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Letter from the Chairperson

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Dear Friends,

Social sector organisations are accountable to the society at large, as well as to the specific segment of the society selected by the organisation as its constituency. Bhasha's special interest has been two types of under-privileged sections of Indian society, one, the adivasis, whose national population is about 9 crore, and two, the nomadic and denotified communities, whose population is estimated at 6 crore. Bhasha tries to do everything possible in order to bring a greater appreciation of the cultures of these two social sectors and to improve their rights and security.

It need not be stressed that this work is of a huge proportion and involves not just the question of reducing the economic deprivation of the adivasis and DNTs but also changing the social attitudes of looking at them through stereotypes. Besides, the question of restoring their access to resources such as land, water and forest, and shaping the structural instruments such as policy and regulations, has been of high-priority in Bhasha's activities.

Bhasha tries to carry out all these lines of action for a social transformation by activating the energy and imagination of the young and the educated among the adivasis. As a result, the Bhasha family has now grown in numbers beyond our initial expectations. Moreover, the community of Bhasha's supporters and benefactors too has been steadily increasing in volume. All of Bhasha's colleagues and collaborators need to be kept informed of the developments on all fronts of Bhasha's activism. Therefore, for the first time in our existence for a decade we found it necessary to prepare a systematic and somewhat formal annual report of activities. Last year a cumulative report for the first seven years of Bhasha was released under the title Saptak. The present report for the financial year 2004-05 is prepared by the visiting Research Fellow from Iceland, Ms. Gudbjort Gudjonsdottir. As Chairperson of Bhasha I am pleased to release the report for a limited circulation.

Nisha Grover
Chairperson, Bhasha
April 2005

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Introduction

Bhasha Trust was founded in 1996 for the study, documentation and conservation of adivasi languages, arts and culture. However, working with adivasi and denotified communities soon brought in the realisation that it was equally important to address the socio-economic needs of adivasi communities. Thus, Bhasha has strived to combine academic research with grassroots level social activism to bring about constructive change in adivasi society.

Within a span of nine years Bhasha's work has expanded greatly and today Bhasha has emerged as a platform for activists, scholars, writers, artists and community workers to voice as well as address the issues and concerns of adivasi and denotified and nomadic communities.

The main location of Bhasha's work is the eastern adivasi belt of Gujarat. Bhasha has made serious interventions in the areas of conservation of languages, promotion of arts and craft, research, non formal education, agriculture, health-care, economic empowerment and human rights.

The work of Bhasha can largely be divided into six major areas, although all are interrelated and vary in scope. These areas, which are covered in the first six chapters of the report, are: Research and Training, Development work, Human Rights, Publications, Cultural Promotion, and Programmes for Sensitisation and Awareness. The seventh chapter briefly discusses Bhasha's direction for the future. Sources of funding are presented in the eighth and final chapter.

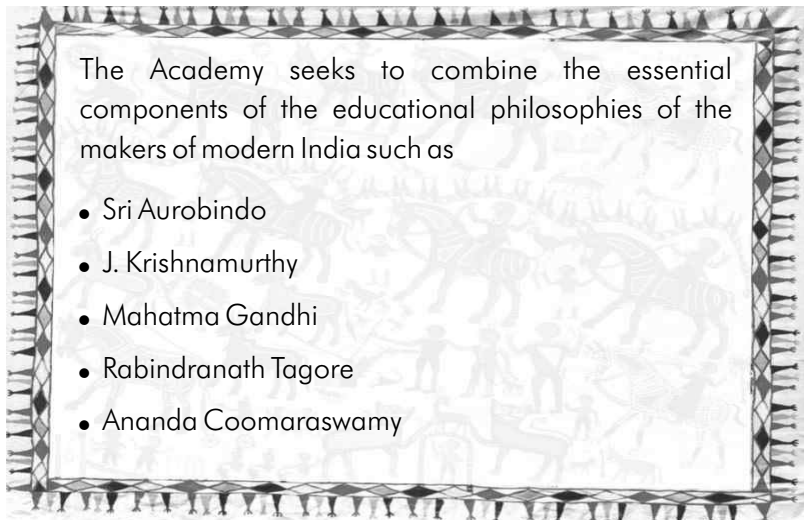
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1.

Research and Training

It was in June 1999 that Bhasha laid the foundation of the Adivasi Academy at Tejgadh. The Academy is established with a view to create a unique education environment for the study of the adivasi civilisation in India. The aim of the Academy is to revitalise traditional wisdom and knowledge systems and to bring them to meet with the challenges of modern technologies and cultural values. While Bhasha is the catalyst for initiating adivasi movements, the Academy is the nucleus of this movement for social transformation and equity.

