

Newsletter Ramana's Garden and Ambiya Mountain Paradise

September 2005

Ramana's Garden

Our kids are doing great! We had a lot of happy events the last few weeks.

At August 15 we celebrated *Independence Day*.

The children set up a complete culture program on their own: There was dancing, singing and other beautiful performances. They also made their own flags and paraded through the village. Everyone came out of their houses and gave the children sweets. It was such a wonderful experience.



On September 5 we celebrated *Teacher's day*.

The children made beautiful drawings for the teachers. They honored them with plays, speeches, dancing and singing because it is education that will give our children a future, and it is their teachers who provide it.



Thanks to the organic apple-harvest from the mountains, the children made their own *Organic Apple-Ginger jam*. They sold more than thirty jars, and the money they earned has been put in their own bank accounts. It is nice to see how successful they are.



At the moment we are busy creating a beautiful play for the celebration of the holiday *Dushera*'s cultural festival in our village. When the evil demon Ravana and his army of demons kidnapped Sita and were threatening to keep her by destroying all Ram's armies, Ram finally was able to kill the evil demon, not with a sword, but with a disk of light. It will be performed on October 12 during the festival of Dushera, to honor the goddess Durga. Ramana's children are famous for their Dushera performances! We already made monkey masks and soldier costumes.

We are very excited because this play is the event of the year and carries a powerful message for us all in these troubled times when our political leaders fail to understand the fact; that violence only creates more violence..

We are constructing a new classroom to achieve our goal of providing higher education here at Ramana's garden. We currently offer seven classes from lower kinder garden to 5th class. Every year since our inception we have added one more class to our school. With our new building we will be able to offer 6th class next year.



Japanese encephalitis

A terrible epidemic is spreading over North India. Local newspapers report that the virus *Japanese encephalitis* has killed approximately 5000 children in India with up to 300 new cases reported every day. The virus, which can be prevented with a vaccine, has come very close. Right now a 2 yr. old child in Rishikesh, 5 kilometers from Ramana's garden, is dead from this disease. The government is hiding figures and maintains they are not able to provide the vaccine against this epidemic. They say the monetary cost to vaccinate the children at risk for the disease is too expensive. Currently, no vaccines are available for purchasing in India.

At Ramana's garden, we await a medicine donation from abroad, while Prabhavati fights with the local authorities to gain permission to bring it into India.. Meanwhile, we keep the children healthy with good food, plenty of clean drinking water, exercise, and a herbal anti-viral medication donated from the Energy Group in Czech Republic.

Ambiya Mountain Paradise

We are very happy to have welcomed many guests to our paradise in the mountains. Both Indian, and foreigners visit our resort. They come here to experience a new way of living through meditation and yoga.

The ambassador of Poland and his sons had their first vegetarian meal in their lives with us which they thoroughly enjoyed. All our visitors have been very excited about the silence and peace they found in Mountain Paradise and about the food, which is all organic, fresh and homegrown, so of course extremely healthy and tasty!

In October we will be hosting a group of thirty American youths.

These youths come here for self-improvement via meditation and volunteer work. They will stay with us for the entire month.



Thanks to a large donation from a Spain Foundation we are building a greenhouse in our garden. This is a very important project, as now we will be able to provide fresh vegetables to our kids in wintertime! Last week we were happy to discover that thanks to the vermiculture process our compost turned out to be excellent soil for our garden plots. We will have enough for the fields in Mountain Paradise as well as down in Ramana's Garden.

Our children have just received an invitation to present their handicrafts of stone sculpture, hand-painted cushions/ bedcovers, and greeting cards in an all India Rural Handicraft exposition in Delhi Sept.21-Oct 11. A very exciting adventure for all. Some of the children will actually travel to Delhi with Prabhavati to do their paintings there on the spot.

Created for you by Roos and Renee, volunteers from Holland