30 years ago, we used



When a child gets up in the morning, he or she touches his or her parents' feet. He or she recites mantras before touching food. He or she respects elders and avoids abusive language and unworthy sports activities. He or she tries to become an ideal boy or girl. Which parents would not like to have such children?

We may accept the fact that our country has progressed quickly in the last 20-30 years. Earlier, we only had Ekal schools in villages, now even



SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN

(UNIVERSAL ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME OF THE GOVERNMENT) AND THE EKAL ABHIYAN

the Ekal schools? Shyam ji understands this query and explains: First, we must understand that there is a fundamental difference between society and government. This difference also influences people's perception about the SSA and the Ekal Abhiyan. A system like that of the government could be huge and flush with cash and other resources, but the termites like corruption, inept bureaucracy and politics will make it hollow and it will crumble on its own. Its productivity will be limited. On the other

to attract compulsory students in bulk, but now we get more extra students in every region instead of the compulsory ones. In the government schools, students enroll themselves for the sake of the midday meal, but most of them don't study there. In small provinces, yes, the government is doing a fine job, and students are getting good education at the government schools. But, even in these provinces, parents take keen interest in the Ekal schools as the moral education of the Ekal school impresses them a lot.'

government schools have arrived in every village. So, now the Ekal has taken the role of the supporter of the village education. The Ekal has a significant role in making the government effort more effective and competitive. However, one very important aspect remains invisible to everyone. Children study in primary and elementary government schools, but the rate of dropout during or after completing school is very high there. In such a desperate situation, who will motivate children to prepare





themselves for further education? The government system has its sharp limitations. It will be unreasonable or impractical to expect emotional efforts from the government system. Here comes the responsibility of society to educate the children who somehow remain deprived of proper and complete education. The Ekal has this responsibility. It has generated matchless social harmony in villages and filled the parents with full confidence to push their children towards education. This effort of the Ekal has no parallel. One more thing distinguishes the Ekal from the government system: the Ekal plans overall all-round development of the village through education. Its definition of education is different from that of the government. Originally, the syllabus of the Ekal had four-dimensional education for its students (Elementary Education, Health Education, Village Development and Developing Self-respect), yet it also organizes weekly classes for the parents and guardians of the students (meaning common villagers). The government education is limited to classroom education; the Ekal emphasizes functional education that provides life skills. The SSA's vision is only limited to its schools and their functioning, but Ekal's target is to

develop the whole village. The SSA is admittedly doing fine, yet the Ekal has maintained its uniqueness and utility.

The Ekal has made its mission clear from the very beginning—to educate and empower the tribal or forest-dweller community to make India stronger. So, the Ekal school is functioning as the bridge between residents of cities and rural tribals. Can the government's SSA perform this task? When urban and affluent families consider educating tribal children as their responsibility and the tribal families see in urban dwellers their sympathizers, we can only imagine the power of this enormous psychological connection. It will produce wonders for our country. More than 1,00,000 Ekal schools have woven an unprecedented relationship between urban India and tribal India, and this horizon will only further widen in the future. The enormity of this task and its importance in the progress of rural India can't be imagined. It can't have any other better alternative. Its contribution towards nation building is mammoth. Hence, SSA schools may perform at a scale of excellence, the Ekal schools will continue to serve the society and nation in their quintessential way.

The flip side of the SSA is also that children educated in government schools drop interest in traditional work like agriculture. They only dream of government and private jobs. Consequently, the villages are being uprooted, and jhuggi-type settlements are increasing in cities. The agricultural lands and gardens are lying unattended and are slowly decaying. The Ekal has also ruminated on such remedies and has included certain steps for this purpose in its charter of plans. It is planning to establish Gramothan and Swablamban Prashikshan Kendra (Self-reliance Training Centre) in each zone while protecting the greenery and protecting the nature. It means village youth will be trained to generate employment in their villages themselves. They will study in their village and open their start-up in the same village. But we must keep in mind that the government can never replace society, so the answer must come from society itself. Both society and the government have their separate roles in solving the problems of the country. If the government has Dhan (money), the society has dharma (conviction). The base of the government's efforts is money, while society connects through links of affection. The government's efforts are vulnerable to malignant things like corruption and reliance on government machinery, but society works via goodwill that creates a sense of self-reliance and love for values. Government education is giving rise to demand for government and private jobs. Social efforts are leading to the generation of self-employment, which is the basis of a life full of self-respect. Hence, let the government do its work, and the society will shoulder its share of responsibility. ■

(To be Continued...)





Enterprise with Purpose

"The true measure of achievement is not only what we build for ourselves, but what we enable others to build for their future."

- Naresh Kumar

Sri Naresh Kumar's journey from pioneering industry to empowering Bharat's villages reflects a simple belief: achievement matters most when it enables others to build a better future. For him, "standing tall" has never meant rising above others, but using decades of enterprise, experience and influence to lift people up beginning with education as a pathway to dignity, independence and stronger village life.

Born on 1 January 1954 in Darjeeling into a Haryana family known for entrepreneurial drive and service, Naresh Kumar grew up with two enduring instincts: readiness to act and a sense that success carries an obligation. Throughout his life, he has sought to unite these values by building institutions through hard work and discipline and directing their strength toward public good.

A Pioneer's Mindset

A distinguished student, he topped Mechanical Engineering at YMCA, UST, Faridabad, now J. C. Bose University of Science and Technology. He later served several terms as president of its alumni association. His engineering education provided the foundation for an entrepreneurial career in a sector that was then largely unfamiliar territory for Indian industry. As a promoter, he was among the pioneers who helped build India's capacity in offshore oil-and-gas drilling in a private sector. His group's rigs

worked for ONGC, and the business later expanded to other national and international oil companies. He also carried his experience into industry forums in India and abroad, contributing to the sector's future. His leadership earned recognition. He became the first Asian to serve on the Excomm of the International Association of Drilling Contractors (IADC) USA (Estd 1940), was the founding Vice Chairman of its South-Central Asia Chapter. In India, he chaired the Oil & Gas Services Division of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and served on its National Council, as well as on FICCI's National Hydrocarbon Committee. At the Petrotech Society, the largest oil and gas association in Asia, he was a founding member and served four terms as President. The Government of India included him in its Hydrocarbon Restructuring Group, where policy ideas he advocated were adopted. His contributions received awards, including an Industrial Excellence Award and an international honour presented in Madrid, Spain. The thread in his career is his willingness to enter unfamiliar territory, build Indian capacity, unite people and create enduring institutions.

From Achievement to Seva

The same institution-building instinct shaped Sri Naresh Kumar's philanthropy. Education, skills and health have remained central priorities,



Naresh Kumar

rooted in his conviction that meaningful progress begins by expanding people's capabilities. He has supported and served as trustee for charitable initiatives including PL – RL Charitable trust, the Mahabharti Sanskriti Research Trust, Acharya Mahamandleshwar Swami Ganeshanandji Maharaj Dharmarth Trust, active in education and social upliftment in Haryana and few others. In 2014, he became Vice Chairman of the World Hindu Congress, which brought together more than 2,000 delegates from 53 nations. His philosophy has remained consistent: goodwill becomes effective seva when combined with organisation, shared leadership and clear purpose. Idea of CSR was envisioned by him, suggested and discussed with the then Prime Minister, resulting finally in its implementation. Latest being more than Rs 40,000/- Crores in year 25-26 alone for social welfare.

The Ekal Commitment

Ekal Abhiyan represents perhaps the clearest expression of this philosophy. Ekal's distinctive strength lies not only in bringing education to rural and tribal communities, but in





building a model rooted in the village itself—with teachers drawn from local communities, active participation, respect for local culture and the belief that each child can become the starting point for wider transformation. Sri Naresh Kumar's role in the movement has evolved into institutional leadership. He now Chairs the Trust Board of Ekal Global Foundation and serves as a Trustee Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation USA, Ekal Gramothan Foundation and Bharat Lok Shiksha Parishad. These roles connect international support, education, Skills, Aarogya, Culture and Integrated Village development. His contribution extends beyond financial support. He strengthens governance, connects committed people, widens the support base and aligns Ekal's branches around a common purpose. Ekal's growth beyond 100,000 schools and reach to millions of children are milestones, but Sri Naresh Kumar believes scale matters only when connected to quality, relevance and measurable village-level change while inculcating the sense of Responsibility.

To quote him, "Ekal does not merely educate a child. It awakens confidence, capability and self-reliance across the entire village."

Village Transformation

According to Sri Naresh Kumar, as India's education system changes and government schools reach more communities, Ekal's role must evolve. It can address gaps where last-mile presence, trust and adaptability remain essential. The village classroom can become an entry point to digital literacy, health and hygiene awareness, vocational training, income opportunities, environmental stewardship and deeper community engagement grounded in Human Values. Success should not be measured only by numbers of schools or students, but by how many villagers become more capable, confident and self-reliant.

Youth Must Own the Mission

For Sri Naresh Kumar, the future of any movement depends on whether the next generation truly makes it its own. Young people should not be limited to attending events or contributing to occasional drives; they need responsibility, freedom to experiment and genuine ownership of the mission's future. Young Indians in India and across the diaspora bring technological confidence, new communication methods and a desire for tangible impact. Ekal can channel this energy through volunteering, mentoring, social enterprise, digital-first learning and direct engagement with villages. Experienced leaders, in turn, should increasingly become mentors, passing on institutional knowledge while creating space for new leadership.

Women at the Centre

Sri Naresh Kumar recognizes that women already drive much of Ekal's

grassroots impact, particularly the Acharyas and other workers who build trust within families and communities. But, for him, the next phase should expand women's leadership at village, regional, national and global levels. Education, skills and leadership opportunities for women create benefits that extend far beyond the individual. Children benefit, families become stronger and communities gain a stronger voice. Women's leadership is therefore not an additional element of Ekal's mission; it is central to achieving lasting transformation.

Standing with Others

Three pursuits define Naresh Kumar's life: quality, discipline, building businesses and institutions besides serving others. His business career demonstrates the courage to enter new territory; his work with industry and public bodies reflects his ability to unite people and shape outcomes; and his commitment to Ekal shows how these capabilities can serve society. The Ekal he envisions is human while embracing technology, rooted in culture while preparing communities for future, and able to partner with public institutions without losing grassroots agility. Its next chapter should place greater responsibility in the hands of women and youth. Sri Naresh Kumar has summed up his journey in these beautiful words - Standing tall, in the end, is not a solitary achievement. It is the quieter strength of standing alongside others—so a child can learn, a woman can lead, a young volunteer can take charge, and an entire village can rise with confidence and lasting social impact, resulting in a Prosperous & Responsible Bharat. ■

Editorial Team



The Saga of Ekal's Awakening Movement in Andhra-Telangana



Ekal Abhiyan, the world's largest educational organisation, and winner of the Gandhi Peace award, had sown the seeds of education and values in the rural regions of South India. Today, those seeds have grown into a tree that is providing shade and support to society. Despite the language barrier, during my tour I reached six Anchal centres of Division P9. In my travels I interacted with local workers in broken Hindi while trying to understand their language, Telugu. One thing became clear throughout the journey: language can never be a barrier to dedicated service.