The first course of the Academy started on 15th August 2000. For the first two years, the classes were held under a majestic mahuda tree. Then a small hut was built. Finally a structure in red-brick and arches was built with the backdrop of the Koraj Hill. The buildings are designed by architect Karan Grover, combining features of local architecture and historical monuments found in the area. The Academy is today viewed by the adivasis as their very own platform.



1.1. Research

1.1.1. Cultural Resource and Documentation Centre

Adivasi civilisation has a rich tradition of arts, folk forms and cultural practices. The literary output in oral traditions has been immense in variety and form. However, due to an unprecedented social and cultural transition over the last two hundred years, these practices and forms have come to be seen as non-central to Indian mainstream and urban culture. There is little appreciation and understanding of the social and cultural practices of adivasi communities. As a result the oral literary traditions of the adivasis have become even more marginalised than before. Besides, these traditions face the danger of extinction due to the processes of rapid modernisation.

Therefore the Academy has set up a Cultural Resource and Documentation Centre for documentation and conservation of endangered cultural practices and oral traditions of India. The Tejgadh Resource Centre is visualized as a unique institution of national importance that shall articulate the cultural voice and art practices of adivasi communities. The Resource Centre includes:

Museum

To document, hold and display the 'voice' of adivasis, both artistic and cultural, in digitised and multimedia format. The Museum shall be the 'laboratory' for contemporary ethnic, anthropological and artistic studies. The Museum is built to become the first Museum of Sounds in the world and the largest Museum of Adivasi Culture in India





Artists' Workshop

The Workshop is created as a platform for practising artists and craftpersons for documentation and promotion of their art practices.

Library

Holding print and audio-visual resource on adivasi societies, endangered languages and related sociological issues, the library has at present about 17,000 titles and is aimed to have a specialised collection of 50,000 volumes for reference.

Devoted to the documentation and promotion of Adivasi Arts, Culture and Oral Traditions, the Resource Centre is the backbone of all research and study undertaken at the Adivasi Academy. This is the first ever adivasi Museum of Voice and Documentation Centre for collection and dissemination of traditional knowledge systems. The Museum is creating active and specialised archives on Medicinal and Curative Practices, Oral Narratives and Memories, Local Histories and Adivasi Movements, Cultural Festivals and Rituals, Craft Practices, Theatre, Music and Dance, Seasonal Migration Patterns and Historical Narratives.



1.1.2. Short Term Research Projects

Bhasha has undertaken Research Projects with :

- National Human Rights Commission for 'Study of Status of Denotified and Nomadic Communities in Delhi, Gujarat and Maharashtra'
- Central Institute for Indian Languages for 'Preparation of Study Material in Rathwi, Dehwali, Dungri Bhili and Pavri languages and Pictorial Glossaries in Rathwi and Dehwali'
- Education Resources Centre for 'Study of Areas of Conflict and Reconciliation Modes among Adivasi Communities'

1.2. Training

Since August 2000, several young adivasi graduates have been pursuing the two year Post Graduate Diploma in Adivasi Studies. The course focuses on the study and understanding of how the adivasis perceive the world. The attempt is to make the students reflect on their own situation, motivate them and put them onto the task of empowering the adivasi villages by helping them to be self-reliant. The course includes study of adivasi history, culture, literature, society, development issues and para legal training along with practical field training. So far, 32 young women and men have been trained under the Adivasi Studies programme.



In 2004 the curriculum of the Academy was expanded. Viewing the necessity to capacitate rural youth to take up social responsibilities as well as to provide them with avenues for self employment, the Academy announced seven new Post Graduate Diploma and Certificate Courses in the areas of :

- Rights, Social Security and Development
- Adivasi Culture and Museum Studies
- Publication, Media and Rural Journalism
- Adivasi Development
- Rural Health Work and Traditional Medicinal Practices
- Management and Accounting for Rural Organizations
- Micro Enterprise

Majority of the students at the Academy are adivasis. Following is an outline of the new programmes.

1.2.1. Post Graduate Courses

Post Graduate Diploma in Rights, Social Security and Development

Through this Diploma Programme the Academy aims to train community leaders to address issues of development, human rights, social equity and legal justice. The programme covers areas such as citizens' rights and responsibilities, social and legal history of adivasi and DNT communities, cultural identity, literature of marginalised communities, protest movements, national and international human rights forums, legal aid training, gender equity and child rights, structure of Indian society, identity and culture, development and governance. The course will open opportunities for the students to work with organisations in the field of human rights and social development.

Post Graduate Diploma in Adivasi Culture and Museum Studies

This Diploma Programme aims to introduce new perspectives for the study of adivasi culture and society. This is the first programme of its kind being offered in Gujarat. The



program orients trainees to cultural and social anthropology, museum studies, documentation processes and methodology, folklore, traditional cultural practices, theatre and the arts. The course will open opportunities for trainees to work in research organisations, libraries, museums and documentation centers.

