

Empowering Today Enriching Tomorrow

50 years on: a severe Drought comes calling in Maharashtra!!!!

From the desk of the CEO



Shri. Prafulla Parakh

Drought, that climatic event which creeps in, ever so slowly and stays for months and maybe years, impacting the ecosystem and thereby affecting all things living. This humanitarian crisis has hit Maharashtra and 3 neighbouring states.

This year, a severe drought, the likes of which have not been experienced during the last 50 years, stares at Maharashtra. All regions in Maharashtra, with the exception of Konkan, have received deficient rainfall during the monsoon of 2012, making the state vulnerable to an unprecedented drought.

Over 12,000 villages in 123 talukas in 16 of the 35 districts of Maharashtra are in severe grip of water scarcity and that includes the whole of Marathwada, which is expected to run out of water by March. Aurangabad, Jalna, Beed and Osmanabad are facing the worst crisis, so are some districts in western and north Maharashtra. An average of 44 percent water has been left in all its 2,468 dams and reservoirs across the state

The state government has initiated means to provide (a) drinking water through a fleet of tankers and plan to use train wagons to carry water 5 lakh litres of water every day over long distances, (b) fodder for animals and (c) shelters for animals. While the state government is doing the best it can, a number of corporate entities and temple trusts have pooled in with financial help.

Looking at the seriousness of the situation, BJS has stepped in. To preempt the effects of social, environmental and economic impact in the affected regions, the need of the hour is to provide relief during the next 4 month or until the rains come. BJS will compliment the work of the government with solid action at ground zero.

With our vast, hands on, experience in managing disasters since 1993, in the aftermath of the Latur earthquake, the Gujarat and J & K earthquakes,

the Tsunami in Tamilnadu and Andamans and floods in Maharashtra and Bihar, we are once again pooling our manpower and material resources to help deal with the drought in Maharashtra. On Feb 26, 2013, BJS called for a meeting of its office bearers from Maharashtra. It was attended by more than 200 volunteers from across the State. As always, our strong network of volunteers have risen to the occasion by giving their time and resources for a coordinated effort to deal with the drought and help reduce its damaging effects. Our volunteers have committed to press their resources, in the service of the needy, be it water, fodder or shelter for animals.

BJS Action Plan:

1. Arrangements for drinking water
2. Tie up with local cow shelters
3. Build shelters for animals
4. Provide fodder for animals
5. Appeal to Jain Sadhus and Sadhavis to communicate BJS action plan during their discourses.
6. Coordinate with respective Zilla Administrations.

An Appeal

BJS requests all those who can join us in our endeavour to provide relief, do contact the BJS HO



BJS in Teacher Training

BJS has designed and developed innovative teacher training program to upgrade the professional teaching skills of existing school teachers in the country. The BJS team of educational experts have identified and analyzed the gap between the present average skills of teachers and the required & desired skills as outlined in NCF for teacher education. This gap analysis was utilized to design few specific short term modules to equip the teachers to enhance their performance in classroom practices, widen their perspective, expand their knowledge base and further develop their personality.

A concern is raised in the RTE act that one of the problems of inadequate quality of education in most schools is poorly equipped teachers. The NCF for Teacher Education states that the quality and extent

of learner achievement are determined primarily by teacher competence, sensitivity and motivation. The National Knowledge Commission has observed that the country is facing a severe shortage of qualified and motivated school teachers. They have recommended that the current models of teacher education are required to redesign their courses. This clearly indicates that a fundamental restructuring of the present teachers training programs & methodology is essential. In synch with the policy makers, BJS thought it fit to brainstorm on the issues and come out with practical & pragmatic solutions. BJS has trained over 600 primary teachers using these modules and the evidence gathered so far suggests that with innovative training methods the classroom performances of the teachers have improved substantially.

