



स्य ही

...inking self to society

**COMMUNITY
IMMERSION
EDITION
GANDHI FELLOWSHIP
BATCH 14
STATE
TRANSFORMATION
PROGRAM**

12 DISTRICTS
20 FELLOWS
21 DAYS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The path of writing, re-writing, editing, proofreading, designing and all the other things that have been done to put this magazine together have been worth it. Throughout, this expedition we have been engaging in various discussions with people and it has proved to be quite an enriching experience.

We would like to thank all the fellows who contributed to this magazine by sharing their work with us - in various forms of writing and pictures captured on their individual journeys. Warmth, love and regards to Arnab and Sarfaraj who helped us in designing the photograph section- Pratibimb.

We'd personally extend our gratitude to the Core Team Member of the Jharkhand Team - Ritu Jain, who allowed us to share her thoughts on the whole experience of Community Immersion. Huge appreciation to our Program Manager, Smita Routh who pitched this idea which eventually led us to curate this little piece of our heart. Special applause to all the SPM, PMs, SPLs & PLs who supported our efforts and, also, shared their individual pieces of thoughts with us.

Cheers to all those people who have made this experience of ours extraordinary. To everyone who let us be a part of their community and allowed us to experience their ride, this one is for you all and our beloved readers.

Love,
Team Syaahi...

FOREWORD

Twenty-one Fellows from across the country joined the Jharkhand systems transformation team in the month of July 2021.

We welcomed them, they founded places to stay, attended sessions on our aspirations, our theory of change, products, and our philosophy at Piramal Foundation. They met the existing teams, the government stakeholders, and most importantly - made Jharkhand their home! On 15th December 2021, they stepped out across 24 districts for what we call “Community Immersion” for 21 days. Their journey began with staying with a family in a remote village and comprised of doing laborious jobs, engaging in conversations with Sarpanch, Teachers, Block Officers, Dadi, Ma, and Children. Their 21 days of immersing in The System and more importantly with people in that System.

My team and I witnessed that they were fully present, they were observant, they were joyous, they were overwhelmed, and they were touched! They were fully immersed. Isn't Immersion a key step to Transformation? A key step to change within which is necessary for the change outside.

Join me in reading what they have to say, encouraging our fellows, while they are on to the next step of reflecting on this experience and crafting an action plan for the next 12 months.

RITU JAIN
CORE TEAM MEMBER

The process of Community Immersion as a part of the Gandhi Fellowship blew me away. Isn't it everyone's dream who intend to work in the social sector?

I was very anxious for it to be inducted for the first time in Jharkhand under STP Edu. Several challenges came in as we started planning and working towards it. Since the fellowship model has progressed from School Leadership Development Programme to District Transformation Programme and now to State Transformation Programme, so have the roles of fellows, likely, from working directly with the schools to working at block and district level and now finally at the state level.

This led to the biggest challenge for STP fellows because they got very few opportunities to work at the school level and had the least scope to build the rapport with the community required for CI. Many struggled to find a host family for themselves, later with the support of Program Leaders all got a house.

I observed some powerful pictures during those 3 weeks and understood the impact of CI as a process on an individual. These pictures of fellows with children, homemakers sarpanches and grandparents, were narrating so many stories. The brilliant captures of the rural serenity were so appealing that I could not resist visiting a few fellows in their communities also because this would be my only opportunity to connect with the community. I could only envy and at the same time be sceptical of whether I could have survived in the same environment if given the opportunity.

SMITA ROUTH
PROGRAM MANAGER



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RESPONSIBLE CITIZEN

प्रतिबिम्ब



AS WE WALKED INTO THE FELLOWSHIP..

BIPASHA ROY
EDITOR

We were introduced to the idea of Community Immersion. It is a very different concept which is more about us getting to live in an unfamiliar world. It is extremely challenging to survive through Immersion but most of the fellows manage to complete it. It allows us to see the world from the lenses of the people living at the grassroots of India. These are the people whom we aim to affect the most, through whatever work one does inside this organization.

The whole concept of Community Immersion is challenging. It is often described as overwhelming by the fellows who undergo this one-month process - several times if they get the opportunity in the tenure of their fellowship. Before I entered my Community Immersion, I had mixed feelings about the whole process whether it was worth my time and energy since, most of my engagements are at State Level but, during my stay at a village where nobody knew me but, still chose to accept me as a guest and then gradually as a member of their family and community gave me a strong sense of belongingness.



I can confirm it is not easy to survive but, with practice and various techniques, people do live under extremely challenging conditions. I stayed in a small village at Palamu, Jharkhand which is quite a dangerous place for a young girl to live by all alone with a family unknown to her. Had I not been in this fellowship I would never have dared to even think about moving to a place like this for a month. But, because of the people I got to meet I understand why it is important for us to take some safety measures and move out of our comfort zones. The best part is all the 20 fellows successfully completed their Community Immersion and drove various initiatives and practised their pet projects on the ground - be it morning and evening classes, working on Art Education, working on Menstrual Hygiene, or spreading awareness on Covid-19 Vaccine.

The whole experience according to me is inexplicable as you walk into people's lives, closely feel them, shadow their day-to-day activities and learn about their experiences often, it makes you realize the importance of the whole process when you bring your learnings to the table the next time you are engaged in any kind of problem-solving activity.

The biggest contributing factor for our Community Immersion being a success is because of the people who put in all their faith in us and let us stay with them as family and are glad enough to take those relationships forward which we have built them.

अभिव्यक्ति

ROAD OF THOUGHTS

A section
curating
expressions,
tales, poems,
ideologies &
experiences...



DEVELOPMENT?

Welcome to the PahariKorwa Community

Bazaar -is still the same here, the vehicle that comes to its usual point weekly -white in colour, brings tons of joy on the faces and into the eyes of elders, kids, women, men and to this soil.

"Bazaar Jaabo"

"Gumla Jaabo"

Children here are nurtured in a way to survive in the Jungle.

Hence, the instinct to survive is evident from their actions.

They know -the axe is their saviour, collecting & burning wood will give them food to eat, taking care of their animals (goat, buffalo, bull and hendog) is like caring for one's siblings, selling their only land produce grains with such a sheer hardship is the extreme point from where they can't see any money coming in for buying the very essentials like oil, salt & spices.

