

Adopted Village Kandalei, Khurda, Odisha

The progress we make is not defined by where we are; it is defined by the struggle



we have endured to reach that stage.

India is a country of diversity and so are our states and regions. The diversity extends from culture to food habits, source of origin to the current access to development. However, it is not the differences that divide the segments of society; it is our inability to



recognise and accept those differences. This is what lures the attention of people, who seek to mitigate those disparities through individual or organizational deeds. ASSRA has laid stress upon the dire fundamental demands of citizens since the very inception



of this NGO, streamlining activities to encourage education, fair involvement of women, employment and cherishing community building.

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Turning back to the time when we started, it was from a village



in Odisha; the place was nearly inaccessible through normal human ways. "Kandalei" is a village inside Chandaka Sanctuary, about 18 KM from Smart City Bhubaneswar under Chhtabara Block of Khurda

District of Odisha. This is a village none other than the



'NAGADA' a tribal village



Kandalei within the dense forest of Chandaka range, Jatni constituency. The remote secluded village hosts a limited number of around 200 kolho community people, most of them being daily labourers.



ASSRA adopted Kandalei Village in the year 2013. The motive was clear- to bring about a transformation so-as-to enhance their connectivity with the outer world.



Comprehending the difference between liberty and orthodoxy is better once we understand what it's like to live life anyway and to live it for a purpose. The Kandalei village in Odisha now smiles; it once failed to distinguish the

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independent India's flag. The 36 families who had established themselves since 1962



appeared devoid of even meagre living conditions, set aside the implementation of government run initiatives on account of not being a part of any specific tribe. Children were devoid of any education and primary



health facilities seemed far-fetched for the villagers. After the appointment of 2 primary



teachers by government from May 2013, no particular school building was built. The men of the family worked as day wagers in the nearby cities and the ladies spent their time taking care of the house.



With the help of ASSRA and the frequent visits by the



volunteers, there was gradual interaction with the local inhabitants and meetings were also held to understand their needs. The people were taught about maintaining basic hygiene, using soaps, involving women in productive activities and raising awareness about education.



Pursuing its vision, ASSRA with the help of local teachers and sarpanch worked day in and day out to raise awareness and even celebrated the

70th Independence Day. The flag was hoisted by a tribal 5th



class student Pitin Chatar in the presence of the social activists Sushant Sahu, Sripati Acharya, Panchanan Samal, Mihirkanta Praharaj and the local teacher Pabitra Mohan Nayak.



Several newspapers appreciated the effort by writing a column for the same.

As the tale moves ahead and the local issues start getting addressed, in the year 2016, with the support of the New Delhi based – Association for Social Service and Rehabilitation of the Aged (ASSRA)



the villagers constructed their own road. The programme was controlled by social activist Susanta Sahu and the other social activists Prasanta Kumar Ghadei, Sripati Acharya, Gopi Mohan Pattanaik and Kulamani Mallick helped them. Not only this, but also a



request was raised by the villagers that the Government should pay due attention and construct proper roads. For the



first time, a unique festival was initiated as well as celebrated by the NGO within the



tribals of Kandalei Village with special Odia cakes on the eve of Odia Nava Barsa. The very well-known cakes of Odisha the Manda, Gaintha, Chakuli, Chitau, Suji kakara, Arisa, Idli etc. were prepared and the local school



teacher, Kanaklata Mishra, the head mistress of Arisol, Upper Primary school and Arnapura Dei the teacher, Pamalaya Nath of Gamei



upper primary school helped them organise the program. The programme was inaugurated by the local head Master Pabitra Mohan Nayak, and controlled by the social activists Sushanta



Sahu, Priyabrata Panda, Er.Basudev Mishra. At last the



trainer cum teachers were honoured by ASSRA in the form of tribal paintings.

Apart from this, a number of steps have been taken since the adoption of the village for subduing the development process. ASSRA helped construct a School building in the village and the government provided two teachers. Many kids after



completing the 6th class have joined other govt. aided residential schools in the state for higher education. Learning seems to be making its way down the growing



minds of those secluded children. Community building has been strengthened by promoting mutual understanding among the family members, including respecting the elders, developing



association among co-habitants, and celebrating occasions like Annual Day at school, Father's Day, conducting painting workshops etc. Women empowerment has always been at the heart of all improving social enlightenment efforts. ASSRA has been holding hands with the local

people to stir up better income opportunities like mushroom cultivation, helping keep the neighbourhood clean and cottage industries.

Lives revolve around the highs and lows. Persistent and focussed teamwork results in unparalleled outputs, no doubt. But the hard times call for even stronger team bonding while facing the challenges together.



Such was the scenario when cyclone FANI hit Odisha; some areas hit badly and others even worse. There were multiple hideous consequences including lack of



access to any food, health stay safe. The Cyclone Tin Roof of the school ASSRA, being blown away through it's effort again Hope has come back to the students are again getting



support or even places to FANI witnessed the whole building, constructed by in the year 2019. ASSRA reconstructed the building. people affected and many proper education in that

govt. aided school; besides the hall being used by the villagers for various purposes. Many livelihood activities like Mushroom Farming, Goatery & Poultry was imparted among the village women to contribute to the family income in the past 4 years.

The Journey Continues.....