Post Graduate Diploma in Publication, Media and Rural Journalism

This Diploma is intended to create a community of sensitized and responsible journalists for publication and rural journalism. The course includes training in print and electronic media, documentation, copyediting, data processing, reporting and writing. Through this course, the Academy shall provide trained youth for growth of media and publishing houses and enable trainees to work as freelance writers, editors or journalists.

1.2.2. Certificate Courses

Certificate Course in Adivasi Studies

This is a specialised region specific programme for assessing and addressing development needs of various adivasi regions. This year students from Panchmahals were enrolled for training in community and area study, identification of issues and concerns, developing programmes for addressing economic, social and legal needs of adivasi and denotified communities and project implementation and monitoring. The team shall thereafter be deputed to Panchmahals for undertaking development initiatives in the area.

Certificate Course in Rural Health Work and Traditional Medicinal Practices

This course aims to train community health care workers for meeting the health needs of rural areas. The course covers primary health care, hygiene, preventive and curative health practices, diet and nutrition, child and women's health care, study of traditional medicinal systems, detection of diseases, referral of cases,

knowledge of illnesses and stages of treatment, health counseling, sensitisation and awareness, building health support networks and services. The course includes practical experience of working in health clinics, conducting health surveys and visits to hospitals, health organisations and laboratories. After completion of the course the trainees will be placed in health NGOs or shall work as community health workers in the villages.

Certificate Course in Management and Accounting for Rural Organizations

The course includes accounting and audit procedures, financial management, project management, resource management, monitoring and evaluation, networking, human resource development, social accountability, community leadership, event management and conflict resolution, administration, public relations and communication. This certificate course will bring opportunities of working with voluntary organisations.

Certificate Course in Micro-Enterprise

This course aims to build economic self-reliance and check outward migration in adivasi areas. The training is intended to enable Self Help Group members to establish self-sustainable enterprises. The course is aimed to help existing micro - credit networks to establish community owned micro-enterprises through training in establishing linkages, planning, production and marketing. The micro-enterprises include craft production, organic vegetable cultivation, horticulture, preparation of organic fertiliser and use of agricultural and forest resources such as neem seeds and mahua flowers for production of oil.

1.2.3. Distance Education Programmes in Collaboration with IGNOU

The Adivasi Academy has been registered as a Special Study Centre with the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and six

certificate courses offered by IGNOU are being facilitated at the Academy, each of duration of six months. The courses are taught through distance education mode. The first batch of 46 students was enrolled in June 2004, most of whom are adivasis.

The courses currently being offered by the Tejgadh IGNOU Study Centre are :

- Certificate in Guidance
- Certificate in Human Rights
- Certificate in Labour Development
- Certificate in Nutrition and Child Care
- Certificate in Participatory Forest Management
- Certificate in Empowering Women Through Self Help Groups

1.2.4. Short Term Training Programmes

In addition to the PG Diplomas and Certificate courses the Academy offers short term training programmes which aim to :

- Provide innovative and alternate livelihood means for economic betterment of adivasi women, small and marginal farmers and migrant adivasis.
- Promote community based programmes that are in keeping with the adivasi lifestyle.
- Pilot new approaches for sustainable income generation activities among adivasi communities

The training programmes include :

Craft Training

This training course aims to introduce and enhance traditional craft production and provide landless and marginal adivasi farmers with opportunities for additional income.



The teachers are skilled craftpersons, usually adivasis themselves. Since January 2005 three different courses have been started under which 75 students are being trained in making of Sculpture and Jute and Sankheda furniture.

Training for Women in Organic Farming



In March 2005 a new training programme in organic farming was started. The participants are 40 women from low income families. The programme is aimed to encourage women's co-operatives, help introduce and promote new farm products and scientific techniques and increase women's participation in local governance and village development activities. The Academy has set up an organic farm and water conservation model as a demonstration unit for sustainable agriculture.

Training in Masonry and Brick Making

In the making is a specialized training programme that shall be conducted for training 40 migrant adivasis belonging to Naika community for brick making and masonry. Post training the trainees shall be enabled to set up their own brick kilns and establish marketing of bricks. This shall develop the brick trade and allow landless Naika families to develop independent enterprises and check their outward migration. The training shall include linkages with banks and financial institutions for setting up of local brick manufacturing units, providing legal education regarding laws and rights for the unorganised sector.

