



# FRIENDS

Newsletter of the Ragpickers Education & Development Scheme (REDS) Bangalore, India  
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## “Chilli Pili Mela “

### REDS-Bangalore

A cultural program for the REDS Play School children was held on 8 December at Akkithimanahalli next to the Hockey Stadium. This is the second annual celebration of Chilli Pili Mela for 10 area Play Schools. Over 450 children and their parents were able to participate in the day's activities of dancing, songs, skits and a fashion show performed by the children.



The chief guests for the day were Dr. Narayana Swamy, A.C.P. - East, Mr. I.G.Manjunath, Police Inspector - Adugodi Police Station and Mrs. Kurvilla. The program was

inaugurated with the lighting of the lamp by the chief guests and Fr. Pragasam, S.M. - REDS Executive Director. In his inaugural speech, Dr. Narayana Swamy stressed the importance of education and encouraged parents to educate their children and not to send them to work.



All present were fascinated by the performance of the little children in the cultural programs that followed. Group dances saw the children dancing to the latest hits from regional movies. The fancy dress competition saw children dressed as prominent personalities. Parents thoroughly enjoyed watching their children on stage and applauded them.



The afternoon program continued with cultural items performed by the children as well as the Skill Training Center boys. Many parents expressed their sincere gratitude to the organisation. Fr. Pragasam, S.M. also encouraged parents to ensure their child's education, and thanked the children for their long preparation for the day.

We take this opportunity to thank the Brothers of Faustino Community - Deepahalli, Brothers of Scholastic Community - Deepahalli, Brothers of St. Joseph's Community - Deepahalli, Aspirants from the Marianist Society, Novices from Augustine Missionary Sisters, MSW students, and our NFE and play school teachers for putting much effort into the cultural activities and lunch for the program.

## "Pongal Celebration"

On 14 January, a Pongal celebration was organized. This is the auspicious day when the sun moves from one zodiacal sign to another, marking the end of winter and onset of summer. Pongal is celebrated throughout India. The sweet pongal is cooked in a new mud pot and distributed to the relatives and friends along with jaggery and sugar candy. All of the REDS staffs, including play school, tailoring, day care center and study center, tuition center teachers, solid waste management and Skill Training Center staffs along with their families took part in the program on 13 January.



The staffs gathered together at the new REDS office and made the sweet pongal in a mud pot. The staffs and their children performed some cultural activities. The day ended with lunch and a word of thanks by Fr. Pragasam, S.M. for everybody participating in this occasion, he then distributed sugar candy with sweets.



## Workshop on Communication & Women Rights

On 19 January, the staffs of REDS Bangalore and Deepahalli participated in a workshop.

Mrs. Prema Manthesh welcomed Mr. K.C. Venkatesh from Paraspara for the morning session. He spoke about communication that travels from administration to the field and vice versa. Relating to this one should think of individuality, individual goals, family, organisation and society. He explained this through a flow chart and a short game. After lunch break, we then started with the afternoon session. Mrs. Prema Manthesh welcomed Mrs. Gowri from Vimochana. She spoke about women's rights, basic



knowledge in handling police cases and which laws to know. She explained about mental and physical violence faced by the women in society. We have to tackle and solve problems at the gross root level. We should help others through good counseling while guiding them to understand the law.

On 22 January, a new play school was opened at Rajendranagar and from the 24 January a tuition center was started for the children of Baglur Layout.

### REDS-Skill Training Center

- The staff and boys took part in the Chilli Pili Mela on 8 December.
- The staff took part in the Staff Development Program on 19 January and Pongal celebration on 13 January.
- Monthly Family Nights and Birthday celebrations
- On 24 December, boys received clothes from Fr. Pragasam, S.M. and Bro. Delmar, S.M. for Christmas. We had New Year's celebration with the Faustino Community members.



- The boys had a parents meeting on 11 January. Mrs. Prema, Mrs. Sashikala and Bro. Cyprian, S.M. participated. Bro. Arokia Doss, S.M. and Mrs. Prema explained about the REDS Skill Training Center Program.
- On 26 January, Republic Day was celebrated with Chaminade Educational Center. On the solemn occasion the National Flag was hoisted by Bro. Rajesh, S.M. and all paid their respects by singing The National Anthem.

## REDS-Ranchi

School-going children have appeared for the exams and received their results. Overall, the results were very good. During the Christmas holidays at Mousibadi center, a Kabadi Tournament was held between the boys and girls. The girls won the trophy. Blankets were distributed to the families of REDS children.

The non-formal education children are preparing themselves for the entrance test for enrollment in formal school. Bro. Alex Toppo, S.M. explained about the Self Help Groups. He also explained about the benefits of SHG. The Birla Hospital nurses visited Mousibadi center and provided night-blind syrup for the children.



Parents meetings were conducted in December for all of the parents. The main topics discussed were:

- Stress on the importance of the upcoming annual exam.
- Discussion about the objectives and goals of REDS.
- Admission of new school-going children.
- Punctuality of the children at the center and at school.
- Attendance of formal and non-formal education children.
- Cleanliness of both children and parents.
- Christmas gathering.

In vocational training news, many girls have been hard at work. They are dutifully working on their embroidery, tailoring, and knitting. Attendance has been very good and the girls are in good spirits. The embroidery units make handkerchiefs, altar cloths and table cloths. The knitting section students are doing knitting of full sweaters and half sweaters. The tailoring girls are stitching dresses for the Tokitoli Center.



The girls were given tests on stitching full shirts, full pants, trousers and skirts. They are learning to make nighties, saree blouses, baby frocks, Jhablas etc.

Bro. Mike O'Grady, S.M. visited the REDS program at Ranchi in December. The Marianists



sisters visited the Pahadi center in January. The children were very happy to receive them. Three sisters of Asha Nivas and two Marianist brothers visit the REDS program every Wednesday.

On 24 January, the Community Development Committee, Mecon and Ranchi arranged for the medical camp. They provided free treatment for normal diseases. They also gave awareness program concerning on

HIV. On 26 January Republic Day, the children were taken to Morhabadi Grounds where the Governor hoisted the National Flag in the presence of the Chief Minister.

## Christmas

On 15 December, a picnic was organized for the Bangalore and STC staffs to Ognikal in Tamil Nadu. It was a day of fun and frolic especially playing in the water. A short game was conducted and the message of Christmas was shared along with the gifts distributed by Fr. Pragasam, S.M.

On 20 December, a get-together was organized for the play school, tuition and study center teachers of Bangalore. A short game was conducted and the message of Christmas was shared with gifts being distributed by Bro. Delmar, S.M.



At Bangalore, each play school, day care center and tuition center child celebrated Christmas at the center with snacks distribution.



A Christmas get-together was held on 17 December for the boys of REDS - STC. Around 350 children from different NGOs gathered for the Christmas celebration at Deepahalli. They performed cultural activities after which gifts and snacks were distributed.



At Ranchi, delightful celebration was held wherein the children cherished the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Each center celebrated by exchanging gifts with their Christmas friend from 21 to 23 December. The children performed beautiful dances, songs and skits. The tailoring, knitting, and embroidery unit girls celebrated Christmas at the units.



### Joke

Two boys turned up at a doctor's clinic, "I've swallowed a marble," said the smaller boy to the doctor. "I see," replied the doctor, "and is this your brother with you?" "No," said the other boy, "I own the marble."

*The Staffs at REDS wish you a happy and prosperous New Year!*

*Our earnest appreciation and sincere gratitude goes to those who have continued to support REDS INDIA.*

