

AMULASOILE DIARY

the context



**MANBHUM ANANDA ASHRAM
NITYANANDA TRUST**

The village is a small part of West Midnapore of West Bengal. This small village of Bengal – Jharkhand Border, of nearly 370 (mostly Munda and Shabar) households, drew the limelight in June 2004 following reports of the death of five Shabar people (one of the most ancient tribes of India) allegedly due to starvation. Though neither the administration nor the government admitted that the five died owing to lack of food, they, however, conceded that there was food scarcity and poor health services in the area.

The present scenario is that horrible memory still does not touch the people of Amlasole so much as they are still very much accustomed to the term, “DEATH” due to the lack of many other basic necessities of life. The prime of those is the absence of health centers in that area. The nearest hospital for primary medical services is at Belpahari, almost 26 kilometre away from that place. Mode of communication is at worst at that area and rarely any public transport can be seen.

The residents of this village situated close to the Jharkhand border, survive by selling Kendu leaves, Sal leaves and a rope made of “Babui” (a type of grass). There are no other sources of income as Amlasole grows only one major crop during the monsoons. There is virtually no winter crop. Also while Mundas are engaged in agriculture, Shabar people depend mainly on minor forest products for their survival. But cultivable land is meagre.

Malnutrition still continues to be a problem at there, especially among children. People still die there due to TB, Malaria, Food Poisoning, etc. Worst skin diseases are very common thing among the people of this area, which often become very serious in nature. Women face difficulty during pregnancy. Death of pregnant woman or the new born in the time of delivery is not a rare scene at there, as the delivery system is still very primitive. Pregnant mother or the baby often dies due to high risk pregnancy of the mother.

In last one year at Amlasole 54 children have been identified with worst skin diseases, among them 22 children had severe anaemia with $>9.2-8.4$ mg/dl. Eight pregnant women have been registered till date and five of them are suffering from high risk pregnancy. One can understand the severity of malnutrition, poor health seeking behaviour and like among the “would be mothers” at Amlasole. 40 people have been detected with malarial protozoa; 6 of them were suffering from very highly risky form of malaria. At this village, in the last one year 3 people have been found having leprosy and 12 people have been infected with Mycobacterium Tuberculosis.

Metalled roads, a little improvement in water supply, irrigation and electricity have been added to Amlasole's list of recent developments but the misery of the commonman still continues. Still there is not any Higher Secondary School in this area and this illiteracy also leads to the basic vicious cycle of poverty and lack of developments. More than that people of Amlasole have become tired of seeing deaths after deaths in front of their eyes. So they want to live now; and for that they demand a hospital which can save them from basic and serious health related issues. That may in case increase the possibility of employment of the local villagers also.

The Importance of the Proposed Hospital:

The proposed hospital will be focusing on providing culturally appropriate primary health care services to the people living in the margins and who are regarded as underserved. It will be a localized health care unit to provide an appropriate range and format of accessible health care facilities and resources designed to meet the needs of local marginalized people. Services like 10 in-patients beds, outpatient clinics, basic diagnostic (pathology & radiology) services, treatment facilities for minor injuries, malaria and TB, pregnancy related care, Safe-delivery facilities will be available through medical officers, GNMs, and appropriate para-medical personnel. Local people will surely be encouraged and benefitted to be here.



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