No. of students currently enrolled at the Academy

Courses	Duration	Female	Male	Total no of students
PG Diploma in Rights, Security and Development	2 years	1	6	7
PG Diploma in Adivasi Culture and Museum Studies	2 years	3	3	6
PG Diploma in Publication, Media and Rural Journalism	2 years	-	3	3
Certificate in Adivasi Studies	1 year	1	14	15
Certificate in Management and Accounting	1 year	-	6	6
Certificate in Rural Health Work	1 year	11	7	18
Certificate in Micro Enterprise	3 months	20	22	42
Certificate in Empowering Women	6 months	1	9	10
Certificate in Participatory Forest Management	6 months	4	3	7
Certificate in Nutrition and Child Care	6 months	-	9	9
Certificate in Labour Development	6 months	-	6	6
Certificate in Guidance	6 months	-	5	5
Certificate in Human Rights	6 months	1	8	9
Craft Training	3 months	-	75	75
Training in Organic Farming	8 months	40	-	40
Training in Masonry and Brick Making	8 months	-	40	40
Total		82	216	298

1.2.5. Trainees and Fellows

Bhasha instituted Fellowships for the following activists and scholars :

- Dr Bhagwandas Patel, Gujarat
- Shri Ramesh Madari, Gujarat
- Shri Daxin Bajrange, Gujarat
- Shri Avinash Gaikwad, Maharashtra
- Dr Niranjan Kulkarni, Maharashtra
- Shri Atmaram Rathod, Maharashtra

Other Fellows engaged in research include :

- Shri Nishant Chokshi, a Fulbright Fellow affiliated to Bhasha for study of “Avenues of Action: Indigenous Participation in Indian Democracy”
- Mr. Douglas Schlemmer of Harvard University's John F Kennedy School of Government visited Bhasha to study “Conflict between Indigenous Populations and Government Policies”
- Mr. Timothy Perry, from U. C. Berkeley, visited Bhasha on a study for “A New Solidarity Rights Regime: How to Tailor Group Rights for Conflict Prevention”

Trainees working with Bhasha :

- Gudrun Sif Fridrkisdottir, AIESEC Trainee from Akureyri, Iceland, conducted a research on “Economic and Environmental Effects of Genetically Engineered Cotton for Farmers in Vadodara District”
- Gudbjort Gudjonsdottir, AIESEC Trainee from Reykjavik, Iceland, was engaged in study and documentation of projects and activities
- Denisa Simlova, AIESEC Trainee from Prague, Czech Republic, worked for promotion of adivasi craft and culture.

1.2.6. Internship & Training

Prof Greg Alles of Maryland College visited the Academy with a group of ten students on a Rural Internship Programme.

Between 5th and 28th of May 240 students of DA-IICT were deputed to the Academy and other adivasi research and grassroots organizations in Gujarat and Rajasthan for study purposes.

In December 2004 Kinsa Associates from New Zealand conducted a one month in house training for Bhasha staff in MIGIS (Mobile Interactive Geographical Information Systems) Participatory Technology for Community Development in Chhotaudepur. The

training included participatory development tools for detailed study of adivasi villages that shall be used as a tool for preparing a blue print for adivasi development.

1.2.7. Institutional Recognition

Viewing the scope and vision of the institution and its rapid growth and effectiveness since its establishment, the Education Ministry is considering the possibilities of recognition or affiliation of the Adivasi Academy.

2.

Development Work

As Bhasha launched its research and documentation of the adivasi languages the associates of Bhasha came to interact closely with the adivasis and learn about their harsh conditions and everyday struggles. Viewing the need and significance of economic empowerment in preserving adivasi culture and society, Bhasha decided to broaden the scope of its work in 1999 to include the micro credit programme. A year later Bhasha decided to integrate social empowerment with economic betterment and undertook new projects that aimed to address issues of health, children's education and migration that are crucial to the empowerment and survival of adivasi community. In later years, several other programmes were initiated.

Finally in June 2002 Bhasha established Development Services Centres (DSCs) for implementation and extension of Bhasha's preceding development work. The DSCs service villages and monitor the various community-based activities. The DSCs have become the nucleus for economic empowerment and social justice in the adivasi areas of Gujarat.

Presently there are five DSCs in Vadodara district and one each in Panchmahal and Narmada districts. Nine new DSCs are being planned. All the DSCs are fully managed and operated by the members of adivasi groups trained at the Academy.

Location of DSCs and number of villages covered by each DSC

DSC	Taluka	District	No of villages
Zoz	Chhotaudepur	Vadodara	39
Kawant	Kawant	Vadodara	36
Khatiyawant	Kawant	Vadodara	34
Panwad	Kawant	Vadodara	40
Moti Amrol	Pavi-Jatpur	Vadodara	35
Kantar	Lunawada	Panchmahal	58
Selamba	Dediyapada	Narmada	14
Total			256

Each DSC has undertaken a survey of all the villages within its fold to assess the needs of the area. The survey includes population, mapping of natural resources, communication and transport facilities, banks, government schools, medical services, land holdings, livestock, extent of indebtedness to moneylenders, literacy levels, outward migration, craft practices, gram panchayats etc. The DSCs have identified indebtedness, hunger, migration, drought, illiteracy and health ailments as the key problem areas and have set up various programmes to address these issues.

