

## **FROM THE DESK OF PRESIDENT**

*It is indeed a great honour to present to you Santiniketan Ratanpalli Vivekananda Adibasi Kalyan Samity's (SEVAKS) Annual Report on its activities in Birbhum District. I am happy to comeback to you through this column to share some ideas in our common combat against HIV/AIDS and disabled, SEVAKS is devoted to promote upliftment of the socio-economically backward sector's of the society and is implementing a few action plans in order to create self reliant and progressive society in Birbhum District. To achieve the said objectives some programmes were implemented during the year under report and such programme includes Integrated Education for Disabled, STD/HIV/AIDS, Voluntary Blood Donation Camp, Thalassaemia, Pulse Polio Immunisation, formation and Nurturing of Self-Help Groups and Education for Child Labours. In addition to that, a number of awareness programme, seminars and workshops on HIV/AIDS, Thalassaemia, Motivation & Recruitment on Voluntary Blood Donation, RCH, and Disabled were organized as an initiative towards developmental objectives.*

*Taking steps towards development is a very hard task when the target group is economically backward – socially, educationally and culturally depressed, infrastructurally decentralized and encircled with age-old taboos, superstitious on habits which are detrimental to their interest so far as growth and development is concerned. Our target groups are mostly SC/ST and economically depressed, poorest of the poor section or people work in risk areas and who faces difficulties because most of the beneficiaries belonging to the aforesaid categories do not understand aims and objectives of ongoing programme due to their illiteracy, lack of*

*knowledge and experience which give rise to superstitious. Once it is backed by negatively motivated persons it creates tremendous trouble in achieving the objectives. Considering this aspect we took proper and adequate measures for awareness generation through information, education and communication so that we may not face difficulty while implementing a project. We believe if it is done we shall be in a position to achieve our objectives with full cooperation of the target group backed by proper awareness and experience.*

*This report is an attempt to reflect transparency in how we work. It is also a small but significant step sharing the experience, knowledge and lessons learnt at SEVAKS. We hope that this report will become an annual tradition and would appreciate your suggestions as to how we can improve upon it in the future.*

*In this connection we convey our deepest thanks to our staff who in spite of their personal difficulties worked sincerely and sympathetically for the cause of the economically depressed target groups. We also convey our heartiest thanks to all donors, Government officials, N.G.O.s and advisors, social activists and all concerned persons and organizations for extending their cooperation and assistance for the implementation of our plan programmes.*

*Mr. Sushil Kumar Chowdhury  
PRESIDENT, SEVAKS  
Santíníketan, Bírbum*

# *ANNUAL REPORT 2006-2007*

## *1. INTEGRATED EDUCATION FOR DISABLED (IED)*

### **A. Introduction**

Just a decade ago the disabled children, especially those living in the rural areas, could not even dream that they have some philanthropic souls to think for them and to try their best to juxtapose them with the multitude of general students without any deformity in them, be it Mental, Physical or anything abnormal. So came forward Santiniketan Vivekananda Adibasi Kalyan Samity (SEVAKS) to meet-up the needs of the disabled children in the fields of their education and vocational trainings. As a matter of fact, India has for decades been famous for its voluntary agencies, their mechanism and methods of collaboration. SEVAKS is also a voluntary organization. If it is given certain incentives and is provided with the requisite facilities and are not looked upon with disfavour by officials, it can ensure better results in the social and economic arenas. It is true that voluntary bodies, especially those working at the grass root level, can render service of which official agencies and their staff are incapable. When Birbhum district aimed at spreading literacy to all, it was observed that a large section of children is far away from the light of education because of their deformities. No nation can progress if a portion of her total population is left out from any programme. It needs involvement of all people in any programme. Rightly Birbhum District Primary Education Programme tries to address the illiteracy problem especially among the disabled children along with the normal students. Rural people still believe that physical deformity is a curse and children with such deformity are always an object of ridicule and fun. S.S.M., Birbhum have done much to remove the above-mentioned prejudices of some people.

It goes to the credit of S.S.M. that this has enhanced Literacy percentage almost to the full target in Birbhum district.

### **B. Aims and Objectives**

Every plan and program has some objectives. S.S.M. is not an exception to it. If we try to sum-up the motto of S.S.M.; it reads like;

1. Disabled children are not disabled any longer.
2. They can compete with general students. They have right to read and learn with general students.
3. They can earn their living by themselves.
4. Extension of every kind of facility to the disabled children in their reading and learning process.
5. To give home service where necessary.
6. To teach them the lesson of self help.

Therefore, to ensure all the above-mentioned facilities to disabled children is the main objectives of Sarva Siksha Mission.

