

**Bhasha Research and Publication  
Centre  
Annual Report  
2008-09**

## **Adivasi Academy**

Bhasha Research and Publication Centre was formed in 1996 for documentation and conservation of adivasi languages and culture and for creation of a national institute for research and education in the area of adivasi culture and imagination. The Adivasi Academy was visualised as an institute that would develop Tribal Studies as a new discipline and contribute to the development of adivasi communities. A decade later, the Adivasi Academy at Tejgadh stands as a unique institution that has laid the foundations of a distinct educational and development model for the adivasis of India. Recognised as a Centre of Excellence by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, the Adivasi Academy is viewed by adivasi communities as a space for intellectual dialogue, imaginative expression and hope for a dignified future.

The Adivasi Academy was established in 2000. The present **Director Shri Ashokbhai Chaudhari** joined at the Adivasi Academy in November 2008. **Shri Arjunbhai Rathwa** is working as Deputy Director in an honorary capacity.

Ms. Antara Dev Sen, Shri Arjun Rathwa, Dr. Sudarshan Iyengar, Dr Tridip Suhrud, Dr Varsha Das, Ms Vidya Rao and Shri Uttam Parmar form the Advisory Board of the Adivasi Academy.

The following courses were offered by the Adivasi Academy during the academic year 2008-09:

### ***Diploma in Tribal Studies***

**Ten** students were admitted for the two year course (August 2007 to July 2009) at Tejgadh.

### ***Diploma in Adivasi Languages, Society and Culture***

**Five** students were enrolled for the one year course (July 2008 to June 2009) at Tejgadh.

### ***Diploma in Organic Agriculture and Forest Management***

**Five** students were enrolled for the one year course (July 2008 to June 2009) at Selamba taluka in Narmada district of Gujarat.

### ***Diploma in Tribal Studies***

**Five** students were admitted under the one year course (July 2008 to June 2009) at Vedchi.

### ***Certificate Course in Rural Health Management***

**Nine** students were admitted for the one year course (December 2008 to November 2009) at Tejgadh.

## **Distance Education Programme (IGNOU)**

The Indira Gandhi National Open University's Special Study Centre at the Adivasi Academy enrolled forty new students under various Certificate, Diploma and Degree courses.

## **English and Computer Training to High School Students**

With a view to enhancing English and Computer proficiency among adivasi students, the Adivasi Academy commenced English Language and Computer Training programmes for high school students in remote villages of Naswadi and Pavi Jetpur talukas. During a three year period, the project intends to promote computer literacy, communication skills and English language proficiency among three thousand students of **eight** high schools of Naswadi and twenty seven schools at Pavijetpur talukas.

### **‘Vidya’ Non-formal Schools**

*Vasantshala*, the non-formal residential school set up for children from migratory families on the Academy’s campus, was created with the purpose of providing adivasi children from migrating families who have been either pushed out or have missed going to school, an opportunity to reintegrate with the formal schools. During the past three years of its existence, *Vasantshala* has been an extremely successful experiment in non-formal education for adivasi children. The residential school now has **fifty** children.

The Academy continues to run bridge schools for adivasi children in the villages under its ‘Vidya’ programme. Last year, **twenty eight** non-formal schools were run in the villages of Pavijetpur, Chhotaudepur and Kanwant talukas covering 906 children. During the last academic session, the ‘Vidya’ schools admitted **eighty four** children to various government schools and **five** children to the Eklavya Residential School at Tilakwada. Camps for extra-curricular activities, music and theatre workshops were organised at the centre locations.

In a new initiative, the **Adivasi Academy** has collaborated with Reach to Teach, a U.K. based organisation devoted to reaching out quality education to adivasi children in Gujarat. Towards this, the Adivasi Academy conducted a massive diachronic survey covering **264 villages** of Narmada, Tapi, Vadodara, Dahod, Godhra, Kheda, Sabarkantha districts during June 2008 to assess the existing educational status and needs in these areas. Based on the survey and consultations with educationists, organisations and community members, **Reach to Teach** has set up **fifteen non-formal schools** in far-flung villages located on the borders of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh in the Kanwant taluka.

An intensive Teacher Training Programme was launched at the Adivasi Academy for providing qualitative inputs in methodology and curriculum to be adapted by the school teachers.