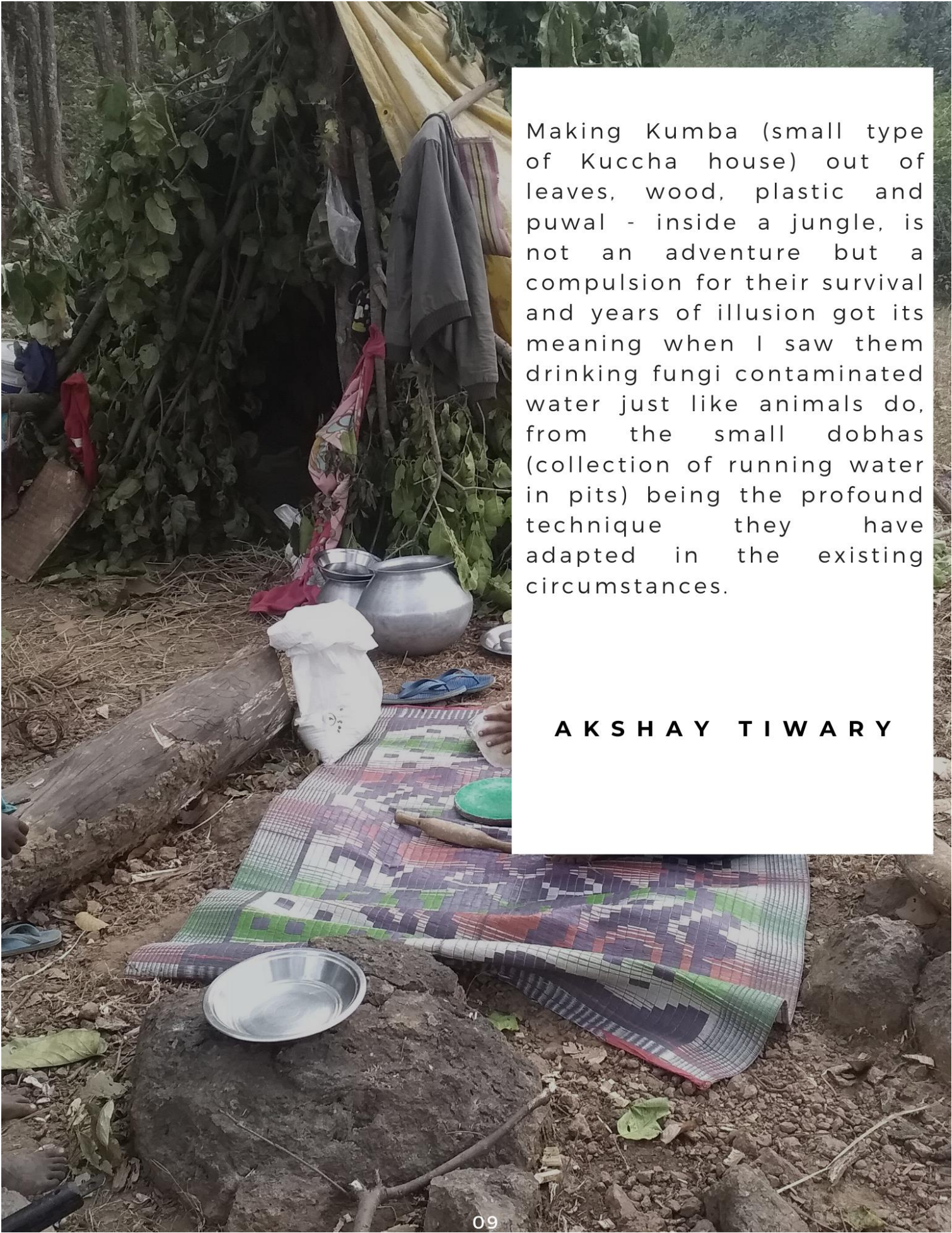


*IN THIS RACE OF
DEVELOPMENT, WE HAVE
LEFT THEM SO FAR ...SO
FAR, THAT EXPECTING
THEIR COMING
GENERATIONS WALKING
ALONG WITH US IS
DOUBTFUL...*

Sending children to school is still not the priority as is the taking of an axe, cattle rearing, helping parents in making coal out of jungle trees, collecting leaves/wood from jungles, washing utensils, making rice water with modern alcoholic touch, and serving the same. These are the immediate breath that they take on an everyday basis for survival.

"Ji, Ji, Ji..." is the only response to all the questions asked, along with the suggestions, facilitation and proposals offered.





Making Kumba (small type of Kuccha house) out of leaves, wood, plastic and puwal - inside a jungle, is not an adventure but a compulsion for their survival and years of illusion got its meaning when I saw them drinking fungi contaminated water just like animals do, from the small dobhas (collection of running water in pits) being the profound technique they have adapted in the existing circumstances.

A K S H A Y T I W A R Y

MEELIANI

"A Little Girl growing up with a Dream"

FROM THE LENS OF A FATHER

Tangiya, a small village near Jaldega, blessed with the green cover, rich soil and sprinkled with humbleness, is where I met him, a young farmer, Fabian Topno, forced to be a part-time welder. One morning I went to the Panchayat Bhavan of Jaldega to meet with the Pradhyaan, who kept me waiting. Like a silver lining appeared Fabian, to get his pending allowance under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Yojna, released.



I helped him to understand the procedure of getting the funds and met the Pradhyaan for the same. Overwhelmed with the support, Fabian invited me to his home- a small hut, made of bamboo and mud, painted blue with alpanas.

In between the talk at Fabian's, he disclosed his earnings from a rented farm which was around 250 bucks a day. Claimed in despair that after cultivating rice, raddish and vegetables for three consecutive seasons, there has not been any growth in his earnings. Owing to low demand in the local market, now he needed to get out to larger markets of Rourkela and Simdega. But in that case the transportation would cost him more than the profit. Eventually, the way out for him was to work for part-time as a welder.

Dream of a Father for his Daughter

There was a spark in the eyes of the villagers I interacted with. They had limited resources with hearts bigger than their materialistic wealth. The thought led me to the curiosity of knowing what kept Fabian going all this while; Nothing groundbreaking but just a word he responded with, 'Meeliani'-his daughter. Fabian continued, "Sir, I am uneducated, but I want my daughter to read and be a teacher one day educating others in the village". I was left numb and awestruck at his response. I realized we all have problems in our life, in a way, we all are suffering, yet despite of being pessimistic,



Fabian is fighting his own battle for hope. Meeliani is his reason to live, and the spirit of inspiration. The insightfulness of this little chat taught me to give up on ranting and that Arnab needs to proactively fight for hope and what's right. Fabian's words would keep echoing in my mind, "for Meeliani, Sir".

