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**bhasha**

**Bhasha Research and Publication Centre, Vadodara and  
Adivasi Academy, Tejgadh**

**Annual Report**

**Highlights of Key Activities**

**April 2020 to March 2021**

## **1. PEOPLE'S LINGUISTIC SURVEY OF INDIA (PLSI)**

The *People's Linguistic Survey of India* is the first nation-wide survey of Indian languages to be taken up after India's independence. Embarked upon by Bhasha's Founder and eminent literary critic, Dr. G. N. Devy in 2010, the survey was completed in a span of four years, covering all States and Union Territories of India. The nation-wide survey involved 3000 community speakers, linguists, scholars and publishers. Reporting on 780 living languages in India, the survey is presently being published in a 70-volume series in regional languages, English and Hindi by Orient Blackswan and regional publishers.

In the past year, 3 new volumes were added to the series:

PLSI Volume 01/Part II : *The Languages of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands*

PLSI Volume 36/Part II : *Sanskrit*

PLSI Volume 07/Part II : *The Languages of Chhattisgarh*

So far, 52 volumes have been published under the PLSI series.

## **2. DOCUMENTATION OF ADIVASI LANGUAGES, MUSIC AND ORAL TRADITIONS (SUPPORTED BY MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS, GOVT. OF INDIA)**

The 'Centre of Excellence' project 2019-20 got extended due to the Covid pandemic in March 2020 and the lockdown following it. Bhasha has now completed the project and submitted the Report and related documents to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs. The final instalment of the grant is awaited.

Bhasha has accomplished the following activities under the project:

i) 10 short films are made, each of 12-15 minutes each, exploring endangerment in the following tribal languages:

*In Gujarat:* Kunkna, Charani, Siddi, Chaudhari, Gamit, Dhodia

*In Maharashtra:* Gondi, Halbi, Pawri

*In Karnataka:* Hakki-Pikki

In addition to the 10 short films, a comprehensive 30-minute film is also made to present an overall picture of factors that lead to language endangerment and decline.

### Links to the films:

Charni Language: <https://youtu.be/rsuyDk030vU>

Chaudhari Language: <https://youtu.be/s3tEhLVQAoQ>

Dhodia Language: <https://youtu.be/gSPkjVpLrv4>

Gamit Language: <https://youtu.be/aonTkhgbPbA>

Kunkana Language: <https://youtu.be/shabFnFa4vs>

Siddi Language: <https://youtu.be/ySCrVct5aDk>

Halbi Language: <https://youtu.be/f0zAhzCwNP4>

Pawri Language: <https://youtu.be/11Y1PPF1vBo>

Hakki Pikki: <https://youtu.be/NQxPNgF1ar0>

Gondi: <https://youtu.be/rG-CstsGV5c>

Main Film: <https://youtu.be/Ym1GBQwIJ6A>

ii) Bhasha has digitised 600 audio and 20 video tapes containing Dr. Bhagwandasbhai Patel's life-time of dedicated work of recording the oral traditions of Garasia and Dungri Bhils of north Gujarat. The recordings, running into 500+ hours, contain the original epics and legends as *Bharat* (Bhili *Mahabharat*), *Rom Sitmani Varta* (Bhili *Ramayan*), *Rathod Varta* and *Gujarano Arelo*, all rendered in Bhili. The documentation will be part of the Adivasi Academy's digital archives and would be accessible to community members, students, researchers and scholars.

iii) Adding to its tribal music collection, Bhasha documented the tribal music and performing traditions of Sikkim. A 90-minute film is made presenting the performing traditions of Khas, Nepali, Gurung, Bhutia, Lepcha, Rai, Tamang, Magar, Limbu, Bhujel and Sherpa Adivasi communities, along with interviews with some of the artistes.