### **‘Prakriti’ Healthcare**

The ‘**Prakriti Clinic**’ at Tejgadh provides health care services, rural para-medical training, health awareness and need-based research. During the year, the Prakriti clinic was visited by **7682 patients** that included **3572 women**, **3254 men** and **856 children** from **400 villages** of Chhotaudepur, Pavijetpur and Kanwant talukas.

In addition, **7110 households** were provided with **health insurance**.

**Health camps** were held in various villages such as Jamla, Methibor, Jharuli, Dobacapra, Jervi, Koli, Kumbhani, Bodgam, Dehari, Singlabari, Diawat and Khadla, during which **1148 persons** were offered treatment.

The Adivasi Academy’s teachers and health karyakartas collaborated with **Darpana Academy’s ‘Acting Healthy Project’** to raise awareness regarding women’s health in the villages of Vadodara district. Artistes from Darpana Academy trained a group of teachers and community health karyakartas of the Adivasi Academy in community theatre. During **April 2008**, the group held **thirty performances** based on gender and health issues in various villages of Chhotaudepur, Kanwant and Pavijetpur talukas.

### **Recognition as IGNOU’s Autonomous Special Study Centre**

For design and delivery of courses for furthering education and livelihood opportunities among adivasi communities, the Indira Gandhi National Open University has decided to recognise the Bhasha Research and Publication Centre as a **Special Autonomous Centre of IGNOU**. Institutes set up by Bhasha, namely the Adivasi Academy and Himlok: Centre for Himalayan Studies, will launch

research and educational programmes from their respective campuses under the Trans-Disciplinary and Inter-Disciplinary School of IGNOU.

### **Research**

Under its Fellowship Programme, the Adivasi Academy extended Senior Research Fellowships to the following scholars:

**Ms Eileen Coates**, artist, Ireland

**Dr Brian Coates**, Dept. of Cultural Studies, University of Limerick, Ireland

**Shri T. C. Negi**, writer, Himachal Pradesh

**Shri Rajpal Varma**, Shimla

The following scholars visited the Adivasi Academy for research:

**Prof. Greg Alles**, Maryland College, U.S.A. visited the Adivasi Academy on a Fulbright Scholarship to study tribal religion.

**Ms. Aliche Tilche**, a student of SOAS, London is affiliated with the Adivasi Academy for her Doctoral Research on Museum Studies.

**Ms. Hanna Al-Taher** from Germany was offered a Junior Research Fellowship for the study of gender relations in adivasi communities and the impact of micro-credit on the same.

### **Vaacha': Museum of Voice**

Documentation of local history and culture was carried out and put on display at the Museum.

A new collection of tribal musical instruments was added to the museum artifacts.

Digital documentation and dissemination of tribal music was undertaken and exhibitions on tribal culture were held.

A total of **4063 visitors** from India and overseas visited the Museum of Voice during the year.

The Vacha Museum group was invited by the District Collectorate, Bharuch to provide guidelines for the renovation of the Government Museum at Bharuch.

A craft training programme for twenty bead making artists was conducted from March to May 2009 at Malaja village.

Music workshops were held for the non-formal school children.

### **National Consortium of Tribal Arts and Culture (NCTAC)**

The Exhibition Catalogue and National Inventory of Tribal Arts based on different Tribal Museums of India, was published for circulation among the Tribal Museums.

A workshop of the NCTAC was held at the **Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi** and at the **Lahoul Spiti Museum, Keylong, Himachal Pradesh** from 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> May 2008. Directors and Curators from the Tribal Research Institutes of Kozhikode (Kerala), Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh), Pune (Maharashtra), Imphal (Manipur), Bhubaneswar (Orissa), Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh) and Kolkata (West Bengal) participated in the workshop.

The work on the touch-screen interactive display of the National Consortium was completed and launched on **4<sup>th</sup> January 2009** at the Museum of Voice, Tejgadh as part of '**Chotro II: International Conference on Nomadic Communities in the Post-Colonial World, Culture-Expression-Rights**'.

### **Library**

During the year **1860 new books** were added to the library. With this, the Tejgadh library has a collection of **28,063 books** and **185 academic journals and magazines**. The library has a membership of 486 individuals that includes faculty, students, college teachers and local residents.

### **Campus Development**

The construction of the '**Activity Centre**' supported by the **Japanese Consulate** was completed with additional donations from Association of India's Development and Smt Kusum and Shri Indra Kumar Bagri. The nine rooms built at the Activity Centre are fully functional.