Division P9 comprises four Sambhags — South Andhra, North Andhra, South Telangana and North Telangana. Keeping operational convenience and geographical conditions in view, these four Sambhags have been divided into 23 Anchals, where 3,468 Ekal Vidyalayas are currently functioning. A total of 94,450 students, comprising 54,503 girls and 39,947 boys, are receiving education through these

Ekal Vidyalayas. The steady increase in the number of girls in Ekal Vidyalayas is a significant step towards promoting women's education.

A total of 221 Ekal workers are driving Ekal's programmes forward across the Division. The Division has 5 Ekal Shrihari Raths, 9 Sewing Centres, 3 IVD vans, 2 Arogya Shiksha vans and 3 Tablet Education

vans, which are strengthening and expanding the five-fold educational dimensions of Ekal Abhiyan.

In this edition's Ground Zero Report, you will read about several such activities being undertaken by Ekal Abhiyan in Division P9. These stories offer a glimpse of the strength of society and the indomitable spirit of rural India that gives us a deep sense of pride.

A Unique Confluence of Education and Values: The Ekal Vidyalaya of Tokapalli



Ekal Vidyalaya being operated in Tokapalli village

Under Ekal Abhiyan, an Ekal Vidyalaya is not merely an educational centre, but a great endeavour that carries the message of character-building, social awareness and patriotism to remote and underserved areas.

The Ekal Vidyalaya operating in Tokapalli village of Sanch Yerragondapalem, Prakasham Anchal, South Andhra Sambhag, presents an excellent example of this noble endeavour. Under the able leadership of Sanch Pramukh Smt. Veera Nageswaramma, 28 Ekal Vidyalayas

are being successfully operated in the Sanch.

The Tokapalli Ekal Vidyalaya is conducted regularly for two hours each day, with 31 children currently attending classes. The village has a government primary school up to Class V. The Ekal Vidyalaya, with a spirit of inclusiveness and service, connects all children with Indian values through quality primary education and value-based learning. For the past two years, Acharya Smt. Krishna Malleshwari, lovingly referred to as Mataji, has been imparting value-

based education to the children with complete dedication.

Smt. Ramannamma, Anchal Prathmik Shiksha Prashikshan Pramukh, has been working continuously to enhance the teaching skills of the Acharyas. At the same time, Sri B. Venkateshwara Naik, Anchal President, Prakasham, despite running several educational institutions of his own in the region, continues to provide his valuable guidance to the Ekal Vidyalayas.

One of the most distinctive features of this Vidyalaya can be witnessed every Saturday. On Saturdays, the school is conducted in the premises of the village temple. Immediately after the class, the parents of the students also gather there and a weekly Satsang is organised. This collective effort to bring together education, values, and the community is an excellent example of holistic social development.





Transforming the Lives of Rural Women through Gramothan



Rural women with the instructor at the Sewing Centre



Beauty Parlour instructor conducting a training session



A glimpse of the Computer Training Centre

Ekal Abhiyan, which is spreading the spirit of education and self-reliance in rural and underserved areas, is continuously working towards empowering women through its Gramothan initiative. The Skill Development Centre (SDC) operating in Vikarabad Anchal of South Telangana has demonstrated that when rural women are provided with the right guidance and opportunities, they can not only strengthen their families economically, at times becoming its financial backbone, but also become powerful examples of empowerment.

One of the most distinctive features of the Skill Development Centre at Vikarabad is that it has been managed entirely by women since March 2022. Practical training is provided in employment-oriented skills such as tailoring, computer education and beauty parlour services. A large number of homemakers and young women are acquiring computer skills at the centre and becoming digitally empowered. In addition, through beauty parlour training, women are being taught techniques of bridal makeup, facials and various aspects of beauty care, enabling them to start businesses of their own.

Ms. T. Lakshmi, Tailoring Instructor, and Ms. N. Shilpa, Beautician Trainer, have so far trained 1,090 and 100 plus women, respectively. Particularly noteworthy is Ms. M. Sarita, who received computer training in the first batch at this very centre. Today, she herself works as a Computer Trainer here and has already trained more than 853 women.

At present, two batches each of tailoring, computer, and beauty parlour training are conducted every day. One of the most remarkable features I observed at the Skill Development Centre was that a handbook is prepared for every course, enabling trainees to preserve what they have learned in written form for future reference.

In addition, three satellite centres are also functioning in different villages through the centre.

Sri Vinay Pandey, P9 Zone Coordinator, informed me that besides this centre, tailoring, computer and beauty parlour training centres are also being operated at various locations. At the Kautalam Beauty Parlour Training Centre, 40 women have so far been trained, while 235 women have received tailoring training. Similarly,

through the Jangaon Tailoring Centre, 240 women have been trained, while 20 women have completed the beauty parlour course.

During my visit to the centre, I met several beneficiary women who, through their hard work, dedication, and willingness to learn, have strengthened themselves economically. Ms. U. Lavanya, a student of the third batch of the tailoring course, started a tailoring shop at her home after completing her training. Today, she earns 20,000–25,000 per month by stitching designer garments. She has also created employment for two other girls from the village by engaging them in her work.

Similarly, Ms. K. Varalakshmi, a student of the 15th batch, rented a shop and started her own business. She is now earning 15,000–20,000 per month. In Vikarabad, Ms. Rajashree earns 12,000 per month through her tailoring machine, while D. Maheshwari earns a monthly income of 10,000 by stitching not only regular garments but also woollen sweaters and outfits for religious ceremonies. A list of computer course beneficiaries is enclosed.





Rural Women's Strength: Advancing towards Self-Reliance



Sewing instructor with rural women



A session being conducted at the Beauty Parlour Centre

The primary objective of Ekal Abhiyan is not limited to rural education; it also seeks to make rural and underserved communities self-reliant and empowered. During my visit, I had the opportunity to personally observe the Women's Empowerment Centre at Sanch Markapur, Prakasham Anchal, South Andhra Sambhag. Witnessing the work of the tailoring and beauty parlour training centres operating here made it abundantly clear how a small initiative can bring a new ray of self-reliance and confidence into the lives of rural women.

The foundation of the Women's Empowerment Centre in Markapur was laid on July 6, 2025. Following its establishment, the tailoring centre was the first initiative to commence operations. Subsequently, in response to growing interest among women and emerging employment opportunities, the Beauty Parlour Training Course was launched on January 1, 2026. The centre is being efficiently guided and coordinated by Shri Sai Subbarao.

With 30 years of experience, Instructor Smt. Aarti Kumari has been

guiding women in tailoring since the establishment of the centre. At present, the fifth batch of the tailoring course is underway, with 40 women receiving training. Since the centre began, a total of 180 women have received tailoring training. Of these, 20–25 women have opened their own tailoring shops and become self-reliant. Their list is enclosed.

In addition, a Beauty Parlour Training Course is also being conducted here. The course is led by 36-year-old Smt. G. Sujatha, who has been handling the responsibility of this department since its inception. At present, 20 women are receiving training in the third batch, while 40 women have already completed their training in the earlier batches.

Ms. Sunita, a Class XII pass-out from Ganapavaram village, located 40 km from the centre, enrolled in the first batch of the Beauty Parlour course. She enthusiastically travelled this distance every day to attend the training. Today, she works at a parlour in Vinukonda, where she earns a monthly salary of 5,000. She also provides beauty services from home for weddings and other

occasions, earning an additional income.

Similarly, sisters Alivelu (Second Batch), Rajalakshmi (Second Batch), Durgaswaroopu (Third Batch), Nagarani (Third Batch), and Durga Devi (Third Batch), all from Markapur, are working in the beauty parlour sector and earning a respectable monthly income of 5,000–7,000.

Ms. Sai Lakshmi, a B. Com graduate with computer specialisation who is undergoing training at this centre, has mastered the art of mehendi application. She started working from home and earned 3,000 in her very first month.

Overall, the tailoring and beauty parlour centres in Markapur are not merely avenues for skill development; they are sowing the seeds of self-respect, confidence and economic independence among rural women. Encouragingly, a Computer Training Centre is also scheduled to commence here shortly, generating considerable enthusiasm in the area.





Women Become Self-Reliant by Learning Tailoring

NAME	AGE	VILLAGE	BATCH	INCOME
M. Padma	29	Markapur	2nd	₹10,000–15,000T.
Nagalakshmi	21	Markapur	4th	₹10,000T.
Chandrakala	28	Erragondapalem (40 km away)	4th	₹10,000–15,000G.
Malleswari	41	Markapur	3rd	₹8,000–10,000G.
Ramadevi	30	Nimmanadolanala (35 km away)	4th	₹10,000–15,000
Sumangala	50	Rayavaram (10 km away)	4th	₹5,000
C. H. Sudha	32	Markapur	4th	₹3,000
B. Rajalakshmi	40	Markapur	1st	₹15,000
M.Srilatha	37	Markapur	1st	₹10,000
D. Shravathi	37	Markapur	4th	₹5,000
R. Shravani	31	Markapur	1st	₹5,000
C. H. Tejaswini	25	Rayavaram	4th	₹3,000
N. Jyothi	26	Markapur	2nd	₹5,000–10,000
P. Bhavani	24	Markapur	1st	₹10,000
P. Subhashini	33	Seetha Nagulavaram (10 km away)	1st	₹10,000

A New Dawn of Self-Reliance and Transformation

With a firm resolve to promote the development and self-reliance of rural India, Ekal Abhiyan continues to move forward on the path of progress. As part of this endeavour, the IVD Centre at Sanch Haliya, Nalgonda Anchal, South Telangana, has laid the foundation for remarkable positive transformation in the lives of rural communities through education, skill development and an agricultural revolution.

Established in March 2022, the centre has now extended its reach to more than 30 surrounding villages, through the tireless efforts of IVD Coordinator Sri P. Venkateshwarlu and his dedicated team.

The Women's Empowerment Centre (WEC), established with the objective of making women self-reliant, has achieved significant success. Under the guidance of Tailoring Instructor Ms. N. Nagamani, as many as 373 women have so far received professional tailoring training. At present, 15 young women are learning tailoring in the 18th batch.

Similarly, at the tailoring sub-centre in Pangavani Kunta, under the guidance of instructor Ms. N. Uma, 64 girls have completed their training, while 10 new students are now progressing towards self-reliance.

Beyond the main tailoring centre, eight satellite centres have also been established and are being expanded. These centres are being operated in remote rural areas such as Peddevelapalli, Mukundapuram, Tumbadam, Anumula, Kompalli, Janareddy Colony, Erra Cheruvu Tanda and Pahamatgudem, where women are receiving tailoring training.





During my visit, I met Mamatha, who had received training at this centre. Today, she is standing on her own feet and earning a livelihood of 8,000 per month. Similarly, Dhanalakshmi and Sahnutha are also earning between 5,000 and 7,000 per month, demonstrating how skill development is opening new avenues for dignity and economic independence for rural women.

At this very IVD Centre, a Beauty Parlour Course was started in October 2025 under the guidance of instructor Ms. V. Geetha. Since its inception, 57 girls have been trained. After completing their training, several young women, including Deepika,

Shirisha, Kalpana, Surekha, Kavitha and Parina, are now earning a respectable monthly income of 5,000–8,000 by running their own centres and taking up professional assignments.

In addition, keeping in view the growing importance of digital literacy and computer education in the modern era, special emphasis is being placed on Computer Education (CTL) at the IVD Centre. Since March 2022, under the guidance of instructor N. Sujatha, a computer laboratory equipped with 10 computers has enabled 482 students to acquire digital literacy.