Greatness in Humility



Unable to pay picnic fee, Class VII boy kills self'TNN Jan 21, 2013 - BERHAMPUR
Class IX student stabs teacher to death in Chennai'PTI February 09, 2012
Boy commits suicide after parents questioned his English'PTI January 16, 2013- SALEM
Crimes involving kids go up from 0.8% to 11.8% in ten years'Zee News - Tuesday, Jul 10, 2012

One is just dumfounded at what children can do! We may feel sad, angry or helpless, or may even deny or justify such acts! What is even more disturbing is that these have become so 'common place' that one may just turn a blind eye to it. Can we afford such maladies? Have we not always been a peace-loving society that values non-violence? Every respected 'Education Commission' says that education in India has grossly failed in its role of developing children into wholesome and responsible human beings. National Policies on Education and curriculum frameworks strongly recommend cultivation and nurture of desirable values among children. Even the Planning Commission (1992) and Parliament (1996) had appointed special Committees. Extensive recommendations we given - including holding separate classes on value education, promoting education about religions, integrating value education within curricular subjects, gearing every school-based transaction for promoting values etc. The NCERT even initiated a Resource Centre on Value Education, published position papers on Peace Education, and very recently brought out the framework on education for values.

Education activists filed petitions challenging provisions on education about religions as being unconstitutional (Sept 2002); lawyers filed PILs in courts of law for directives on value education(April 2012) ; and MPs even raised the issue in the Parliament (Aug 2012)! But all this remains within the confines of the policy documents, court orders and only expression of intents.

In the midst of this hue and cry across the nation, here, in Maharashtra has been a passionate social entrepreneur, grounded in reality, humbly doing his bit, but in a big way and with big dreams of building a value-oriented society! He is not in the lime light. Neither has he knocked the doors of media, courts or Parliament; nor is he just criticizing the non-functionality of the government. He has been quietly experimenting with a value education initiative - '*Mulyavardhan*' with 500 government schools covering 35,000 children in the backward district of Beed and Jalgaon in Maharashtra, trying to implement what his inner voice tells him and what experts/ policies say.

He is Shantilalji Muttha - a great man - who rightly fits the description given by eminent writer John Ruskin - 'The first test of a truly great man is his humility. By humility I don't mean doubt of his powers or hesitation in speaking his opinion, but merely an understanding of the relationship of what he can say and what he can do.' Having taken the challenge of integrating workable and tested value education models within the education system in the entire country let us be rest assured that this would one day become a reality.

Cambridge University Technical Services (CUTS) Team visits BJS Mulyavardhan project



Dr. David Whitebread and Dr. Sanjana Mehta from CUTS, U.K. expressing their views on Mulyavardhan.

BJS was honored to receive its friends - the eminent researchers and educationists Dr. David Whitebread and Dr. Sanjana Mehta from CUTS, U.K. They interacted with children, teachers and other staff of four schools in Mulyavardhan's field areas and also with staff of BJS. Although the CUTS team had conducted an impact assessment of Mulyavardhan in schools in 2010-11, this visit provided them a first-hand exposure to the school context in which Mulyavardhan is being implemented.

They provided important insights for enriching and improving Mulyavardhan further. Appreciating that the strength of Mulyavardhan lies in its people who are committed and talented, and in the effective management and monitoring systems; they suggested changes in the content, process and pedagogy. Value dilemmas or conflicts are challenges that all of us, including children, face. How we resolve them is a matter of choice and decision making. Hence, in order to equip children to make healthy and appropriate choices, they should be provided with such opportunities in the classroom setting using experiential methods including vigorous discussion. Problem situations/ incidents in the community can also be used as learning opportunities for children. Professional confidence among teachers will enable them to undertake such challenging tasks and make the entire process learner-centric, they explained.

BJS National President Shri Shantilal Muttha visits villages and schools in the Mulyavardhan field area.

This is for the first time since the inception of Mulyavardhan in 2009, that Shantilalji decided to visit its field - the Patoda and Ashti talukas of Beed district in Maharashtra. Being a native of the village Dongarkinhi in Patoda taluka, he was well aware of the context. It was his conscious decision not to visit these areas in person until the Initiative gained ground due to the quality of its delivery, and pitch in at a time when it gained acceptance. After four years now, it was the perfect time to talk to children, teachers, principals and people of the community in person. It was time to strengthen partnerships with them in order to make value-education more impactful.