### **C. Executive Summary**

By keeping the lofty mission in mind, 28 special educators are rendering their services to the disabled students both in primary schools and giving home services to them. The term deformity embraces a lot of problems that the children face from the very moment of their birth or after birth as an aftermath of an accident in life. So acquired or congenital deformity is dealt equal care and tenderness. We have three kinds of special educators working in their respective fields like M.R., H.I. and V.I. the areas they cover are Nalhati-I and II, Rampurhat II, Suri I, Illambazar, Nanoor, and Bolpur blocks. It is more important to point out that the rural disabled children of these blocks are equally competing with the normal students in schools or in the playgrounds. Their pictures in action as are shown in the concerning offices like S.I. office, S.S.M. office, DLRO (SEVAKS) office and in magazines testify to this fact.

### **D. Programme Planned / Implemented**

With a view to achieving total success of the programme as taken by S.S.M. and DLRO (SEVAKS) a unique plan has been taken. The plan and services of the special educators are as follows:

#### **i. Services in their Educational institutions:**

In most of the Primary Schools some numbers of disabled children have been found initially by the concerning school teachers and then by the special Educators of the different areas. Then a special camp is held with the disabled children where expert doctors of different branches come and examine them and also offer their valuable suggestion regarding treatment and operations also. This camp is held in Block level for the convenience of the disabled children. This camp runs with the help of the special educators who tick primarily the deformities of the disabled children and final checking is made by expert doctors. When it is found that the disabled children need more special help and guideline in the process of their reading and learning with the normal students, the special educators pay regular visits to the concerned schools. They hold healthy discussions with the teachers first about how to behave with the disabled students. Because their school teachers are their regular friends. Then the special educators take initiative to teach the disabled students in their schools with their normal friends.

#### **ii. Service at Dwelling Sets (home based):**

Not only so but also the special educators pay regular visits in their homes and with a great many scientific appliances and special teaching aids they teach them. What is more important in the matter of home services is that the disabled students are more and more interested to learn with the help of their parents who are again taught by our special educators – the way of teaching a disabled child. As a result in the absence of the special educators they get a whole time teacher. Without the special educators the training of the parents as well as of the students would not be possible.

### **iii. Service to the Society:**

It has been found that many people of the rural areas do not even know that their disabled children may be imparted proper education. It is because that they found no one to think for their deformed children. When SEVAKS took a programme for educating their disabled children they began to see some unknown faces to pay visits to their local primary schools. In course of time they came to know that these unknown faces are the special educators for their disabled children. From then on the community became aware that those children born with physical deformity are not a pest of the society but they can do a lot for the society. A Special Educator by holding discussions among the villagers have created a mass awareness about the teaching of their disabled children. Without the special educators who cycle from village to village, from school to school, no such mass publicity was possible. Because most of the villagers have no connection with mass media like radio and T.V. So the living mass media like special educators play a great role to the ignorant villagers. They get necessary information from them. They get education for their children from them and they themselves are enriched about what prospects are laying ahead for their disabled children.

### **E. Bottlenecks**

No sensible man can deny that without proper number of workers no plan or programme can be totally successful. Our survey report says that every school has disabled children in the average. But the number of special educators is not adequate to the need. So more special educators are needed to guide the disabled children properly. So far, as the number of the special educators is not raised, daily-meet with the disabled children is not possible. So it may be expected that more special educators will be appointed to render service to the students who need special care and help in school or at home. So shortage of staff is a great bottleneck in making this noble plan feasible and fruitful.

### **F. Future Plan**

Keeping in mind the improvement of the disabled children SEVAKS are trying to solve the above mentioned problems. More special educators are likely to be employed in the different fields of special teaching to the disabled children. What is most needed is that the parents of the disabled children should be brought into a Block Level training camp where they should be taught how to prevent congenital deformities first then they should be taught how to behave with an abnormal child, how to make him understand that in spite of being handicapped he is not lagging behind from a normal student in reading and learning. Deformity is deformity. Notwithstanding some cases like deaf and dumb, blind and mentally retarded and also severe cerebral palsy children should be taken greater care in their homes and schools. Necessary teaching materials should be supplied to them free of cost. A blind student can not learn a little unless they are provided with Braille Slate, Stylus and Braille papers. These are not available in local rural markets and most of the guardians are unaware of these also. So the society has decided that all the necessary materials will be supplied to the disabled children in the very – very near future. The plan of the society is to bring the disabled children to the front fore of these days tough competition.

## G. Picture at a Glance

Here is a Block wise picture of the children who need special help and also service provided to them by the special educators of SEVAKS.

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	M.R.	V.I.	H.I.	O.H.	Others	Total	No. of School covered
1.	Nalhati-I	120	84	201	260	54	719	116
2.	Nalhati-II	086	62	104	135	40	427	060
3.	Rampurhat -II	130	60	090	180	70	530	095
4.	Nanoor	077	73	111	154	36	451	108
5.	Suri-I	084	56	056	127	72	395	084
6.	Illambazar	075	46	055	130	31	337	102
7.	Bolpur	077	84	082	191	62	496	095

**Grand total disable children covered :3355**

**Grand total primary school covered : 660**

## 2. WORLD DISABLED DAY

Among many global problems the problem of the children who need special help, is a burning one and it has appealed all human souls that something has to be done for these helpless children. So a day in the caption of “WORLD DISABLED DAY” was fixed. It is on **3<sup>rd</sup> December** of each year. On this day many plans and programmes are taken for the upliftment of the disabled children in the global context. Likewise the world Disabled Day was observed by Santiniketan Vivekananda Adibasi Kalyan Samity at Bolpur on 03.12.2006. It was observed with much pomp and show. A grand procession with a multitude of students, teachers, guardians, moved along the township areas creating much enquiries among the common people. Many elites, dignitaries, well wishers, concerning authorities took part in the function with greater heartiness and responsibility because the function was meant for the upliftment of disabled children.