Computer training has opened new opportunities for young people. 24-year-old Sri Shiva Reddy, who was earlier working as a lineman in the Electricity Department, received computer training at this centre and is now serving as a Computer Operator with TGSPDCL (Electricity Department), Haliya, and is earning a monthly salary of 20,000. Similarly, 28-year-old Sri A. Ganesh, trained at the centre, is also working as a Computer



Operator in the Revenue Division of the Electricity Department.

Under IVD Haliya, Kisan Mitras S. Giri and Shriramulu are working continuously towards Gramothan, organic farming, environmental protection and health promotion. The four Kisan Mitras working in the Haliya area have so far taken the message of organic farming to more than 1,500 farmers. As a result, more than 200 farmers have fully adopted organic farming. In addition, more than 150 nutrition gardens and 300 vermicompost beds have been established in the villages. These initiatives are providing rural families with nutritious food while also improving soil fertility.

Arogya Initiative Creates Greater Health Awareness



Arogya Sevikas with Coordinator I. Kavita at the Ekal Arogya Sanch

Ekal Abhiyan is not only promoting education but also strengthening health awareness and self-reliance across rural India. Under the Arogya Foundation of India, continuous efforts are being made to take health awareness, malnutrition prevention, and natural and Ayurvedic healthcare practices to rural and forest communities. During my visit, I witnessed significant transformation taking place in remote villages through the dedicated efforts

of Arogya Sevikas and Sanch Coordinators.

Expansion of Arogya Services in Haliya Sanch

As part of efforts to improve rural healthcare, the work of the Arogya Foundation is progressing steadily in Haliya Sanch of Nalgonda Anchal, South Telangana. Arogya activities in Haliya Sanch commenced on March 29, 2022, and since then, the area has





emerged as a notable example of health awareness. Under the able leadership of R. Kavitha, Coordinator of Arogya activities, various health services are being provided.

The major activities include Ayurvedic treatment, plantation of medicinal plants, distribution of Ayurvedic medicines and development of medicinal herb gardens. In addition, anaemia screening camps and awareness programmes are being organised to address anaemia among women and children. To protect villages from diseases and improve sanitation, soak pits are also being constructed.

Ground-Level Transformation through Health Awareness in Odyssey Sanch

The remarkable transformation in health awareness in Odyssey Sanch of Sri Satya Sai Anchal is largely attributable to the dedicated efforts of its workers and Arogya Sevikas. Sri B. Shriramulu is serving as the Sanch Coordinator. The Sanch comprises 30 villages, where 15 Arogya Sevikas are providing door-to-door health services.

Each Arogya Sevika is responsible for two villages.

Villages such as Babajapalli, Akukoyapalli, Narappagaripalli, Kondakamarla and Chaudepalli, among others, have emerged as key centres of Arogya activities.

In the villages of Saishayagaripalli and Tondapalli, Albel Amma has been doing exemplary work as an Arogya Sevika for the past three years. Her key responsibilities include conducting Kutumb Surveys (family surveys) - collecting data on the health and living conditions of every family in the village; organising special awareness sessions for pregnant women; promoting simple household nutritional practices, such as explaining the benefits of cooking in iron utensils to help prevent anaemia; conducting cleanliness and environmental activities; facilitating the construction of soak pits in villages; developing medicinal herb gardens; and several other initiatives.

The positive impact of her dedication is clearly visible in the lives of villagers. 30-year-old Sai Shobharani of the village says that the



Arogya Sevika Albel Amma interacting with villagers

arrival of the Arogya Sevika Didi has brought immense benefits to the women of the village. Health-related matters that women were previously hesitant to discuss with anyone can now be shared freely with the Arogya Sevika Didi, enabling them to receive timely treatment and appropriate guidance.

Smt. Shanti Venkatesan, South Zone In-charge of the Arogya Foundation of India, informed that a total of 31 Arogya Sevikas are working to improve the health of rural communities across 62 villages in the two Sanchs of Haliya and Odyssey in Division P9. The Arogya Foundation of India plans to expand its health activities to 6-8 additional Sanchs.

Shrihari Rath: An Unbroken Stream of Devotion, Culture and Social Harmony in Rural Areas

Where devotion and spiritual emotion come together, the seeds of social transformation are sown. The Shrihari Rath, operated under Ekal Abhiyan, reaches remote tribal and rural areas not merely as a vehicle but as a living bearer of Lord Shri Ram and Sanatan consciousness.

During my visit, I witnessed in two Anchals how the Ekal Shrihari Rath is

awakening a sense of spiritual, cultural and national consciousness among rural communities. Some of these experiences are described below.

Experiencing Ayodhya in Every Village

The arrival of the Shrihari Rath at Gadhsingapur village in Sanch Pargi, Vikarabad Anchal of South

Telangana, was celebrated like a festival. With a population of approximately 3,000, around 99 per cent of the village residents are Hindu, and an Ekal Vidyalaya has been functioning here for the past six years.

The Shrihari Rath first arrived in the South Telangana Sambhag in 2022, and since then it has continued to





strengthen the spirit of Sanatan consciousness in the hearts of rural communities. More than 200 villagers welcomed the Rath and participated in worship and prayer with deep faith and devotion.

65-year-old Sri K. Venkatayya, an elderly resident of the village, became emotional as he shared, "We could not travel to Ayodhya, but when we see the Ram Darbar seated in the Shrihari Rath, it feels as though Lord Shri Ram Himself has come to our village from Ayodhya." He added that the arrival of the Rath brings immense satisfaction to the heart and strengthens Hindu unity.

A visible reflection of this cultural transformation can be seen in the lives of dedicated villagers such as Smt. P. Vijaya (60), Sri T. Narsinghulu (38) and Sri V. Narsinghulu (58), who now gather regularly every Saturday at the village temple for bhajan and kirtan.

Sambhag Vice-President Sri Tukaram Vasude (55) shared that the Shrihari Rath has carried the message of cultural awareness from village to



Villagers performing puja at the Shriram Darbar installed in the Ekal Shrihari Rath

village. One of the most beautiful transformations is that the women of the village are now becoming guardians of Sanatan values in their own homes, taking upon themselves the responsibility of protecting and nurturing their culture.

A Sacred Message of De-addiction and Organisational Strength

When the Ekal Shrihari Rath arrived at Maraparaju Gudam village in Sanch Krithivenu, Vijayawada Anchal of North Andhra Pradesh, the entire village seemed transformed. Under the able leadership of Sri Rangarajan, the Rath Yatra Organising Head, who has been selflessly dedicated to Ekal service for the past 20 years, the Rath

Yatra was organised with great devotion and discipline.

Through the Shrihari Rath, the village witnessed not only a revival of religious awareness but also remarkable momentum in initiatives such as the de-addiction campaign, strengthening of Hindu unity and cultural awakening. The resonance of devotional songs and collective prayers helped dissolve social differences and brought the villagers together in a spirit of unity.

These two events are living proof that the Shrihari Rath of Ekal Abhiyan is not merely a religious journey but a powerful medium of social renaissance.

A New Dawn of Social Awakening and Cultural Consciousness through Satsang

Gaurapuram village in Sanch Odyssey, Shri Satya Sai Anchal, South Andhra, offers a living experience of Sanatan strength, national devotion and social reform.

The very soul of Indian culture resides in our villages, where dharma, service and culture come together to give direction to life. Undertaking the remarkable task of

taking this cultural consciousness to remote rural areas is Sri P. Subbarayudu. At the age of 60, with a dedicated service journey spanning 23 years, he serves as an Anchal Sadhak and organises Satsang every month in approximately 10 villages, spreading awareness of Sanatan Dharma and social consciousness.

More than 70 villagers

participated with devotion in the Satsang organised in the temple premises of Gaurapuram. The auspicious arrival of the Shrihari Rath on two occasions in the Anchal further enriched the religious and cultural atmosphere. As the villagers immersed themselves in devotion to the rhythmic beats of the dholak, jhanjh and manjiras, the entire surroundings became filled with a divine sense of joy.





Villagers participating in Satsang at Gourapuram village under the guidance of Satsang Sadhak P.

Beyond the Boundaries of Language: The Universal Experience of Sanatan

The most moving aspect of this Satsang was that it completely dissolved the barriers of language and region. Krishna bhajans, Ram bhajans, Devi bhajans and Shiv bhajans were sung continuously in Telugu.

"I do not know the Telugu language, yet through the expressions of the villagers, the

devotion in their eyes and the overwhelming spiritual energy, I could easily understand whom they were worshipping and what they were praising. This is the true universal power of Sanatan Dharma and Satsang."

The spontaneous devotion and enthusiasm of the villagers are living proof that when faith and culture come together, words become unnecessary; what truly matters is the emotion of the heart.

Saluting the Motherland and Building a De-Addiction-Free Society

The Satsang of Ekal Abhiyan is not limited to worship alone. It also lays the foundation for character-building and nation-building. During Satsang, while the Lord is worshipped, love for the nation is naturally awakened in the hearts of villagers through reverence and devotion to the Motherland.

Addressing social evils, the villagers took an oath to abstain from alcohol. Alongside this, they resolved to eliminate discrimination based on status, caste and social differences, and to establish a spirit of brotherhood. When villagers gathered in the temple premises collectively pledge themselves to the Motherland and to a life free from addiction, it becomes a starting point for building a strong, self-reliant India.

Chennamma Amma: A Living Example of Service and Dedication



At the age of 72, when many people might prefer to rest, Ekal worker B. Chennamma, lovingly known as Amma, remains actively engaged in the service and upliftment of society with immense energy and dedication.

Currently serving as Anchal Sadhak, Prakasham Anchal, B. Chennamma, a resident of Nangulavaram village, has been making her invaluable contribution to social service through Ekal Abhiyan continuously for the past seven years. A testament to her dedication is that even at this age, she undertakes 20–25 days of travel every month. Travelling to remote areas, strengthening organisational activities and empowering rural communities have become an integral part of her life.

Keeping rural communities connected to the roots of Sanatan values, protecting them from addiction and awakening the spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam in villages are the principal objectives of Amma.

An Embodiment of Affection and Motherly Care

Her contribution extends far beyond travel and organisational work. For all the workers in the Anchal, she is a source of support and care like a mother. She cares for every worker and looks after their well-being with the affection and concern of a mother. Her warmth and caring nature fill the workers with renewed enthusiasm and inspires them to move forward in every situation.

Amma's exemplary life is a source of guidance for all of us. Her selfless spirit, continuous travel and motherly affection towards workers remind us that, in this great endeavour of social transformation, dedication and human warmth are among the greatest sources of strength.





Grand Organisation of the P9 Division Planning Workshop



Kendra, Prabhag, Sambhag and Anchal functionaries attending the Prabhag Yojana Varg, along with Ekal office-bearers

The three-day P9 Division Planning Workshop of Ekal Abhiyan (Andhra Pradesh and Telangana) was successfully organised in Bhagyanagar (Telangana) from July 21 to 23, 2026. The workshop was attended by 28 workers and functionaries from North and South Telangana and North and South Andhra Pradesh, along with five central functionaries.

The workshop commenced with guidance from Sri Deep Kumar on "Organisational Structure, Strengthening and Clarification of the Abhiyan Committee," followed by the inaugural session.

