

**Betreff: Newsletter Number 5 - April 2011-english Version****Newsletter Number 5 - April 2011-english Version**

Dear friends,

Greetings to you all from Vishwaneedam! It's been a 2 years since we started Vishwaneedam. As you know that we have been engaged in various activities, such as, primary education, primary health care, sanitation and Hygiene etc. in the surrounding villages and within Vishwaneedam; we have started sustainable living model, such as, organic farming, dairy, preservation of environment, design of our buildings in sync with the natural surroundings etc.

After spending considerable time with the villagers, we found that lack of education is one of the root causes of their poverty. Therefore, we have started a school 'Gaiatreeschool' in Vishwaneedam for village children in order to provide them Integral Education. In this regard, Mr Mike and Ms Anke, Teachers from Schkola, Germany, have been helping us. Last year we have started our school with only 12 children and this year we have taken only 8 more children, due to lack of sufficient infrastructure and running cost.

To update you on our activities in school and Vishwaneedam community, we have started publishing newsletters. If you wish to unsubscribe please do so at the bottom of this newsletter.

For more infos please visit our homepage [Aktuelles](#)

**India is Cricket World Champion**

It is Saturday, April 2nd. An entire nation watches in excitement. At around 11 pm one billion people start to celebrate. India is the new cricket world champion. Cricket is more than just a sport. It is like the blood in your veins. Every child knows the rules and dreams of becoming a bowler or batsman one day. In a cricket match, the opposing team tries to hit the ball as far as possible outside the boundary. For this, you get runs (points). Everyone was trying to explain me the rules when we were watching the game. I did not understand much because there was fierce competition for the best explanation. Now, I found it on the internet and am able to understand the fascination attached to this game a bit better. However, I did not make it to the end. One match lasts nine hours altogether.

Foto: Ram, the small child want to become a cricket player

- [Parents meeting with a lot of fun](#)
- [Admission for the new academic year](#)
- [Daily schedule restructured – work in blocks](#)
- [Moving visits to children's homes](#)
- [Shibu and Shakti are leaving the Gaiatreeschool](#)
- [Guest house is ready](#)
- [When the ice seller passes by](#)
- [Trip to Bramani valley](#)
- [Account at the State Bank of India \(SBI\)](#)
- [Sabine has got used to the new lifestyle](#)
- [Family house on school ground under construction](#)

**News from our Gaiatreeschooll****Parents meeting with a lot of fun**

Once a month, the parents of the pupils of Gaiatreeschool come



together for a meeting. This always takes place on Sundays since many parents work long hours during the week. In order to be able to start at 4 p.m., we invited the parents at 3 p.m. The last parents arrive around 5 p.m. I wonder if we will ever get used to that? This time, many new parents joined the meeting in order to learn more about the school concept. They had a chance to experience everything practically in a station work. After that, questions of organization were discussed. Just like in Germany, transportation is an important issue here. Finally, we played some sports games to finish the meeting and everyone had a lot of fun.

### Admission for the new academic year



In the upcoming academic year, we are planning to take in 10 new children. Our emphasis is on girls, children with a tribal family background, and orphans (see resolutions). The limited number of students is due to the fact that we do not want to open a new class but decided to fill the existing one. From next week on till the beginning of the holidays in mid April, the new pupils will come for two hours per day to get an impression of their future school.

### Daily schedule restructured – work in blocks



When we were observing the lessons at Gaiatreeschool, we acknowledged unrest in the classroom. One reason for that were the continuous station and group changes. Consequently, we decided to divide the day in two parts. During the first part, which finishes at 9 a.m. (breakfast time), the three subjects math, Orya, and English are taught in three levels according to the age and learning level of the children. After breakfast and a long break reserved for playing, project lessons on different topics are held from 10 – 11:45. Like before, the day starts with the morning circle and ends with the final circle. We are planning to use the remaining time before the holidays in mid-April for teacher training and workshops.

#### Rita wants to become a teacher

Rita has been coming daily to help in the Gaiatreeschool for more than one month now. She comes from Turla, the neighbouring village in the south. In cooperation with her, we are developing a trainee programme with practical and theoretical elements. Like Sadananta and Babloo, she does not have a pedagogic degree. Her wish to start teaching immediately will thus stay a dream until she has completed her training.

foto: Rita (left) and Anke at the teacher training

### Moving visits to children's homes



We were very busy during the last days. We decided to visit all ten children at home and give them the presents their sponsors had prepared for them.

