

ADRA India Calls For a Collective Effort to Celebrate Van Mahotsav

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Port Blair, June 30: 'Van Mahotsava', a month long festival, will be celebrated in the islands too along with the rest of the country commencing from 1st of July 2008. During this festival, the government departments, non-government organizations, educational institutions and other stake holders chalk out various functions individually to spread a message i.e. to save our fragile eco system.

Since the goal of celebrating the mahotsava is the same, this year ADRA India, a global humanitarian organization, decided to call on the stake holders especially the non-governmental organizations for a collective effort in order to send a strong message across.

To materialize the plan, the Project Manager, A&N Islands for ADRA India, Shri Stanzin Dawa called a meeting of the stake holders at the conference hall of ADRA office at 3.30 pm today. The meeting attended by NOGs that included, Butterflies, Save The Children, Human Law Network and the Press Club of A&N Islands after a long deliberation the stake holders finally decided to celebrate the festival in a collective manner. Programs like planting of saplings, drawing competition, quiz competition, environment awareness rally were among the few that were decided upon for this year's Mahotsava. Letters to join the collective campaign were also sent to the Government agencies to make this year's celebration a grand success.



Representatives of various non-government agencies attend the meeting called by ADRA India

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Success story of a tsunami victim

Ray of hope

"Starting life again after the tsunami in a new place with new people was a very tough process. But after joining ADRA's project on backyard agro forestry and nursery I met with many women and today they are my good friends..."



Vasanthi with her new friends at Chouldhari Intermediate Shelter. Photo: Stanzin Dawa

Vasanthi 29 year old married woman from Chouldhari intermediate shelter has her own story of coping with the traumas and sufferings caused by Tsunami. The Tsunami had separated Vasanthi from her husband for almost 30 days. She was shifted to Chennai and spent one month in a marriage banquet hall.

With the approaching of marriage season in Chennai she was forced to vacate the banquet hall with mere 2000 rupees donated by different people during her stay at the banquet hall. With a one rupee ticket, she came back to the islands in a ship with a hope to find her husband alive. Many people tried to convince and condole her assuming the death of her husband in Tsunami.

"...deep in my heart I had an intuition that my husband must be alive somewhere. With great hope I started searching for my husband while extensively traveling to different places in Port Blair", Vasanthi narrated while talking to Andaman Chronicle.

"I was almost shattered and negative thoughts started eating me up..." Not willing to give up I continued my search and one fine day I got the news that my husband is 'alive' in Nirmala School Camp."

"...tears of joy and happiness started rolling from my face. I must thank God for uniting me again with my husband. I don't have kids and losing him is losing my life, my dream and my world."

They met after 35 days and started living together since then in the intermediate shelter at Chouldhari.

"Starting life again after the Tsunami in a new place with new people was a very tough process. But after joining ADRA's project on backyard agro forestry and nursery I met with many women and today they are my good friends."

"The project has not only helped me in improving my income and standard of living but also in adjusting me and my husband in a new environment with new people in a healthier and happier way."

Today she is an integral part of the community and actively involved in different activities at the community level.

"Today I am proud of myself as I am also earning for myself and my family and my husband is also happy as I am not asking for money for running my house," said Vasanthi with a big smile on her face.

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Greening Campaign Rally 2008 Organised by ADRA India In Association with Press Club

There is nothing permanent in this world except the change:
C. Targay, IAS



Port Blair, July, 28: The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) in collaboration with Press Club of Andaman & Nicobar Islands as media partner initiated the "Green Campaign 2008". The Campaign started with a mass sensitization program through a rally participated by 1000 people including students, teachers, government officials, NGOs, and concerned citizen.

The campaign was flagged off by Director of Education, Shri Udaya Kumar. The Greening Campaign 2008 aims to preserve forests for future generations and promote public awareness of the importance of trees among schools, communities, civil groups and businesses. ADRA has made a plantation target of 14,000 trees and under the auspices of the Greening Campaign 2008, ADRA planted 6000 plants and in the process of completing the remaining 8,000 trees in the coming month. The participants were shown documentary film "Climate Change: An untold Story".