**FILM URL:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=naQd-aSqATA&feature=youtu.be>



### 3. KASOTA WEAVING

Since 2019, Bhasha has undertaken to revive the now threatened Kasota textile, traditionally woven by the Vankar community of Chhota Udepur, specifically for Rathwa males. To enable the two surviving master weavers, Govindbhai Vankar and Ratanbhai Vankar to continue their work safely, the looms were shifted to their homes in August 2020. Whereas earlier mill-made yarn was being used in the warp and hand spun yarn was used only in the weft, this year the Adivasi Academy has begun using organic yarn both in the warp and weft, thus making the Kasota a 100 percent organic fabric. During the year, 200 kasota pieces were made, several of which have been sold at exhibitions. The fabric found a very welcome buyer in the royal family of Kathiwada.

### 4. INDIGO FARMING AND DYE EXTRACTION

Indigo cultivation continued on the one *bigha* of rented land at Achala village in Chhota Udepur taluka. This year the indigo produce was better with the plants reaching a height of more than six feet. Indigo pigment was extracted in three cycles and prepared in four vats to dye the yarn for Kasota weaving. Arjunbhai Rathwa and Praveenbhai Rathwa at the Adivasi Academy have mastered the art of indigo extraction.



Three Workshops on ‘Preparation of Natural Dyes’ were conducted at the Adivasi Academy from 4 to 9 January 2021, 19 to 29 January 2021 and 28 February to 5 March 2021. Master dyers, Paresh Patel (Ahmedabad), Ranamal Khatri (Barmer), Anand Moorti (Bangalore), Asif Chhipa (Ahmedabad), Brijvallabh Udaiwal (Jaipur), Deepak Agrawal and Ashok Siju were invited to conduct the training as well as to assist the Academy personnel in the finer aspects of Natural Dyeing. The workshops were attended by 8 participants. This time, along with Majishtha (*Rubia Tinctorum*), Lac (harvested stick lac), Babul (*Acacia*), Amaltash (*Cassia*) and Eucalyptus, *Aal* (*Morinda citrifolia*) that grows in abundance in the Chhota Udepur region, too was used for red dye. So far, *aal* has been used as a dye only in Kotpat in Chattisgarh. Bhasha is the second organisation to use it for textile dyeing.



## 5. AMBAR CHARKAS FOR HAND-SPUN YARN (SUPPORTED BY JEWEL BRUSHES)

To improve the quality of the Kasota textile, the Adivasi Academy is sourcing hand-spun yarn from Tamil Nadu and dyeing it in natural dyes as red from the Aal tree roots, brown from Neelgiri tree bark, yellow from marigold and turmeric, black from iron rust, purple from lac, orange from Palash tree flowers, blue from indigo, all sourced locally on the Adivasi Academy's campus. In terms of natural dyes and weaving, the Kasota production is completely in-house. In order to produce its own hand-spun yarn, Bhasha has raised donation to procure 5 Ambar Charkhas for the Academy. Local women will be trained in the charkha-spinning of the raw cotton fibre, thus offering them local employment

## 6. VAACHA MUSEUM

The Museum team has prepared a digital database of the museum's entire collection of nearly 3000 artefacts comprising paintings, sculpture, pottery, jewellery, household items, musical instruments and textiles. The data base provides information on each artefact with regard to its size, weight source, price and utility. Work is on to turn the database into a Digital Register that can go online in future.

The Museum has a large new collection of terracotta horses that are traditionally worshipped by Adivasi communities at the village *devsthal*.



Bhasha augmented its audio recording archives of Bhasha Van, by adding information on 80 more Adivasi languages of Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. The recordings are rendered in Hindi, Gujarati and English. Annu, a volunteer intern with Bhasha, is working on a mobile app on which the recordings will be made available in future.