The afternoon and evening sessions covered a range of important subjects, including the Role in Primary Education (Sri K. Raghavendra), Office Department Functions (Sri T. Hanumantu and Sri Kartar Dogra), Satsang Sadhak and Rath Planning (Sri Sahebudu and Sri M.B. Mallikarjun), and Urban Organisation and CSR (Sri T. Hanumantu and Sri M. Hanumanta). The night session focused on the Teaching Material Plan.

The second day began with deliberations on the Role and Management of the Finance Department, guided by Sri Kartar Dogra. This was followed by sessions on the importance of the Worker and Acharya Apps (Sri T. Hanumantu and Sri Chandrashekhar) and Worker Department and Travel Review (Sri Manohar Lal).

During the afternoon sessions, Sri Deep Kumar provided valuable guidance on "Activity Department: Concept and Planning" and "Worker Discipline and Personality Development." Discussions were also held on the role of Arogya, Gramothan and Gram Sangathan Committees (Sri Manohar Lal and Sri K. Raghavendra).

On the final day, strategic discussions were held on Ekal Vidyalaya: Concept and Planning (Sri K. Raghavendra and Sri Koteswara Rao), Annual Action Plan and Departmental Calendar, and Anchal Palak Plan/Ekal System Renewal (Sri Deep Kumar). Prior to the concluding session, Sri Siddharth Shankar Gautam presented his thoughts on "Ideology and Publicity"

Every evening during the planning workshop, Bharat Mata Aarti was performed. The concluding session was graced by several distinguished guests, including Sri Vinod Agarwal, President, Telangana Chapter and South Zone Vice-President, Vanbandhu Parishad; Sri Kailash Narayan Bangariya, President, Hyderabad Chapter, Vanbandhu Parishad; Sri Ashok Thakur, Vice-President, Telangana Chapter; Sri Raghavacharya, President, P9 Division; Dr. Indra Devi, Division Women's In-charge; Sri Vishnu Gupta, General Secretary, Telangana Chapter, Vanbandhu Parishad; and Sri Mukund Baheti, Trustee, Baheti Bhawan, among others. Their presence greatly encouraged and motivated the participating workers. ■

Siddharth Shankar Gautam
Co-Editor, Ekal Prayas

(Contributors: K. Raghavendra, T. Hanumantu, M. Hanumanta, Vinay Pandey, M.B. Mallikarjun, K.B. Subbarao, Jhansi Lakshmi, Radhika, Hathiram, T. Venkatanarayana, S. Ramanjaneyulu)

The statistics used in this article are as of June 2026.





Ekal Abhiyan Annual Meeting

A Resolve for National Regeneration, Gram Swaraj and Self-Reliance



A two-day meeting of a movement that carries the spirit of national consciousness and seeks to kindle the light of

education, healthcare, values, and self-reliance in remote Vanvasi and rural areas was held in New Delhi on August 8–9, 2026, in an atmosphere marked by great enthusiasm, discipline and dignity. The two-day meeting proved to be an important milestone in shaping the organization's future direction, expansion and ideological consolidation.

The meeting commenced with Vedic Mangalacharan, Omkar chanting, the Gayatri Mantra and a collective recitation of the Hanuman Chalisa. On this auspicious occasion, the distinguished guests seated on the dais included Sri Laxminarayan Goyal, Sri Ramesh Sarawgi, Sri Rajesh Goyal, Smt. Chandralekha Rungta and Dr. Lalan Sharma. Nearly 100 dedicated office-bearers and Sevavratī workers from across the country participated in the meeting. The presence and guidance of Sri Shyam Ji Gupta, Mentor of Ekal Abhiyan, and Sri Alok Kumar, Sah-Sarkaryawah of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, added special significance to the proceedings.

First Session: Before formally presenting the proceedings in the first session, Sri Rajesh Goyal led the gathering in observing two minutes of silence as a tribute to members of the Ekal family who had passed away during the preceding year. He also briefed the participants on the work undertaken, decisions taken and progress made by the Ekal Core Committee following the previous year's meeting in Kolkata.

During the first session, a detailed overview of the work being undertaken by the city organizations was presented through a PowerPoint presentation (PPT).

Guidance and Inspirational Address by Invitees

The inspiring presence of Sri Alok Kumar infused the gathering with renewed energy and enthusiasm. Highlighting the glorious history of Sri Ram Janmabhoomi, Sri Alok Kumar provided valuable guidance to the participants. He observed that, in its initial phase, the work of Ekal was primarily confined to non-formal education. He emphasized that the fundamental objective is to ensure that children remain connected with their culture and traditions, while developing a strong sense of patriotism and national consciousness.

He particularly stressed that the functioning of Ekal Vidyalayas under Ekal Abhiyan is one of its most effective areas of work. At the same time, he said that city organizations must give serious thought to enhancing the respect and recognition accorded to workers and Acharyas/Sevavratīs. "It is the responsibility of the city organizations to ensure that good and dedicated workers do not become disengaged from the work."

Sri Shyam Gupta narrated the story of Ekal Abhiyan's origins and highlighted its continuing relevance. Recalling the mindset that prevailed in rural society in the early years, he said that villagers would initially ask, "Why should people from the village go to school? Farming is our dharma; if a child becomes educated, who will work in the fields?" Ekal challenged



and transformed this narrow outlook, turning education into a people's movement reaching every section of society.

Sri Shyam ji outlined the five core objectives of Ekal: "Through service, we will win the trust of the villagers; through that trust, we will create ownership and self-reliance; we will awaken dharmic consciousness; we will expose the face of forces opposed to Hindu society and the nation; and we will build the army of Ram ji." During his address, he also shared an inspiring maxim: "The son of wealth is arrogance, and the son of arrogance is humiliation."

Sri Shyam ji presented a distinctive ideological framework for preserving the geographical and cultural unity of Bharat. He said, "The Himalayas are the crown of this country, Punjab is its neck, while Tamil Nadu and Kerala are its two feet." Through Ekal, he emphasized, we must ensure the protection of the head, neck and feet of Bharat Mata.

It is with this sacred objective that the Hanuman Parivar Yojana has been initiated. He said that the greatest need of the present time is to develop the habit of giving one's time for the nation. The youth must be inspired and prepared to serve Bharat Mata. He emphasized that the goal





of making Ekal self-reliant must now be pursued with determination. When self-reliance takes root at the village level, the self-respect and dignity of villagers will rise, and Ekal will emerge as a strong and cohesive social organization. Our ancestors had said: "When villages become places of pilgrimage, the nation will once again become Vishwaguru." It is these very villages that we must transform into places of pilgrimage.

Organizational Expansion, Committees and New Dimensions of Self-Reliance

Several important proposals were placed before the meeting to make the organization stronger, more dynamic and result-oriented, followed by extensive deliberations on each.

Geographical Expansion of Schools: In his address, Dr. Lalan Sharma stated that, at present, approximately 5,000 Ekal Vidyalayas are being run through PRP, while the long-term goal is to reach 100,000 Ekal Vidyalayas. Ekal's expansion is progressing rapidly, particularly in Vanvasi and border areas. The figures reflect this growth: in 2025, there were 64 units in the border areas, which increased to 77 in 2026—representing expansion into 13 additional districts.

A historic achievement for the organization this year has been the successful completion of 91 per cent of the training programmes by August 2026. This is the first time such a high level of completion has been achieved, and the results have been extremely encouraging and beneficial. In addition, the organizational committees have been firmly strengthened and their roots consolidated at the zonal centres. Today, more than 70 per cent of the Anchal Pramukh positions are held by women, providing a living example of women's empowerment and leadership within the organization. Sri Ramesh Sarawgi laid special emphasis on the need to

immediately initiate the work of Ekal Vidyalaya and Aarogya in Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Sikkim, thereby extending Ekal's reach and service to these strategically important regions.

The conclusions of the two-day Annual Meeting emphasised that the culture of coordination among all dimensions would need to be strengthened further. Special emphasis would also have to be laid on the committees undertaking active Pravas (field visits). New plans for expansion in the Vanvasi areas of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh are also to be formulated, among other initiatives. Overall, this Annual Meeting was not merely a formal gathering but emerged as a great resolve towards nation-building and the transformation of rural Bharat. Embracing the core mantra of "developing villages into places of pilgrimage", the meeting will prove to be an important step towards taking Ekal Abhiyan to greater heights.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Sri Rajesh Goel placed several proposals before the gathering, which will be discussed in the coming period, and their implementation will be undertaken on the basis of collective decisions.

1. It was agreed that the participation of representatives from all organizations associated with Ekal Abhiyan should be ensured in the national/central-level meetings of all affiliated organizations. This would help further strengthen the atmosphere of mutual cooperation, dialogue, affection and trust.
2. While considering a system for the evaluation of Sevavratī workers, it was suggested that the performance of regular Sevavratī workers should be evaluated through the concerned Sevavratī system, while senior Sevavratī workers should undergo a review-based evaluation at the senior leadership/core level.

3. Discussions were held on keeping Ekal Sansthan under the umbrella of Ekal Abhiyan and making it an integral part of the Abhiyan, as well as developing Ekal Prayas as the official voice/publication of the Abhiyan.

4. The need to streamline the centralized management of the sale of products through the Ekal Gramotthan Products Foundation was discussed. It was agreed that **Sri Sanjeev Goel would be entrusted with the responsibility of examining the existing system**, identifying any discrepancies or shortcomings, and finalizing the system within a defined timeframe. **A September 15 deadline** was suggested in this regard.

5. It was agreed that an **SOP** should be prepared to streamline the tenure and succession arrangements for the **Central Co-Abhiyan Pramukhs** appointed across the six zones. Emphasis was laid on providing the successor worker an opportunity, during the final six months of the incumbent's tenure, to understand the responsibilities and gain practical experience in carrying out the work.

6. The proposal to establish a **three-year tenure system for Committee members** was considered, with the provision that, after the initial term, the work and performance could be reviewed and a decision taken regarding further extension.

7. Emphasis was laid on assigning the Central Co-Abhiyan Pramukhs of the six zones comprehensive responsibility for coordinating and reviewing organizational activities in their respective areas, with a system for submitting their regular reports to the Central Executive Committee (CEC). It was also suggested that they should function in their respective zones in the capacity of Sangathan Mantri (Organizational Secretary).





8. To avoid clashes in the dates of programmes organized by different affiliated organizations in the same city, it was felt necessary to prepare an **annual programme calendar through mutual coordination** among the concerned organizations, particularly in major cities.

9. The age limit for the discharge of organizational responsibilities was discussed in detail. Various suggestions, including 70, 75 and 80 years, were put forward. At the same time, it was strongly emphasized that, while benefiting from the guidance and experience of senior workers, a systematic mechanism must necessarily be developed to provide **leadership opportunities to younger workers and nurture the next generation of leadership**.

10. It was suggested that, in the case of senior workers, age alone should not be the sole determining criterion; their physical and mental capacity, level of activity and ability to continue contributing effectively should also be taken into consideration. Suggestions were also made to bring relatively younger workers forward for key responsibilities such as Secretary, Joint Secretary, etc., while assigning senior workers the role of mentors and guides.

11. It was suggested that each organization should have a clear mechanism to identify and bring **new and capable workers in the 45–50 age group into leadership, gradually entrust them with responsibilities**, and regularly report on the progress of this leadership-development process.

12. Rather than bringing the role of senior workers to an end, **special emphasis was laid on keeping them actively engaged as guides, mentors and resource persons, while entrusting them with the responsibility of preparing and**

nurturing a new generation of workers to take their place.

