

CRIMSON DAWN SPECIAL EDITION ANANDA PURNIMA 2016



AMURT in Nepal: Womens Empowerment

In total 176 participants were provided training on awareness on Gender Based Violence, Legal Education, and Girls Trafficking whilst 77 participants participated in Food Processing Training and 15 participants are enrolled for 3 months tailoring course.



Legal rights workshop in Tekanpur, Sindhupalchok district

Initial work for one stitching centre has been established. Process for selecting the participants for vocational training is on the way. The training program for the women on vegetable is in planning stage and will be implemented during the next rainy season starting in July.

Summary:

AMURT in Nepal

Community School: in Lebanon

AMURT in Nigeria

Food for All in Washington DC

Mama's D Kitchen in Los Angeles

AMURT Haiti Update

Acarya Cirananda Avadhuta visiting
Morelia in Mexico

Ananda Marga Yoga in the Community

WWD emerging in New York Sector

Indian Consulate preparation for
International Yoga Day

Ananda Marga Canada

Ananda Priiti Master Unit in Texas

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Process of Interaction in community outreach program:

Outreach Program staff have interaction with the community during the community assessment visits and meetings in the target villages. The staff have interactions with the community leaders, school teachers, structured women groups, social workers and local institutions like VDC office, village resource centre, health post, local police post etc. To facilitate the interaction process, we have hired community mobilizers in each VDC since 1st January 2016. These mobilizers help the women groups in their respective areas to organize their monthly meetings, plan to participate in skill training and involve in different income generating activities. The mobilizers are trained on how to interact with the women groups and to support them in empowerment training activities. We also emphasize to promote local resources and production whilst discussing with them.

community level programs and also small business activities.



Women are trained in food processing of pickles and potato chips they are now selling in the local market.



Participants at girls trafficking awareness session at AMURT field office, Karitok, Sindhupalchok district.

Beneficiaries profile

Most of the families in our target areas are low income families. Their children have receiving benefit from education support program from AMURT. About 85 % families are the victims of the mega earthquake of April and May 2015. Most of them are staying in temporary shelters with difficulties. Most of them have lost their job opportunities. The introduction of hands on skill training to start small scale business has helped them to plan and implement some small business activities. There are some women groups and they are functional. They could be effective in implementing grassroots

Level of Participation by the stakeholders:

During the interaction program with the focus group, the women discuss about change and improvement in their life situation. They also identify the needs which included skill training such as food processing, tailoring, soap making, candle making, vegetable cultivation and marketing of the products. Moreover, they asked AMURT to help them to acquire information on legal education, human trafficking, gender based violence and also other useful skill training. AMURT responded to their needs and helped them to organize the training on awareness program and food processing training and basic equipment to one group as requested.



Advanced tailoring workshops in full swing near Kalika Primary school



Community School in Lebanon

"I want you to be persons of the highest category. You must always think of the goal. Always look to your ideal. By spiritual ideation you can get inspiration to adhere to your principles."

Shrii Shrii Anandamurti

On September 19th, 2015 we started our Community School for Syrian Refugees in Upper Chouf – Mount Lebanon, Lebanon. Within one month, and through outreaching the remoted villages in the Upper Chouf, we got more than 100 children living in a bad situation far away from all kinds of minimum standards of living. The best choice for these kids was working in a gas station for boys or waiting any suggested groom for 12- years- old girls. The few public schools in the area were full due to certain regulations from the Ministry of Education. AMURT's Community School came at the right time to save these children.

The Community School consists of two classes for teaching a Basic Literacy and Numeracy program BLN (61 children), two KG3 classes (67 children) and three sections of grade 1 (88 children) registered in the Lebanese Ministry of Education and High education (MEHE) and will get a certificate at the end of the scholar year. Most of these 216 students will be registered next year in public schools.

Teachers are well educated and are receiving trainings from Didi Anandarama in Yoga for children and Neo-humanism Education, and other educational trainings.

Recently, Ole Brekke gave AMURT's staff a 10 hours' workshop on Theatre in Education (TIE).