The '**Toor**' **Residency Block** on the campus was commenced with the support of **Reach to Teach, U.K.**

### **Adivasi Chaitanya Trust**

The Adivasi Chaitanya Trust was set up to create a model of sustainable development whereby adivasi villages could become self-reliant. Set up by trainees of the Adivasi Academy, Adivasi Chaitanya Trust has set up **Development Services Centres** in adivasi areas that carry out community work in nearly a **thousand villages** of the eastern belt of Gujarat.

The **Adivasi Chaitanya Trust** set up **twelve** new Development Services Centres at Surat, Tapi and Narmada districts. There are presently **thirty centres** spread over the eastern tribal belt of Gujarat. The community work of the thirty DSCs covers:

**Micro-credit: 1842 self-help groups** having a membership of **21285 individuals**

Food Grain Banks: **135 banks** with **6962 women members**

Non formal Education: **60 centres**

Migratory Labourers legal aid Forum: **656 members**

Water Banks: **47 groups**

Organic Agriculture: **610 women farmers**

Micro-Enterprise: **739 entrepreneurs**

Artists' Groups: **11 SHGs** having **242 members**

Gobar Banks: **98** with **857 members**

The Adivasi Chaitanya Trust has conceptualised the setting up of a Green Economic Zone (GEZ) in the tribal belt of Gujarat with the involvement of a **hundred karyakartas**. GEZ plans to cover **2200 villages** spread over 30000 sq. mt. area of Tapi, Narmada and Mahi river basins in Gujarat.

The Adivasi Chaitanya Trust organised *Vikas Haats* for discussions on development at Tejgadh Khatiawant, Kanwant and Baroj villages. The *Vikas Haats* saw a participation of **five thousand adivasis**.

A Capacity Building Programme was organised for the core group of the DSCs from 19th to 24th March 2009 focussing on the impact of the economic slowdown on adivasi areas, the role of gram sabhas, livelihood, gender issues and self-reliance.

A Computer Training Programme was conducted for imparting computer skills, internet usage and communication to the karyakartas.

### **Budhan Theatre**

The Budhan Theatre began with a small community library set up at Chharanagar ten years back. The group performed its first play based on the custodial death of Budhan Sabar in 1998. Since then Budhan Theatre has performed street plays to raise awareness about the condition of the denotified tribes. Budhan Theatre actors have adopted theatre as a medium to change their lives and their identity as “born criminals.”

The year 2009 marked the completion of ten years of Budhan Theatre’s existence. On this occasion Budhan Theatre held a performance of *Ek aur Balcony* (based on Jean Genet’s *Balcony*) at the H. K. College Auditorium, Ahmedabad on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2008. The play was performed again at Darpana Academy on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

Other performances of the Budhan Theatre were held at the following forums:

A performance of *Budhan Bolta Hai* was held at Darpana Academy on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2008. The performance was part of an Inter School Competition in which Nikul and Hardika were awarded best actors and Dakxin Bajarange received the award for best playwright.

The children’s wing of Budhan Theatre was invited for a performance and cultural interaction by Crossword, Ahmedabad on 28th Dec. 2008.

*Budhan Bolta Hai* was performed at City College, Ahmedabad on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008.

Budhan Theatre held performances of *Budhan Bolta Hai* and *Ek aur Balcony* at Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2009. The performance was watched by IIMA Director and senior IAS officers. The performance was followed by the visit of the IIMA group to Chharanagar. The group was provided understanding of the historical stigma being carried by the Chharas and the problems posed by the judicial system.

Budhan Theatre was invited for a second performance at Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2009.

Budhan Theatre engaged in the movement to resist the commercialization of the Kankaria Lake at Ahmedabad. The group performed a play on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2009 under the direction of Prof. Saumya Joshi for public sensitization.

Another performance of *Budhan Bolta Hai* was held at Kaleswari Mela on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2009.

The first Performance of *Taras Lagi Chhe Taras* was held on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2009 before the office of the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation as a part of the Kankariya Lake Fees Agitation. More than two hundred common people witnessed the play and seem agreed to take part in this movement.

Budhan Theatre participated in a cycle rally held for opposition to the Kankariya Lake Commercialization on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2009.