After the rally was completed, a cultural function started with the disabled children. Many items like highlighting personal problems in the process of reading and learning was highlighted by the students themselves. This was much appreciated by the audience and they paid their rapt attention to the speeches of the students. This has improved the society much because practical problems of the students came to the fore through discussions and speeches. Then followed recitation, dance and song programmes. The common men earned the conviction that the disabled children are no longer pest to the society. They have enough capacity to take part in a cultural function in spite of their debility.

Then followed sit and draw competition. The paintings of the disabled children asserted the fact that they may be flanked by Leonardo-Da-Vinchi in future if a little more training and facilities are provided to them.

The function came to an end with the prize giving ceremony in the afternoon. The chief guest gave away the prizes making an earnest request to us so that we may stretch our helping hands to these disabled children and care them as our own brothers and sisters or sons and daughters.

### **3. MASS AWARENESS ON INTEGRATED EDUCATION FOR DISABLED**

It is needless to point out that the Poush Mela of Santiniketan is an international occurrence. Here we find many native as well as alien visitors to pay their much-coveted visit to this renowned place, which is coated with the memory of the world poet as well as Noble laureate Rabindranath Tagore. Aptly this is the most convenient place for spreading any kind of knowledge and information through sketches, pictures, data and cultural function.

In the last Poush Mela of 2006 a stall was set up there from 23<sup>rd</sup> December 06 to 26<sup>th</sup> December 06 and it was inaugurated by Mr. Jayanta Sukul, ACMOH, Bolpur. Many dignitaries spent their valuable time in the stall by establishing friendly rapport with those who expressed their eagerness to know something about the disabled children, their prospect of education, their ways of livelihood, their job assurance and many others enquires about them. This was very- very effective because visitors got direct answers from the elites and the Special Educators through question-answer method. No camp, no workshop, no propaganda can be so fruitful as a direct link was established there between two sides. Moreover, a large number of educated personalities offered their valuable advice and mentioned the name of a lot of disabled students who have come in contact with them as a student. Respected Sri Manasa Hansda, Sabhadhipati, Birbhum Zilla Parishad, Suri, Sri Milan Singha, Chairman, Bolpur Municipality, Dr. Jayanta Sukul, ACMOH, Bolpur, Dr. Subhabrata Ghosh, Superintendent of Bolpur Sub-Divisional Hospital, APD, State Sarva Siksha Mission, West Bengal, ADPO, Sarva Siksha Mission, Birbhum, Mrs. Kanjilal, Income Tax Commissioner, Kolkata Division, Mr. S. K. Roy Choudhury, Assistant Labour Commissioner, Birbhum, Mr. Susil Choudhuri, President, Santiniketan Vivekananda Adibasi Kalyan Samity, Mr. Niknil Kr. Sinha, Secretary, Santiniketan Vivekananda Adibasi Kalyan Samity and many others added to the grace and dignity of the awareness camp.

Apart from this Poush Mela the Society set up a stall at Dhannasara, Birbhum from 09.02.06 to 12.02.06. This was inaugurated by Mr. Tapan Roy, the honourable Minister, Jana Siksha Prasar, Govt. of West Bengal. Besides, a lot of officials were present at this stall. They are Mr. Manasha Hansda, honourable Sabhadhipati, Birbhum Zilla Parishad, Mr. Tapan Kumar Som, District Magistrate, Birbhum. The objective of setting up a stall is to make local people aware of the services offered to the disabled children by the Special Educators of the Society.

Another stall is set up at Layekbazar, Bolpur during 28<sup>th</sup> September 2006 to 1<sup>st</sup> October 2006 on the Holy occasion of Sharadiya Durga Puja Festival. Leaflets, handbills were distributed and printed pictures were shown to dispel the prejudices and wrong belief of common men about the disabled children. It was explained to them that deformity is not a curse and we have a lot of things to do for them and in turn they can do a lot of things for us also and can enhance the national prestige through games and sports. What is more important about setting up stalls and running workshops at different places is that they can educate rural people about the hollowness of some prevalent social customs or misbelief about the disabled children.