The goal of our Community School is to find the best place for these traumatized Syrian children, who were suffering a lot in the war, to take psycho-social support and good education at the same time. These 216 children had no chance to enter any public school this year so AMURT protected them from early marriage (girls aged eleven and twelve years old), child Labor, physical and verbal abuse and many other problems they may face in society and provided for them a clean environment to grow and perform.



This photo shows the motivating certificates children received after passing a dictation competition of 50 words in Arabic and English Language. Knowing that, many of these children had been out of school for two to three years.





Moreover, the dignity of these children and their rights of being equal with any Lebanese child made us work so hard and with Baba's will our students could have the access of visiting the National Library in Chouf (Youth and Children Library) where they can borrow any book or story for free.

Also, we had a special day prepared for our children where they listened to a story about protecting trees from the principal of the Youth and Children Library, Madam May Okalii, and then the children expressed their feelings through their drawings. After the visit, the principal and the workers in the library were surprised of the smartness, politeness and very good behavior of our students.



Also, the children prepared their Mother's gifts from recycled materials. Here are some photos of their lovely exhibition.



In addition to that, we recently had a performance party for our students where 40 children graduated from the BLN program. They are still in the school either in KG3 or Grade one (the high achievers).



Team



Talk

AMURT & AMURTEL Global News April 2016

Safeguarding the lives of women and children in Nigeria.

In 2010 AMURT began a project in rural Ebonyi State in Nigeria to bring maternal health facilities to neglected villagers. Prior to AMURT's arrival, maternal and new born mortality rates were unacceptably high due to a lack of functioning health centers, and unsanitary conditions.

Six years later AMURT has created a successful model that unites local government with local communities to provide pregnancy to birth support and care. AMURT has financed the construction of 6 maternal health facilities, 4 ambulances to rush emergency cases to the city hospital, and extensive outreach programs that reach even to the household level. All pregnant women now receive visits from clinic staff and maternal health promoters to ensure successful pregnancies and safe births.



Before AMURT arrived there were no clinic births, whereas in 2015 there were 1869 successful births in the six health centers AMURT supports.

The most successful health center is Offia Oji, to which 85% of the surrounding women come for antenatal and delivery services. The women have become confident that the health center can meet their needs through quality of care and familiarity. As a strategy, AMURT has employed local people in the health centers. They have the same culture



AMURT has established network of community-based maternal health promoters who are constantly encouraging women to access antenatal and delivery services.

and language as the patients, and are often known to each other. A health worker can scroll down a list of 70 patients and say that she knows them all. Hence, ours is a personalized healthcare approach.

In addition, pregnant women support groups are effective in bringing mothers together to share issues and share health education. And AMURT provides logistical and financial support for emergency cases. So people know that if they come

to the health center with a complication, they will be looked after.



AMURT employs local women as trainees, and provides them with more opportunities if they show potential. One of them, Chinyere Mwakwuba, a 26-year old mother of three (pictured), is now training as a

community health extension worker (CHEW) in the School of Health with a scholarship from AMURT. For her this is a dream come true; she never imagined she would get such an opportunity in life. AMURT has given 65 village people the possibility to build their careers, hence tapping into a grossly underutilized pool of talent in the rural areas.

Dada Daneshananda: Vocational seeds of youth

When he was 17, Dada (pictured right) got a job as a baby sitter, and discovered a passionate vocation. He loved spending time with the baby, whether he was sharing time with him in the peaceful forest, or feeding him.

Unbeknownst to Dada, in those years of baby-sitting a seed was being sewn that would lead to projects that care for thousands of babies. Dada's professional work in the field of maternal health started in Burkina Faso in 2001 with the training of village midwives in the remote north of the country. Then he traveled to Ghana to promote maternal health in underserved villages.

In 2010, rich with experience, he came to Nigeria as AMURT director to take on the greatest challenge: establishing a maternal health network in villages where none existed. Six years later the results are impressive: over 4000 births in 6 health centers

where none existed before. That's a lot of happy mothers with healthy babies.

Dada feels joy when he sees mothers with their babies. "I enjoy the serenity of the post-birth period," he says. "There is a special presence in the air. It is a privilege to participate in someone's birth."