13. To prevent the misuse of the Ekal Abhiyan logo, it was stated that the rules and guidelines formulated earlier should be strictly enforced and, wherever necessary, **legal action should be initiated. Emphasis was also laid on taking appropriate action against any unauthorized use of the logo.**

14. The need to appoint an **Organizational In-charge (Sangathan Prabhari)** for Ekal Abhiyan was reiterated, and a request was made to the Sangh to make an appropriate person available for this responsibility.

15. On the occasion of the completion of 40 years of the Ekal Vidyalaya programme, the possibility of undertaking a special campaign in the coming years was discussed. It was also proposed to create a comprehensive **database of former Acharyas, students, Committee members and other long-standing associates**, and to reconnect them with the organization.

16. Detailed discussions were held on the need to develop an **integrated app and digital platform** that could be used by all organizations associated with Ekal Abhiyan. It was suggested that the various apps and Google Form-based systems currently in use should be studied and their useful features integrated into a common platform.

17. It was emphasized that, instead of any one organization taking an independent decision regarding the integrated app, the requirements should be determined at the Abhiyan level, followed by an **evaluation and integration of the existing apps through a professional/expert agency.**

18. It was suggested that a small expert team comprising representatives of **FTS, BLSP** and other associated organizations, as required, should be constituted for this purpose and given **clear directions**. It was also agreed that the final system adopted should be implemented uniformly across all affiliated organizations.

19. Regarding the available apps and portals, it was suggested that useful features already developed across different systems could be integrated to create a common and effective platform aligned with the requirements of the Abhiyan. In this regard, a decisive suggestion was made that Sri Suresh Iyer should take the matter forward for further discussion with the American team.

20. Regarding the Annual Meeting, the view was expressed that such meetings should be held regularly, while the Akhil Bharatiya Pratinidhi Mandal (ABPM) has its own distinct statutory and organizational role. It was felt necessary to clearly define and maintain the objectives and format of the two meetings separately.

21. **Emphasis was laid on organizing the Annual Meeting in a distinct and more focused format in the future. Instead of making it presentation-oriented, it was suggested that it should be organized as an “Open House Discussion”, taking up a limited number of important subjects and arriving at clear conclusions and decisions on each subject after in-depth deliberation.** ■

Siddharth Shankar Gautam
Co-Editor, Ekal Prayas







President of India

 @rashtrapatibhvn

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The Ekal Abhiyan Trust helps 2.2 million children - 52 per cent of them girls - access education. Many of its initiatives benefit tribal communities; all of its initiatives are a tribute to the Mahatma and his vision
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In 1989, when the Ekal movement began its journey with a simple yet revolutionary idea—One Teacher, One School, One Village—few could have imagined the extraordinary story that would unfold in the decades to come.

Today, the Ekal movement has grown to more than 100,000 Ekal Vidyalayas, carrying the light of education and transformation to the remotest corners of Bharat. And behind every transformed life is the silent contribution of countless teachers, volunteers, donors, supporters, well-wishers and committed workers who have made the impossible possible.

It was amid this expanding journey that Ekal Prayas was born.

In 2010, following the successful Ekal Kumbh in Delhi, the first issue of this bilingual, bimonthly in-house magazine was published. It was a modest beginning a 28-page publication conceived to document, communicate and celebrate the expanding work of the Ekal movement.

But with time, Ekal Prayas became much more than a magazine.

It became a living chronicle of the Ekal journey.

From 28 pages in its first edition, it has evolved into a comprehensive 44-page publication reflecting the vast and expanding canvas of Mission Ekal. Its pages have carried the voices, initiatives, achievements, aspirations and stories of the Ekal family across India and abroad.

Over the years, Ekal Prayas has documented the movement's expansion across states, its international chapters and its ever-growing areas of service.

A MAGAZINE WITH MANY WINDOWS

Every section of Ekal Prayas opens a different window into the world of Ekal.

Ekal's Historic Journey takes readers back to the roots of the movement and reminds us how far the organisation has travelled.

The **Guest Column** brings the reflections and perspectives of distinguished contributors.

The **Cover Story** captures the central theme of each issue including dedicated features from **Ground Zero**.

The **Roundup of Ekal Events** captures the energy and scale of activities taking place across the country and around the world.

Vanyatra takes readers into the field—to the villages, communities and people whose lives form the heart of the Ekal mission.

Standing Tall celebrates individuals whose dedication and contribution have strengthened the movement.

Vanvasi Shaurya Gatha brings forward stories of courage, determination, valour and achievement from tribal communities during freedom struggle.

Together, these sections create a narrative that is both diverse and unified.

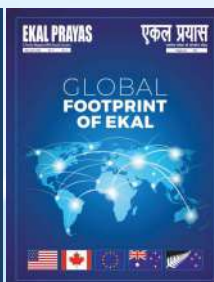
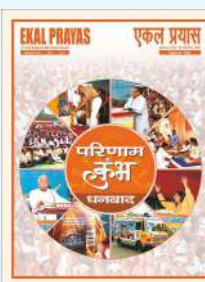
THE 100TH ISSUE: A MOMENT TO REMEMBER

- The 100th issue is an opportunity to pause.
- Not to stop. But to look back.
- To remember where the journey began.
- To honour those who walked before us.
- To celebrate those who continue to walk with us.

Celebrating 100 Issues of Mission Ekal

One Mission. Countless Lives Transformed.

From One Teacher, One School to One Hundred Thousand Dreams



ONE MISSION. COUNTLESS LIVES TRANSFORMED.

- The 100th issue of Ekal Prayas is a milestone in the journey of a movement.
- The first issue documented the success of an Ekal Kumbh.
- The 100th issue represents something far greater.

It represents the cumulative journey of seventeen years of uninterrupted communication, documentation and celebration of Mission Ekal.

THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

The most beautiful thing about a journey is that reaching a milestone does not mean reaching the destination. The 100th issue is not the conclusion of Ekal Prayas.

It is a new beginning. The first 100 issues tell us where we have come from.

The next issues will tell future generations where we are going.

And as long as the Ekal mission continues to walk towards the last village, there will always be stories worth telling. Because the journey continues.

Team Ekal Prayas

Manju Srivastava

Manju Srivastava

Siddhartha S Gautam

Siddhartha S Gautam

Harsh Malik

Harsh Malik

Sandeep Kumar

Sandeep Kumar



40 Years of Trust and Resolve for the Next Decade

Vanbandhu Parishad (FTS) Annual Conference 2026



The Annual Conference of Vanbandhu Parishad (FTS) was held from July 17-19, 2026, at Kanha Shanti Vanam,

Bhagyanagar (Hyderabad), in a grand and dignified atmosphere. The theme of the conference, "40 Years of Trust & Resolve for the Next Decade," powerfully reflected the organisation's journey and its firm resolve for the future, while bringing the entire FTS family together as one cohesive unit. Set in a serene and harmonious environment, this meditation centre provided an ideal setting for three days of meaningful discussion, introspection, and interaction.

The conference was graced by Sri Alok Kumar, Sah-Sarkaryawah, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh; Swami Vigyananand, Joint General Secretary, Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Founder, World Hindu Congress; Sri Kamlesh D. Patel (Pujya Daaji), spiritual guide, author, and the fourth spiritual guide in the lineage of Rajyoga Acharyas of the Sahaj Marg tradition; Sri G. Kishan Reddy, Union Minister for Coal and Mines, Government of India; Padma Sri Sri Rameshwar Lal Kabra, National Patron, Vanbandhu Parishad; Smt. Ratanadevi Kabra; Padma Sri Sri Sajjan Bhajanka; Sri Pradeep Goyal;



Officials and guests participating in the ceremonial lighting of the lamp

Sri Rajesh Goyal, National In-charge, Ekal Abhiyan; Sri Atul Shah, National President, Ekal Gram Sangathan; Dr. R. N. Mehta, President, Ekal Arogya Gram Sangathan; Smt. Chandralekha Rugunta, Vice President, Ekal Gramotthan Foundation; Dr. Umesh Paliwal, Trustee, Arogya Foundation of India; Smt. Manju Srivastava, Chairperson, Ekal Sansthan; Dr. Lalan Sharma, Kendriya Abhiyan Pramukh; Sri Suresh Agrawal (Manaksia), Trustee, Arogya Foundation of India; Sri Sajjan Kumar Bansal; Sri Ramesh Sarawgi, National Outgoing President; Sri Ramesh Maheshwari, President, National Women's Committee; representatives of the Telangana Women's Committee and Telangana Youth Committee, senior Sevavratīs, Gram Sangathan representatives,

Prabhag and Sambhag Presidents, Prabhag and Sambhag Pramukh, among others. More than 400 delegates from 43 regions across India participated in the conference. Thus, the conference became a common platform for the entire Vanbandhu Parishad-Ekal family.

DAY ONE: The programme commenced with three recitations of Brahmanaad and the ceremonial lighting of the lamp, creating a positive and auspicious atmosphere for the entire conference. In his welcome address, Sri Vinod Agrawal, President of the Telangana Chapter, welcomed and felicitated all the participants present at the conference. Addressing the gathering, Sri Ramesh Kumar Maheshwari, National President,





Vanbandhu Parishad, said that it is the worker who is the true strength of the organisation. He called upon the youth to shoulder greater responsibilities within the organisation and urged senior workers to continue guiding the new generation. He emphasised that, for the organisation to progress continuously, it is essential to create meaningful synergy between the experience of the seniors and the enthusiasm of the youth.

The Vanbandhu Parishad was formally established on January 15, 1989, on the auspicious occasion of Makar Sankranti, with a Yajna-Havan ceremony. However, the groundwork and conceptual framework for the organisation had already begun in 1986. Recalling the 40-year journey and efforts of Vanbandhu Parishad, Sri Ramesh Kumar Sarawagi, the outgoing National President, shared his experiences and association with the organisation. He made a special mention of the contribution of Hon. Sri Shyam Gupta and highlighted the importance of Van Yatras. He explained that continuous contact, dialogue, and collective effort transformed ordinary supporters into dedicated workers, and it was this bond of personal affection and togetherness that has strengthened the Vanbandhu family today.

Sri Alok Kumar, Sah-Sarkaryawah, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, highlighting the distinctive features of the organisation, said that while one may win an argument with someone through logic, one may lose the person in the process. Therefore, winning the heart and mind of a worker is far more important. He appreciated the selfless service and spirit of

dedication of the workers and called upon everyone to continue working with the same commitment and sense of responsibility in the years ahead.

The inaugural session also featured an inspiring address by Swami Vigyananand, Joint General Secretary, Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Founder, World Hindu Congress. His topic was "Vishwaguru Bharat: India's Global Role in the 21st Century." He said that India must guide the world while remaining firmly rooted in its rich cultural heritage. His thoughts inspired everyone present to contribute to building a strong, self-reliant, and confident India.

THEMATIC AND MANAGERIAL SESSIONS: On the first day, parallel group sessions were also organised on subjects such as Sanskar Gurukul, Van Yatra, Digital & IT, Social Media, CFC and Sanrakshak Yojana, CSR & SSI, Accounts, Finance & Accounting, among others. The respective in-charges made detailed presentations on these subjects through PPTs, followed by extensive discussions. Participants shared suggestions and experiences to make their respective areas of work more effective, exchanged successful working methods, and held detailed discussions on future plans and strategies.

