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Miscellany

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This anganwadi is a role model in child care

Facilities created with help from donors and organisations

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MANGALORE: Conditions in most of the anganwadis in the country often range from dilapidated to deplorable. Many anganwadis often consist of an ukempt room which has little or no ventilation and light and sanitation.

However, an anganwadi centre at Barinje in Ammunje village of Kariangala Gram Panchayat in Bantwal taluk stands apart. It has been adjudged the 'Best Anganwadi centre' in terms of cleanliness in the district.

The anganwadi has a water purifier for drinking water, an aquarium and a child-friendly toilet. With the help of the donors from the village, the anganwadi centre has been converted into a model anganwadi with several child-friendly facilities.

The anganwadi centre has given priority to cleanliness. Even the tiny tots in this centre are taught cleanliness. When asked to say few sentences on cleanliness, all the children said "shauchalaya kattisi, khaile at-tisi" (construct toilet and ward off diseases), 'Kattisi' kattisi shauchalaya kattisi,' (construct toilets).

The walls of the toilet are adorned with Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck and other cartoon characters. The anganwadi helper cleans and maintains the toilet. "There is a wash basin outside the toilet where soap is kept, so that the children cultivate the habit of washing hands with soap after attending to na-

ture's call," Bala Vikasa Samithi president Aboobakkar told *Dewan Herald*.

There is a wash basin inside the classroom and the children are taught to wash their hands with liquid soap before eating anything. A handkerchief is kept near the wash basin, so that the children can make use of it.

The walls of the anganwadi classroom are adorned with portraits of national leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Bhagat Singh, Subhash Chandra Bose, Radhakrishnan, Lal Bahadur Shastri and Dr AP J Abdul Kalam. The tiny tots easily recognise each national leader. There are charts about fruits, vegetables, butterflies, animals, domestic animals, Kannada alphabets, musical instruments and so on. At the same time, to give a glimpse of

the village and the anganwadi centre, the map of the village also adorns the wall along with the maps of Bantwal taluk, Dakshina Kannada district, Karnataka, India and the world.

Donors

"All the facilities at the anganwadi were created with the help of donors and various organisations in the village. Anganwadi worker Sujatha and helper Mohini helped rope in the organisations. There are 23 children in the anganwadi," he added.

"I developed the anganwadi centre with the support of donors from the village. The main objective of creating the anganwadi was to cater to the needs of the development of children in the age group of 3-6 years. Pre-school education aims at ensuring holistic devel-

opment of the children and to provide learning environment to children, which is conducive for social, emotional, cognitive and aesthetic development of the children. Instead of making the children sit in dark rooms, we have to provide conducive atmosphere for the development of the children. So, through the help of donors, I started creating facilities in the anganwadi centre."

The children of this centre have a variety of toys to play with and they have been purchased with the money donated by the villagers, he added.

Even the kitchen of the anganwadi has been provided with racks, so that utensils, plates and glasses can be arranged neatly.

The walls of the anganwadi centre also provide details on

prasuthi araike programme, *janani suraksha*, vaccination for children and pregnant women and other welfare programmes of the government for the benefit of pregnant woman and children.

Fruit bearing plants

When the anganwadi was started in the early 90s, the department of Women and Child Welfare had given one table and a chair in the building. There are fruit bearing plants like banana, cherry and gooseberry in the compound of the anganwadi.

On the future plans, Aboobakkar says "I want to develop a playground for the anganwadi children with a kindergarten where children will be provided with see-saw, swing and merry-go-round to play.

DH News Service



CREATIVE: A view of the child-friendly toilet at an anganwadi centre at Ammunje in Bantwal taluk. (Right) The toys which have been arranged neatly at the centre. DH PHOTOS