When asked what motivates his staff to work tirelessly every day, Dada responds, "We have created a culture of service. People are eager to serve. Our approach is patient centered. Only when we put the patient first can we face the many challenges on a daily basis."



Reflecting back on his past, Dada remembers a song he used to sing in primary school in his native Norway, a song that has since become a theme song for his life:

*Den største gleden du kan ha
Det er å gjøre andre glad.*

The greatest happiness you can have
Is to make others happy.

Food For All: Reaching the home-bound and marginalized

By James McCullum



Volunteers of Food for All D.C. fill boxes with groceries early on a Saturday morning

Walking into her dimly lit apartment near Gallaudet University in Northeast DC, I notice Emily Flanagan has a small TV going in the background while she methodically crochets a scarf. We smile as I begin to interview her.

Emily was born and raised in the foster care system in Maryland. She said she learned to crochet “to escape to another world.” At the age of 13, she moved to DC to live with her mother. Emily completed high school, married and had four children. She moved soon afterward to an area of DC where drugs, fighting and gunfire were rampant. Her husband disappeared, and she was left to raise their son and three daughters on her own.

“If I didn’t do it, they didn’t eat, and we would have no place to stay,” she said firmly.

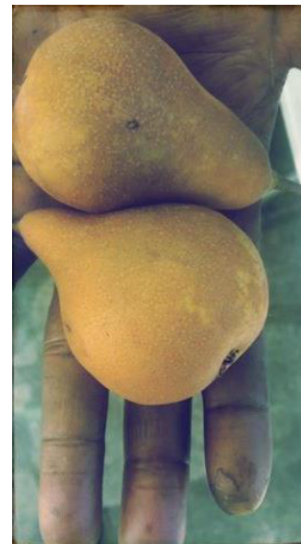
She always had a job until respiratory problems forced her onto disability. Her caseworker recommended Food for All.

Emily is one of 300 households that receive assistance from Food for All. Like many of the others, she shares her food - with her son, grandchildren and neighbors. In all, nearly 550 people benefit from the 60,000 pounds of food delivered by Food for All every year.

“The protein snacks, you can’t find them in the store!” she said excitedly. Another recipient, David Stewart, said Food for All “delivers the vitamins, vegetables and things that I really need because I don’t get enough of them.”

But Food for All delivers more than just food. “The people are the nicest who come out here,” Emily said. “No matter what the weather, they always show.”

Food for All’s volunteers also benefit. Jena, a middle school student, lives 30 minutes away and has plenty of volunteer opportunities closer to home, but she and her father Amer prefer spending Saturday mornings at Food for All.



“You just show up and help out,” Jena said. “There’s no pressure; if you don’t come one weekend, no one is going to be upset with you.”

Collectively, Food for All’s volunteers put in 3,650 hours a year helping people like Emily Flanagan, who shares that feeling of compassion by crocheting scarves, sweaters and blankets for

patients at Washington Hospital Center.

“You can’t always give somebody a hug,” she said, “but if you crochet something and give it to them, that’s a way of giving someone a hug.”

The healing art of service: an interview with Jules Sorensen, the director of AMURT-supported Mama D's Kitchen in Los Angeles



Since 2006, Jules Sorensen (pictured, bottom left) has been co-directing Mama D's Kitchen, a breakfast program in Skid Row for homeless people. In the past six years she and her team have provided a total of 36,750 breakfasts to an average of 125 people a week for 49 weeks in a year.

Mama D's Kitchen was founded by Delia Javier, an actress and set designer. When Delia reached her mid-seventies, she succumbed to cancer. Jules visited her the morning of her death day which, in true Delia style, was more like a party than a mournful event. During their last conversation Delia told Jules to take over the service project saying it would "heal" her.

Since then Jules been going out into the street with the regularity of a clock, rain or shine, to give a little of herself to those who often feel pangs of hunger. For Jules, Mama D's Kitchen is not just about giving people a piece of bread, it's a human exchange, the joy of greeting others in their eyes.

"There is no pity in the breakfast line," says Jules, "only acceptance and the understanding that, even though life can be tough, anything can change at any time."