**ARNAB KUMAR
SHOW**

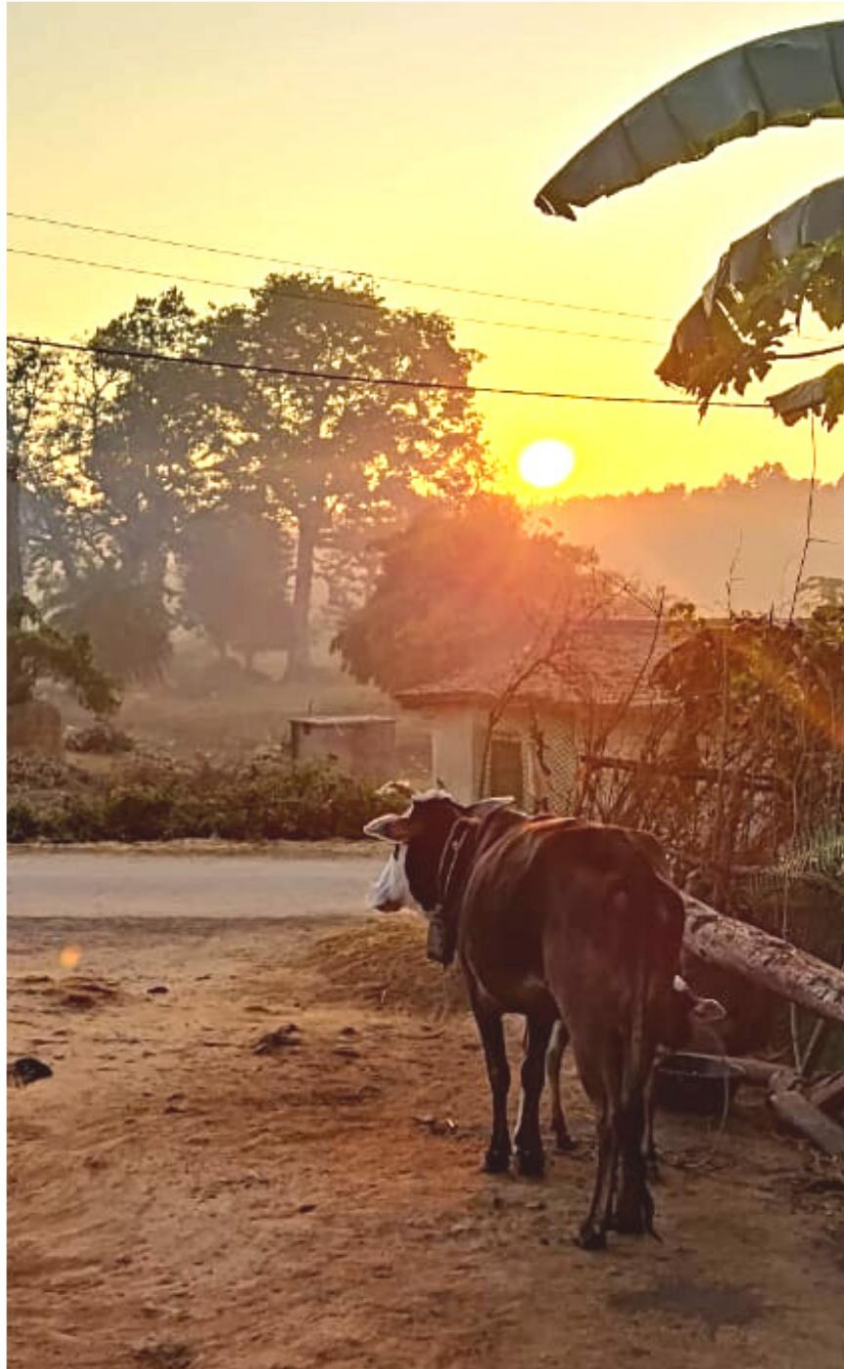
समाज जो मैंने देखा

एक दौर...
आदिवासी समुदाय
के
साथ तन्मय होने
का

बिहार, उत्तरप्रदेश और झारखंड तीनों सीमावर्ती राज्य हैं जहाँ की सभ्यता-संस्कृति से मेरा जुड़ाव हुआ है। बिहार और उत्तरप्रदेश में जिन क्षेत्रों से जुड़ा मैं वहाँ कमोबेश समान संस्कृति एवं जीवनयापन देखा। राँची शहर में रहते हुए शुरुआती दिनों के अनुभव ने ही कुछ ऐसा महसूस कराया मुझे, जो झारखंड के बारे में पहले से सोचता था उससे अलग था।

सामुदायिक तन्मयता (कम्युनिटी इमर्शन) के लिये राँची के अनगड़ा ब्लॉक के सिरका एवम नवागढ़ पंचायत के ग्रामीण परिवेश से भी मुझे बीस दिनों के लिए रूबरू होने का सुअवसर मिला। यहाँ के परिवेश को लेकर मेरे अपने सीमित विचारों के साथ कुछ अवलोकन रहा।

आदिवासी बहुल समाज है इस क्षेत्र में। यहाँ की भाषा नागपुरी है क्योंकि पूर्व में ये नागवंशी राजाओं के क्षेत्र थे। भाषाई लहजा यहाँ की बहुत ही दिलचस्प लगी मुझे। कुछ शब्द जैसे रात को राइत, चार को चाइर, कल-काइल, काट-काइट बोला जाता है। बच्चों को 'छौवा', बकरी को 'छगरी' पत्थर को 'पखन' या 'पखल', पत्नी को 'जनि' आम बोली में बोलते हैं।





हालाँकि इस क्षेत्र में मुंडा जनजाति की बहुलता है,लेकिन मुंडारी भाषा कोई नहीं जानता या बोलता है। इससे इस अवधारणा को बल मिलता है कि भाषा प्राथमिक रूप में क्षेत्रीय होती है, जाति-वर्ग आधारित नहीं।

महिलाओं का एड़ी से थोड़े ऊपर और घुटने से थोड़े नीचे साड़ी पहने में अपने ग्राम परिवेश में भी देखता आया हूँ उस दौरान,जब वो कभी खेती-बाड़ी या गोबर के उपले बनाने सम्बन्धी घर से बाहर कार्य कर रही होती है, लेकिन इस क्षेत्र में अधिकतर महिलाएं रसोई और अन्य घरेलू काम के अलावा बाहरी कार्यों जैसे जंगल से जलावन हेतु लकड़ी लाना,खेती-बाड़ी में काम करना, पालतू पशुओं को चराने जाना या उनके लिए जंगल से घास-हरे पत्ते लाना, दैनिक मजदूरी कार्य आदि के लिए घर से बाहर निकलती है । ये साड़ी पहनने के तरीके के पीछे का संदर्भ यहाँ के सामान्य कार्य संस्कृति में अहसास हुआ। इस प्रकार के कार्य संस्कृति के कारण महिला-पुरुष सम्बन्धी एक बात जो यहाँ देखने को मिली कि,महिलायें घरेलू या बाहरी निर्णय लेने में सहभागी थी,तथा उनके घर की चाहरदीवारी से बाहर निकलने को लेकर बहुत ज़्यादा रोक-टोक नहीं थी। कार्य संस्कृति या आर्थिक परिस्थितियों से समाज के कुछ पहलू निर्धारण होते है ये सिद्धान्त यहाँ अनुभव हुए वास्तविक रूप में। महिला और पुरुष दोनों यहाँ जीविकोपार्जन हेतु श्रम कार्यों में सुबह से शाम लगे होते है ,लेकिन अधिकतर पुरुष चावल से बने मद्य जिसे 'हँड़िया' कहते है उसका नियमित सेवन करते है। महिलाएं इस कारण भी यहाँ पुरुषों के तुलना में सामान्यतः अधिक जागरूक, समझदार,और नेतृत्व में आगे दिखी।

D U R G E S H K U M A R



DRIPTING SOCIETY

- in search of a support
beam

"Every situation is temporary & change is permanent" - Is this Positive? I believe it is and, it surely motivates me a lot.

In the village, I stayed for 22 days affected me a lot. I felt it has drifted from the world and is living in a different time zone. There is very little space for education and most of the time is spent on farming. Predynastic the villagers practice farming; they don't have their own lands; they practice it on other's land.



There are many problems. Few among them were practice of Castism, Patriarchy, Child marriage. People were unaware or not observant enough to see if it affected the others; whether anyone was affected. Mahua was their favourite drink and following order of upper cast was a nature. Far away from the world outside Chatra was not even seen by many. I am talking about a village named Pakaria, Itkhor Block, which is in Chatra district.