The development projects Bhasha is currently running are listed in the following subchapters in the chronological order of their commencement.

2.1 Micro-Credit and Micro-Enterprise

Bhasha began to consider the need for micro credit facility for adivasis in August 1999. The main reason was the exorbitant rate of interest of private money lending which ranged between 60 to 120 per cent. To reduce the community's dependence on local money lenders as well as to free them from indebtedness, Bhasha began formation of Self Help Groups for credit linkages.



Bhasha later established micro enterprises for generating supplementary sources of income to check migration. The minimum guiding principle for the micro enterprise is that a new income generating activity should not lead to the adivasi's migration or competition with the urban centers. Therefore the focus has been more on para-agricultural or value-added rural activities, such as honey cultivation, fruit plantation and specialized gum-tree plantation. In 2004 training for women in tailoring was started.

During the year training in SHG management and operations was imparted to representatives of the micro-credit groups.

A comprehensive exercise was undertaken during the year to grade the SHGs formed under the project. On the basis of this, 100 groups were chosen for forming the first Micro Finance Federation. 94 of the SHGs decided to join the Federation and remaining six SHGs deferred the decision so that they could wait and study the working of the Federation. The Federation will be regularized as a Society registered under the Bombay Societies Act.

Of the 21 Founder Trustees of the Federation, 19 are women and 2 are men. Similarly, 19 are adivasis and 2 are non adivasi villagers. The Federation will decide upon merger of their separate SHG accounts with Banks after observing the conduct of the new entity for six months. Thus, Bhasha's Micro Finance and Micro Enterprise Project has taken a major step forward from formation of isolated SHGs to the formation of grassroots based self managed Micro Finance Institution (MFI).

Scope of the micro-credit programme:

Region	New SHGS formed during the year	Total No of SHGs	Savings	Loans	Repayment
Zoz	35	95	12,87,350	27,94,700	3,53,518
Kawant	14	29	1,61,050	-	-
Khatiyawant	43	62	2,84,574	2,19,000	-
Panwad	36	114	9,41,394	20,67,100	3,30,770
Moti Amrol	20	35	1,67,063	6,35,300	-
Selamba	12	18	58,280	-	-
Kantar	44	71	3,46,890	-	-
Total	204	424	32,46,601	57,16,100	6,84,288

Recognition

Ms Manisha Varia was the first female student to graduate from the Adivasi Academy as a member of the first batch of students in the Post Graduate Diploma Programme in Adivasi Studies. Since her graduation in 2001 Manisha has dedicated herself to the micro-credit programme with tremendous zeal and entrepreneurship. In March 2005 Udyogini Foundation awarded her with the Smt Anita Sen Memorial Award for her selfless and dedicated work for empowerment of adivasi women through micro finance.



2.2. Water Collectives

The adivasi economy is largely based on rain-fed agriculture. During the dry season when rains fail people are forced to migrate to the cities in search of employment. To check seasonal outward migration and establish sustainable water supply Bhasha decided to encourage setting up of water sharing collectives in 2000, which was a year of successive and severe drought.

Water Bank Self Help Groups (SHGs) were formed, which run like the Micro-Credit SHGs but their savings go exclusively into establishing a water source. The group saves amounts when necessary to meet the costs of sinking or deepening wells, constructing check dams, laying pipelines and related activities. So far 65 Water Bank SHGs have been formed.

2.3. Non-Formal Literacy Centres

On account of large scale migration and absence of an effective schooling system the literacy rates in the rural areas of Vadodara

district is only 35 per cent among men and 15 per cent among women. To address this problem Bhasha initiated an educational project in 2001 with the objectives to :

- Provide learning centres for adivasi children in interior villages that do not have formal schools
- Advocate government schools to run effectively
- Sensitise parents about the necessity of education
- Help children who have dropped out of school to bridge the learning gaps and admit them to government schools
- Encourage voluntary education centres in tribal villages

Bhasha set up Non-Formal Literacy Centres (NFLCs) in adivasi villages that operate in the dwellings of the communities and follow flexible timings to suit the needs of working children. Community teachers are employed in the centers. Besides imparting basic literacy, the teachers deal with language and cultural disparities, problems of exploitation and health arising out of child labour and migration. The instruction is conducted in the children's own languages and the focus is on making the lessons interesting and relevant by relating to the children's own surroundings and culture. Training for the teachers is supplied at the Adivasi Academy in the form of workshops that cover teaching methodology and content.