### **4. ARTIFICIAL LIMBS & CALIPER FOR DISABLED**



Here is a piece of good news for the disabled children that our society has organized a screening camp for Orthopedic disabled to provide them with artificial limbs and caliper shoes in support of Sri Jaina Hospital, Howrah on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2007 at Bolpur Rotary Bhavan. The programme was inaugurated by Sri Utpal Biswas, S.D.O., Bolpur and Sri Sushil Chowdhury, President, SEVAKS, Sri Shyamal Das, Rotary Club of Bolpur-Santiniketan were also present there. From this screening camp total 50 Orthopedic Handicapped persons were selected for the purpose. Beside that we have conducted a Gram Panchayet(GP)Level assessment camps for disabled at 60 Gram Panchayet and 3 Municipalities under seven blocks in the month of November 2006 at Birbhum district. Total 1488 number of disabled children was assessed through these camps.

## **6. SPECIAL SCHOOL FOR DISABLED**

It is for the information of the people at large that this society is running a special school named Naboyuddam at School Bagan Bolpur, 42 disabled students coming from the fields of M.R, H.I, and V.I are reading in this school. Special Educators teach them thrice in a week. It is more important to note that these disabled students are given vocational training here and rightly it may be expected that these disabled children will be able to earn their bread by themselves. When the students work in groups they throb with energy and vivacity. An attempt has been taken to enrol many other disabled students here and to provide a scope of their prosecuting studies here. Four (4) special teachers (VI, HI & MR) are constantly imparting lessons to them. The students also take vocational training here.

## **7. STD / HIV / AIDS PROGRAMME**

### **A. HIV/AIDS Mass Awareness Programme**

AIDS has come to be the most pressing public health problem of this century. Despite of this fact that AIDS is a preventable disease, it is spreading rapidly all over the World in a speed which never witnessed before in case of any other public health disease. Unlike other public health disease, there is no cure for AIDS. The possibility of developing a safe and effective vaccine to control the spread of the virus is still a long way off. The most important and effective strategy for controlling the spread of infection at present is through public education to bring about positive behaviour changes that emphasize safer sex and awareness of High risk behaviour. To destroy the roots of these devils what is needed is the cultivation of mass awareness among people, especially among the High risk groups. Santiniketan Ratanpalli Vivekananda Adibasi Kalyan Samity (SEVAKS) is playing a great role in this regard. Many meetings, rally, awareness camps, workshops are held to create mass awareness.

#### **i. Street Drama, meetings & processions**



Common people are very little aware of the burning problem of **HIV/AIDS**. SEVAKS is trying much to make the common people or the mobile vulgus aware of them through holding processions, street corners meeting, lectures and performing street plays. So far six (6) street dramas have been performed in the various important places of Birbhum district. Most noted places are Illambazar, Bolpur, Suri, Rampurhat, Nalhati, etc. This type of awareness programme has a special appeal to the High Risk people as it strikes their senses directly. It is very living to them than that of the publicities through Radios and TVs.

## **ii. Video Show**

To make the people aware of the diseases VIDEO SHOWs on the theme of STD/HIV/AIDS are held in many places of Birbhum district. So far 10 shows have been organized at Illambazar, Bolpur, Suri and Nalhati. Through pictures people have formed an idea about how people sag to the lap of death bit by bit when he is affected by HIV/AIDS. Through shows people are warned against the diseases.

## **iii. Local folk songs and cultural programmes**

SEVAKS is diurnally thinking about how to prevent the problem like **STD/HIV/AIDS**. So folk songs and cultural programmes on HIV/AIDS are very often held in many places of Birbhum district to make people aware and educate on STD/HIV/AIDS. During the year five (5) programmes of folk songs(Baul) and cultural programmes on HIV/AIDS have been held at Bolpur, Suri, Rampurhat and Nalhati in Birbhum district. These types of programmes have special appeal to the common people to prevent HIV/AIDS.

## **B. Training programme on STD/ HIV/AIDS**

A vital training camp was held in the Rabichhaya auditorium, Bolpur on 20.02.2006. The main aim of this program was to make people aware of the killer diseases like **HIV/AIDS** by reaching the remotest corner of rural areas. This was done in a novel way. Different people like club members, rural practitioners, self-help group leaders and deputy leaders and many other public minded men and women took part in this training. Their number was sixty (60). They are called mentor because they were taught about the ways of eradicating **STD/HIV/AIDS** and their side effects and symptoms also. These people after having proper knowledge about the diseases from this training camp go to the remotest corner and make people aware about the dangerous effects of these diseases. By organizing this training SEVAKS has got many volunteers to work in this regard. It has been found that some **HIV/AIDS** affected people have confessed their problems to these volunteers whom they call as their 'Counsellor' because they have shown them the better ways of life to lead. The Counselor was trained by Dr. Manabendra Ghosh, Superintendent of Bolpur Sub-Divisional Hospital, Dr. Bholanath Manna, Medical Officer, Suri Police Line Hospital, Dr. Nandy, Medical Officer, Pearson Memorial Hospital, Visva Bharati, Mr. Yubabrata Mazumder, counselor, **HIV /AIDS** of Burdwan Medical College VCTC and many other **HIV/AIDS** experts.