Shri. C. Targay, Chief Secretary A&N Administration was the chief guest. In his address he said, "There is nothing permanent in this world except

Continued on page 3



'Greening campaign' by ADRA, PCANI launched

People urged to protect isles environment in right earnest



Port Blair, July 29

The greening campaign launched here today by ADRA, an NGO, together with the Press Club of Andaman and Nicobar Islands saw a reasonably good response with hundreds of school children participants in the event. The pupils from different schools of the city with placards in their hands and shouting slogans which were coined to highlight the importance of the event, marched through various places here right from Girls School – Marina Park area and the rally later culminated at Dr B R Ambedkar with a well orga-

nized function in which the Chief Secretary, Shri Chhering Targay was the chief guest. Environment is an important component in everyone's life and therefore, it needs to be ensured that it is not disturbed at any cost and its importance is not lost sight of, the Chief Secretary observed. "As for this island territory, we have a fragile ecosystem here which too is required to be protected and preserved in the right earnest, he wanted, stating that although the environmental situation in this part of the country is not alarming but this territory in the distant past cer-

tainly had witnessed indiscriminate cutting of forests – particularly some timbers of special species. This, he felt, should not have happened in the greater interest of the people here. The Chief Secretary was of the opinion that need-based exploitation surely restricts the damage to environment. One should also ponder over how to reduce further damage caused to the environment and ecology, he added. Shri Targay said that the Administration works as per the response from the public. It is for the public to make the govt. aware of what are their concerns and what actually they

want the govt. to do, he observed.

Having a word to the students, the Chief Secretary urged upon them to maintain good discipline in their life beginning from personal level, being in the community and the society. "By maintaining a disciplined life one can achieve success in his future endeavors".

Shri Targay also gave the Green Ambassador certificates to the school staff. He also handed over saplings of some plants to the students for planting it at their respective schools. Among others, who spoke on the occasion included Shri

Ashok Chand, SP Andaman, Shri MA Salim, President, Press Club of A & N Islands and Dr R N Prasad, Principal DIET. Informing about ADRA India, the organizers of the programme, its Project Manager, Shri Stanzin Dawa said the organization in collaboration with the Press Club of A & N Islands as media partner has initiated 'Green campaign 2008: Clean Islands Green Islands'. Earlier, the Director, Education, Shri Uday Kumar blessed the students from Marina Park from where the rally was flagged off.

Women SCs quince keep interest in EOD

Major marine silviculture project

From a trainee to a trainer

Success story of a tsunami victim

Pushpa, Bamboo Flat (South Andaman) 32 years old married woman lives with her husband and in laws in the temporary shelter. Like many women, her world was also shattered by the hostile Tsunami. It was difficult for her to get a job with 12th pass education qualification and she was desperately looking for a job to support her family. She got an opportunity to attend a training programme organized by ADRA and now she is a confident and empowered woman working as field facilitator with ADRA project in the community. Today she is not only earning her own livelihood but also helping hundreds of women in improving their livelihood situation in crisis.

"Initially it was difficult to make them understand the benefits of backyard farming. It was perhaps that the tsunami affected families had become used to getting free gifts in the form of house hold articles, clothes etc. from different organizations who came prior to ADRA", said Pushpa, Field Facilitator working in the Intermediate shelters at Bamboo Flat for ADRA.

"But through our persistent efforts, the tsunami affected families realized the significance of backyard agro forestry. They soon realized that we intended to support them by empowering the community through trainings and technical support in practicing back yard agro forestry"

With a big smile Pushpa shared, "today in my community 106 families have benefited through backyard agro forestry. They have learnt the art of growing vegetables for their own consumption as well as for selling the surplus production".



Pushpa, the field facilitator.

"My happiest moment while working with the project was when a beneficiary came to me with a basket full of vegetables. This is for you DiDi! It is all because of your support, guidance and encouragement that we are able to produce vegetables in our backyard", she said.

"We are ensuring the sustainability of backyard agro forestry by promoting vermicompost, quick compost and nurseries in the families and community. The availability of nurseries in the community ensures easy access to seedlings and samplings with low cost. Kitchen wastes are used for vermicompost for enriching the soil in their backyard agro forestry. Quick compost gives them an alternative livelihood options by selling the compost to the families in the community."

Pushpa goes to the families, lives with them, listens to them, understands their problem and works with them on a daily basis with a weekly plan of action in consultation with ADRA's technical team.