The clients appreciate the consistency of the program. Everyone needs some sort of regularity in life, so for these homeless people, who have little

security, the knowledge that the breakfast party will take place every week provides them with an anchor, an opportunity to gather.

"Has it healed me?" muses Jules. "It has certainly warmed my heart. Sometimes it is not always me with the smiling face out in the street, but once I interact with our clients my mood lifts and I once again celebrate the joys of life."



Patricia and Linda may be chair bound but they have a priceless friendship. They like to heckle anyone not being fair in the breakfast line, so everyone gets their rightful share.



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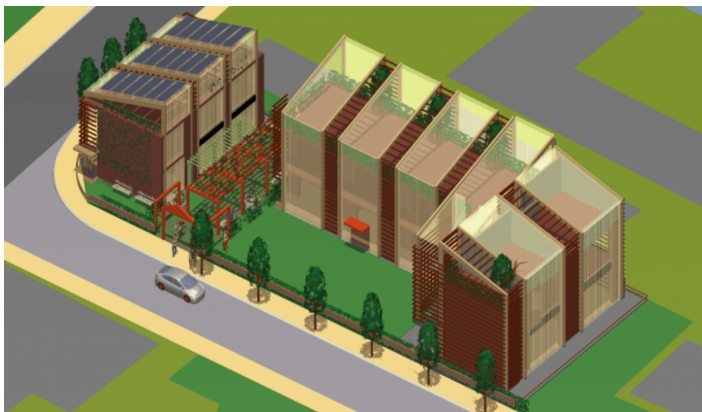


AMURT Haiti Update

The ongoing activities of AMURT-Haiti continue full speed with several new programs joining the wide scope of long-term initiatives.

The Center for Innovative Continuing Education completed in close collaboration with the University of Quisqueya has graduated the first two cohorts of 400 teachers who have learnt how to apply in their schools Neo-Humanist pedagogical processes and tools. The Center will begin expanding the scope of its trainings in September through a scale-up model of training other institutions in NHE methodologies, with the goal of integrating these in the curriculum promoted by the Ministry of Education for all schools in Haiti.

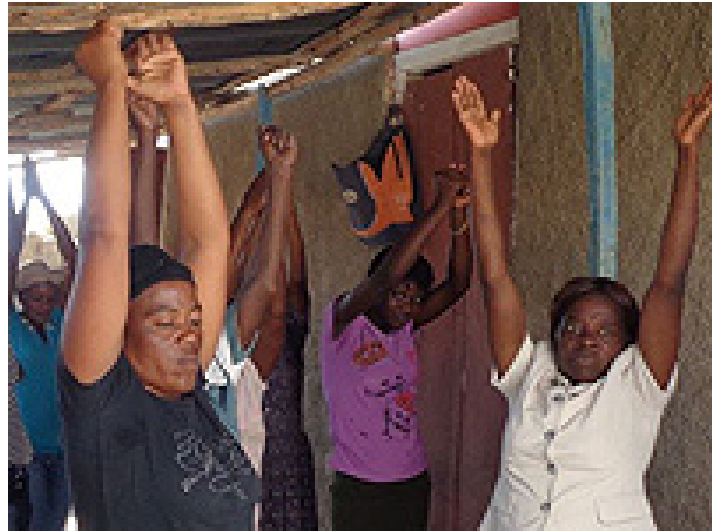
AMURT-Haiti is preparing to rebuild from scratch the infrastructure of the destroyed La Felicite Learning Center, which will strive to be a model demonstration lab allowing workshop participants to experience first hand the process of student-centered learning.



Drawing: view of the project plan showing the main school, the sports field, the garden, training center, and rooftop pavilions.

The center will contain a model school and environmental lab, and a training and office spaces to be used by AMURT in Haiti.

A vocational training program is building the capacities of 400 women and men over 6 months in several professional disciplines including electricity, sewing, plumbing, construction, cosmetology, etc. The participants will also learn how to apply integrated breath-work and mindfulness to resolve conflicts and set personal goals.



