

## **Jan Shikshan Sansthan: Social Transformation through Skill Development**

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### **Introduction**

Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS), formerly known as Shramik Vidyapeeths (Institute of People's Education), falls under the Department of School Education and Literacy, beneath the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. JSSs across the country have been in operation in India since 1967. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) sanction JSSs, and each JSS is an independent unit administered by a Board of Management and other committees formed by the Board. The Government of India provides an annual grant and monitors the running of the Sansthans. The Government of India allots one JSS to each district based on need. There are currently 252 JSSs in India. The main objective of the JSS is to improve the standard of living of the marginalised and suffering group by improving occupational skills through vocational training programmes.

### **History**

JSS, Malappuram had a humble beginning. It was established in April 2006 and has been functioning under the aegis of its Parent Organisation, Nilambur Muslim Orphanage Committee, based at Myladi in Malappuram, a district in Kerala. The Parent Organisation is a registered Charitable Society which began under the leadership of the Chairman, P. V. Ali Mubarak and the, the late Abubacker Karakkunnu. The torch was later handed to P. V. Abdul Wahab, the Chairman, and the Director, V. Ummer Koya. The activities of the JSS are monitored by a Board of Management constituting 15 members with other committees looking after the specialised areas.

### **Goal and Objectives**

- To enrich the life of the illiterates and, neo-literates and make them self-sufficient through the broad spectrum of Vocational Trainings.
- To raise the women, the SC, the Scheduled Tribes (ST), and the poor to an income generation status through Vocational Training Programmes and continuous monitoring.
- To cherish the lives of the socially, economically, and educationally backward groups of society through motivation and brainstorming.
- To improve the occupational skills of the semi-skilled and the unemployed through skill development and awareness programmes.
- To upgrade the downtrodden such as, the differently-abled, orphans, widows, and slum-dwellers to income generation through motivation and skill development.

### **Vision and Mission**

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The vision of JSS, Malappuram is, to empower the youth, the poor, and the marginalised community through the creation of demand driven interventions and make them lead a beautiful life pattern. The mission of the JSS is to organise a grassroot-level empowerment among the deprived section of the society through a participatory and community owned sustainable system.

#### **Sparsham**

The main objective of Sparsham is to allow the differently-abled group to become self-sufficient through income generation. A real breakthrough was achieved by the innovative income generating programme developed for this group. Sparsham means touch and as indicated by the name, the JSS touched their hearts, awakened them through a word of inspiration along with good motivation, making them confident to raise themselves to the status of 'self-made'. They were given training in chalk, filepad, candle, and soap making. Those who successfully completed the courses were issued with Government of India certificates. Furthermore, the JSS currently direct and support their products to market. The palliative care group also find an element of joyousness through this programme. Therefore, the objective was successfully achieved.

#### **Ullasam**

The widows, divorcees, and unmarried women are among the neglected segments of society. Many of these groups in the country are outside the preview of even primary education. The needs of these women have seldom been acknowledged. Their need for education has not been recognised. Their need for life-skill education has not been mainstreamed. However, the JSS has led the way in transforming the lives of this group. The JSS came out with an innovative project, Ullasam, in 2014, training them in non-woven bag making. Since plastic bag eradication has been executed on a large scale, these bags have been in great demand. Ullasam, as the word expresses is five-days' work and one-day entertainment. Activities, such as yoga and meditation which act as stress relieving elements, are also practised as a part of this programme. This group make bags of quality and deliver orders on time. They earn Rs. 5,000 to 10,000 per month. A second step taken by Ullasam is the introduction of waste material processing. Around 200 women take part in this programme. The beneficiaries are from the premises of Nilambur, Sansad Adarsh Gram Village (Karulai ) and Chungathara Grama Panchayath.

#### **Insight**

The JSS has gone beyond the stated mandate and entered completely new areas of development. The major objective of the programme is to promote individual interests and vocational skill development. It is said that those with a vision are always blessed. The JSS, with its humanitarian approach, designed the project Insight for the visually challenged, which offered them the knowledge of income generation through skill development. Fifteen beneficiaries were trained in chalk, candle and sandalwood sticks making. JSS sponsored the marketing through co-ordinating with both the schools and industrial houses. As an added advantage, the beneficiaries were trained in waste material processing and are currently engaged in this work. They are presently happy that they are generating an income which improves their socio-cultural acceptance in society.