## **C. HIV/AIDS Awareness stall on festive occasions**

## **Poush Festival at Santiniketan, Birbhum**

Poush Utsava of Santiniketan is 111 years old. Rabindranath Tagore's father Devendranath Tagore who was known as the Maharshi started the festival to mark the foundation of the Santiniketan Ashrama. The Poush Festival is internationally famous and near about 7-8 lakhs people are coming from different parts of our country as well as outside the country to enjoy the grand occasion of Poush Festival.

This year Santiniketan Vivekananda Adibasi Kalyan Samity (SEVAKS) organized a unique stall on HIV/AIDS & BLOOD with the collaboration of West Bengal State AIDS Prevention & Control Society (WBSAP & CS) at Poush Festival during 23<sup>rd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> December 2006 at Santiniketan. A series of programme were undertaken at HIV/AIDS & BLOOD information stall to reach the general people with emphasis on the key information, HIV/AIDS and BLOOD. The stall was well decorated with this year's World AIDS Day theme "STOP AIDS: KEEP YOUR PROMISE .....ACCOUNTABILITY". The interior decoration of the stall was made with various colourful poster, banner, written message, red ribbon and campaigning of our friend BULADI (1097) as well VCCTC, PPTCT & Thalassaemia. From this stall general people from urban and rural areas were educated and were made aware on the above issues. The stall was inaugurated on the very first day (23<sup>rd</sup> December 2006 at 10 am) jointly by Dr. Jayanta Sukul, Assistant Chief Medical Officer of Health, Bolpur, Birbhum, Mr. Sushil Chowdhury, President of SEVAKS and President of All India Rice Mills Association in presence of Dr. Subhabrata Ghosh, Superintendent of Bolpur Sub-Divisional Hospital, Mr. Debabrata Chakrabarty, Vice-President, SEVAKS, Mr. Nikhil Sinha, Secretary, SEVAKS and other eminent personalities from various walks of life of Birbhum district. Leaflets, Booklets, Red Ribbon and condoms were also distributed from the HIV/AIDS stall. The following activities were undertaken from the stall during the four days:

### **i. Spot Counselling:**

SEVAKS made an arrangement for the spot counselling about the diseases. By keeping up secrecy of those men who came forward for the discussion on these diseases, be it is his own or a case of other people, SEVAKS continued the discussion programme with experts of these diseases. At least 78 persons took advice on the spot. Thus the discussion stall was highly fruitful. Again, many posters, pictures were displayed there that fed people with the primary knowledge of HIV/AIDS.

### **ii. Condom demonstration and Distribution:**

The works of SEVAKS in the Mela stall was not limited to discussions only, it distributed some contraceptive materials like condom also, free of cost. The recipient of this Condom was 5700 and the number of demonstration of the same was 498. With the distribution of the condoms people were educated about the proper use of this materials and it was also taught that condoms can prevent the attack of these diseases. But a greater stress was given on living a good moral and normal life.

### **iii. IEC Distribution:**

Earlier it is told that leaflets were distributed in the stall but here is the graphic picture of distribution of IEC materials. To educate people on STD/HIV/AIDS and blood contamination total 9000 pieces of leaflets and 1500 booklets and 500 red ribbons were distributed for this purpose. What is more important to note is that many common people were ignorant about the red ribbon, its meaning and its purpose and its indication, etc. Now it was clear to them that red ribbon is the symbol of AIDS.

#### **iv. Survey:**

In a novel way a survey was carried on to know people's general knowledge on STD/HIV and AIDS. It was done by distributing written questions to the audience at random and they after receiving the question sheet ticked the possible answers to the questions on STD/HIV/AIDS and returned them to the stall after sometime. Total 500 schedules and questionnaires were filled by the viewers from the Mela on random basis.

#### **v. Video Show:**

To create interest among the general public and awareness generation on the issue of HIV/AIDS & motivation on Blood donation. Screening of various types of audio visual on HIV/AIDS & Blood like Akrant, Kalo Rakte Sada Manush, Rakter Ashukh, Fir Milenge, Jibaner Gaan was arranged. A large number of people including the bus, auto, truck, taxi, van drivers and daily labourers were educated from this video show.

#### **vi. Cultural programmes on HIV/AIDS & Thalassaemia:**

To appraise the general public, flying sex workers truck drivers on the objectives of our stall and about the knowledge about menace of HIV/AIDS and Blood-Thalassaemia through local folk (Boul) song, Ranpa dance and drama on the subject was arranged. More than 10000 people were educated from this cultural programme. Many people came to the stall and asked questions and encouraged us to conduct such type of activities in every fair.

#### **vii. Quiz:**

A spot quiz contest on STD/HIV/AIDS, Thalassaemia & Blood was conducted by the Organisation in the Mela for four (4) days among the viewers. At least 1600 people on each day participated in the spot quiz competition. In this competition we made to understand the viewers about the question if any viewer asked to know about any question or clarification on the said subject. In this way a mass awareness was created in Mela. It will not be too much to say that 1600 pens were distributed among the successful participants.