After a break in the first day's sessions, a grand and vibrant cultural programme was organised in the evening. Smt. Geeta Ganeshan, Founder of UCPA (Uttar Centre for Performing Arts) and a renowned exponent of classical dance, along with her team, presented a captivating Bharatanatyam performance. Showcasing the grandeur of India's ancient and prestigious classical dance



Sri Alok Kumar
Sah-Sarkaryawah



Swami Vigyananand
Founder, World Hindu Congress

tradition, the performance enthralled the audience with its graceful mudras, expressive enactment, and devotional spirit.

The cultural programme also featured a selection of beautiful songs. The songs were presented by the sisters of FTS, whose performance was highly appreciated. The active participation of women and the enthusiastic support of the youth throughout the programme were particularly commendable.

DAY TWO: The second day commenced with the felicitation of spiritual guide Sri Kamlesh D. Patel (Pujya Daaji), followed by his inspiring blessings. In his simple and affectionate address, he encouraged all the workers to continue moving forward on the path of humility, compassion, positive thinking, and selfless service. His thoughts served as a renewed reminder of the organisation's core values and proved deeply inspiring and offered valuable guidance to everyone.

On the same day, meetings of the various regions were also held, including the East and Northeast Region, West Region, North Region, and South Region. The respective Regional In-charges reviewed the





work undertaken in their regions and discussed organisational requirements, challenges, and ways to make the work more effective. These meetings provided an important opportunity for participants to learn from one another, identify practical solutions, and strengthen mutual coordination and collaboration across the country.

A distinguished honour was conferred on Sri Vuiyya Sudarshan (Village: Degama, Mandal: Bazarhathnoor, District: Adilabad, Telangana), a passionate champion of tribal self-respect, a dedicated practitioner of social service, and a custodian of tribal culture. He was presented the Vanbandhu Parishad Seva Samman in recognition of his exemplary service and contribution. In addition, chapters and their representatives that demonstrated outstanding performance in various categories were felicitated. These included highest OTS collection (Highest OTS Collection), increase in the number of donors (Growth in Donor Base), highest membership collection (Highest Membership Collection), growth in membership collection (Growth in Membership Collection), excellence in accounts management (Excellence in Accounts Management),

Strong Chapter, Emerging Youth, and Van Yatra, among others.

For their exceptional performance, Sri Hathimal Baid, President of the Bengaluru Chapter, and Smt. Rashi Jain, National Coordinator, Ekal Yuva, were also honoured with the Outstanding Leadership Award.

On the same day, the 37th Annual General Meeting of Vanbandhu Parishad (Friends of Tribal Society) was also held. National General Secretary Agrawal, National General Secretary, presented the Secretarial Report for the financial year 2025–26, providing a detailed account of the major activities, achievements, and progress of the organisation during the year. She also apprised all the representatives of the Parishad's future plans and the direction of its forthcoming initiatives. Key discussions during the meeting included the establishment of Sanskar Gurukuls at the Nagar Sangathan level, expansion of skill-development programmes for underprivileged sections, and the regular organisation of health camps. The primary objective of these initiatives is to bring about sustainable and positive transformation in society through service. During the meeting, Sri Ramesh Gupta, National Treasurer, presented the detailed Accounts Report for 2025–26, which was duly approved by the members with the chanting of Om.

The gracious presence of Padma Sri Sri Rameshwar Lal Kabra (Bapuji), Founder Member and Mentor of FTS, was a great source of inspiration for everyone at the conference. In addition, the valuable guidance of



Children of Ekal Vidyalaya reciting mantras in Sanskrit

Padma Sri Sri Sajjan Bhajanka, former National President and prominent donor, and Sri Sajan Kumar Bansal, National Patron, was received by all. Their vision, dedication, and sustained efforts have given new direction to the organisation's journey of growth.

The contribution of the senior Sevavratīs was another important highlight of the conference. Their selfless dedication towards strengthening the Gram Sangathan and Nagar Sangathan was deeply appreciated. Their spirit of service continues to remain a constant source of inspiration for workers across the country.

DAY THREE: The third day of the conference continued in an atmosphere of enthusiasm, warmth, and gratitude. On this occasion, Padma Sri Sri Sajjan Bhajanka recalled the historic moments of the organisation's journey and paid tribute to the efforts of Hon. Sri Shyam Gupta. The children of Ekal Vidyalayas presented the recitation of Sanskrit mantras, while members of the Sur-Taal group enriched the occasion with an artistic presentation. The invaluable contributions of senior leaders such as Sri Sajan Kumar Bansal, Sri Ramesh Kumar Sarawagi, and Sri



Members of Sur Taal giving an artistic performance





Ekal Yuva Vanbandhu Parishad team, Hyderabad-Telangana

Ramesh Kumar Maheshwari were also remembered with appreciation. Heartfelt gratitude was expressed to the countless workers, associates, Sevavratīs, and well-wishers whose silent yet steadfast contributions have continuously provided strength and momentum to the organisation.

The conference was honoured by the distinguished presence of Sri G. Kishan Reddy, Union Minister for Coal and Mines, Government of India. In his address, he recalled the history of Telangana, the struggles against the Nizam's rule, and the historic liberation of Hyderabad in September 1948 under the leadership of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. His thoughts brought alive the memory of the sacrifices upon which modern India was built. He also reminded everyone of the responsibility to preserve, enrich, and carry forward this glorious legacy.

“From Supporter to Fellow Traveller” Felicitation: A special highlight of the day was the “From Supporter to Fellow Traveller” felicitation programme, an innovative initiative of FTS in its own distinctive way. Under this initiative, donors who had evolved beyond being mere supporters to become active participants in the FTS family were

felicited. It was not merely a felicitation ceremony; it was a celebration of the bonds of warmth and belonging nurtured over the years through the spirit of service. The programme conveyed a powerful message: when well-wishers connect themselves with the mission of an organisation and become active participants in its journey, the larger endeavour of nation-building becomes even stronger and more impactful.

One of the most emotional moments of the entire event was the presentation by the Ekal students of Hushanpur village, Kodangal Sanch, Vikarabad Anchal, South Telangana. Under the guidance of Acharya Savitri, the confidence, discipline, and impeccable pronunciation with which they recited the Saraswati Vandana, Gayatri Mantra, and Sanskrit shlokas demonstrated the profound impact of value-based education. Their presentation filled the entire auditorium with devotion and positivity, and the audience responded with enthusiastic applause, encouraging the young performers.

The success of the conference was the result of several months of meticulous planning and tireless

effort. Members of the Governing Board made several visits to Bhagyanagar and, with the support of the Telangana Chapter, Telangana Women's Committee, and Telangana Youth Committee, ensured excellent arrangements for accommodation, food, transportation, and the overall programme. Sri Rishabh Kothari, General Secretary of Kanha Shanti Vanam, and his local team also made a significant contribution to the successful conduct of the event.

Inspired by the spirit of “Organisation and Commitment to the Mission,” the conference further strengthened the spirit of collective action, mutual cooperation, and responsibility. From formal meetings to informal interactions, all participants remained united by a common objective—to serve society and take the organisation forward.

The programme concluded with a Sankalp Session, where all participants, filled with renewed enthusiasm, reaffirmed their commitment to the ideals and objectives of the organisation. Thereafter, National President Sri Ramesh Kumar Maheshwari expressed his heartfelt gratitude to everyone. He thanked every worker, volunteer, organiser, and chapter whose tireless efforts and dedication made the conference a tremendous success. With his vote of thanks, the conference, which had been a meaningful journey of learning, connection, and service, came to a dignified conclusion. ■

Rupa Agrawal
Gen Secretary, Vanbandhu Parishad



Know Ekal

A Witness to the Unique Journey from Literacy to Self-Reliance

The Ekal Abhiyan (Ekal Gram Sangathan), recipient of the National Gandhi Peace Prize, recently organised “Know Ekal” programmes in Noida and Delhi. The events witnessed the enthusiastic participation of a large number of distinguished social workers, intellectuals, and eminent citizens from Delhi-NCR and Noida. The central theme of the programmes was “The Unique Journey from Literacy to Self-Reliance,” through which the five-fold dimensions of Ekal’s education initiative were presented before society.



The chief speaker, Sri Chandresh Sona, Commandant, Border Security Force (BSF), and former Director, Prime Minister’s Office (Government of India), shared his field experiences with Ekal Abhiyan in a deeply moving address. He said, “When I was posted in R. S. Pura in Jammu &

Kashmir and in the Araria sector, the way the Acharyas and workers of Ekal Vidyalayas operating in remote villages along the border supported the Indian soldiers was truly inspiring. It reflects the deep spirit of patriotism among the youth associated with Ekal.” He emphasised that Ekal’s work in the areas of women’s empowerment and employment-oriented training for youth is exemplary and has been appreciated on several occasions by Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi himself.

The Scientific Dimension of the Ramayana and its Life Values

The distinguished speaker, Sri Shantanu Gupta, Founder of ‘The Ramayana School’ and renowned author and thinker, presented the scientific dimensions of the Ramayana, along with research-based facts and insights. Highlighting the exemplary human conduct of Lord Sri Ram and the enduring relevance of his words, he said that Sri Ram demonstrated through his life the resolve: “Raghukul reet sada chali aayi, pran jaye par vachan na jaye”—the age-old tradition of the Raghu dynasty that a promise must be honoured even at the cost of one’s life.

Sri Khemanand Sapkota, Central Co-Campaign Head, Ekal Abhiyan, referring to the present global and national scenario, explained why there is an urgent need for society to connect with Ekal Abhiyan today. Adding a strong flavour of patriotism to the programme, the “Ekal Sur-Taal” troupe made a special contribution. These dedicated workers of Ekal’s Sanskar Shiksha initiative, who had come from different Vananchals across the country, presented beautiful and melodious cultural performances.



A “Know Ekal” programme was also organised at Ekal Bhawan, Pitampura, New Delhi. Its primary objective was to familiarise urban society with Ekal Abhiyan’s methodology, its five-fold education system, and its contribution towards nation-building.

The programme commenced with “Vande Mataram” and a documentary showcasing the development journey of Ekal Abhiyan. The chief speaker, Sri Sansar Chandan, informed the gathering that the movement, which began with just 30 villages in Jharkhand, has today grown into a nationwide movement. The distinguished guests, Sri Nikhil Yadav and Sri Rajkumar Barthwal, appreciated Ekal’s service initiatives and called upon society to contribute to this important endeavour of taking education to the last person in society. Sri Rajkumar Barthwal said that supporting the noble work of providing free education to rural and tribal children is an act of dharma and merit for everyone.

In his address, Sri Nikhil Yadav said that many people speak about social service and nation-building in seminars and public addresses, but the distinctive feature of Ekal Abhiyan is that its Nagar Sangathans, Gram Sangathans, and workers are translating these ideals into direct action. He emphasised that Ekal’s work is not confined merely to ideas or speeches; rather, it is a living example of reaching the last person in society and bringing meaningful change to their lives. Sri Vinod Agrawal, National Treasurer, and Sri Rajesh Goyal, National In-charge, emphasised the importance of serving as a bridge between urban and rural society and joining the endeavour to preserve and strengthen dharma, culture, and values (sanskar).

