

Sham

INDIA DEVELOPMENT SERVICE NEWSLETTER

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Fall 1983

Editor: Dr. R.L.Kashyap

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financially, albeit in a small way, the operation of these groups can be stabilised.

Hence we will cover one such rural development project in some depth in each issue. We will report on some major projects not financially supported by IDS as well. It is surprising that very few even hear about these projects in the popular press, except when there is a scandal.

We are planning on having 4 issues in a year. We welcome your contributions. If any publicity is needed for a rural development meeting or discussion group, please let us know. When you go to India, please visit at least one rural development project and send us a report for publication in the newsletter. If you have read any interesting book on rural development, please share your views on the book with us.

This is your newsletter. Please make it a success.

WELCOME

This is the first issue of our newsletter dedicated to improving the communication among not only IDS members, but also people devoted to Indian Development, particularly rural development. The main purpose of this newsletter is educational, i.e. to increase our awareness regarding the various rural development projects in India. It is not an exaggeration to say that very few of us have any intimate knowledge of the excellent work in rural development done by relatively small voluntary agencies. Often these agencies are started by a small group of young persons who are highly educated, motivated and idealistic such as Dr Rakesh Popli, Dr Parameswara Rao and others. Their work is particularly hampered by a lack of financial resources. It takes considerable time to tap the resources in India. It is here that the role of voluntary groups in the U.S. such as IDS is crucial. By helping these groups

OUR OFFICE BEARERS

President: Sham Dabadgao  
Treasurer: Sampriti Shah

The board of governors of IDS is open to all who will actively help in its projects. Please call any one of the numbers listed below if you desire to become a member of the board.

Sham Dabadgao: (312)939-0505  
Venkatesh: (513)559-7121 (Res.)  
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## OUR FEATURE R.D. PROJECT

VIKAS BHARATI  
Bishunpur, District Ranchi,  
Bihar 835331.

A research and development project for tribal people.  
Contact: Mr Mahesh Sharma  
Reporter: Dr Rakesh Popli.

### What is Vikas Bharati?

Vikas Bharati represents a journey by a team of young activists having backgrounds in science and technology into the depths of development process, a quest for understanding the basic issues and undercurrents behind the visible contradictions and the distortions in the socio-economic structure of society and, hopefully, a contribution to the ongoing march of the society towards a new horizon. It is a microlevel experiment in the judicious and appropriate application of science and technology through participatory research and social action towards an integrated development of the villages of India.

The place selected for this work is in the tribal area at the four-state junction of Bihar, M.P., Orissa and W.Bengal, known as Jharkhand. Tribal life today faces serious economic and technological stagnation on the one hand, and a steady erosion of their natural environment, community life and cultural values on the other. In spite of abundant natural resources and enormous sums of money poured by the Government in developmental programmes the daily bread continues to pose an uncertainty to most tribal families.

## The Area

The immediate aim will be the integrated development of the people selected in one Block viz. Bishunpur in Ranchi Dt., Bihar. Village Bishunpur is 125 km. from Ranchi on the road to Netarhat. The 68 villages in the block have a total population of 36000, 90% of it being constituted by 19 scheduled tribes and another 2% by scheduled castes. Occupationally, 78% are farmers, 11% agricultural labourers and 3% artisans. However, the land holdings being small and unproductive, most families work as unskilled labourers for a good part of the year. Every year there is a large scale migration to other places, including far-off Haryana and Nagaland, in search of work.

A mere 4% of the land is irrigated. Consequently the agricultural productivity is exceptionally low (5-10 qtls/hectare). The quality of the animals is even worse. The 26000 cows in the block yield only 2000 litres of milk a day. The Block is rich in mineral resources (bauxite) and forest resources, but there is virtually no cottage industry. The literacy is a dismal 18% (1981 census), although 45 primary schools, 9 middle schools and 3 high schools are there.

## The Proposed Program

Attention will have to be paid to agriculture and allied sectors, particularly irrigation, rural industries, entrepreneurship development, education - both formal and non-formal - health education, organization of vulnerable groups and development of science and technology appropriate to the area. Our focus will be on economic growth

and social justice. It is realized, however, that a major stumbling block is a lack of motivation and faith in the people. Therefore, a sociocultural awakening on the basis of national and local culture will be necessary to achieve lasting results. The development of enlightened, committed and dynamic leadership, having its roots firmly in the area, can result only from such an awakening.

At the same time we hope to motivate and help scientists and other intellectuals in the neighbouring universities and research institutes keep in touch with realities of the villages and to re-orient their research and study programs accordingly. We also hope to provide avenues for meaningful village work to college students in the region.

The project will be a judicious combination of voluntary and institutional effort. Funds would come from the Government as well as individuals.

#### Progress Made so far ( March 1983)

The site was selected in 1981. Whole of 1982 was spent in developing contacts at the village, block and district levels and in gaining a broad understanding of the situation. An 8-day regional workshop was held at Bishunpur in May, 82, where 86 students, faculty members, social workers and officials participated, besides some 600 local people attending seminars and meetings. A survey of the entire Block was conducted. That summer several members of the Vikas Bharati team visited a number of rural technology/rural education projects in Bihar, U.P., Maharashtra and Gujarat.