## 7. ART EXHIBITIONS

As Covid set in, the nation-wide lockdown followed by interim measures such as curtailing of weekly *haats*, *melas* during Holi and Dusshera and travel restrictions have brought the tourist footfall in the Chhota Udepur district almost to nil. This has severely impacted the artist community in the district. In order to keep their artistic activity going and to bring them economic support, Bhasha commissioned artworks to 25 artists practising pithoro painting, sculpture, pottery, kasota weaving, canework and bead jewellery. The art work was presented at two exhibitions at Vadodara that received an excellent response. The first exhibition was held at Splatter Studio on 9-10-11 January 2021 and the second at Upaj Farm's Farmers' Market event on 13-14 February 2021.



## 8. WORKSHOP ON TRIBAL CUISINE

A workshop on the tribal cuisine of South Gujarat was held on 28-29-30 January 2021 at the Adivasi Academy. A group of women from the Chaudhari community living in Alghat village of Tapi district and led by Manojbhai Chaudhari and Rekhaben Chaudhari, gathered to prepare a wide assortment of *chutneys* using herbs, vegetables and fruits. The Academy plans to launch a youtube channel on Adivasi Cuisine in future, once the pandemic abates.



## 9. PRODUCTION OF BANANA HANDMADE PAPER

Ravi Raj, a post graduate student at the Indian Institute of Crafts and Design, Jaipur, came to the Academy in April 2021 for his final post-graduation project on research on Banana Paper Making. As part of his project, he has experimented with paper making from the banana stem that is usually discarded as waste by banana growers. As part of his research, he visited the Navsari Agricultural University that has done significant research on the use of banana plant and has studied the national and international market for banana handmade paper. Ravi is developing colourful paper of various sizes and gsm(s) using natural dyes. He plans to stay for a year at Tejgadh and develop this as a sustainable enterprise that would generate local employment in not just paper making but also banana by-products as fertiliser, compost and edible food as candy. Bhasha/Academy will need to raise funds to translate this into reality.



## 10. CONNECTING COMMUNITY HERITAGE (SUPPORTED BY WORLD LEARNING, US)

In collaboration with the University of Northern Colorado, Bhasha undertook making of video podcasts to highlight the cultural heritage and identity of the Rathwa Adivasi community. In all, 8 videos, focussing on music, cuisine, rituals and social practices were produced and disseminated over social media.

URL: <https://youtu.be/wDO6z4QPeZs>

<https://youtu.be/xM07SuEg1Bc>

<https://youtu.be/ogdyJW9Muok>

<https://youtu.be/CD2sOSKJQPs>

<https://youtu.be/v3V5a-u54Uk>

<https://youtu.be/2GQeTvOiPMg>

<https://youtu.be/YNDgdQRUTBw>

<https://youtu.be/XU18FqMYCRI>

## 11. DOCUMENTING THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 AMONG INDIA'S ADIVASI AND NOMADIC COMMUNITIES (SUPPORTED BY UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER, UK)

Bhasha has undertaken a research project supported by the University of Leicester and led by their Faculty at the Department of Museum Studies, Dr. Alice Tilche, to document the impact of the Covid pandemic on the Chhara community in Ahmedabad and to explore the policy implications of the same. Implemented by Budhan Theatre, 10 video podcasts were made and widely disseminated among the community. Some of these aimed to create awareness about the safety precautions to be taken to save oneself from infection.

Successfully implemented, the University has awarded a second project to Bhasha, this time expanding the scope of the documentation to cover Adivasis and other Denotified Communities as well. The Colorado and Leicester University projects have enabled the Adivasi Academy to buy high-end iMac systems along with video editing software and advanced mobiles for video shoots. Under Dakxin Chhara's leadership, a small team is being trained at Tejgadh to undertake the making of podcasts and short films/videos.

URL: <https://www.budhanpodcast.com/>

A woman carrying a child on her back, walking down a set of stairs. The image is part of a promotional poster for Budhan Podcast.

Budhan Theatre

Budhan Theatre Presents

# BUDHAN PODCAST

A community arts podcast about health & rights during the COVID-19 pandemic.