During the concluding session, Sri Santosh Gangwal Jain, National Working President, expressed his gratitude to all the participants and contributors. The programme was conducted by Sri Kapil Bhatia and concluded with the National Anthem. ■



Sanjay Malviya
Kendriya Prachar Pramukh, Ekal Abhiyan



EKAL RURAL IMMERSION PROGRAMME NANAKMATTA, KHATIMA, UTTARAKHAND



The Ekal Rural Immersion Programme (ERI) successfully conducted its third Rural Immersion Programme at the Nanakmatta Sanch (cluster) in the Khatima region of Uttarakhand. ERI is a unique internship initiative of Ekal Sansthan designed to bridge the gap between academia and rural India by providing school and university students with immersive field experiences.

The programme enables students to understand rural realities, identify community needs, and contribute towards sustainable rural development through research, innovation, and social entrepreneurship. By engaging directly with village communities, participants gain insights into education, livelihoods, healthcare, skill development, agriculture, and local governance while exploring practical, research-driven solutions for rural upliftment. The initiative also nurtures socially responsible leaders committed to nation-building through experiential learning.

The participating group comprised six students from Indraprastha College

for Women Sheetal Jakhar, Shubhakshi, Sonal Gupta, Saima Sheikh, Priya, and Tanisha accompanied by their Assistant Professor, Dr. Archana Kumari. They were joined by Akshay from the Institute of Information Technology & Management (IITM), Janakpuri, and Khanak from Ryan International School. The programme was coordinated on the ground by Sri Ram from Ekal, with Professor Vineet Kumar from Motilal Nehru College and Smt. Sunila Bhatia accompanying the group throughout the immersion.

Day 1: Understanding Rural Development Initiatives

The participants departed from Delhi in the morning and reached Nanakmatta in the afternoon, where they received a traditional welcome with floral garlands and a portrait of Swami Vivekananda.

The first visit was to Siddha Gram, where students explored the Integrated Village Development (IVD) initiatives. They interacted with trainees enrolled in the Women Empowerment Centre (WEC), Computer Training Lab (CTL), and Beautician Training Centre, learning how skill development and entrepreneurship are helping reduce

migration while promoting self-reliance in rural communities.

Later, the group visited the Ekal Gram Vidyalaya at Dhusra village. Students observed digital classroom practices where an Acharya used a tablet to conduct lessons. They interacted with teachers, students, and village committee members, documented their observations, and participated in community engagement activities by writing inspirational messages through village wall paintings.

The day concluded with visits to the historic Nanakmatta Gurudwara and the nearby dam. The participants received Prasad and were honoured with a Saropa by the Gurudwara management, making it a memorable cultural experience.

Day 2: Community Interaction and Sustainable Rural Practices

The second day focused on deeper engagement with rural communities at Manjholi, Ekal Gram Vidyalaya.

Students conducted household surveys to understand education, livelihoods, sanitation, and local challenges. They also learned about





sustainable rural practices, including incense stick manufacturing, vermicomposting, preparation of natural pest-control agents, and soak-pit construction.

The participants enjoyed a traditional community lunch at the residence of Sri Dharm Singh Rana, Cluster Head, experiencing rural hospitality firsthand.

In the evening, an interactive session was organised with regional and divisional committee members, including Sri Bhuvan Chandra Pandey, Smt. Shanti Pandey, Sri Vinay Batra, Sri Mahesh Mittal, Sri Umesh Agarwal, Sri Dharm Singh Rana, Sri Keshwar Chaurasia, Sri Jagdish Chandra Pandey, Sri Sher Singh, and Sri Pawan Rana. The programme also received valuable support from Sri Arvind Kumar, Divisional Activity Trainer, along with volunteers Ms. Rameshwari, Ms. Sarojini, and Ms. Bhavana.

Day 3: Reflection, Research and Rural Entrepreneurship

The final day began with a reflection session during which students shared their observations, learnings, and experiences from the immersion programme.

The team then proceeded to Ainchta Vihi village, where they continued field surveys and interacted with villagers to gain deeper insights



College students engrossed in making composite manure



College students observing teaching session at Ekal Vidyalaya

into local issues and opportunities. A traditional rural meal at the teacher's residence further strengthened their understanding of community life and rural values.

On the return journey, Sri Umesh Agarwal, President of the Regional Campaign Committee, invited the students to visit his rice mill, providing valuable exposure to rural entrepreneurship and agro-based industries. At Rudrapur, Sri Vinay Batra warmly hosted the participants for breakfast before the group departed for Delhi.

Impact of the Programme

The three-day immersion enabled participants to experience rural India beyond textbooks and classrooms. By living among villagers, interacting with educators, farmers, women entrepreneurs, and community leaders, students developed a deeper understanding of rural strengths and challenges.

The programme encouraged participants to think critically about how academic knowledge can be translated into practical solutions through interdisciplinary research, technology, innovation, and social entrepreneurship. The insights gathered during the internship are expected to

serve as a foundation for future research projects, community initiatives, and sustainable development interventions aimed at improving the quality of life in rural areas.

The programme was led by Smt. Sunila Bhatia under the coordination of Dr. Ramandeep Kaur, ERI Coordinator, Joint Secretary, Ekal Sansthan, and Professor at the Institute of Information Technology & Management (IITM), Janakpuri, affiliated with Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University (GGSIPU).

The Ekal Rural Immersion Programme (ERI) is the brainchild of Sri Praveen Arya and Prof. Manju Srivastava, Trustees of Ekal Sansthan. Conceived as a structured rural internship initiative, ERI seeks to connect academia with rural India through experiential learning, research, and social entrepreneurship. By encouraging students to understand grassroots realities and co-create sustainable solutions with rural communities, the programme continues to build socially responsible professionals committed to inclusive development and nation-building. ■

Smt. Sunila Bhatia
Ekal Sansthan





Inauguration Ceremony of Ratanlal Shantiswaroop Shrihari Shiksha Sadan

**A Grand Pilgrimage
of the Confluence of Values,
Education and Service**

In every society, remarkable personalities are born whose lives are dedicated not merely to themselves but to shaping generations to come. Through their deeds, they provide society with a foundation in which education is not merely a means of acquiring knowledge, but also a means of building lives enriched with values, service, culture, and a sense of national consciousness. In the lives of such great personalities, the harmonious confluence of "Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram" finds its living expression.

When an institution dedicates its life, time and resources to the character-building of future generations and value-based education, every such effort becomes an investment in the future of society. A living manifestation of this noble spirit is found in Ratanlal Shantiswaroop Shrihari Shiksha Sadan.

This residential educational campus has been constructed by Ekal



Shrihari Educational Trust, Agra, on approximately 1,240 square yards of land. The newly constructed building is envisioned as a centre for the holistic development of students, character formation, and an understanding of Indian values and traditions. Along with formal education, students will receive training in discipline, service, culture, patriotism, and life values. The story of the campus's construction is itself inspiring. Approximately 1,240 square yards of land was received as a grant, and this magnificent building was completed in the short span of just about 12 months.

The construction of the building required an investment of several crores of rupees. Yet, the ease and natural momentum with which the project progressed were remarkable. In his address, Shrihari Mahamantri Sri Sanjay Goyal spoke about this journey

and stated that no major obstacle arose during the construction, and the building gradually took shape with remarkable ease. This was undoubtedly the result of the collective faith, dedication, and organisational strength of the Shrihari family.

The gracious presence of Vatsalyamurti Pujya Didima Sadhvi Ritambhara and Mananiya Sri Alok Kumar, Sah-Sarkaryawah of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, at the inauguration ceremony further enhanced the spiritual and national significance of the occasion. The presence of Mananiya Sri Shantiswaroop Goyal, one of the principal pillars of the Shrihari Satsang Samiti, added an even greater sense of warmth and inspiration to the occasion.

In the presence of these distinguished personalities, the inauguration of Ratanlal Shantiswaroop Shrihari Shiksha Sadan was not merely the inauguration of a building. It marked the auspicious beginning of a new chapter in value-based education, Indian culture, and the character-building of future generations.

At a time when the need for values, along with knowledge and skills, is being felt more strongly than ever in the field of education, such institutions emerge as beacons of hope for society. Ratanlal Shantiswaroop Shrihari Shiksha Sadan will provide direction and purpose to the lives of students who, in the years ahead, will contribute towards building society, the nation and humanity. ■

**Publicity &
Communications Department**
Ekal Shrihari, Agra





Friends of Tribal Society (FTS) has launched Health Awareness Campaign 2026, a new pilot initiative in the states of West Bengal and Odisha aimed at addressing the health concerns of villagers living in remote and underserved areas.

The campaign focuses on preventive healthcare, regular health awareness and active community participation. Through sustained engagement at the grassroots level, the initiative seeks to promote awareness about hygiene, nutrition, sanitation, common health concerns and the importance of timely medical attention.



FTS Launches Health Awareness Campaign 2026

A Preventive Healthcare Initiative for Remote Tribal Communities

Rather than limiting healthcare intervention to the treatment of illness, the campaign seeks to build a culture of health awareness and prevention within the community. Local participation will be encouraged to ensure that health education becomes a regular and sustainable part of village life.

The pilot project is envisioned as a collaborative effort involving communities, local volunteers and healthcare professionals. Based on the experience and learnings from West Bengal and Odisha, the initiative may subsequently be expanded to other remote and underserved areas.

Why is this health initiative important?

- Preventive screening and basic medical support are often difficult to access in remote villages.
- Awareness about nutrition, hygiene, anaemia, diabetes and hypertension can support earlier action.

- FTS can mobilise communities through existing relationships with volunteers, Panchayats, ASHAs and local health teams.

Initiative Overview

Purpose: Bring health awareness, screening, medical consultation and essential medicines closer to underserved rural and tribal communities.

Proposed Plan: A 150+ camp programme across Odisha, supported by FTS and Ekal field networks.

What We Deliver: Awareness sessions, BP/sugar/haemoglobin screening, consultation, medicines, referrals and campwise documentation.

Inauguration

Formal commencement of the campaign: The health awareness camp held at Padang Village under Telkoi Block marked the formal inauguration of the campaign. The event brought together Dr. Harish

Anand, local elected representatives, Panchayat leadership, doctors, public-health personnel, ASHA and Anganwadi workers, and FTS/Ekal functionaries and volunteers. Their participation established a collaborative platform for delivering preventive healthcare in remote tribal communities.

Inauguration of the campaign at Padang Village, Telkoi Block.

Value delivered through

Community Access: Health services were taken directly to three remote villages over three consecutive days.

Preventive awareness: Doctors guided villagers on dietary habits, healthy lifestyles and recognition of common health risks.

Screening and Consultation: Beneficiaries received basic health checks, medical consultation and identification of conditions requiring attention.





SUMMARY OF THE FIRST THREE CAMPS

Date	Camp location	Beneficiaries
26 Jun 2026	Padang Village, Telkoi Block	335
27 Jun 2026	Not Village, Kaptipada Block	217
28 Jun 2026	Magarmuhan Village, Khamar Block	211
Total Beneficiaries		763

Immediate support: Free medicines were distributed based on assessed medical needs, with local health teams supporting camp delivery.

Summary of the First Three Camps

The initial camp cluster reached 763 beneficiaries across Padang, Not and Magarmuhan villages. Each camp combined community awareness, medical screening, consultation and medicine distribution. Date

Health Observations: The camps identified common health concerns including high blood pressure, elevated blood sugar, anaemia, skin conditions, back and knee pain, diarrhoea, cough and fever. Anaemia was observed frequently among adolescent girls and women, highlighting the need for continued nutritional awareness and follow-up screening.