In my first day I saw they were working happily for almost 14-16 hours where all employee's working hours are 8 hours. On this I revisited a poem written by Tagore:

আমরা চাষ করি আনন্দে।
মাঠে মাঠে বেলা কাটে সকাল হতে
সন্ধে ॥
রৌদ্র ওঠে, বৃষ্টি পড়ে, বাঁশের বনে
পাতা নড়ে,
বাতাস ওঠে ভরে ভরে চষা মাটির
গন্ধে ॥

They welcomed me everywhere, I helped them in farming, had lunch with them, laughed, and exchanged a lot of stories. It helped me build meaningful relationships. In the meanwhile, I realised farming and labour work is not easy. It needs several skills and experience. But they don't get the value they deserve. I also paid door-to-door visits for spreading awareness about education and Covid-19 vaccination.



During that many shared their stories, struggles, which was heart-touching and helped me to build a good relationship with the whole community.

I used to deliver evening classes every day. In which the students learnt and practiced letter writing (personal and official), reading with understanding, English grammar class, spoken English and gender equality class were also included.

During the tenure of those 22 days, I also worked on a school - M.S Khohra, which was in a non-functioning condition; like attendance was less than 10% even teachers were not present every day, toilet was not in usable condition.

I tried to strengthen School Management Committee, build proper classroom environment. By the mid-way of the Attendance improved 10% to 70%. After I visited everyone, people helped me and with support of them this was possible. It was definitely a very energizing experience for me. While being in this process I started loving the school and my whole community.

I realized this drifting society just needs some support to aware them; motivate them; and someone who can give them hope and direction.

And after 22 days it was very difficult to leave them. So I promised whenever I will visit the community again and again.

Thanks to Fellowship for giving me this opportunity to gain such a beautiful experience.

SUJIT MANDAL

Those smiling faces!



Children are the living image of God. They spread positivity, happiness, and prosperity to whosoever gets in touch with them. There's so much to learn from them. And so, the Children of Beradih village being the epitome of happiness taught me too, to be happy in life no matter what.

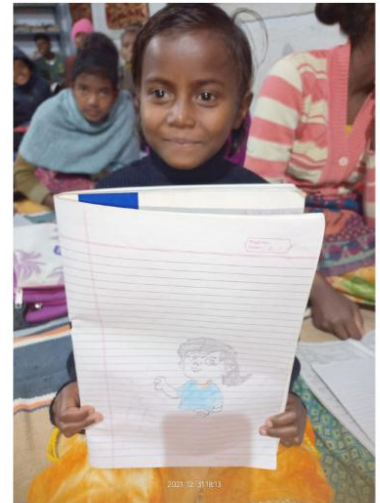
Having a bad day?
Just "Smile".

Feeling lonely?
Just "talk".

Feeling stressed?
Just "Chill"

- CI STORY -

I remember bumping into two kids eating 'Muli" in their lunch. I approached them and inquired if that was the only thing they would have for lunch & no rice. They replied "No! Our parents are to be at the farm today and so they couldn't cook food". There was a constant smile on their faces throughout. I murmured to myself 'Look around and recall yourself wanting at least one vegetable for your lunch and here are these kids having radish as lunch without complaining". Similarly, I again saw some kids in the chilling winters barefooted, without sweaters and when asked "Bacho, apke sweater Kaha hai"? They responded sweetly, "Nahi hai". I again asked "Apko thand nahi lag rahi"? They replied, "Lagti toh hai par itna to chalta hi hai. ab aadat si ho gayi hai".



**WITH JUST A FEW WORDS, THEY
GAVE ME A LEARNING FOR LIFETIME.
WHAT A BLESSING IT WAS TO HAVE
MET THEM!**

One day we went to the Mela. They insisted me to accompany them for the swing ride. And those 2 minutes were a rush of enjoyment.





**THE JOY IS
IRREPLACEABLE,
UNMATCHABLE,
AND
UNFORGETTABLE**

They kept saying “Bhaiya kitna maza aaya na jhula jhulne me”, “Bhaiya, chaliye na aur jhulejhulenge . There was an unmatched spark in their eyes. I contemplate, why I didn't spend my childhood like them. Why was I only into the books and cartoon channels? That wasn't a real childhood, perhaps. The real childhood is how these children live. Not much financially sound but so much satisfied socially and mentally.

The children of mere 5 & 6 years accompany their parents to the farm, At the age appropriate for play and study, these children contribute to their parents' work, to my surprise, they do so without any complaints. If asked, “Aaplog thakte nahi ho itna kaam kar ke?”, “Ghar ke kaam karne me kaisi thakan. Mata pita itna humare liye hi to karte hai to humlog ko bhi to help karni chahiye na!”

The kids would buy 1 chocolate from the shop but would come and offer me to have half of it. Do we get to see such generosity these days? I doubt it.

Truly said, whenever having a bad day spend your time with kids and that day would be as good as it can be. These kids can come up with so many interesting tales and jokes that would make one laugh aloud. I may forget my meal a day but cannot forget those smiling faces who made me smile for 20 days.

MONU RAJAK



Connecting Rural Serenity with **POLICIES**

-SARFARAJ

For approximately three weeks I lived in a village named Hathyapathar located in Masalia block, which is somewhere around 50 km away from the main city of Dumka, Jharkhand. It is surrounded by nature with Mountains, meadows, plains, cattle, and everything you dream of when you want to be and feel close to nature. I was always in awe for the whole time I was there as I found myself playing in the lap of nature.



I was fortunate enough to find a lovely family who hosted me for the whole Community Immersion period. The care and support I received made me feel that I was just like a son to them.

Being part of the family I got the opportunity to observe the challenges of the society closely. I first planned for classes, and went to the school in order to see if any students were interested to come to my morning and evening classes. The classes begun from the morning and end at night.

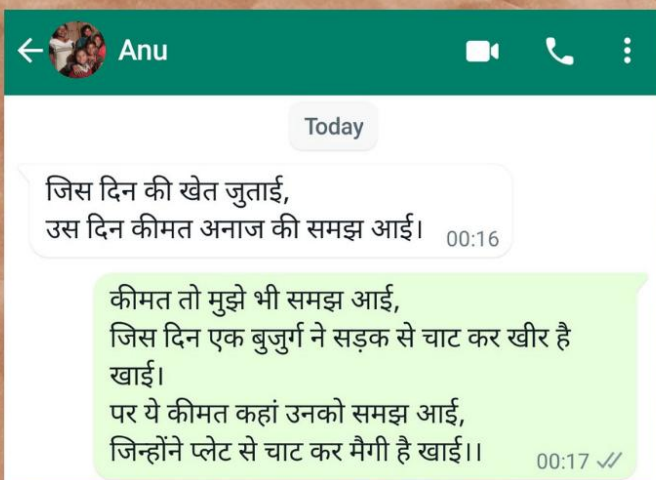
I invested almost more than 6 hours and conducted classes after traveling from one place to another. The moments are cherishable for me where I held the hands of the kids and taught them how to write English 'A'. I started with 5 students and then later I started teaching kids from 4 Tolas. Everyday, there were new faces and each and every kid was interested to learn, study and grow. Each kid was unique and was inquisitive. I would have never imagined myself being so loved, by everyone. It is a life-changing experience for me.

गुफ्तगू

- DIKSHA

These are some excerpts taken from real incidences and conversations which I experienced during my journey of CI. Every conversation has a story to listen to and an emotion to understand.