10th Episode  
Available From  
20th December 2020 at 7 PM  
[www.budhanpodcast.com](http://www.budhanpodcast.com)

Produced by  
BHASHA RESEARCH AND  
PUBLICATION CENTRE

Funded by  
UNIVERSITY OF  
LEICESTER



## **12. SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION OF DNT COMMUNITIES IN GUJARAT USING RESEARCH AND PERFORMING ARTS (SUPPORTED BY FUNDS FOR GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS)**

Under this project, Bhasha is working with three DNT communities in Gujarat: Chharas in Ahmedabad, Madaris in Kothamba and Nats in Khanpur in Mahisagar district. The project has a two-fold focus: one, a survey of the status of citizenship entitlements at these three community locations and facilitating families to obtain necessary documents that they do not have; and second, creating plays based on community issues to address their social justice and human rights issues.



## **13. PUSTAK PANKH (SUPPORTED BY GAIL CHARITABLE AND EDUCATION TRUST)**

Bhasha was awarded the ‘Pustak Pankh’ project by GAIL in December 2019, to run community libraries in schools of 21 villages of Chhota Udepur district with the purpose of enhancing the learning levels among primary school children through varied activities. The project continues to be kept on hold by GAIL on account of the pandemic.

#### **14. PICTORIAL GLOSSARIES AS AN EDUCATIONAL TOOL (SUPPORTED BY FICCI)**

As a closing event to the FICCI supported project wherein Pictorial Glossaries were produced in Tadvli and Bareilly, Bhasha held a National Webinar on 23-24 January 2021. Several educational NGOs from Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Odisha participated in the webinar. The Keynote Address was presented by Dr. G. N. Devy who provided the idea of developing a Digital Consortium of Tribal Languages and which is now being taken forward with Child Fund India.

#### **15. VASANTSHALA MULTI-LINGUAL SCHOOLING PROGRAM (PARTLY SUPPORTED BY ASSOCIATION FOR INDIA'S DEVELOPMENT, NEOGEN CHEMICALS LTD, SHAKUN POLYMERS PVT. LTD.)**

Vasantshala had 56 children enrolled in the 2019-20 batch. All children were sent home for the Holi festival in March 2020. With the pandemic reaching India in mid-March and the Government declaring a nation-wide lockdown from March 24, the children were asked not to come back until schools would officially open in Gujarat. In June 2020, 40 Vasantshala children were mainstreamed in government residential schools of whom 17 girls gained admission in Kasturba Gandhi Vidyalayas. After the lockdown, Vasantshala teachers have periodically visited the children to enquire about their well-being and to provide study material. In June 2021, 4 more girl students have been admitted to the Kasturba Gandhi Vidyalaya at Zoz.

Bhasha invited educationist Prabhat, associated with the Parag initiative of Tata Trust, to conduct virtual training on story-writing and story-telling with the teachers. Taking this forward, the Vasantshala teachers have produced 41 videos narrating stories, songs, lexicon, and riddles that are being edited and put up on youtube.

URL:

<https://youtu.be/3zQaoR9tP-Q>

<https://youtu.be/XDe9xk2vbg0>

<https://youtu.be/q7FBhw8CX14>

<https://youtu.be/6StA6vSZa3M>

<https://youtu.be/b72FBVLv7iE>

In a major step forward, Vasantshala was duly registered as a school with the Gujarat State Board on 4 April 2021. Vasantshala can now run as a day school as well as a residential school for Standards 1 to 5 (Gujarati Medium). For its first batch, the Adivasi Academy has registered 63 children after a survey of drop-out children in the area. The children largely belong to border villages as Turkheda (in Kanwant taluka on the borders



between Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat), Koli village in Chhota Udepur taluka on the borders between Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat), Dholkuva (in Devgad Baria on the borders between Dahod and Chhota Udepur districts) and few others from Nakhal, Chikhali and Kanalwa. The education officers have advised to carry on online education along with offline teaching by visiting the children in their villages.