Presently, the non formal literacy centres are set up in 81 villages, 30 in Vadodara district and 24 in Panchmahal district of Gujarat and 27 in Maharashtra. More than 2500 children in the age group of 5 and 14 years attend these centres.

The NFLCs have reached out to new areas where the percentage of literacy is very poor. Village level meetings have encouraged parents to send their children to schools. As the NFLCs are run and managed by the community, there is greater participation of parents and teachers in running the centres. Extra curricular activities have further improved the attendance and reduced drop out ratio among

the children This academic year 518 children (249 girls and 269 boys) were readmitted to the government schools from various NFLCs. in Vadodara and Panchmahal Districts.

2.4. Food Grain Bank

To address the issue of food insecurity Bhasha decided to set up food grain banks for adivasi women in villages in Gujarat. The immediate provocation was a prolonged period of drought, rise in the forced migration of men and women, and cases of starvation deaths. Initially, it was decided to follow the government model of food grain banks, but soon it was discovered that they had come to be seen by adivasi villages as charity distribution events, and so it was decided to set up the food grain banks without any government contribution and entirely through local participation. By limiting the membership to women the aim is to increase their hold in control and distribution of resources. The Food Grain Bank has 2800 women members who are actively involved in agriculture and training activities.



The Women of Bhilpur

Bhilpur is a small village of 1800 inhabitants in Chhotaudepur taluka. In the past the women of Bhilpur often faced food shortage and were frequently unable to provide two meals a day for their children and thus the families often went hungry to bed.



However, three years ago the women decided to form a food grain bank. The main food crop that they cultivate is maize and each woman contributed 5-10 kgs as bank membership. The grain is stored at Chaturiben's home, who is the elected chairperson. When the women are short on food they borrow grain from the bank. When they acquire foodgrain they return the loan with an interest of 12 per cent additional grain.

30 per cent of the villagers of Bhilpur are landless and have to work as labourers on other farms. Chaturiben states that the food grain bank is especially important for the people as they can get corn when they need it and when they receive their wages they are able to repay the loan. Chaturiben, Kapureben, Vagiben, Manjulaben, Zavariben, Vinaben and Mesaliben all agree that the food grain bank has had a positive impact on their daily lives. Now their food supply has stabilised and they do not have to spend as much time worrying about how to provide the next meal but can concentrate on other matters. Chaturiben adds that the meetings Bhasha organises for the women heads of all the SHGs is an excellent initiative to establish sisterhood and bring people of different villages closer together.

2.5. Health Care Programme

The health care program was established in 2001 to address health problems among Adivasis, especially sickle cell anemia. Adivasi areas have little access to healthcare and there was a need to look for approaches outside the clinic and hospital setting. The objectives of the programme are :

- To undertake study of area specific diseases to know the incidence and causes and take preventive measures
- To focus on area specific problems such as sickle cell, tuberculosis, dermatological and ophthalmic disorders and women's health
- To create preventive measures for sickle cell and other serious health problems
- To create health awareness among people through community health workers and literature on health issues
- To build an effective system that would make healthcare easily accessible in interior areas

Initially health camps were organised at the villages but for regular health care a clinic was set up at the campus area of the Adivasi Academy in Tejgadh in 2003 which serves people from 280 villages. This clinic operates on weekends.

Number of clinic cases treated last year and health camps held :

Taluka	DSC	Clinic Cases	General Health Camps	Sickle Cell Camps
Chhotaudepur	Zoz	6000	20	6
Kawant	Kawant, Khatiyawant, Panvad	7000	10	7
Pavi-Jetpur	Moti-Amrol	2000	1	2
Dediyapada	Selamba	-	-	-
Lunawada	Kantar	-	1	2
Total		15000	32	17

In addition to the health camps specified in the table above a camp for physically challenged was held last year. In total 208 patients were treated, including 20 operations for polio, artificial limbs were distributed to 125 patients and 5 were provided with wheelchairs. Another two-day health camp was held in March 2005, which concentrated on eye problems. 1100 patients, who were identified through health surveys, came for the camp.

The healthcare programme has reached to interior adivasi areas where no medical units exist. People in adivasi areas of Vadodara district now have access to hospitals and other medical aid and are able to receive timely treatment.

2.6. Migrant Workers

Many adivasis migrate to the cities to search for alternative sources of income. Most end up working at construction sites where exploitation is common. To address this problem the Development Services Centres are working to mobilise migrant adivasi labourers and address issues of exploitation and human rights violation. The programme undertakes legal advice and networking meetings for sensitization and conscientisation.