Meanwhile in the NW of Haiti the rural programs continue with the expansion of the 3,000 women strong network of Self-Help Groups. This Proutistic model has already reached 300,000 USD in self-generated savings invested weekly in loans for small business activities. The model gained national recognition when the Digicel Foundation awarded it its special 2014 Entrepreneur of the Year award in the category of emergent ventures. Parallel with business and literacy skills the women learn leadership and mind-body practices such as integrated breath-work, yoga asanas, and non-violent communication.

(Reprinted from amurt.net website)





Acarya Cirananda Avadhuta visiting Morelia in Mexico

The visit of Acarya Cirananda Avadhuta to Morelia in Mexico is particularly auspicious for this important town in the state of Michoacan. The unit of Morelia have responded by organizing several events and lectures for Dada who spoke about Yoga, Meditation and also the practical aspects of living on this planet earth.



Most acaryas of Ananda Marga have found Morelia one of the best places for propagating the ideology of self-realization and service to humanity which represents the essence of Ananda Marga.



Ananda Marga Yoga in the Community

Ananda Marga has tradition of teaching yoga to all. From India to United States, from Africa to Iceland, the yoga teachers of Ananda Marga bring this ancient art and science to people of all walk of life.



Many are aware of the health benefits of yoga. Ananda Marga is gradually bringing yoga as a life style able to change society from its core.



In United States together with the Indian Consulate and other yoga organizations Ananda Marga is actively involved in making the International Yoga Day 2016 a memorable event. Ananda Marga is teaching yoga at present in colleges, schools, senior citizen centers, Ananda Marga Centers organizing seminars and event accessible to everybody.



Dada Anudhyananda we did a special Kiirtan program in Orlando in sister Dayavatii's house. Some of the margiis drove three hours to attend the blissful program. Total initiations 23 and the follow up tour is planned for later this year.



Getting ready for baby naming ceremony in Orlando, Florida.

WWD emerging in New York Sector

Once a month we have a three hour Akhanda Kiirtan in WWD sectorial office, in Queens New York. Margiis are always happy to attend. On April we had 18 people and we posed next to the new banner.



In March we had a public program and a one day seminar in Toronto, Canada.



In February Didi Ananda Tapomaya (PWSA) did a tour in Florida, visiting Miami, Tampa and Orlando. With



Retreat in Guatemala



Indian Consulate preparation for International Yoga Day

June 21 2016 will be the second International Yoga Day instituted by the United Nations and greatly supported by the Indian Government. In preparation for the event Consulate General of India called a first meeting for the organizers and supporters of the Yoga Day.



Chaired by Indian Consul the meeting saw the participation of Ananda Marga representatives together with the representatives of others yoga organizations in New York. The familiar atmosphere of the meeting was conducive for offering several suggestions and practical points.



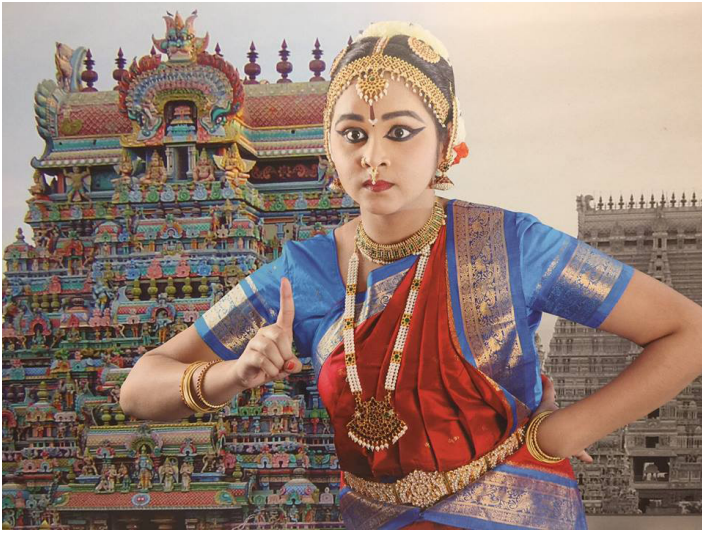
Acarya Abhiramananda Avadhuta of Ananda Marga

conveyed the importance of working together for the best success of the event and it was agreed to held regular meeting from now on at the Consulate.



