

**Partnership-in-Action** was set up in April 1994, to work with our sister organization in Germany to support the work of the Ecumenical Sangam in Nagpur, India. The overall aim of the Sangam is to start and support a process of sustainable development in the rural villages and urban slums in such a way that the people do not become dependant upon the Sangam but are able to manage their own affairs. The Sangam is currently working in more than 49 villages supported from the Bamhani Centre and three Sub-Centres which are at Shedeshwar, Gondwananagar and Narayanpur. Bamhani is approx. 35 kms south of Nagpur on Highway 7 towards Chandrapur. The Sangam provides primary health-care and social development to all people when requested. At present the Sangam relies on funding from the German partners called *Deutsch-Indische Zusammenarbeit* (Indo-German Cooperation) and *Partnership-in-Action*. The building of the 'Rainbow Centre' in the Civil Lines area of Nagpur, which is a Conference Centre and guesthouse, has enabled the Sangam to generate funds locally. In the Rainbow Centre there is also office space for the Ecumenical Sangam. Since conversion of the basement in 2006 there is dormitory accommodation, lecture and study rooms for the twelve month residential Trained Birth Attendants courses together with an office base for the Sangam's Slum and Leap Teams.

**Partnership-in-Action** has supported and funded for the past seventeen years three projects, a **Kindergarten Class** and a **Tailoring Class**, in Bamhani, and the ongoing training program to provide ('bare foot doctors') **Village Health and Social Workers** for the rural villages and the urban slums.

April saw the completion of the first of the purpose built Sub-Centres at Narayanpur and it was officially opened when the red ribbon was cut by Mr. Barai watched by Mrs. Rita Dohrmann (Sangam President) and the village leaders. Mr. Barai had helped the Sangam by providing the land on which the Sub-Centre is built. On the ground floor at the front of the new building there is a clinic which provides facilities for the Trained Birth Attendant (TBA) who attends to the medical needs of the ten surrounding villages. This clinic also provides a consulting room for Dr. Mukerjee who makes regular visits to treat the patients referred to him by the TBA. One of the kindergarten classes for up to thirty children plus kitchen area is also accommodated on the ground floor, with the first floor providing rooms for a second kindergarten and a tailoring class. On the second floor there is staff and visitor accommodation. Construction work has been completed on the Sawangi Sub-Centre, this is to replace the existing rented Shedeshwar Sub-Centre and the

electrical wiring is now being installed. This work is being carried out by the Electrical Installation Instructor and students as part of their practical training. It is anticipated that this work will be completed by the end of the summer break enabling the two kindergarten classes to transfer from Shedeshwar to use the new building after their summer holiday. With the planned Gondwananagar Sub-Centre plot some progress is being made in registration of the land purchase with the Government Land Registration Department.



In May Mrs Usha Bende Co-ordinator of the Sangam's work in the rural villages made a three week tour of the Sangam's German partner - to give a number of illustrated talks from her first hand experience to branch groups of DIZ, German.



There have been some changes this year to the Sangam's Counselling Cell team with Ms Minakshi Kadu replacing Ms. Prachi Bhope in May as the Social Worker/Counsellor. Ms. Sureka Shende (standing on the right of the picture) who runs the

Micro-Finance scheme stepped in to supervise the operation of the Cell and set up a Seminar at Buti Bori Police Station. The Seminar is for women from the local villages to learn about the help that the Counselling Cell can provide for women suffering from abuse.



Following an article written on Organic Farming by Pankaj Bhagat (Sustainable Farming Team Leader) being published in the local paper, Pankaj (right) was contacted by Ramesh Chute (centre) a well established farmer from Naand village who had 5

acres of uncultivated land asking for help from the Sangam's Team. Pankaj guided Ramesh through the growing techniques for Ambadi plants and a plan was developed to grow these plants on the

uncultivated land. The Ambadi plant is a little miracle, with edible oil made from the crushed seeds and the residue made into 'chutney' to be eaten with other food. The green leaves from the Ambadi plant can be used as a leafy vegetable for animal feed. The overall success of this crop was a fine one with an investment of £70 producing a harvest valued at more than £360 with Ramesh sharing his success story with many of his farming friends and neighbours.



On the 8<sup>th</sup> July the Leap 'Exhibition on Wheels' set off from the Rainbow Guesthouse to visit more than 30 locations around Nagpur district over 4 days to spread information on the symptoms and multi-drug therapy treatment of Leprosy. This minibus was accompanied by The

Leap Team led by the Sangam's Mr Dilip Sathe and made up of members drawn from all the associate NGOs who engaged and informed the various people that they met at each location.

The Slum Development and Healthcare work continues in the Urban Slums around Nagpur, from the 3 slum centres in Saraswati Nagar, Sewar Nagar and Motibag slums. A search is currently underway in and around Motibag slum to locate a suitable building as the Buddhist organisation that own the current centre and have leant it free of charge for development work now require it for their own activities. There are currently 45 young women enrolled in the Tailoring classes in Saraswati and Sewar Nagars, and 6 young women from Saraswati Nagar and 2 from Motibag are producing Fair Trade goods. As part of the Self-help programme the women are shown methods of producing Washing Powder and Disinfectants which they are able to sell on. Awareness programmes on the careful use of water resources are organised. Bal Sammelan (children groups) are organised in each of the centres with talks and discussions led by the Sangam staff on self defence, personal hygiene and other health related matters. Health camps are regularly organised in the slum centres with the Sangam staff publicising and organising the sessions for visiting doctors.

If you would like to make a donation or regular monthly contribution to the development work of the Ecumenical Sangam please e-mail: [pina@sangamonline.org](mailto:pina@sangamonline.org), ring 01323 731715 or write to 73, Baldwin Avenue, Eastbourne, East Sussex. BN21 1UL.



**Mr Barai cutting the ribbon to open the Sangam's new Sub-Centre building in Narayanpur village watched by Mrs Rita Dohrmann and the village leaders**

## *Summer 2011*

*Newsletter prepared by Bruce Williamson  
Hon. Secretary Partnership-in-Action  
e.mail: [Bruce58@btinternet.com](mailto:Bruce58@btinternet.com)*

See the Ecumenical Sangam Website: [www.sangamonline.org](http://www.sangamonline.org) for more details of the Sangam's activities with regularly updated 'News Items' and 'Success Stories' telling how individuals lives have been changed by the various training programmes and initiatives run by the Ecumenical Sangam.