Typing





রাষ্ট্র চিনুক আমার গ্রাম

আলোক, মানে আমি, বর্তমানে নিজের গ্রাজুয়েশন শেষ করে গান্ধী ফেলোশিপ যোগদান করেছি। ফেলোশিপ কারিকুলাম অনুযায়ী আমাকে ডিসেম্বর মাসে কমিউনিটি ইমার্শন যেতে বলা হয়। কমিউনিটি ইমার্শন একটি সুন্দর ধারণা যেখানে আমরা যাদের জন্য কাজ করছি তাদেরকে সামনে থেকে বোঝার এবং দেখার সুযোগ পাবো। কিন্তু একটি শহরের ছেলে পড়ন্তগ্রামে এক মাস থাকা বড়ই চিন্তাদায়ক হয়ে উঠেছিল প্রতিটা মুহূর্ত আমার কাছে। কিন্তু যখন আমি সেই ইমার্শন শেষ করে ফিরছিলাম তখন আমারও চোখে জল ছিল।

চৌরাটিয়া, পালামু জেলার একটি পড়ন্তগ্রাম। চারিদিক পাহাড়ে জঙ্গলে ঘেরা যেখানে শহুরে আলোর ছাপ এখনো পৌঁছায়নি এবং সেখানকার মানুষ শহুরে আদব-কায়দা থেকে একেবারে বিচ্ছিন্ন। পৌঁছানোর পর কিছুটা অদ্ভুত কিছুটা ভয়ভীত পরিস্থিতি তৈরি হয়েছিল নতুন জায়গায়। কিন্তু দু-একদিনের মধ্যেই গ্রাম আমাকে আপন করে নেয়। বাচ্চাদের পড়াতে শুরু করি এবং ধীরে ধীরে গ্রামের সবার কাছের মানুষ হতে থাকি। এবং তাদের আমার প্রতি ভালোবাসা আমাকে আরো বেশি আগ্রহী করেছিল প্রতিটা মুহূর্ত তাদেরকে আরো বেশি কাছের থেকে জানতে।

শিক্ষা শুধু পুথিগত হয়না, পরিবেশ কতটা আন্তরিক হয়, কতটা সহজ সরল হয় মানুষ, জীবনের ইকুয়েশন গুলো কতটা সহজ হয় এবং সম্পর্কগুলোর মাহাত্ম্য কতটা আন্তরিক হয় আমি তা আমি হয়তো বুঝতে পারতাম না ঐ গ্রামে না গেলে।

সকাল থেকে সন্ধ্যা অবধি পড়াতে পড়াতে বুঝেছিলাম দিপু, সুরাজ, রাজান, প্রীতি এরা অনেক বুদ্ধিমান। গ্রামের মানুষের সাথে কথা বলে বুঝলাম পরিস্থিতি কিভাবে তাদেরকে পিছিয়ে দিচ্ছে সমাজের মূলস্রোত থেকে। হয়তো তারা পড়াশোনার দিক থেকে পিছিয়ে কিন্তু জীবনগত দিক থেকে তারা শহুরে মানুষদের থেকে অনেক এগিয়ে।

আমি দেখেছি রাজুকে খুব ভালো ফুটবল খেলতে ওই কম বয়সে। আমি বুঝেছি দিপু, সুরাজ, রাজান, প্রীতি এরা খুবই বুদ্ধিমান ছাত্র-ছাত্রী। একটিমাত্র জামা আর প্যান্ট পরে দিনের পর দিন কাটানো এই ছেলেমেয়েগুলোর মধ্যে আমি জানার এবং বোঝার প্রবল খিদে অনুভব করেছি।

আমি দেখেছি ভোরে গ্রামের মানুষকে লাঙ্গল নিয়ে মাঠে চাষ করতে যেতে। আমি দেখেছি পকেটে এক টাকা না থাকা বাচ্চাগুলোর অকৃত্রিম হাসি। আমি বুঝেছি সুখের সংজ্ঞা। আমি শিখেছি অল্পতেই সুখী থাকা যায়। আমি শিখেছি মানুষকে কিভাবে আপন করা যায়।

শেষে রাষ্ট্রের কাছে আমার অনুরোধ শিক্ষার ন্যূনতম মানোন্নয়ন হোক আমার ওই গ্রামে। শিক্ষার আলো ওদেরকে আরও এগিয়ে নিয়ে যেতে পারে। রাষ্ট্রের দায়বদ্ধতা দিপু, সুরাজ, রাজান, প্রীতিকে সেই সুযোগটা দেওয়া। হয়তো তাদের মধ্যেই লুকিয়ে আছে আগামী দিনের ডাক্তার বা ইঞ্জিনিয়ার বা শিক্ষক।

রাষ্ট্র শুধু ওদের অধিকারটুকু দিক!

ALOKENDU BISWAS

THE LADY AND A GIRL

THE 80 YEARS AND THE 16 YEARS
TOO MUCH FOR HER AGE I THINK

I am old and alone,
I am young and ruined.

My sons left me in this broken shed,
my parents drink till they drop dead.

I am weak and old,
I am strong yet hopeless.

They left me in hunger and darkness,
they are making it seem dark.

Someone holds me down, cried the old,
someone free me of these chains,
screamed the young one.

-PEEYUSHA PAHAL



पीरियड्स, मासिक या फिर महीना

पता नही ये लफ़्ज़ सुन कर सबको क्यों घिन आती है?
आज भी इसके बारे में खुलकर बात करने से क्यों लोगों की जुबां कतराती है?

पढ़ा-लिखा कहते है न हम खुद को, तो हर बार क्यों ये गलती दोहरायी
जाती है?

पीरियड को लेकर ऐसी धारणाये क्यों अपनाई जाती है?
पता नहीं ये लफ़्ज़ सुनकर सबको क्यों घिन आती है?
नई जिंदगी के लिए सबसे ज्यादा जरूरी है ये,
तो फिर औरतों के लिए क्यों सज़ा बना दी जाती है?

फिर इस पर बात करने से लोगों को क्यों लज्जा आती है?
आज भी पैड पेपर में लपेट कर दिए जाते हैं
पीरियड्स में होना एक गुनाह हो जैसे
पैड से हम क्यों शर्माते हैं?

तुम ये नहीं कर सकती, तुम वो नहीं कर सकती
यहाँ नहीं जा सकती, वहाँ नहीं जा सकती
खाना नहीं पका सकती, पूजा नहीं कर सकती
और न जाने क्या-क्या पाबंदियाँ लगा दी जाती है।
ऐसा क्या है पीरियड में की औरत अछूत बन जाती हैं?
ये लफ़्ज़ सुन कर लोगों को क्यों घिन आती है?
इस पर बात करने से लोगों की जुबां क्यों कतराती है?
कितना अजीब है न,
अपने ही घर में, अपनों से ही ये बात छुपानी पड़ जाती है।।।।

K U M A R I A N N U P R I Y A



गरिमा की वो गाँव की यादें

पहले था कि लोग अपनाएंगे भी नहीं
फिर यूँ हुआ कि,
छोड़कर हुआ आना मुश्किल
गरिमा की वो गाँव की यादें
गाँव कहे या घर।
पहला दिन बीता ऐसा की,
मन हुआ छोड़ दूँ रण
फिर याद आया कैसे कहूँगी खुद को की, मैं हूँ
समाज सेवी,
मैंने जिया है वो जिसपे हम करेंगे काम,
इस कश्मकश के साथ रात बीती
खैर हमारे लिए बड़ी बात न थी कि,
हम रात भर जगे, बड़ी बात ये थी की
क्या हर रात ऐसी ही बितेगी ?
खैर गरिमा की वो गाँव की यादें
गाँव कहे या घर,
आगे बनायी बचस एक योजना
कुछ भी हो अपने मिजाजी से है इन्हें जीतना,
असफल हुए जरूर, जो होना ही था,
लेकिन दूर नहीं थी वो मुकाम,
जब उन्होंने बोला बेटा क्या खाओगी...
उस दिन हुआ महसूस की प्यार से आप
कुछ भी पा सकते हो,
खैर गरिमा कि वो गाँव की यादें
गाँव कहे या घर...