The integrated development program was formally launched on Makar Sankranthi day (Jan. 14), 1983. Two members of the team are currently residing at Bishunpur. Two more are expected to join them in May. Of them, Mahesh Sharma and Rajneesh Arora are research scholars at the Center for Rural Development and Appropriate Technologies, IIT, New Delhi having several years' experience of social work behind them. Another member Ashok Rai also has been a social worker since he completed his M.A. in political science 10 years ago. Two staff members have recently been recruited from the area.

One of the first activities to be started is a training program for tribal students of senior classes of the Bishunpur High School in agriculture, horticulture, chalk-making, soap-making, sewing, poultry, embroidery etc. All these trades can be carried out mostly with local raw materials and would cater to local consumption. Another program in the direction of mobilizing local youth is a small hostel for 30 tribal boys, which will start functioning in March. Considering that a number of students have to walk 5-10 km. to reach the High School, it would be a useful facility. We hope to supplement the educational program of the School as well as gain contacts in the villages through the hostel.

Regular weekly meetings of the youth of the area have started. The instructors working for the adult education and non-formal education program of the Government are in constant touch with us and coordinate their program with ours. The identification of artisans who need training in the new trades is under-

way. We shall shortly send a couple of young men for training in agriculture and dairy techniques in the nearby institutions. The second Regional workshop will be held from 15th to 22nd of May 1983 where a clearer picture of the program for the coming years will emerge. During these two months, the response of the local people has been encouraging.

Activities and Budget for 1983.

	BUDGET (Rs)
1. Training centre for senior school children	40,000
2. Hostel for Tribal boys	10,000
3. Agriculture, dairy and artisan training	10,000
4. Irrigation, drinking water and sanitation (Actual money for construction will come from Govt. This is not mentioned here)	15,000
5. Non-formal Education	27,000
6. Library & Vocation Guidance bureau	25,000
7. Festivals & Exhibitions	10,000
8. Regional Workshop	15,000
9. Rural Technologies: Demonstrations & Training	----
10. Other programs	20,000
11. General administration & miscellaneous	48,000
TOTAL	<u>220,000</u>

Dr. Rakesh Popli got his Ph.D. in Physics from Purdue University in 1979. During his student days in U.S., he was well known not only for his academic brilliance but also for the help he gave to service organizations like I.D.S., V.H.P., F.I.S.I., etc., We at Purdue miss his presence very much. Currently he is with the Indian Inst. of Technology, Kanpur.

## Announcements

### Trusteeship Foundation

20, Jothica

22, N. Bharucha Road

Bombay 400 007

Contact: Mr A. Deshpande

Reporter: Naimish Shah

Trusteeship foundation is a Public Charity Trust founded by the late Jayaprakash Narain. It propagates (and educates all sections of society) the Gandhian Concept of Trusteeship which seeks to define Wealth, Ownership and one's social obligations to the community and promotes a new attitude to life and one's relationship with nature and fellow human beings. The Foundation attempts to achieve its aims and objectives in the following ways:

#### A) Propagation and Education

To create awareness in the community, the Foundation organises international and national conferences and training camps for discussing topics such as trusteeship as an attitude, social responsibility and social audit etc.

#### B) Establishments of Trusteeship Units

To provide concrete models of work and enterprise, the Foundation helps groups with the necessary initial seed or start-up capital to set up a manufacturing or service unit with member-workers between 10 and 100. It tries to secure loans from banks and financial institutions.

It provides legal, managerial and technical expertise and helps them in the selection of personnel and training to assume responsibilities. These units are committed to return the

capital/loan, pay fixed and reasonable return/interest to depositors, share 25% of profits equally amongst workers and spend 25% on community projects, including starting new units.

### Issues in Indian Development

Workshop; (9/83) Organised by: Dr R. Diwan, Dept. of Economics, RPI, Troy, N.Y. 12181

Tel.: (518)270-6386(O)

(518)272-8873(R)

### Topics of Discussion

#### 1. Meaningful Development

What is rural development? Some typical questions are: Is building a road, generating electricity etc. (sort of things the World Bank and Govt. projects do) village development? or Is development providing the poorest and weakest sections the strength and confidence to solve their problems?

#### 2. India's political economy

What is happening to village India today? Is there more food production? Do the government economic policies encourage social violence?

#### 3. Voluntary Groups in India

Who are they? What do they do?

#### 4. Voluntary Groups in U.S.

What are the common threads in the various voluntary groups active in U.S. for helping Indian rural development?

NEWS ITEM

The Wall Street Journal, the major conservative newspaper, well known for its anti Indian polemics had a very favorable article on India on October 18, 1983, entitled " From an Unlikely Place, Good News for a Change". The article by Joan Holmes particularly mentioned that the hope for India lies in its many integrated rural development organizations carried out by voluntary agencies. Some projects mentioned were: The dairy cooperative in Gujerat organized by Dr. Kurien, the Child in Need Institute in Calcutta organized by Dr.S.N.Chaudhari and the Vilas Salunke in Pune dealing with irrigation. The article also acknowledged that India is essentially self-sufficient in food grains on a per capita basis, a fact largely ignored by the U.S.press.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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