#### **Vidya**

Vidya means education. JSS has made this meaning more significant by launching the project Vidya among the most deserving group, STs, who are the inhabitants of the deep forest. They are very close to nature and live life in their own way being different from the outside world. JSS aimed to enlighten them with the importance of education.

In order to reach the unreachable, two colonies were selected for the process of Vidya Education. Kalyani, a teacher of Palakkayam Peripatetic School, and Sunil Kumar, a graduate from Nedungayam ST colony started teaching the illiterates. Twenty beneficiaries from Palakkayam ST colony, and 29 from Nedungayam ST colony, are on their way to the world of literacy through Vidya. The classes started in February 2015 in Palakkayam, and in August 2016, in Nedungayam, respectively.

The participants play with time. They sing, dance, and enjoy themselves in the classes along with learning. Through this they are made aware of health, hygiene, personality development and childcare, duties of a mother, their birth rights, the value of income generation and digital banking, and similar subjects. They are provided with Talking Pens, a unique learning aid designed by the State Resource Centre, Thiruvananthapuram, in Kerala. The process of learning, through modes of teaching, is made out by JSS, to be like playing a game. The beneficiaries will be enrolled in NIOS and made eligible for Government Certification.

### **Unnathi**

Unnathi is a prestigious project of JSS Malappuram, targeted exclusively for the upgradation of the coastal area population (from Vallikkunnu to Ponnani) who depend on fishing and allied works. The womenfolk are totally unemployed, wasting their time on fruitless endeavours. They have a low profile in all senses, social, economic, and educational levels.

Through interaction and studies, JSS concluded that the most suitable way to upgrade them is to train them in a particular skill and make them self-sufficient through income generation. JSS realised that this group is delicate and must be treated with sensitivity. Through the Panchayaths and Municipalities, JSS conducted participatory rural appraisals, using a humanitarian approach, for this group. Forty-one batches were formed, each batch consisting of 20 to 25 beneficiaries for undergoing 165 days' training as a Basic Sewing Operator. A total of 325 beneficiaries from three Panchayaths, and 562 from four Municipalities were selected according to the norms put forward by the Directorate of Adult Education in the prescribed syllabus. Given ample motivation they were taken to the world outside the deep forest. They were made aware that there is a world outside worth living with self-esteem.

Each stage of selection was handled with much importance and care. Twenty-Five Resource Persons were selected, specially trained and deputed exclusively for Unnathi. Life enrichment education is a part of the syllabus. Apart from this, several areas which are part of day-to-day life, such as, the importance of hand-wash and the various steps of perfect hand-wash, immunisation of children, registration for equivalency, legal rights and awareness, financial literacy, digital banking, etc. were also incorporated into the training. Training in fabric painting was given to encourage the artisan in each trainee. In total, 546 beneficiaries took part in the skill test conducted by the Ministry of Handicrafts. When the beneficiaries are recognised as artisans, they will be provided with facilities such as, health insurance, life insurance, scholarship for their two children, etc. Progress was punctually enabled through management information systems such as, MIS 01 and MIS 02. The activities of the Resource Persons and classes were strictly monitored through monthly review meetings with the director in the lead. The beneficiaries are given a chance to show their aptitude and potential through get-togethers and the exhibition of their products. As a second step, SHGs (self-help groups) and clusters were formed among them and they have been bank linked with the support, co-ordination, and involvement of local body representatives and NABARD. They

will be provided with sewing machines and other working aids, and marketing support for the smooth running of a unit. The ultimate aim of Unnathi is the self-sufficiency of the members.

#### **Palliative Care Clinic Linked Activities**

JSS chooses the road less taken: a challenge. Using a humanitarian approach, the training of the inmates of Jyothi Palliative Clinic in Chungathara in Nilambur Block Panchayath, was undertaken by JSS. These inmates are on wheel chairs as they are affected by paraplegia. The challenge was to select and design training for them which was handled with the utmost care considering their limitations. This group was trained in making shopping bags. Three out of seven are taking permanent orders for stitching for Indus Motors from branches all over Kerala. The efforts to promote self-employment by JSS has materialised. As a bonus, emphasis was also given to those who escort them to the clinic. These escorts were trained in tailoring. Thus, both the original group, the inmates, and those who take them to the clinic, have been equipped to engage in economic and productive activities.