गाँव कहे या घर?

साथ में उनके खेती करना,
बकबक करते दिन बिताना,
बकबक में ही समस्या समझना,
बकबक में ही हल ढूँढना,
खैर गाँव कहे या घर
गरिमा की वो गाँव की यादें।
सांझ होते ही लग जाती थी चौपाले,
बात ही बात में लोग मलते थे मसाले,
मीठी बोली शान है इनकी,
एकता ही पहचान हैं इनकी,
कुछ शब्दों में कैसे लिख दूँ मजा इस गाँव का,
खैर गाँव कहे या घर
गरिमा की वो गाँव की यादें...।

- GARIMA

मैं उसी समाज का इंसान हूँ..

SAJID AKHTER

मैं उसी समाज का इंसान हूँ..
जहाँ समाज का मतलब बदल चुका है
मैं उसी समाज का इंसान हूँ
जहाँ धर्म के नाम पे इंसान बंट चुका है

मैं उसी समाज का इंसान हूँ
जहाँ स्कूल में सबके कंधे मिलते हैं
मैं उसी समाज का इंसान हूँ
जहाँ जात पात को देखकर लोग नजरें बदलते हैं

हर रोज निकलता हूँ मैं, हर वक़्त राहें बदलता हूँ
मैं
कितनी भी कोशिश कर लूँ बाहर निकलने की
इसी समाज का इंसान हूँ
इसी में उलझता रहता हूँ मैं

हम कैसे मान ले संविधान को
हम कैसे मान ले बराबरी की चट्टान को
ये संविधान भी उस चट्टान की तरह भारी है
मैं उसी समाज का इंसान हूँ, इस चट्टान पर ध्यान
नहीं देता हूँ मैं
मैं कितनी लड़ाइयां लड़ूंगा...मैं कितनी सफाई
दूँगा...
हर बात पे मुझे लोग टोकेंगे, हर राह पे मुझे
रोकेंगे...
मैं गैरों की बात क्या करूँ, मुझे तो अपने भी
ठुकराएँगे...
मैं इसी समाज का इंसान हूँ, खुद को बदल सकूँ,
इसमें भी वक़्त बर्बाद करता हूँ मैं...

यह समाज कब बदलेगा, यह विचारधारा कब
बदलेगी...
भरोसा नहीं है मुझे खुद पर
अंधविश्वास के राहों पर चलता हूँ
उसी समाज का इंसान हूँ, उसी के गुणगान गाता
हूँ मैं।



स्कूल और समाज

- दिलीप यादव
संपादक

जब हम एक शब्द 'सरकारी स्कूल' बोलते या सुनते हैं तो हमारे मस्तिष्क में कैसा छवि या दृश्य बनता है?
"खराब बुनियादी ढांचा और खराब शिक्षा का स्तर"

आमतौर पर यही दृश्य हमारे मस्तिष्क में बनता है और यह दृश्य तब और भी स्पष्ट हो जाता है जब हम किसी ग्रामीण क्षेत्र के स्कूल की बात करते हैं। पर प्रश्न यह है कि ऐसा दृश्य बनता ही क्यों है? इस पर अलग-अलग लोगो के अलग-अलग मत हैं, कोई बोलता है सरकारी स्कूल होते ही ऐसे हैं, तो कोई बोलता है सरकारें स्कूलों पर ध्यान नहीं देती है, तो कोई बोलता है अध्यापक अपनी जिम्मेदारियों को सही ढंग से नहीं निभाते या उन पर ध्यान नहीं देते। पर क्या एक समाज के रूप में स्कूल के प्रति जो हमारी जिम्मेदारियां है उसे समझकर उसका निर्वहन करते है या नहीं।

अब तक मेरा जितना अनुभव रहा है उसी को आधार मानते हुए मैं एक निष्कर्ष पर पहुंचा हूँ कि कोई भी एक पक्ष चाहे वह सरकार हो या अध्यापक हो या फिर समाज हो एकल रूप से उतना प्रभावी नहीं हो सकता जितना कि सामूहिक रूप से हो सकता है।

जब हम एक स्कूल की बात करते हैं तो वहाँ अध्यापक और समाज, ये दो पक्ष बहुत अहम हो जाते हैं क्योंकि, एक स्कूल की दशा और दिशा कैसा होगा, इसके निर्धारण में अध्यापक और समाज दोनों का अहम योगदान होता है।

मेरा ऐसा मानना है कि सरकारे केवल भवन तथा अध्ययन-अध्यापन के लिए जरूरी वस्तुएं मुहैया कराती है पर उस भवन को शिक्षा का भवन बनाने का काम अध्यापक और समाज मिलकर करते हैं। मेरे इस सोच को तब और बल मिला जब मैं अपने 'सामुदायिक तन्मयता' कार्यक्रम के दौरान ऐसे दो स्कूलों में गया जो अपनी स्वच्छता और अच्छी शिक्षा के लिए उस क्षेत्र में जाने जाते है। मैंने दोनों स्कूल के प्रधानाध्यापक और अध्यापकों से बात किया, जिसमें दोनों स्कूल के प्रधानाध्यापक का कहना था कि वर्तमान समय में स्कूल की जो स्थिति है इसका श्रेय समाज और समाज के लोगों को जाता है। जिन्होंने हमारे साथ कंधे से कंधा मिलाकर स्कूल को बेहतर बनाने की दिशा में प्रयत्न किये और काफी हद तक हम इस कार्य में सफल भी रहे हैं।

हम हर वह शख्स हैं जो हमसे जुड़ा है

Let me ask you an
unanswerable question.

What happens to us after we die? Errr, yes you know or no you don't? Any idea? I am thinking why to spend time on something that can't be answered, fixed, mended, brought back, or perhaps can't be dealt with at this moment to the moment where life breathes to its last. Because if we knew what happens after the curtain falls, we might just skip the entire show, as to speak we might choose not to live; It'll be easier that way, no?

What I figured out is, something happening just before we die, might be worth answering. A nexus event where life takes a halt at you, death awaits, every feeling gets amplified, eyes get closed but you can still look. Having near-death experiences about 3 times, what I looked at, was not a dream Jaguar, moments of regrets, or anything holding material value. It was the flashbacks, of people who have lived my life with me, of the love & trust we weaved along the way, of the warmth of a hug & that of a drop of a tear, of the shine that the eyes of my beloveds held.





A study published in the journal *Frontiers in Aging Neuroscience* suggests that life may actually flash in front of our eyes before death. "Through generating oscillations involved in memory retrieval, the brain may be playing a last recall of important life events just before we die, similar to the ones reported in near-death experiences," Dr Ajmal Zemmar, a co-author of the study told *Frontiers Science News*.