At Anita's place...

The small girl Anita has been sitting and waiting for quite a while when we finally arrive at her house. The way to her home in Bramani takes around 20 minutes by foot. She is happy when she sees us and tightly holds on to her mother. Her father and grandpa stand next to her and laugh. The father has a small job for the State. He is responsible for the drilling works in the village. We ask him directly if he could also take care of that in the Gaiatreeschool. The house and yard are tidy and neat. Quickly, a bed is brought outside so we can take a seat. Anita's mother offers some snacks and lemon water. Ananta has to drink our water, too, since we do not dare to drink anything that is not boiled. Anita sits there in excitement with her tiny face and beautiful dress. I take her on my lap. Anita is the smallest among the children of Gaiatreeschool. She often falls ill. When she discovers the colourful parcel, her eyes start to shine. She smiles with her entire face. Carefully, she removes the paper piece by piece. The adults start to show signs of impatience, but she does not care at all. Her eyes become bigger and bigger and she starts to rip off the paper. Her mother helps her, and the grandfather is excited, too. It seems that Anita is in her own world right now. Finally, she holds a red schoolbag in her hands. Also, the present contained a painting book and colour pencils. She starts examining everything carefully. We sit there quietly and watch her fascination. On our way home we reminisce the beautiful moments we have just witnessed and at the meditation

circle, we can hardly express with words what we have seen today. These moments are always the highlight of the day.

At Samya's place...

It has become late today. We have helped harvesting the wheat in the afternoon. Samya, the small boy with the big eyes, is already sleeping. In the background, the TV is on. The family is proud of having one. Samya's father works as taxi driver and has a regular income of 1500 Rupees per month. It takes some time before Samya is awake and ready to receive his present. We give him the small parcel and he begins to smile. He is surrounded by family members that watch him curiously. Samya watches everything before he passes it on to the others. At farewell, his mother invites us for dinner for the next day. Ananta tells us that this is an expression of great gratitude and a big honour.

Thanks to all sponsors for the nicely prepared presents. More pictures and reports under [Aktuelles](#)

## Shibu and Shakti are leaving the Gaiatreeschool

Together with the teacher team of Gaiatreeschool, we have decided to tell Shibu's and Shakti's parents that they must not send their children to our school any more. Ananta has taken much time to make this decision. He has tried to contact the father, has visited him at home to tell him clearly that he has to send his sons to school every day. In the last academic year, the two were in school less than half of the time. Even the threat that the contract will be cancelled has not changed anything.

### Community life

#### Guest house is ready



Upon our arrival in Vishwaneedam three weeks ago, we were disappointed to find the guesthouse only partly finished. As Mahadev explained to us, the carpenter did not stick to the agreed timetable and so everything changed. We started with painting work immediately. Also, we made a small veranda in front of the door. The last thing that is still missing is a small shelter for the veranda to stop the water from leaking directly into the rooms during monsoon. Basanti's mother helps us with covering the house in mud and we dream of a traditional wall painting on the outside. Twinkle says there are artists in the villages. Every day from 5 pm – 6 pm we come together for community work. Sometimes we help on the fields, sometimes we work at finishing the guest house. Sabine helps us with everything.

#### Shetadev returns to his village

Not everyone is satisfied with community life. Shetadev has finally decided to return to his village of origin with his wife Mita and their son Ram. They could find an agreement with Ananta. We regret his decision since we are convinced that he fitted very well into the community and he also was a good farmer. The two remaining

families of Ananta and Mahadev are now responsible of finding a new farmer family to join the community.

#### When the ice seller passes by

...the children become very excited. Typically, he wears a cloth wrapped around his head and neck. Maybe this is his personal sign and he wears it because of the extreme cold at around 40 degrees in the shade. In any case, he is an original as he cycles through the villages with his metal box full of flavoured ice, which is probably the ideal place for all kinds of bacteria and microorganisms. While we have to force ourselves into not trying the ice, the four children of the community enjoy the cool refreshment. Every second counts before the tasty sweet melts in their hands.