#### **viii. Prize Distribution:**

No competition is not complete if there is no prize. These are meant to encourage people and to give fillip to the participants. Keeping this in mind SEVAKS, though its financial help is still limited, has distributed many prizes to the participators. The prize distribution ceremony was held

Continuously after the end of the every question-answer session so that persons get the correct information about the question. The prizes were handed over to the winners by our guest Dr. Jayanta Sukul, ACMOH Bolpur, Mr. Samar Banerjee and Mr. Ardhendu Roy, representative from West Bengal Voluntary Blood Donors' Forum, & Mr. Nikhil Kr. Sinha, Secretary, SEVAKS.

#### **ix. Blood Donation Camp at Mela ground:**

A Blood Donation Camp was organized on 25<sup>th</sup> December 2006 at Santiniketan Poush Mela Stall for Motivation on safe Voluntary Blood Donation. 27 Mela viewers voluntarily donated their Blood at our HIV/AIDS stall at Santiniketan Poush Mela. The Blood Donation Camp was inaugurated by the Superintendent of Bolpur Sub-divisional Hospital.

#### **x. "STOP AIDS: KEEP YOUR PROMISE .....ACCOUNTABILITY" Programme:**

Those people who visited our HIV/AIDS awareness stall at Santiniketan Poush Mela during four days (23.12.06 – 26.12.06) signed their name on 20 meters long cloth with the message "STOP AIDS: KEEP YOUR PROMISE ..... ACCOUNTABILITY" were 1200 Mela viewers, including Sri Manasa Hansda, Sabhadhipati, Birbhum Zilla Parishad, Suri, Dr. Jayanta Sukul, ACMOH, Bolpur, Dr. Subhabrata Ghosh, Superintendent of Bolpur Sub-Divisional Hospital., APD, State Sarva Siksha Mission, West Bengal, ADPO, Sarva Siksha Mission, Birbhum, Mrs. Kanjilal, Income Tax Commissioner, Kolkata Division, Mr. S. K. Roy Choudhury, Assistant Labour Commissioner, Birbhum, Volunteers of West Bengal Voluntary Blood Donors' Forum, President & Secretary, and other members of SEVAKS.

### **Hool Festival at Dhanyasara, Birbhum**

Such a camp was held at Dhanyasara, Birbhum from 9<sup>th</sup> February to 12<sup>th</sup> February 2006 on the occasion of 152<sup>nd</sup> Hool Utsav. And it was inaugurated by Mr. Tapan Roy, the honourable Minister, Jana Siksha Prasar, Govt. of West Bengal. Moreover, Mr. Manasha Hansda, honourable Sabhadhipati, Birbhum Zilla Parishad, Mr. Tapan Kumar Som, District Magistrate of Birbhum was the dignitaries present to add to the grace of the camp. It was a very fruitful camp because through statistics, display of pictures, distribution of leaflets, booklets, red ribbon, condoms and through speech & effort was made to make the people of rural areas aware and educate on HIV/AIDS.

### **Durgapuja Festival**

On the Holy occasion of Sharadiya Durga Puja Festival Santiniketan Ratanpalli Vivekananda Adibasi Kalyan Samity has organized a unique stall on HIV/AIDS & BLOOD at Layekbazar, Bolpur during 28<sup>th</sup> September 2006 to 1<sup>st</sup> October 2006. From this stall general people especially from rural areas were educated and made aware on the above issues.

## **D. World AIDS Day**

World AIDS Day 2006 at Bolpur Railway Station was a big event. Santiniketan Ratanpalli Vivekananda Adibasi Kalyan Samity (SEVAKS) Observed 'World AIDS Day' from 30<sup>th</sup> November to 03<sup>rd</sup> December 2006 through a mass awareness stall at Bolpur Railway Station, awareness rally in Bolpur town and a seminar with the help of West Bengal State AIDS Prevention & Control Society. The programme inaugurated through candle burning by the Station Manager of Bolpur Railway Station on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2006 in the presence of eminent persons of Bolpur. The stall was opened on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2006 at 9.00 am and it was continued on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2006. All Railway passengers, taxi drivers, Auto driver, Railway Kuli, Rickshaw pullers & others general people were aware and educated on STD/HIV/AIDS during the four days of the programme. The Station manager told that this type initiative at Bolpur Railway Station is very much needed & effective to prevent HIV/AIDS at Birbhum District. Condoms, leaflets, booklets and Red Ribbon were freely distributed from the awareness Stall at Bolpur Railway Station during the days.