While working on *Syaahi*- our magazine, the process adorned me with the privilege to go through the writings of my co-fellows. And all I could see as common among the pieces were the 'People'. Every tale, every poem, every photo whispered names of people I never met, never heard of, yet I was in a position to be compassionate towards them, the communities they come from, the culture they are passing on, the art they are advocating for. I could resonate with all the emotions tagged along the way with my co-fellows during the CI. For me being a part of a community is of great importance, as I believe that I am every individual I'm connected to, and every individual who is connected to me is a bit of myself. Because when it comes to life, people and their presence are all that matters in the end.



Talking of making this life worthy, which is a circle, every decision that we make impacts countless lives attached to us. To make these decisions right and acceptable, we must understand how, why, when, by and for whom they should be made. Starting from the basics, the policies that govern our everyday lives, from the kind of water we are drinking to the quality of the air we are breathing, the type of engine our vehicles have and the emissions they produce, the amount of insurance coverage a person would receive during a pandemic, the number of city buses to be run on a specific route, the number of paediatricians, gynaecologists & psychologists available for mothers and their babies, the limits of freedom given to the socially weaker communities, and the endless list, these are the areas we must indulge our conscience and labour into. For, policies act as a binding agent for the sand grains (here being the people) which our fists aren't capable enough of holding together. Through knowledge, experiments, trials, learnings, practice and all the analytical tools available in the concerned subject matter, we- the inheritor of society, shall aim towards sustainability.

VAIBHAVI AWASTHI
EDITOR



JOURNEY OF COMMUNITY IMMERSION

Have you ever stayed in an unknown remote village for more than 15 days without having any personal connect?

Unfortunately, your answer would be a No! But we were fortunate enough to experience this during our fellowship and let me tell you what? It was worth it.

What are villages?

Villages are the lands free from the hustle and bustle of city life, these are peaceful, calm, quiet, and full of greenery where one can breathe in fresh air. The beauty of a village is described by the way villagers happily live in small huts, made of clay or mud.

JOURNEY

OF COMMUNITY IMMERSION

Have you ever thought of living in a villager's house with minimal resources, without paying rent, taking up labour jobs?

I have lived a life like this, learnt lessons and made the most out of it. And I feel deeply grateful to both my host families

for giving me immense love and care. This experience will always be close to my heart because I felt it.



**They don't own big houses, but they have big hearts
They don't have basic facilities, yet they are thankful
for whatever they have.**

**They don't know much about technology, but they are
connected with more people.**

**They don't have varieties of dishes on their plates,
yet they are satisfied with whatever they have.**

**They are not rich by money, but they are affording
everything which money can't buy it!**



Having an experience of my own, mentoring Diksha and Vaibhavi, my wonderful fellows, in the same journey I had lived previously, brought me a lot of nostalgia. Dropping them off to their respective fellow houses, listening to their daily experiences/challenges, visiting them back after more than 2 weeks, looking them as a part of their host families, that's what a village immersion is. I have witnessed growing and glowing in their journey. This surprises, inspires & moves me as a person.

-DEVANGI
Program Leader

“ Towards Nation Building

Community Immersion is not a mere word, it's an emotion for every Gandhi fellow. It's a journey of leaving our own house, our culture, modern facilities, to adapting a new family, exploring a new community, taking up new challenges, welcoming new lessons; of being a stranger to becoming a loveable part of the community.



"ONCE A FELLOW, ALWAYS A FELLOW"

During CI, fellows faced a series of experiences at the grassroot level of our country, at times they had to support their host families by taking up labour work, they got to work for the underprivileged children, some nights they had to sleep empty stomach, they were blessed by community members but at times they had to face backlashes too yet, they didn't let go of it, because they knew that they are the changemakers, striving for a peaceful & developed nation by living through the ground reality.

Our fellows have done a tremendous job, beyond my expectations especially considering the ongoing pandemic, they have ensured that a Gandhi Fellow can survive anywhere, in any condition, for the community. Their dedication & contribution makes them the real Nation Builders. I'll always look up to you guys and feel happy to have been a part of your fellowship.

ROHAN HAZRA
Program Leader



P E R S P E C T I V E

Placed in Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan as a DTP-Gandhi Fellow, I happened to go through the same process of Community Immersion like all the other fellows. Our batch went through the CI journey thrice - living in three different villages, each time. It was a life-changing experience for me, and it has left a strong impression in my life which is leading me to be devoted to my profession.

I never thought that I would be lucky enough to be witnessing another Community Immersion. I was not sure how the STP - Operation Fellows and PRODUCT fellows would be involved in Community Immersion as they have very limited interaction with the ground and more involvement in the District Offices and the State Offices. It was a very difficult job for them to find a place but, by hook and crook; they managed it.

I was overwhelmed to see the experience they went through, the deconditioning phase they were a part of. It was not easy to adopt a village amidst a pandemic, go there, live with an unknown family but, all the fellows dedicated themselves to completing their allotted tasks and doing everything smoothly.

As I visited some of the fellows during the CI, I found them facing a lot of challenges but they were unstoppable. They tried their best to achieve their goals and be a big part of the welfare of the people of the villages they chose for themselves. They did everything - household chores, farming, teaching the young children, teaching the women, etc.

Being a fellow, then, and a Senior Program Leader, now, the respect has increased for the curriculum. The journey helps in gaining immense strength to be a better human being. Community Immersion has helped people build - resilient mechanisms, adaptability, relation building and gaining compassion. It is a process of molting a caterpillar to be a colourful butterfly.

I AM PROUD OF ALL THE FELLOWS FOR SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING THE 1 MONTH OF THEIR FIRST COMMUNITY IMMERSION.

RAVI PRAKASH GUPTA
SENIOR PROGRAM LEADER

RECLAIMING

TO BECOME A RESPONSIBLE CITIZEN

Education is an empowering process that not only enhances the potential of the people but also enhances the ability and the capacity devoted towards nature and its related creatures.

The community has been an important part since education came into existence. In the past, learners from Gurukuls used to be deeply connected with the community not only for studies but for attaining life lessons. In line with this, when I heard about the Community Immersion of the fellows, I was left overwhelmed and a chain of thoughts continued to swirl through my mind, like how things would turn out for them, what values would add to their learnings, would the community welcome them, etc.

Although I was a little worried looking at the figures of the ongoing pandemic, there was still a ray of hope for the fellows. And so, with the updates that I was getting on our official group, of the fellows adorned with, confidence, faith, and smile, I was mesmerized.

With every passing day, looking at the fellows' social media updates, my belief grew stronger in them winning the hearts of the community. I saw them taking up varied activities, like selling shoes, growing vegetables, chattering with grandparents, processing paddy, and whatnot. The way the communities welcomed our fellows without wanting anything in return was heartfelt, something that needs to be celebrated.

I realized that I too shall experience this to connect with people and be more supportive of them using education as an instrument. In fact, I urge others too to have such experiences, develop an understanding of rural India, brainstorm ways to positively contribute, like, developing leadership qualities, self-determination, self-help skills, optimum utilization of available resources, and the list goes on.