#### **Sansad Adarsh Grama Yojana**

Sansad Aadarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) is a Rural Development Programme of the Government of India broadly focusing on the development of villages, which includes social and cultural development and spreads motivation among the people on social mobilisation of the village community. This programme was launched by the Prime Minister of India on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2014. SAGY was started to bring the MPs (Members of Parliament) of all parties under the same umbrella.

P. V. Abdull Wahab, MP, adopted Karulai Grama Panchayath in the Malappuram district in Kerala state. Karulai is a backward village with a major part being forest area with a number of tribal colonies. JSS Malappuram was selected as the nodal agency for co-ordinating the SAGY activities. The declaration ceremony was inaugurated by P. K. Kunhalikkutty, and presided over by P. V. Abdul Wahab MP. To ensure the smooth functioning of SAGY, an office was opened in Millumpadi in Karulai, on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2015. The office was inaugurated by P. V. Abdul Wahab, MP in the presence of V. Assainar, the Grama Panchayath, President, Hyder Ali, SAGY Nodal Officer and V. Ummerkoya, Director, JSS Malappuram. P. V. Abdul Wahab, MP interacted with the villagers. They were asked for suggestions for the development of Karulai village. Skill development is a key aim of SAGY. Training in various skills, such as, fashion designing, mobile phone technology, cutting and tailoring, dress-making, make-up, hair care and setting, to name a few, is offered. Attention was given to the SC/ST communities as well.

A new experiment in social change was initiated in Karulai Grama Panchayath. As a result, it was decided that all the people in the Panchayath be informed about the Jan Dhan Yojana schemes and PMSBY insurance. To do this effectively, broad planning was conducted, drawing on 1,500 volunteers from Kudumbasree SHGs, youth clubs, political parties, higher secondary schools, colleges, and JSS Resource Persons. One-day training was given to the volunteers with the support of LEAD bank and other banks in society.

The different modes used for the publicity were Grama Sabhas. Moving campaigns in vehicles travelled through every nook and corner of the village. A mass campaign was conducted in September 2015 under the leadership of the volunteers. The mega campaign resulted in the opening of 7,455 bank accounts and 16,741 insurance policies. This is considered a great achievement.

**Handicrafts  
Association with Textile Ministry**

Breaking fresh ground, the JSS started recognising the creativity of the beneficiaries after the training. Associating with the office of Handicraft, Marketing and Service Extension Centre, under the Ministry of Textiles, the JSS conducted skills tests for the artisans trained by the JSS in various skills. Those who did the skills test were awarded with the multi-beneficiary artisan card. Approximately 2,080 Artisans have been registered by JSS in various skills.

Apart from the Artisan Certificate and Card, children of eligible artisans were given a yearly scholarship of Rs. 1,200 each, other facilities like life insurance with Rs. 1.5 million and accident claims work Rs. 0.15 million for those who lost mobility, and Rs. 75,000 for partially handicapped are additional advantages of the scheme.

#### **Achievements**

JSS has carved a niche in the wall of the society through its great achievements. The Government of India recognised the JSS through the Sakshar Bharath Award in the National level in 2014. The UNESCO Confucius International Literacy Award in 2016 raises it to the international level. This was yet another colourful feather in the cap of JSS Malappuram.

#### **Conclusion**

In all these years, the JSS has never looked back but has been moving forward with slow but firm steps. The downtrodden society is being uplifted through continuous motivation and training; the graph of positive changes is always upward. In fact, the JSS has carved a niche in the wall of society through its great achievements. The JSS has a policy of alleviating poverty by facilitating self-sufficiency, and as the Chinese proverb says 'Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime'. Through this policy, the transition from 'status quo' to 'social change' can and has been made. When each individual in 'Unfaith', 'Vidya' or 'Insight' is considered, they may not have much to offer. But put together as an upcoming social group, each one does and it tells a story II – the story of transformation from status quo to social change.