To address these concerns, beneficiaries received basic health screenings, medical consultations and free medicines based on clinical need. Doctors also provided guidance on nutrition, hygiene, healthy dietary practices and lifestyle changes. Patients requiring further attention

were advised to seek follow-up care through nearby public health facilities.

Dignitaries and Key Attendees Across the Three Camps: The three health awareness camps witnessed strong participation from senior representatives of Ekal Abhiyan Arogya Shiksha, Vanbandhu Parishad, local government bodies and the public health system.

Dr. Harish Anand led the inaugural phase, with Dr. Prafulla Sahu providing medical and health-awareness support across the camps. Public representatives and community leaders included MLA Fakir Mohan Naik, Padang Sarpanch Bholeswar Naik, Manaranjan Mallik, Manaranjan Satpathy, Subrata Kumar Mahanti, Arjun Mahanta and other Anchal, Sanch, Prabhag, Bhag and Sambhag office-bearers.

The camps were also supported by district and block-level health officials, including Dr. Dhananjaya Mahanta, CDMO of Baripada, Dr. Soumyadeep Muduli, Medical Officer P. Satyam, doctors from Bhubaneswar, and teams from Telkoi CHC, Kaptipada CHC and the Telkoi Mobile Health Unit.

Grassroots participation included Anganwadi workers, ASHA workers, Sevavratris, Sevika workers, Panchayat representatives, Sanch committee members and local volunteers, whose involvement helped mobilise villagers and strengthen coordination between the campaign and the government healthcare system.

All three camps recorded strong participation, and villagers expressed interest in continued health camps in the future. Doctors, CHC and district health staff, community workers, elected representatives and FTS/Ekal teams jointly supported mobilisation and delivery.

These health awareness campaigns will strengthen the organisation's network and will help achieve our motto of Shikshit Bharat, Swasth Bharat, Samarth Bharat.

Upcoming Odisha Camps: The next set of camps in Odisha is planned after the rainy season, with field activity expected to resume in September 2026. Final dates and village locations will be confirmed based on weather conditions, road accessibility and medical-team availability.

Preparation priorities before the restart:

- Review the first three camps and incorporate operational lessons into the next camp plan.
- Finalise village selection and coordinate dates with Panchayats, local health facilities and field volunteers.
- Confirm doctors, paramedical support, testing kits, medicines, transportation and camp logistics.
- Strengthen standardised beneficiary data capture, condition tracking, medicine records and referral documentation.
- Begin local mobilisation and awareness communication sufficiently ahead of each confirmed camp date.

Team Social Media and Campaign
FTS, Kolkata (Special Mention)
Dr. Harish Anand
Project Coordinator,
Health Awareness Campaign



Arogya Sevika treating patients





Community Empowerment Visit to the GRC, Naimisharanya

A visit to the Gramothan Resource Centre (GRC), Naimisharanya, Uttar Pradesh was undertaken by Smt. Manisha Jain, Executive Director, Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation USA; Sri Bhaskar Sharma, Executive Director, Ekal Gramothan Foundation; Sri Anil Bansal, Zonal Head P4; Sri Ashok Kumar, Zonal Coordinator; and Sri Shivam, State Coordinator.

The visit aimed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the proposed GRC site, assess its infrastructure and programme requirements, engage with the local community, and review ongoing initiatives in the area. Interaction with local Samiti members, villagers and community representatives provided valuable grassroots insights into their aspirations, existing skills, livelihood opportunities, community needs and key challenges. Besides that, their involvement is expected to play an important role in strengthening local ownership and facilitating effective programme implementation.



The team undertook a detailed assessment of the land identified for the GRC and discussed the requirements for its structured, phase-wise development. The proposed approach will enable infrastructure and programmes to evolve systematically in alignment with community needs, available resources and identified priorities.

Discussions also focused on the potential requirement for training facilities, skill-development infrastructure, livelihood-oriented programmes, community facilities and

other support systems. The GRC is envisaged not merely as an infrastructure project, but as a platform capable of integrating existing initiatives with new programmes emerging from community needs.

Way Forward: The visit marked an important step towards shaping the future of the proposed GRC. Most importantly, direct community engagement brought grassroots perspectives into the planning process, ensuring that the centre's future development remains relevant, practical and sustainable.

With the right combination of infrastructure, community participation, market linked skill development and livelihood-oriented interventions, the GRC has the potential to become a meaningful catalyst for Gramothan transforming local potential into sustainable opportunities and community-led development. ■

**Team - Social Media &
Public Relations**
Gramothan Resource Foundation



The GRC team, along with Smt. Manisha Jain, interacts with villagers





Experiencing Arogya Foundation's Grassroots Health Mission

A Three-Day Field Immersion Across Sanch Harrai and Sanch Kareli, Madhya Pradesh



Arogya Foundation of India (AFI) organised a three-day Vanyatra for Smt. Manisha Jain, Executive Director, Ekal Vidyalaya USA, and Smt. Shivani Patel, Donor Relationship Manager, Ekal Vidyalaya USA, across Sanch Harrai and Sanch Kareli, Madhya Pradesh. They were accompanied by Smt. Maumita Chatterjee, Project Head; Smt. Sujata Dutta Chowdhury, Project Supervisor; and Dr. Mukul Bhatia, Rashtriya Margdarshak, AFI.

The Vanyatra offered the visiting team a first-hand understanding of AFI's last-mile, community-based healthcare model through field observations, practical demonstrations and interactions with Arogya Sevikas and beneficiaries. Key initiatives included Arogya Gram, Telemedicine, Chashma (Eye Care) and Anaemia screening, supported by Janki Foundation and Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation USA Sri Mahesh and Smt. Asha Navani. Senior Karyakartas, field coordinators and the MIS & Data Analyst also supported the visit.

Arogya Gram: Prevention Begins at Home

The team observed demonstrations of soak pits, compost pits, nutrition gardens, water filters and

medicinal plants, highlighting simple, locally relevant solutions for improved health, hygiene, sanitation and nutrition. Arogya Sevikas also demonstrated the preparation and use of herbal remedies from locally available medicinal plants, reflecting AFI's effort to integrate traditional knowledge with preventive healthcare.

Technology Bringing Healthcare to the Last Mile

The visitors attended a two-day Telemedicine Refresher Training for Arogya Sevikas conducted by AFI doctors and trainers, Dr. Granthik Banerjee and Dr. Tathagata Moulik. A practical demonstration covered the complete digital workflow from beneficiary registration and recording vital parameters to remote medical consultation, prescriptions and follow-up.

Chashma: Restoring the Gift of Clear Vision

The team observed the Chashma Eye Care Project, supported by Janki Foundation, including registration, eye examination and vision assessment by Ophthalmic Assistant Sri Bishvajeet Nagvanshi, assisted by Sri Dharmendra Shivvedi. The process included refractive assessment through an autorefractometer and trial lenses,

provision of spectacles and follow-up. Interactions with schoolchildren who had received spectacles offered touching evidence of the programme's impact on learning and confidence.

Anaemia Screening and Follow-up

The team witnessed haemoglobin screening by Arogya Sevikas, including beneficiary consent, digital recording, counselling and follow-up. Dr. Granthik Banerjee also demonstrated AFI's Anaemia-focused digital application, showcasing the integration of technology, community screening and Sevika-led care.

Strengthening the Mission Through Community Leadership

Interactions with Sevikas and beneficiaries highlighted their dedication and the challenges of delivering healthcare in rural communities. The visiting team also met the Sambhag Samiti, whose guidance, coordination, monitoring and field-level feedback strengthen programme implementation. Smt. Manisha Jain appreciated AFI's grassroots approach, motivated the Sevikas and commended their dedication, observing the tangible impact of these initiatives at the community level. The Vanyatra reaffirmed AFI's core philosophy: healthcare becomes truly transformative when it reaches the last mile, empowers local communities and enables people to become active partners in their own well-being. ■

PR & Social Media Team
AFI, Kolkata





Unsung Tribal Freedom Fighters of South India

Guardians of Freedom, Forests and Identity

The history of India's freedom struggle remains incomplete without the glorious saga of its tribal communities. Long before organised political movements assumed a wider form, tribal men and women living in the forests and hills of South India rose in resistance to colonial exploitation. They sacrificed everything to protect their homeland, culture and traditions and to uphold the ideals of freedom, self-respect and self-governance.

Across the Western and Eastern Ghats, the Nilgiris, the Deccan Plateau and the tribal regions of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, numerous tribal leaders transformed local resistance into powerful movements against oppression. Their stories deserve an honoured place in India's national consciousness.

Alluri Sitarama Raju (1897–1924) – Hero of the Rampa Rebellion: Though not tribal by birth, Alluri Sitarama Raju became a widely respected leader of the Koya and other tribal communities of the Godavari Agency in present-day Andhra Pradesh. He led the historic Rampa Rebellion (1922–24) against oppressive British forest laws that deprived tribal communities of their traditional forest rights and shifting cultivation. Demonstrating exceptional guerrilla warfare skills, Raju and his tribal comrades attacked police stations, seized arms and challenged British authority for nearly two years. Revered as “Manyam Veerudu” (Hero of the Forests), he was captured and executed by the British in 1924 at the age of 27.



Komaram Bheem (1901–1940) – The Immortal Voice of “Jal, Jungle, Zameen”: A member of Telangana's Gond community, Komaram Bheem fought against the autocratic rule of the Nizam of Hyderabad and the exploitation of tribal communities. His powerful call of “Jal, Jungle, Zameen” (Water, Forest, Land) later became an enduring slogan for tribal rights across India. Refusing to surrender, he continued to organise the Gond community until he was killed in an encounter with the Nizam's forces in 1940.

Telangana also produced remarkable tribal and peasant women who resisted feudal landlords, the Nizam's Razakars and imperial forces. Among them were Sammakka and Saramma, revered Koya warrior goddesses; Chityala Ailamma (Chakali Ilamma), a fearless symbol of peasant resistance; and Mallu Swarajyam, a prominent guerrilla leader.

Rani Gaidinliu – The “Queen of the Nagas”: At just sixteen, Rani Gaidinliu led armed resistance against British rule. Arrested in 1932, she spent nearly fourteen years in prison. Impressed by her extraordinary courage, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru affectionately bestowed upon her the title “Rani of the Nagas.”

Tribal Resistance in Kerala: The Kani (Kanikkar) community of southern Kerala and Tamil Nadu resisted oppressive colonial forest laws that deprived them of ancestral lands and traditional livelihoods. Under Pazhassi Raja, Kurichiya archers, led by warriors such as Thalakkal, displayed remarkable guerrilla skills in Wayanad's forests and inflicted heavy losses on British forces.

Neeli, remembered in local traditions as a forgotten tribal heroine associated with the Kurichiya resistance, is revered in folklore for organising tribal women, safeguarding supplies, carrying secret messages and strengthening resistance against colonial forces.

Their Legacy Lives On: Tribal women played an indispensable role in these struggles—as gatherers of intelligence, protectors of supplies and families, caregivers of the wounded, and custodians of communication. Women from the Koya, Gond, Kurichiya, Kattunayakan, Irula, Toda, Soliga and other communities sustained the resistance through extraordinary courage, endurance, and sacrifice.

Source – Wikipedia and Internet



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