The group performed six shows in various parts of Ahmedabad City such as Gujarat College, Lal Darwaja, Raipur, Behrampura Shah E Alam and Pushpa Kunj Gate at Kankariya Lake.

The **World Theatre Day** on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2009 was celebrated by the Budhan Theatre team at Chharanagar.

On 28<sup>th</sup> March 2009, Daxin Bajarange conducted a one day workshop for tribal students at the Sanjeevani school in Panchgani, Maharashtra. The workshop focused on exploring ways to keep art and culture alive through theatre.

Shri Dakxin Bajarange participated in the National Conference on 'Unorganized Sector and Role of Media' organized by the Mahatma Gandhi Labour Institute, Ahmedabad and presented the experience of Budhan Theatre and Community Development.

A petition for the Maninagar Demolition Case was filed with the Supreme Court and an interim was obtained on demolition of the *basti*.

## **Himlok**

Bhasha is creating an institute by the name of '**Himlok**' at Himachal Pradesh. 'Himlok' is set up for conservation, documentation, study, research in the area of Himalayan Studies and undertaking of cultural and ecological conservation or large-scale field studies and projects of development.

The present Advisory Board for Himlok includes Dr. O. C. Handa, Dr. Gautam Sharma Vyathit, Shri Tobden, Dr. Satish Aikant and Dr Sukrita Paul Kumar.

Bhasha has identified land for setting up of the Himlok campus at Nahan village in Sirmaur district. The application for procuring the land has been submitted to the Government of Himachal Pradesh.

Himlok has initiated community development in the Nahan, Kalpa, Nerti and Keylong areas.

A one year **Diploma in Himalayan Culture** was successfully completed in July 2008 and the **twelve trainees** enrolled in the course are now engaged in various activities of the Himlok centre located at Kalpa.

A library has been started at Kalpa that has been contributory to the strengthening of the local community network.

A survey was carried out at **Kalpa, Roghi and Warangi** villages in **Kinnaur District** of Himachal Pradesh for training to be imparted to women on gender, health and livelihood issues.

Bhasha has completed the interior designing work at the Keylong Museum assigned to it by the Government of Himachal Pradesh. The Keyong museum is now fully functional. In the next phase of the project the communities at Lahaul and Spiti are being involved to evolve the Keylong museum as an active community documentation and cultural centre.

A seminar on Himalayan Culture and History was organized in May 2008.

## **Purva Prakash**

Purva Prakash, was set up as an autonomous Trust for carrying forward Bhasha's publication programme. The organisation represents 'purva' the eastern tribal of Gujarat and evokes the sense of light/knowledge of the adivasis as well as the eastern world. Purva Prakash offers a platform for alternative literature that focuses on issues related to communities that stand on the fringe of the mainstream and makes efforts to sensitise people in general to these issues through literature.

Purva Prakash brought out the following publications during the year:

### **Books**

*SEZ: Ek Sarvanami Tsunami* (Hindi) by Abhijeet Sengupta

*Swami Govind Guru* (Gujarati) by Arjunsinh Pargi

*Hind Swaraj Vishe* (Gujarati) by Tridip Suhrud

*Manda-English Dictionary* (Manda-English) by B. Ramakrishna Reddy

*Manda Oral Literature* (Manda-English) by B. Ramakrishna Reddy

*Tribal Literature of Gujarat* (English) by Nishaant Chowksi

*Indigenous Peoples: Responding to Human Ecology* (English) by Lachman Khubchandani

### **Educational Material**

*Kunkna Pictorial Glossary*

*Chaudhari Pictorial Glossary*

*Gamit Pictorial Glossary*

*Chamthi Pictorial Glossary*

*Naiki Pictorial Glossary*

*Wanjhari Pictorial Glossary*

*Madari Pictorial Glossary*

*Bhantu Pictorial Glossary*

*Gujarati-Pictorial Glossary*

### **Magazines**

*Lakhara* (Annual)

*Purva Para* (Quarterly)

*Bol, children's magazine* (Bi-monthly)



## **Samveg**

Bhasha's Micro Credit federation was registered as a Trust under the name **Samveg Foundation**. Samveg's activities are spread in five districts of Gujarat for the implementation and monitoring of self-help groups. The micro-credit work is spread over **1200 tribal villages** in five districts of Gujarat. Samveg has **2200 self-help groups** having transactions of **six crore rupees**.

