



# STRIDES

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# STRIDES

AROEHAN's Monthly Newsletter

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## In this issue:

(Tap to jump to article)

Safe Holi Celebrations

School Refurbishment for a better future

Photo Gallery

Celebrating Our Forests

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# Safe Holi Celebration





**H**oli, known as the festival of colours, is the harvest festival that marks the arrival of spring and the end of winter. The cultivated rabi crops are harvested during this season.

Traditionally, Holi was played with colours made from spring flowers that bloom at this time of the year, and other natural ingredients such as leaves, tree bark, and even sand were used. However, over the years, people have started using synthetic chemical-based colours because they are easy on the pocket.

These chemical-based products leave long-lasting stains





and are often harmful to the skin. In the quest to bring back old traditions and simultaneously celebrate eco-friendly festivals, organic colours have started to surface again in the market.

On March 3, 2023, a training on natural colour production was organised by AROEHAN in Dolhara, Mokhada.



Home Science expert Rupali Deshmukh facilitated the workshop for our Self-Help Group members.

Rupali Deshmukh demonstrated the making of colours using organic materials like turmeric, beetroot, leaves, flowers, etc.



After the training, the SHG members were able to produce 100 kg of organic colours before the Holi festival.

The colours were made available for retail purposes with the help of Rupali Deshmukh. They were sold at a wholesale price of Rs. 250/kg, and the SHGs collectively generated an income of Rs. 25,000.







## School Refurbishment for a better future

**A**ccess to education in Palghar district, especially in tribal areas, is still a primary issue. It stems from the lack of quality education to poor infrastructure and an unfriendly environment to study. The quality of schools, the generally leaking and dilapidated classrooms, ramshackle classrooms and the absent teachers are also some of the factors that discourage bringing or retaining children in schools. Poorly maintained toilets and lack of water result in poor health of children, thus aversion to attending school.

**DID  
YOU  
KNOW  
?**

*According to NSSO data, 13 out of every 100 Indians between the age of 5-29 years did not attend school because they did not consider education "necessary".*





AROEHAN advocates for better Infrastructure in all schools and facilitates the creation of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WaSH) facilities and other essential school infrastructure, as per norms. Low quality of school infrastructure along with poor to non-existent WaSH facilities negatively affect the attendance of the children. It also affects the learning levels and quality of engagement of the students. Hence it is important to improve the basic infrastructure of the schools in order to create a conducive learning environment for children.





At present, our refurbishment initiative is ongoing in four schools of Mokhada taluka. The schools are being repainted and refurbished for a playful learning environment, thus attracting students to attend classes. As per the baseline survey conducted, new WaSH infrastructures and facilities are improved wherever necessary. Currently, the work is ongoing in Saprewadi, Bedukpada, Sakharwadi and Borichiwadi Zilla Parishad Schools.



# Photo Gallery



**Above:** Anganwadi Worker and AROEHAN Project Community Mobiliser visit mother at home.

**Left:** Construction of a well in Saprewadi.



# Photo Gallery



**Above:** Sanitary Pad distribution during Kishori Sabha.

**Left:** Growth Monitoring of an infant





# Celebrating our forests





March 21 is celebrated as World Forestry Day, also known as International Forest Day. The day is observed to raise global awareness about the values, significance and contributions of forests in maintaining the balance between ecosystems on the earth. Forest sustainable management and their use of resources are key to combating climate change and to contributing to the prosperity and well-being of current and future generations. Forests also play a crucial role in poverty alleviation and in accomplishing Sustainable Development Goals like No Poverty, Life on Land, Climate Action and Zero Hunger, among others.

Through our annual tree plantation drives, over the last five years, 4.5 lakh saplings have been distributed among farmers. The distribution includes saplings such as mango, cashew, chikoo, guava, lemon and jasmine. People have taken care of the plants despite water scarcity in most villages.

AROEHAN's role is not limited just to the distribution of saplings. Before distribution, the interested farmers are selected based on land





availability and the need for livelihood aid. The farmers are trained regarding digging a farm pond and how to utilise resources such as organic fertilisers, pesticides, hand pumps, etc. After the distribution of the saplings, the farmers are provided with agriculture kits consisting of resources necessary for the growth of saplings.

Our latest census to trace the survival rate of these saplings indicates an average survival rate of 70% across all saplings. AROEHAN's initiative has led to the plantation of 4,83, 656 trees in the area, which were planted by 7,700 farmers to generate income. This has, in turn, helped afforestation, leading to an increase in the number of trees in otherwise sloppy terrains with chances of soil erosion.

770 farm ponds with 30,000-litre capacity leading to storage of 231 lakh litres of water for irrigation and domestic use during non-monsoon months.





The preparation for this year's orchard plantation has already begun. On March 15, 2023, Agriculture Project Officer Ganesh Sarode conducted training for farmers in Shivli and Rajkor Pada. The theme of the training was Orchard Plantation focusing on Mogra Plantation.

**The key lessons of training were:**

- Farmers were informed about the method of dredging and spraying after planting Mogra saplings.
- Orchard planting includes mixed plantation of Cashew Nut, Mango, Lemon, Teak, Bamboo and Jackfruit saplings.
- Pits for trees should be 2 by 2 feet.
- Pits should be above 5 by 5 metres.
- Teak and Bamboo should be planted on the side of the plot. This protects the plants from strong wind.
- Fill pits with mulch, cow dung and add a layer of soil in between. Put grass or hay above the pits during monsoon seasons to avoid the erosion of layers.





- The farm pond should be 6m x 5m x 1.5m. This will allow storage of water upto 40,000 to 45,000 litres. The water will be sufficient for the trees throughout the summer.

Apart from this, information regarding vermicomposting was also provided at the training. Different methods of filling the bed of vermicompost were demonstrated. Farmers were informed about the weekly watering of trees in the resource centre.

They were also explained about planning irrigation and fertilisation of plants for mango, cashew, lemon and guava saplings.







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