He visited seven villages in two days - on the 14th and 15th Feb 2013. Children, parents, school teachers, village panchayat members and other villagers had gathered in large numbers on prior intimation. The event in each village/ school was marked by cultural performance by children, speeches by eminent members such as education officers of the *Zilla Parishad* and school authorities; most importantly an extremely active & inspiring interface with Shantilalji.

He expressed deep concern about several impediments in the development of children - an important one being erosion of value systems in society and their impact on children. He called upon every member of the village to shoulder the responsibility of nurturing values in children, so necessary for their growth and progress. It is a great challenge, but can be achieved by working together - BJS-Mulyavardhan, school, the community members, village panchayat members. The entire taluka would eventually 'shine' on the map of India as an 'ideal' taluka, he assured.

One can describe Shantilalji as a Human Magnet. In rapt attention, the audience listened and spoke out, as he engaged them in a dialogue. Even the otherwise shy mothers confidently shared their views before the audience and spoke positively about Mulyavardhan. Of course, it was his humility and skill that brought out their confidence to speak.



Social Development

Parichay Sammelan A Pathfinder

Marriage and Career are two most crucial decisions every adult needs to take at some point or the other. Selection of Mr or Miss Right often creates dilemma. Traditionally, elders of the community used to help young men and women in this selection. However, in the absence of match-making aunties it has become more and more difficult to tie marital knots of ambitious young people.

Geographical distances, high pressure jobs and strong aspirations reduce the possibility of meeting of such would be brides and bridegrooms.

BJS provides a common platform to all such prospective men and women. The novel concept of 'Parichay Sammelan' especially for career conscious qualified professionals of the Jain community was obviously welcomed in the above situation.

Parichay Sammelan aims at:

- Comfortable and favourable atmosphere
- Opportunity for open and fair interaction
- Prospect of voicing their opinions
- Comprehensive database of all the participants
- Relative saving of time, money and energy



सुखी परिवार, प्रगती का आधार

Some Upcomming Events

- On Air ... The Biography of Shri. Shantilal Muttha "Udyamshil Samajvrati" every Tuesday at 10:20 on FM radio on ARI (Pune Kendra)
- Empowerment of Couples (EOC) Program.....2-3 March 2013 at Bangalore, KA
- Parichay Sammelan.....3rd March 2013 at Chidambaram, TN
- National Council Meeting of BJS.....8th & 9th March 2013 at Aamby Valley, MH
- National Council Meeting of Federation of Jain Educational Institute (FJEI).....9th & 10th March 2013 at Aamby Valley, MH
- Office Bearers Training Program.....9th & 10th March at Hampi, KA
- Empowerment of Girls (EOG) Program.....21st-23rd March 2013 at Baitul, MP

Connect with BJS!

We would love to hear from you...

We look forward to your views, opinions, any ideas, suggestions, complaints, compliments, something new, anything nice.....

Talk to us through email / facebook.

Volunteer

with your time, skills and talent at BJS. Look in at our website www.bjsindia.org to know what we do.

If you feel inclined, get in touch and do contact us.

We would certainly welcome and appreciate your talent and time.

We would love to have you with us.

BJS on Facebook



Connect with BJS !!

To connect <http://www.facebook.com/BJSPune>

Join By clicking the 'Like' button;

Give comments on Status Updated, participate in Discussions, Contribute your Views, Share Photo / Video / News of events.

Send feedback, ask your friends / relatives to join BJS - Facebook Community Page.

Jain Minority

Congratulations to Shri U Sudhir Lodha on his appointment as member of the Tamilnadu Minority Commission.

Note: Students from the Jain community can avail of financial schemes announced by states that have notified Jains as minority.

The highlights of BJS processes

national concern

focusing on selected domains that contribute to nation-building

social sensitivity

researching in-depth issues to address needs across the society

developmental innovation

strategizing novel ideas to align development within established frameworks

participatory process

enthusing all stakeholders for involved implementations

sustainable solutions

implementing workable, scalable and replicable models

meaningful impact

touching millions through our work!!