On 1<sup>st</sup> December 2006, a big rally was held in Bolpur town. Many club members, students and common men joined the rally which started from Duckbanglow Maidan and moved through the whole town and it ended at its starting point. It must be mentioned that N.C.C., N.S.S & Boul team were present in the rally. It must be noted that Dr. Jayanta Sukul Asstant Chief Medical Officer of Health, Bolpur inaugurated the rally in presence eminent personalities from all walks of life at Bolpur Sub-division. Mr. N. Sinha, Secretary of SEVAKS mentioned the role of the Rally to the public who actively participated in the rally. More than 250 people turned out to march in support of AIDS afflicted persons and AIDS prevention efforts.

On the same day a seminar on "Stop AIDS: Keep Your Promise . . . . Accountability" was held at Rotary Bhawan, Bolpur at 11.00 a.m. Dr. J. Sukul, ACMOH, Bolpur Sub Division, Mr. Subarna Goswami, Block Medical Officer of Health, Mr. S. Chowdhury, President of SEVAKS, Mr. N. Sinha, Secretary of SEVAKS, Dr. Nandy, Medical Officer, Pearson Memorial Hospital, Visva Bharati, Dr. C. Chatterjee, Member, Red Cross Society, Bolpur, Mr. S. Das, President, Rotary Club, and many renowned persons and social worker was present in the seminar. It was estimated that 175 people was participated in the seminar.

Next day on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2006 a cultural programme on Folk and Boul was held in the Stall at 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m. at Bolpur Railway Station. We tried to make people aware about HIV/AIDS deeply through this programme. A video show was arranged at the stall on the same day after the cultural programme for one hour to the general masses of which 90% was the rickshaw pullers and taxi drivers.

A video show programme was conducted at the stall on 03.12.06 at 6.00 p.m. for two hours as a major part of the occasion. It was major because 90% of the viewers of the show were rickshaw pullers and the taxi drivers who like to enjoy such type of programme very much. It is noted that as Santiniketan as well as Birbhum district is a tourism place, a maximum number of flying sex workers from other side come to Bolpur Santiniketan. According to some taxi drivers and rickshaw pullers, many drivers and rickshaw pullers are high risk group in the town. Some time the sex workers are used in the rail line side in night. So, we think that the video show is very important programme to the viewers. More than 200 people enjoyed the show.

## 8. ANOTHER WING OF SEVAKS (Birbhum District Voluntary Blood Donors' Forum)

With much pleasure it may be informed that SEVAKS has extended its work-area and in a treaty with West Bengal Voluntary Blood Donors' Forum, it has obtained permission of working as a unit of Birbhum District Voluntary Blood Donors Forum. This achievement goes to the credit of SEVAKS.

Every conscious person knows that there is always a dearth of blood bottles in Blood Bank. The main reason of it is that most people are still in superstition or fear in donating blood. SEVAKS is working in this area because it motivates people about blood donation. So far SEVAKS has organized 35 camps in the various places of Birbhum District in the last six months. Again, it goes to the credit of SEVAKS that it has been able to procure 1120 units of blood from the motivated blood donors. It is crystal clear to the medical men that in the Sub-divisions of Bolpur, Rampurhat and Suri there is an acute crisis of blood and SEVAKS has come forward to solve this problem through motivation and organizing voluntary blood donation camps in the remotest corner. It has also organized training camps with club members, conscious villagers, students and teachers in this regard. Such workshop and seminars was conducted by our organization at Khujutipara Chandidas Collage in January 2007 and at Rampurhat Railway Institute hall on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2006 in order to motivate general people towards the voluntary blood donation at Rampurhat Sub-division. The programme was inaugurated by Mr. Tapan Roy, the honourable Minister, Jana Siksha Prasar, Govt. of West Bengal and Dr. Ramchandra Dome, honourable M.P., Birbhum.

## 9. THALASSAEMIA

There is no denial of the fact that Thalassaemia is one of the most dreaded diseases in the world. In India the number of Thalassaemia patients is very alarming. Many renowned persons have come forward to solve the problem of this disease. Most of us have heard of the generosity of the film star Mr. Mithun Chakraborty in solving this problem of Thalassaemia by donating money and everything necessary for the purpose. World Thalassaemia day was observed on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2006 at Ratanpalli Bazar for awareness of thalassaemia among the general mass. A blood donation camp was organized on the same day and 32 people were donated their blood for thalassaemia patient.

SEVAKS is not nonchalant in this regard. In spite of having its financial capacity limited is trying its best to help the Thalassaemia patients by donating blood indirectly through motivating people to donate blood to the needy patients. SEVAKS is now to set its foot to the new precinct of work. It is going to detect the vector of Thalassaemia through blood test.

## 10. HEALTH CAMP

SEVAKS organized a health camps at Tribal Village kaliganj, Balipara during the year. People from Balipara-Kaliganj, Pearson Palli and Baganpara were participated at this health camp. Total 85 people were examined and checked by the Doctors and medicines are also provided free of cost. Dr. S. Pradhan and Dr. Gora Chand Khan delivered the lecture on health and hygiene to make the people educate on primary health (pre & post natal care, immunization etc.).