Every Thursday at 6:30 the Consulate of India hosts a yoga class which is ongoing since the last edition of the Yoga Day. In a similar fashion Ananda Marga offered to have regular meditation classes free of costs at the Indian Consulate provided that there will be sufficient number of participants. Ananda Marga is committed to bring Yoga at his maximum acceptance in all the communities for its vast spectrum of beneficial effects on human body and mind.





Ananda Marga Canada

Ananda Marga Canada held seminar and Bhukti Pradhan Elections in Brampton, ON on Sunday March 27, 2016. On Saturday March 26, Mehool Dave, Sujata and family invited all Margiis, Acaryas, friends and other devotees to a grand debut Indian dance performance of Kiirtana Dave held at Lester B. Pearson Theatre in Brampton, ON and attended by around 390 people.



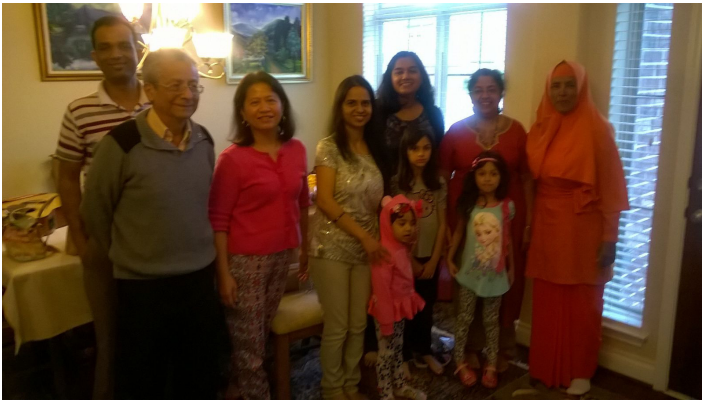
Bharathanatyam Arangetram of Kiirtana Dave. Bharathanatyam is an ancient Indian dance form originated in India centuries ago. This dance form combines complicated rhythmic steps and other foot movements, hand gestures (mudras), facial gestures and dance movements that result in a high sophistication and aesthetics. The dancer has to correlate the movements of the dance to the melody and rhythm of the musicians. For Kiirtana's performance, highly trained internationally claimed musicians performed live at the stage during the entire performance that lasted from 5:30 p.m. until 11 p.m on Saturday March 26, 2016.



Arangetram means to "ascend the stage" and is among the most important events in a dancers life when the teacher (Guru) is ready to allow the student to have his first solo performance. Kiirtana is now 16 years old and has been practicing Indian classical dance since age 4. Her teacher for the last ten years is Guru Natyalalamani, Smt. Jayanthi Shanmugalingam, a renowned dance teacher and founder of a dance school in Toronto. For the last few months Kiirtana has been taking classes daily and during the performance she was dancing for over three hours – something that requires extreme endurance. The performance was of very high calibre, both the musicians, costumes, lightning, sound control, and most importantly Kiirtana's dance was full of vitality, and deep expressions through hand gestures (mudra), dance movements, and facial expressions. She showed that she is not only a great dancer but also a great actor and was able to convey the storyline of the dances with elegance, humility and humor.



Kiirtana Dave renders omage to her teacher Guru Natyalalamani, Smt. Jayanthi Shanmugalingam



Progress at Ananda Priiti Master Unit in Texas

Didi Ananda Sutiirtha is Rector at Ananda Priiti Master Unit near San Antonio in Texas. Master Units are rural self sufficient projects that offers a model of sustainability for local communities. Didi project includes an orchard and three buildings. The recent fire which burned the main building was a big challenge for the project. Ananda Priiti is a project of the Woman Welfare Department of Ananda Marga (WWD) which is particularly dedicated to the welfare of women and children. Didi got solidarity from all the New York sector and we the initial funds collected it was possible to complete the work in the two remaining buildings and to set iron rods to prevent a lighting accident which probably constituted the original cause of the fire. More help is needed to create the conditions for rebuilding the house lost and continue in the endeavor of the Master Unit.