A survey of 2200 migratory labourers has been conducted to study their migration cycle, place of work, occupational hazards, wages, terms of contractual employment and problems experienced due to migration. Village level meetings are regularly held to discuss the effects of migration and adivasi migrant labourers have been organised to form a union of their own.

Number of Labour Union members

Taluka	DSC	Labour Union members
Chhotaudepur	Zoz	350
Kawant	Kawant, Khatiyawant, Panvad	110
Pavi-Jetpur	Moti-Amrol	90
Dediyapada	Selamba	60
Lunawada	Kantar	175
Total		785



Outputs of the development activities:

Freedom from indebtedness to private moneylenders

Improvement in literacy

Reduction in outward migration

Development of agriculture and livelihood support

Accessibility to healthcare

Greater self confidence and self reliance

3.

Human Rights

Inspired by the Verrier Elwin Memorial Lecture delivered by the eminent activist Smt Mahasweta Devi in 1998, it was decided to establish the Denotified and Nomadic Tribes Rights Action Group. It was the first national campaign ever taken up for the cause of the DNT rights and has from the start ceaselessly pursued the question by raising it in several national forums such as the National Human Rights Commission, Census of India, Election Commission, Prime Minister's Office, various other ministries, several State Governments, print and electronic media.

While Bhasha's work with the adivasi groups has focused on establishing an integrated model of development, its work with the denotified communities, mainly due to their criminal history, has taken a rights based approach

During the past year, Bhasha has made concentrated efforts related to the human rights issues on the following fronts :

- Creation of a national alliance of activists and organizations working on the DNT issue
- Identification and documentation of DNT populated pockets in states of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajashthan and Madhya Pradesh
- Addressing issues of human rights violation related to the denotified communities with State Governments, Legal Authorities and National Human Rights Commission
- Advocacy and lobbying for bringing about policy reforms and welfare measures for the denotified and adivasi communities with various government bodies and human rights organizations
- Undertaking and encouraging research and study of the history and status of the denotified communities
- Capacitating representatives of denotified communities to organise themselves

Bhasha's campaign with the National Human Rights Commission led to the Commission outlining directives to the State Governments for Welfare Measures for denotified communities in 2001. In 2004, the DNT Commission was set up to study the status of denotified communities and make recommendations for improvement in their status and living conditions.

Bhasha has taken the initiative to bring together various groups and networks in different states for discussion of the Adivasi Draft Policy. The first preliminary meeting of the group was organized at Tejgadh on 4th and 5th November 2004 where representatives from all adivasi states of India participated actively. The points of discussion have been submitted to the Council set up for framing the National Tribal Policy.

Budhan Theatre Group

The Chharas are a denotified tribe settled by the British on the northern outskirts of Ahmedabad. Bhasha started a library in Chharanagar in 1998 for the children and college students in the area. The Library helped to mobilize the youth in the Chhara community. The youth group at Chharanagar has come together to remove the criminal stigma which has stuck to them since 1873. For this the group started the Budhan Theatre Group in 1998, named after Budhan, a DNT killed while in police custody. Since then the group has been engaged in writing and performing plays on different issues related to DNTs and held performances in several cities last year. Budhan Theatre Group has emerged as a platform for youth with creative talent.



4.

Publication

In May 1997 Bhasha established the Dhol magazine in multiple adivasi languages to create a platform for the adivasis to express their concerns. This lay the foundation of Bhasha Publications for Social Change which strives to create space for expression of adivasi imagination and articulation of their concerns as well as to generate a more sensitive approach in society towards adivasi issues.



Over the years, Bhasha Publications has created a network of thinkers and writers from among the adivasi community to compile oral narratives, adivasi history, religion and culture into print in ten major adivasi languages of Gujarat and Maharashtra, that had no tradition of writing before this. The languages include Rathwi, Chaudhari, Dungri Bhili, Panchmahali Bhili, Kukna, Bhandu, Ahirani, Dehwali, Gor Banjara, Pavri. Voicing their views and concerns, Bhasha's publications have become a medium of intellectual exchange and awakening for these communities.

In addition to the publication of Dhol and other publications on adivasi culture and society, Bhasha Publications has started a children's magazine on communal harmony titled Bol in 2004. Bol is focused on eliminating communal tensions by building mutual respect and understanding regarding different communities and religions among children.

Publications released this year:

- Adivasis: Legal Provisions, Languages, Locations (A Reference Document for the Status of Adivasis and Denotified & Nomadic Jatis in India)
- Bol: 4 issues
- Dhol: 1 issue in Dehwali

5.

Cultural Promotion

The Bhasha Publication activities gave birth to a small but focused publishing and book distribution house in 2002, under the name Samas. It is not so much a commercial as a cultural venture, a platform for literary and intellectual concerns and a forum for cultural interaction.