#### Trip to Bramani valley



Sunday is holiday. This time, we go for a walk in the beautiful valley north of the neighbouring village Bramani with all the children of the community. We start the 30 minute walk in the early morning. Before the sun starts burning our skin we reach the dense forest and are rewarded with a refreshing wind blowing from the river. It is a unique nature experience, passing by vegetable fields, sugar cane, a group of workers producing bricks, goats, and finally an organic farmer who proudly shows us around his abundant fields. After reaching the pick nick spot, we have a small second breakfast consisting of puri and sabzi (vegetable curry). On the way back, we take a short bath in the so called swimming pool. It is a pity that Anke and Sabine have not taken

their swimsuits with them! During the last part of the walk, we collect cow dung for our own fields. Yummy!

pictures: Evan, Ram and Jishnu

## Account at the State Bank of India (SBI)

Account at the State Bank of India (SBI)

The whole procedure was supposed to take two hours. "No problem", says Ananta. We went to Patnagarh at 9 in the morning and came back at 8 at night. Yippie! Now we have an account.

[These are the details:](#)

[Gaiatree Foundation](#)

[A/C No: 31686998165](#)

[CIF No: 86006253264](#)

[Branch Code: 1321](#)

[IFSC Code: SBI0001321](#)

[Branch Name: Patnagarh Branch](#)

We are up to another trip to bureaucracy to switch the account to online banking. This way, I as the organization's treasurer can transfer money to the respective sub-account when money is needed and Ananta can withdraw cash from there. This also assures double control... over the flow of money.

## Sabine has got used to the new lifestyle



I arrived in India more than three weeks ago. After four interesting days in Calcutta, we moved on to Balangir by train. From there, we went on a bumpy car ride to finally reach Vishwanedam. Even though the guesthouse is not completely finished, I was positively surprised by the comfort offered here. Many things are new for me, for example the daily meditation, the mentality, the simple rural life and the mostly vegan food. The community members are very friendly and open and when the children come home from school, there is always something going on. All this makes it easy to feel at home at this place for a while! At the moment, I spend my days between the Gaiatreeschool and the community and collect materials for my internship report. In the mornings, I sometimes participate in

the yoga classes, and in the evening, I accompany Mike and Anke on their visits to the sponsored children. Time passes quickly, and I have found a true friend in my small pet lizard.

## Family house on school ground under construction

All community members sit together. Ananta presents the planned solar pump, explains the necessity and the advantages. In the following discussion, two problems are revealed.

Firstly, the security of the pump from vandalism and secondly, water usage through villagers. Concerning the first problem, we decide to build a family house next to the school. We want to look for a farmer family that could live there and cultivates the school area at the same time. The second problem is not as easily solved. Prohibit the villagers from entering? Limiting the amount of water they can take? Impossible. But we only have 2500 liters (corresponding to the volume of the water tank) and will need it for drinking and construction works, gardening etc.

There is the risk that the neighbours take too much water from the tank. We decided to leave everything as it is and to allow them the free use of the manual pump outside the pump house. Our children, too, will learn that water is precious this way. Reality will show if this solution works in practice. The planning phase for the solar pump is not yet completely over. Currently, we still have to determine the costs for the water tank, the construction of the tower on which it will be erected, and finally who will supply us with the pump. We hope to get things done before we leave in May, otherwise it will be installed upon our return in September.

Altogether, costs will be around three lakh rupees (family house included), which equals almost 5000 Euros (around 3 Lakh Rupee).



If you do not wish to receive this Newsletter any more in the future, please use the following link:  
[http://www.gaiatreeschool.org/index.php?lg=de&id=...&mail=...&nl\\_del=...](http://www.gaiatreeschool.org/index.php?lg=de&id=...&mail=...&nl_del=...)

Gaiatree Foundation 2010

Anmeldung zum Newsletter --> hier [Newsletter](#)

[www.gaiatreeschool.org](http://www.gaiatreeschool.org)

E-Mail-Kontakt: [mail@gaiatreeschool.org](mailto:mail@gaiatreeschool.org)

Redaktion: Anke & Mike Wohne