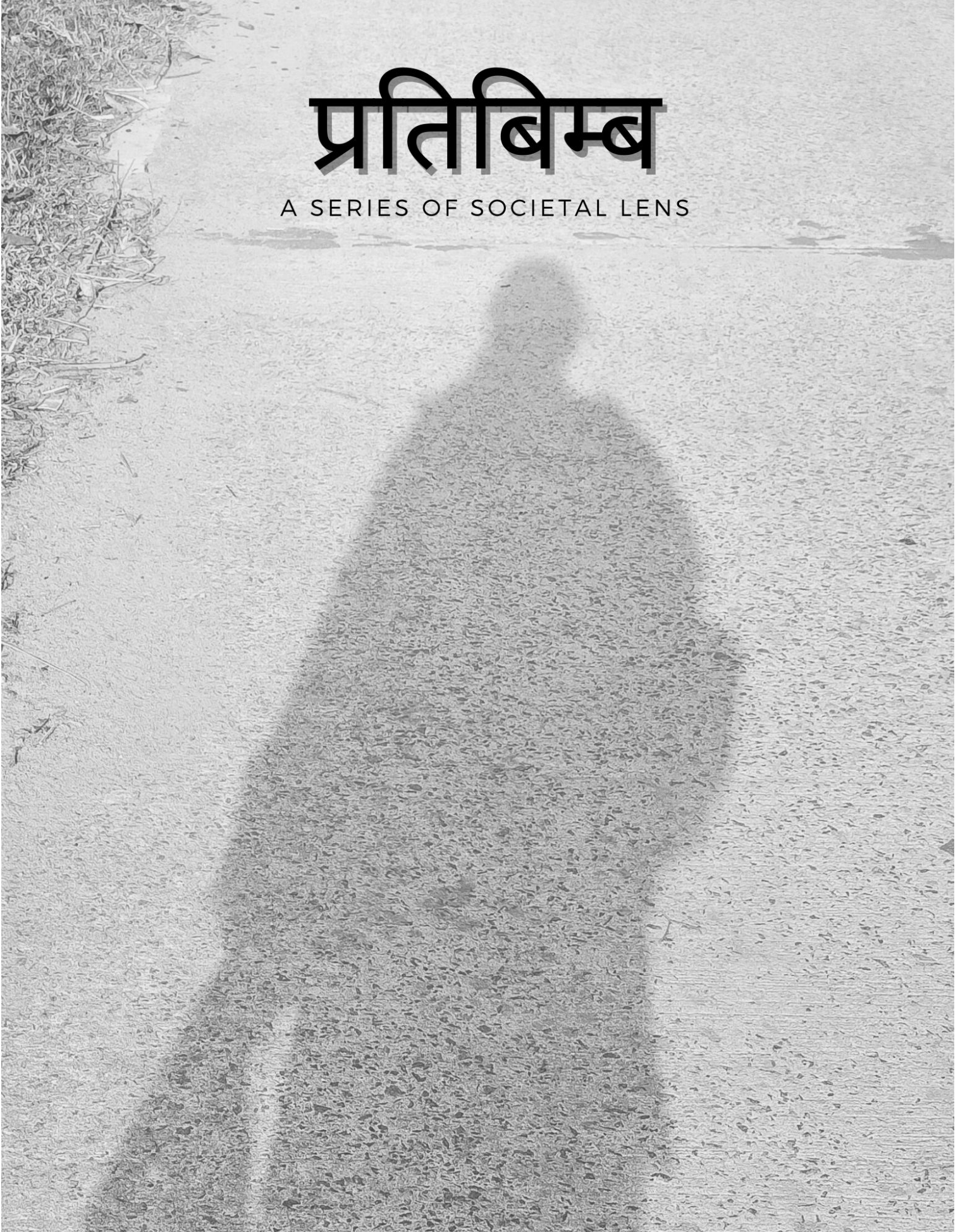
Community Immersion is not simply getting indulged with the people but living a life which supports the attainment of educational goals, advocated by our Constitution. Adding to this, it also aims at making ourselves more resilient towards diversities & inclusiveness, where all can enjoy the right to learn and grow.

SARIKA
Program Leader



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A SERIES OF SOCIETAL LENS









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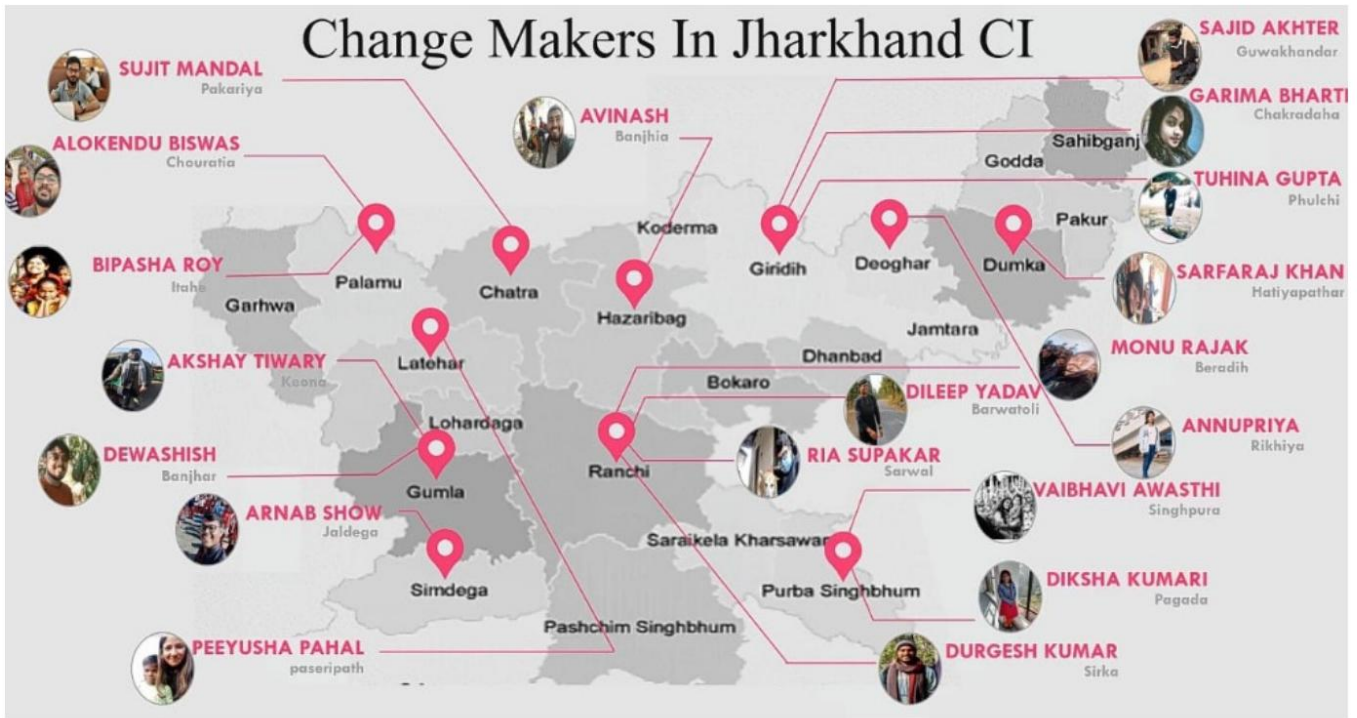








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By Alok



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SCAN THE QR
 TO LISTEN TO
 OUR PODCATS

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