## **11. PULSE POLIO.**

It is not that SEVAKS works in its own field only but it is linked with many other Government Programmes. Hence its objective is many faceted. Pulse polio programme is being carried away earnestly by our Government and SEVAKS is an institution to stand by the Government in its programme. So SEVAKS has worked in two pulse polio centres (i) Bolpur Nichupatty, (ii) Bolpur Chowrasta by sending their volunteers to the centres and they have assisted the concerning staff of health department.

## **12. SELF HELP GROUPS.**

India is still far away from being a developed country because many people live here below poverty line and many of them are emaciated for want of square meals a day. SEVAKS is by these starved men because it has inspired them to form self help groups so that they may earn their living by themselves and may live a prestigious life. So far it has formed 47 SHGs in the rural and tribal areas of Birbhum District. The member group are trained on the vocational planes like food processing, kitchen garden, needle works and bamboo works. SEVAKS in collaboration with DRDC and NABARD is trying to reach the remotest corner of rural villages to make them self supported. Many spouses of rural farmers by forming groups have been able to earn money creating an instance that woman also can earn money by running cottage industries in their homes.

## **13. NATIONAL CHILD LABOUR PROGRAMME (NCLP)**

Five Child Labour Schools are being running by our society under National Child Labour Programme (NCLP) in Birbhum district at Basapara (Nanor Block), Maheshpur, (Nalhati I Block), Hazarpur, Mostafadangapara and Nowapara (Nalhati II Block). Total 25 staffs comprising fifteen teaching and ten non-teaching staffs are engaged in this programme and total 250 Child Labour Students are learning in these Child Labour Schools.

## **14. OBSERVANCE OF IMPORTANT DAYS**

There are some days that are deemed to be important to all nations and these days are observed globally with much grandeur and dignity. SEVAKS also is very careful in observing these days when they come.

### **A. World Anti Drug Day**

“Drug is deadly, don’t take it friendly” – so runs the warning of the doctors. It is a very alarming news that some youths almost of all countries are more or less drug addicted and it is a most sad event that students also take drugs. If the pillars of a nation is ruined in this way, who will lead the world? SEVAKS is trying much to bring the drug victims to their normal life. But it is not an easy task. It needs motivation among the youths to make them lead a moral life and SEVAKS by observing ‘ANTI DRUG DAY’ that falls on the 6<sup>th</sup> June of each year tries much to save the youths from destruction.



On this day in 2006 a big rally comprising of 250 heads started to march from Bolpur Duckbunglow maidan and after marching through the town it ends at the starting point. It must be noted that NCC & NSS joined the rally also. Then went on discussions. Many students delivered speeches on the bad effects of drug addiction and also SEVAKS made a cordial request to the audience to send the drug addicts of the locality to SEVAKS for getting necessary guidance and help.

## **B. National Voluntary Blood Donors' Day**

We know that NVBDD falls on the 1<sup>st</sup> October of every year and it is observed World-wide. No man can give life, it is true but it is also very true that a man can save life. Gold, diamond and jewels have a market value. But nothing has been able to cost the value of a unit of blood in the market. So blood is priceless. Everyman has this priceless thing in his possession and he can give it away to the distressed people and save his life. But fear and lack of proper knowledge prevents men from donating blood in some cases. SEVAKS motivates people in this regard and this year on 01.10.2006 it has organized a blood donation camp at Bolpur Lodge More. It was inaugurated by Mr. N.K.Sinha, Secretary, SEVAKS. 40 units of blood were collected from the voluntary blood donors.

## **C. World Anti Leprosy Day**

Leprosy is a term that makes people panic stricken because most of us have no proper knowledge about the disease. We believe that it spreads through contact among men. It is very heart rendering news that many lepers have been out-cast from the society. All these happen for lack of knowledge. SEVAKS is an institution that fights against these types of misbelieve and misconceptions. This year on 30.01.2006 SEVAKS organized a rally that marched through Bolpur town. The rally comprised of 150 persons coming from all classes of people – students, youths, club members, NCC & NSS.

## **D. World Tuberculosis Day**

Tuberculosis that is better known as T.B. was so rampant only a century ago that many geniuses withered untimely. Who is the student who is not familiar with the name of Sukanta Bhattacharjee, the famous Bengali Poet born only to die untimely? And it was T.B. that took his life. But at present T.B. is totally curable but what is most exigent regarding recovery from it, is early detection. In rural villages T.B. affected people conceal their disease for fear of social oppression and for being ostracized. Here the works of SEVAKS begin. Because it educates people about the nature and effect of T.B.

In the last year, on 24.03.2006 SEVAKS organized a rally that marched through Bolpur town. Here mention must be made that world T.B. Day falls on 24 March each year. It has been stated over again how NCC and NSS co-operates with SEVAKS. This time too SEVAKS got their co-operation in organizing the rally in which near about 300 people took part. At last Dr. Jayanta Sukul ACO, Bolpur Sub Division made an effective speech on the consuming effect of T.B. and on the need of treatment shaking off all misbelieves and prejudices.

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