The following small scale cluster federations are being created under **Samveg**:

**Mahi Parallel Federation** for Panchmahal District

**Sukhi Parallel Federation** for Dahod District

**Orsang Parallel Federation** for Vadodara District

**Narmada Parallel Federation** for Narmada District

**Tapi Parallel Federation** for Surat/Tapi District

Samveg has undertaken training for:

Strengthening of DSCs and for development of Green Economic Zone, micro-enterprise, forward and backward linkages and data analysis.

With the support of NABARD, **58 self-help groups** are formed and linked to nationalised banks. In near future the total number of SHGs under NABARD sponsored project will go to hundred.

## **Important Events during the year**

A seminar on **Tribal Literature** was held in collaboration with **Gujarat Sahitya Parishad** at **Dandi** on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2008.

Under the title '**In Search of Gandhi's India**', a group of scholars from Oakland Community College, U.S.A. visited Tejgadh on 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> July 2008 for discussion on the Tribal Situation and Gandhian Ideology.

**Dr Kerim Freidman** and **Ms. Sashwati Talukdar** visited Chharanagar for documentation of Budhan Theatre's plays in July 2008.

**Shri G. B. Mukherjee**, Secretary, Ministry of Tribal Affairs visited Tejgadh on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> September 2008.

**Prof. G. N. Devy**, Founder Trustee, Bhasha Centre was invited to deliver the Keynote Address on Indigenous Languages at the **annual conference of UNESCO** at Paris in October 2008.

On 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> October, ten students from the **Vasantshala school** of the Adivasi Academy participated in the exhibition for art work,organised by **Delhi Public School, Vadodara**.

The annual mela at **Saputara** was held on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

The **Foundation Stone Ceremony** for the construction of the **Toor Residency Block** at the Adivasi Academy was held on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2008.

**Shri Vijay Nehra**, District Collector and Magistrate visited the Adivasi Academy on 5th November.

A three day workshop on *Revisiting Hind Swaraj* was held at Tejgadh in collaboration with University of Maastricht, Netherlands from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> November 2008.

A two day workshop on mental well-being was held by **Dr. Palan** and **Dr. Kiran Shinglot** at Tejgadh on 8th and 9th November 2008.

**Shri Shambaji Bhagat's** music troupe was invited for a performance at the Adivasi Academy on 23rd November 2008.

On 15th December, **twelve Vidya students** participated at the district level drama competition on the theme of Importance of Education for Children and Removal of Child Labour, jointly organised by Baroda Citizen Council and UNICEF and were awarded the **first prize**.

A meeting of all Bhasha organisations was held on 24th December 2008 under the title *Translating Bhasha*.

**Prof. V. N. Rajasekharan Pillai**, Vice Chancellor, Indira Gandhi National Open University visited The Adivasi Academy on 25<sup>th</sup> December 2008 to discuss the collaboration between the Adivasi Academy and IGNOU.

The **second Chotro conference** on *Nomadic Communities in the Post-Colonial World- Culture-Expression-Rights* was held in collaboration with the Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies at Tejgadh-Baroda from 4th to 7th January 2009.

**Mr. Steven Solnick**, Ford Foundation chief and **Dr. Ajit Kanitkar**, Programme Officer, Economic Development visited the Adivasi Academy on 19th January 2009.

A two day workshop on **Tribal Education** with participation of heads of tribal schools was held on 7th and 8th January 2009 at Tejgadh.

*Kaleswari mela* was held on the occasion of Mahashivratri on 23rd February 2009.

A faculty orientation programme was conducted by **Prof. Lachman Khubchandani** at Tejgadh from 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

A capacity building workshop was organised for all development karyakartas from 19th to 23rd March 2009 at Tejgadh.

'**Toor mela**' for documentation of adivasi music was held at Tejgadh on 23rd March 2009.

### **Funding Agencies**

During the year Bhasha received funding support from the following international organisations and the government:

The Ford Foundation  
Japanese Consulate  
Terre des Hommes  
Action Aid India  
Reach to Teach  
Association for India's Development

ELLE Foundation/ Aide et Action

Ministry of Tribal Affairs, GOI  
Dept. of Education, GOG  
Dept. of Culture, GOI  
Dept of Language, Art & Culture, Himachal Pradesh  
Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore  
District Planning office, Vadodara, GOG  
District Primary Education Department  
CAPART

NABARD