

VARUN – Answers to questions from Noon.ch (Summer 2005)

Dear friend Andy Bhai,

We hope every thing is fine with you. Following are the replies regarding your queries.

1) When is the wet season, you wrote 3/4th of the year as dry land? BECAUSE: I am planning to come to Varanasi in May/June/July 2006 for one month. Is it possible to go to the villages and work there at this times? I will have approximately 4 weeks time for VARUN and I need to plan my holidays now with my job in Zurich.

You are most welcome at the project site as well as in Varanasi.

Wet season is just finished. Usually, it is expected from July to October. Yes, obviously it is true that rest of the all months through out the year are dry but in winter season due to some hail, fog, dew and some unexpected rain may make a little bit wet, but of no use, because the land cannot be wet up to the considerable level.

As far as your visit is concerned, it is ok from my side and we will make you feel like you are at your own home, but up to some extent you have to make some arrangements like you may need some acceptance from the district administration. For that, either you have some authority letter from ASHA or any organization from your country or anywhere else. We will give you in writing that we need your services and you are here for our cooperation making work running smoothly and fast, that is required by the people living in the poverty stuck area. We have every thing for your hospitality here at Naugarh.

N.B. : As you know the area is Naxal affected, so, due to security reason local administration may ask your identity. Rest all cooperation either needed by you or by administration we will arrange.

2) Bee keeping: When/Where do you plan to start bee keeping. How much money you plan to invest in the beginning?

Bee keeping is planned to run Lerha, Nonwat, Shahpur and Aurawatand villages of Naugarh by November 2005. At initial level we are starting to run the programme in above four villages with 5 units. Money has been arranged and everything is ready to hit the bull. It is expected to invest approximately Rs.15000/-. It is a pilot project, further extension of the programme will be depending upon the success of the pilot project.

3) What is a “middle school” and in which cluster of 4-5 villages? Do you plan to start it in Mid 2006?

Middle school is from 6-8 standard. It is of 3 years under British Education Pattern which was set by Lord Macaulay, the then Viceroy of India (it was head of the nation appointed by British Crown before independence) but the pattern is still running in India.

- The Govt. of the state (Province) is planning to make middle school accessible by all upto 2007. As you have been acquainted with the Govt./administration (they might be late) so we are planning and this plan is vaguely thought and is at infantile stage. But if you step forward we may think it seriously, because it needs huge amount of money in comparison to other programmes. It needs at least 3 classrooms plus 2 other rooms for office and library and 5 subject teachers and other allied (consumable & non consumables expenses).

- Vaguely, because Govt. is planning to run the middle school, upon failure of them we can do the same. We can provide land for the school. Remaining things are not in our hand right now to begin.

4) Current Status: Shahpur: I think it would be nice to have a second teacher but I want to focus on the other villages first where we have a higher need for starting any education.

Our focus is to provide complete education in a proper way. So that, the taught students could utilize their education and certificate further. If in other village we go for education it is a nice idea, but not in haphazard way, because education has a proper system everywhere, after completing one, you can start further. Definitely your idea is good. You may provide further your suggestion. 1 teacher at every 40 students required by the government as per norms. But in Shahpur, we have only one teacher @ 65 students, that also for different classes. At new school in maintaining the strength (no. of students) may take some time.

5) Current Status: Lehra: Since when does the government pay the teacher? Is it Mr. Ramkesh? How much does the government pay? What to do with the money we were spending for the teacher up to now?

Current status, Lehra, government is paying Rs.1000/- a month since July this year. The education calendar starts from July-June. Govt. is keeping on top priority for setting up the schools.

6) Current Status: Pathraur: Have the villagers repaired the building as we have discussed? (If so I need to see the fotos). Since when does Varun run a school there?

In Pathraur, the building we saw belongs to the government (Gram Panchayat) Panchayat means local self governance body elected by the villagers, so government provide the fund for repair or anything. We had discussed regarding the repair, newly elected Panchayat chief said, he will repair during this session, if funds are available. Villagers are still ready to repair but without prior permission of block authority (administration) it can't be repaired. Administration think villagers may capture the building so they create hurdle. In Pathraur VARUN has started a school in a private building owned by Mr. Nandlal. He provided the place voluntarily.

7) Current Status: Pandi: Which NGO is running a school there? Can I have some contact details?

Pandi is highly sensitive area due to Naxalite, so, no programme is being run by any one there even government. Instead of Pandi it was Dhobahi what we had said earlier. In Dhobahi, the NGO which was running the school has been stopped itself. We do not know the reason why they closed. From this July we are running a school at Dhobahi. Regarding this we have already informed to ASHA, Kaithi, Varanasi.

8) Current Status: Which two villages are “sanctioned by the ASHA”?

Two villages sanctioned by ASHA are Dhobahi and Pathraur.

**9) General: Can you send me a kind of a budget table for all the projects and tasks?
How much money, when..)**

We have received Rs.40000/- from by ASHA on 14.10.2005 for two new centers. The head wise budget details are as follows :

S.No	Particulars	S.No. Particulars Amount (Rs.)
1.	3 teachers honorarium	43200
2.	3 black board	1500.00
3.	Floor mat (100 ft. for each centre)	6000.00
4.	Study material @ Rs.250/student for 200 students	50000.00
5.	Stationary @ Rs.2000/center for 3 centres	6000.00
6.	Health checkup	5000.00
7.	Centre repairing @ Rs.2000/center for 3	6000.00
8.	8. Cultural	3000.00
9.	9. One Supervisor @ Rs.1500/month	18000.00
10.	10. Support money	15000.00
	Total	156,700.00

The above budget sanctioned for 3 centre but we run only 2 centres which are mentioned above.

We hope every queries are clear now and you will be in position to take decision and make me knowing about your further programs and implementation. Besides above if you have anything else to be known kindly inform us at earliest. We will always be in touch with you and eager to work further together. Kindly cooperate with us. We will provide you every information at every level.

Kindly convey our best regards to your family and other members of the Silicon Valley.

With warm regards,

Yours lovingly friends