As a culmination of the Adivasi Artists' Cooperative Bhasha established a craft outlet for adivasi craft in 2003 to help promote sales of adivasi craft and provide opportunity for direct marketing to artists. The craft outlet, named Tribals First, served as a window of opportunity for adivasi peoples, allowing them to



display, exhibit and sell their work and to bring the richness of their culture to the wider community and heighten awareness of it. Adhering to the principles of Fair Trade, the sale of the artwork will generate a supplementary income for the

crafts men and women.

In October 2004 Tribals First and Samas, were united under the name Samas.

6.

Programmes for Sensitisation and Awareness

Bhasha organizes conferences, seminars, workshops and cultural festivals to raise awareness of issues related to adivasis.

Shortly after the Bhasha Trust was established, it was decided to institute an annual lecture series named after Dr. Verrier Elwin in memory of his significant contribution to documenting adivasi cultural heritage and to defining India's official policy of adivasi development. Since 1997 seven lectures have been given.



In 2004 the VIIth Verrier Elwin Memorial Lecture was delivered by eminent scholar Dr Gail Omvedt under the title: Notes Toward a History of the Bhils.

Conferences held during the year include :

A two day seminar on 'Nari Swaroop, Nari Chetna and Literature' was held on August 27th and 28th, 2004 at the M.S.University of Baroda and the Adivasi Academy, Tejgadhd.

On 17th-19th December 2004 Bhasha and Indira Ghandi National Centre for the Arts organized an International conference in Delhi under the caption 'Towards Harmony: Conflict, Resolution and Reconciliation'.

A workshop on "Conflict Transformation through Non-Violent Communication" led by Dr Marshal Rosenberg was held on 23rd December 2004 in Ahmedabad.

Bhasha has instituted annual cultural melas of adivasis and denotified communities. On these occasions the adivasi artists gather to present their drama, songs, folk epics, dance and music. The melas cover adivasi artists from Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.

On 1st May Adivasis met at Dandi for a cultural celebration.

The annual conference on DNTs was held in Charanagar, Ahmedabad, on 31. August, the day when DNTs were denotified by the government

This year the Saputara mela took place on 15th September 2004 at Dang.

The Kaleshwari mela was celebrated on Mahashivratri day at Panchmahal on 8th March 2005.

The buildings of the Adivasi Academy's Museum, Workshop and Library were completed and blessed on 15th of August 2004 by Smt Mahasweta Devi.



On the 6th of February 2005 the third batch of students from the two-year Post Graduate Diploma Program in Adivasi Studies graduated. The Convocation Ceremony was presided over by Smt Mahasweta Devi and Justice Sonia Gokani. At this time 10 students graduated, two women and eight men. Of these three of the students have already been employed by NGOs engaged in awareness activities, and seven have started working with the Development Services Centers.

7.

Directions for the Future

The range and scope of Bhasha's work has grown rapidly since its establishment. Viewing the spread of Bhasha's work in terms of the activities, the geographical expanse and the many organizations and individuals who have become a part of this experiment, the Bhasha Trust was faced with two core issues :

- Continuity and sustainability of the various activities initiated by Bhasha
- Leadership, vision and direction required for the growth of the organisation

The Trustees of Bhasha decided that it was necessary to streamline the various activities and develop an able leadership that would competently continue to steer the organization. It was decided to establish new organizations for community based activities that, in the long run, were to be governed by the communities as well as for those programmes that fell outside Bhasha's decided objectives.

Accordingly, Bhasha has undertaken a structural reorganisation that would lead to setting of vision and corresponding activities in the coming years. This includes floating of five new organisations from Bhasha's own sphere of activities, namely :

- Gram Vikas Trust for undertaking development work in adivasi areas
- Micro-Finance and Employment Generation Society for training micro finance groups in rural areas and creating opportunities for income generation
- Samas Craft and Culture Centre for providing a platform to adivasi and folk arts and promotion of cultural activities
- Prakriti Healthcare Trust for addressing health issues in rural areas of Gujarat

For the next five years, Bhasha would undertake to establish these organisations on a firm footing and address the DNT and adivasi issues on a national level.

8.

Funding Support

Bhasha received funding support from the following agencies and individuals during the year :

Funding Agencies

Ford Foundation

Action Aid India

American India Foundation

Association for India's Development

Prince Claus Fund

Royal Netherlands Embassy

Functional Vocational Training Forum - Caritas India

Terre Des Hommes - Pharmacists Sans Frontier

Indo Global Social Service Society - National Education Group

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Central Institute of Indian Languages

National Human Rights Commission

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation

District Rural Development Agency

Department of Culture

United Way of Baroda

Zydex Industries

Trifed

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