## **16. REACHING OUT PICTORIAL GLOSSARIES FOR TRIBAL AREA SCHOOLS (SUPPORTED BY SAMAGRA SHIKSHA, GUJARAT)**

Samagra Shiksha, Gandhinagar, assigned Bhasha the task of re-producing its Pictorial Glossaries for the tribal area schools in the state. Bhasha successfully (re-)printed Pictorial Glossaries in 10 Tribal Languages (Garasia, Dungri Bhili, Rathwi, Dungra Bhili, Tadvī, Panchmahali Bhili, Dehwali, Kunkna, Chaudhari, Gamit) and handed them over to respective Block Resource Co-ordinators in 3 copies each for 8300 schools located in 49 talukas across 13 districts of the state (Aravalli, Banaskantha, Sabarkantha, Panchmahals, Dahod, Mahisagar, Chhota Udepur, Narmada, Surat, Tapi, Navsari, Valsad and Dangs). The glossaries are Samagra Shiksha's endeavour to promote mother-tongue and multi-lingual education in Gujarat.

## **17. PRAKRUTI HEALTH CENTRE (PARTLY SUPPORTED BY GULBRANDSEN TECHNOLOGIES)**

While it has not been possible to keep the Prakriti Clinic continuously open during the pandemic, Dr. Kiran Shinglot has continued to be in touch with patients over telephone. Nearly 600 regular patients including 248 men, 288 women and 44 children availed medical advice and treatment during the past year. Along with, government schemes for health and well-being were translated from Gujarati to Rathwi and awareness videos on these were produced and widely disseminated.

## **18. VOICING THE DENOTIFIED COMMUNITIES (SUPPORTED BY PAUL HAMLYN FOUNDATION)**

Herein, Bhasha had undertaken a research study to explore the historical transition experienced by 5 Denotified Communities across Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, from being ‘nomadic’ to becoming ‘denotified’. The study includes a survey of the status of citizenship entitlements along with films made on each of the 6 communities covered. The study is completed and the final report is being prepared. Discussions are being held with the Paul Hamlyn Foundation for the next phase of the project.

## **19. LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT FOR RAJBHOI AND DABGAR COMMUNITIES (SUPPORTED BY PAUL HAMLYN FOUNDATION)**

Bhasha has undertaken a livelihood support project at Ahmedabad for strengthening and up-scaling the traditional skills/trades of Rajbhoi and Dabgar DNT communities. The Rajbhois have been traditionally making ropes while the Dabgars are into wig making. The rope making initiative has been quite successful wherein capacity building workshops have been held for the Rajbhois and rope making machines will soon be acquired to upscale production. Work with the Dabgars has not taken off as the community is unorganised and has too many internal disputes. Bhasha will be taking up discussion with the Paul Hamlyn Foundation regarding this.



## 20. COMMUNITY SUPPORT AT TAPI DISTRICT (SUPPORTED BY NEOGEN CHEMICALS)

Bhasha, along with Tapi Rachnatmak Trust, has set up borewells to create irrigation facilities for small and medium scale farmers in Tapi district. In all 15 borewells have been set up to be shared amongst 60 families across 8 villages (Parti, Bardipada in Dolvan taluka; Lakhali, Balpur in Vyara taluka; Masnpada, Taparwada in Songadh taluka; and Kaher, Dhamodala in Valod taluka) of Tapi district.

Bhasha further distributed 15 kgs each of *dangar* and *bhindi* seeds among 75 farmers in these villages to be used in 375 acres of land cultivation and is also promoting vermicompost preparation among the farmers.



## 21. COVID SUPPORT TO COMMUNITIES (DONATIONS AND GRANTS)

Bhasha has actively extended support to Adivasi and Denotified Communities during the pandemic. As loss of livelihood and restrictions on movement left many families devoid of food, Bhasha provided dry ration to 1200 families of DNT communities as Rajbhoi, Madari, Dabgar, Bairagi Bawa and Chharas along with Dalits and migrants in Ahmedabad and to 400 Adivasi families in the vicinity of Tejgadh. While Zomato provided ration kits directly under its Feeding India programme, Association for India's Development and Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives extended monetary support.

With the support of AID, ration relief is currently being provided to communities such as Chharas, Rajbhois and Madaris in Ahmedabad and Mahisagar and Kalbeliya artists in Rajasthan. These communities have been severely impacted during the second wave. AID has also provided support for tarpaulin for those whose shelters were demolished during Cyclone Tauktae.

## **22. VISITORS AND INTERNS**

On 22nd January 2021, a group of 29 senior officers of the Indian Administrative Services/ Central Services and Defence Services visited the Adivasi Academy to understand the research and development works being done by Bhasha. Their visit was conducted by the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) under their flagship course, 'Advanced Professional Programme in Public Administration' (APPPA). Along with the officers, the Director General of IIPA, Shri S N Tripathi was also present and appreciated the work in a media briefing. The District Collector of Chota Udepur Shri Sujal Mayatra, DDO Shri Mihir Patel and officers of local administration were also present on the occasion.



Kshitja Goyal, as student from Indian Institute of Crafts and Design, has been working remotely to prepare a teaching manual of Rathwa Bead Jewellery for children.

Sneharshi Dasgupta, a Fellow under the American India Foundation's Clinton Fellowship Programme, worked remotely from December 2020 to June 2021. His project was related to Museums and he has produced a short report on how the Vaacha Museum can go virtual during the pandemic to continue its outreach.

## **23. OTHER MATTERS**

The entire master plan for the campus of the Adivasi Academy, including all permanent and temporary structures, was prepared by M/s Karan Grover and Associates.

Bhasha Trust puts on record, its condolence on the passing away of Revaben Rathva, who dedicatedly served the Adivasi Academy's canteen. She died of cancer. Bhasha has completed the procedure of availing her family the insurance money due to her.

## **SINCERE THANKS**

We would like to put on record our very warm and sincere thanks to the several Ministries and Government Departments at the State and Central levels and the corporates who have steadily and continuously extended a helping hand via the CSR mode. At the same time, there are hundreds of individuals, whose contributions, in cash and kind, throughout the year, has been a strong steadying factor. Our immense gratitude to all our friends and well-wishers!

### **Grantor Organisations**

**(Detailed List with Amounts Received and Grant Status is attached separately)**

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
<b>1.</b>	Association for India's Development, USA
<b>2.</b>	Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives, Bangalore
<b>3.</b>	Centre for Multidisciplinary Development Research, Dharwad
<b>4.</b>	Directorate of Archaeology and Museum Department, Government of Gujarat
<b>5.</b>	Funds for Global Human Rights, US
<b>6.</b>	GAIL Charitable and Education Trust, Delhi
<b>7.</b>	Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India
<b>8.</b>	Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India
<b>9.</b>	Paul Hamlyn Foundation, UK
<b>10.</b>	Samagra Shiksha, Gujarat
<b>11.</b>	University of Leicester, UK
<b>12.</b>	World Learning, US

### **Trusts, Foundations, Corporates**

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Name of the Donor</b>
1	Shakun Polymers Pvt. Ltd.
2	Axtel Industries Ltd.
3	G.H. Patel Charitable Trust
4	Rubamin Foundation
5	Gulbrandsen Technologies Pvt. Ltd.
6	Bhailalbhai Amin Foundation
7	Jewel Brushes Pvt. Ltd.
8	Rotary Club
9	Standard Radiators Pvt. Ltd.
10	Mercatus Solutions India Pvt. Ltd
11	Calcita Futuristic
12	Neogen Chemicals Pvt. Ltd.
13	Santokba Premkorba Charitable Trust

### **Individual Donors**

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Name of the Donor</b>
1	Dr. Om Damani
2	Mr. Kalapi Gajjar
3	Ms. Vibha Puri Das
4	Ms. Eva Romero
5	Dr. Madan Meena



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