



JALA PRASADAM – A DEVINE EFFORT TO PROVIDE CLEAN DRINKING WATER

Impact Assessment Report of Divi's Intervention in 5
Major Temples in Telangana



Divi's Laboratories Ltd.

**AN IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT ON DIVI'S INTERVENTION OF
RO WATER PLANTS**

JALA PRASADAM PROJECT, TELANGANA

A CSR INITIATIVE OF DIVI'S

2024

Report Prepared by

Deeksha – Centre for Learning and Action



Divi's Laboratories Ltd.,
1-72/23(P)/DIVIs/303,
Divi's Towers, Babukhan Lane,
Cyber Hills Colony, Gachibowli,
Hyderabad, Telangana – 500081

Deeksha – Centre for Learning and Action,
108, SVP Apartments, Plot 48,
HUDA Complex, Saroornagar,
Hyderabad,
Telangana – 500035

JALA PRASADAM – A DIVINE EFFORT TO ENSURE SAFE DRINKING WATER TO THE PILGRIMS

PREFACE

Drinking water is a critical source of human health and well-being. Globally, 2 billion people (26% of the population) do not have safe drinking water¹. In 2022, globally, at least 1.7 billion people used a drinking water source contaminated with faeces. Microbial contamination of drinking water poses the greatest risk to drinking water safety. It can transmit diseases such as diarrhoea, cholera, dysentery, typhoid and polio and is estimated to cause approximately 505,000 diarrhoeal deaths each year – WHO.

In this background, the sustainable development goal (SDG) target 6.1 calls for universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water. The target is tracked with the indicator of “safely managed drinking water services” – drinking water from an improved water source that is located on premises, available when needed, and free from faecal and chemical contamination.

CONTEXT

Less than 50% of India’s population has access to safely managed drinking water. Two-thirds of country’s 718 districts are affected by extreme water depletion. Despite an extensive river system, safe and clean drinking water as well as irrigation water supplies for sustainable agriculture are in shortage across India. Some of the Telangana districts also fall in this category.

Telangana experienced recurring drought, and the ground water depleted considerably over the years. In the past decade, the State faced problems with water resources, in terms of availability and quality, as well. Additionally, there are 1041 flouride-affected habitations spread across 28 out of 31 districts in the State. The State government implemented various schemes to address the issues of quality and availability of water. The prestigious, award winning drinking water project, Mission Bhagiratha, is one such initiative that brought treated drinking water to almost all the households in the State. However, important institutions like schools, residential schools / colleges, temples are not brought under the scheme. These institutions are primarily depending on borewells or other local resources for water supply for all the purposes. In this context, Divi’s has taken a

¹ UN World Water Development Report 2023, Published by UNESCO on behalf of UN-Water.

major role in providing safe drinking water to the schools, hostels, villages, bus stands, police stations and so on. It extended its invaluable service to the popular temples in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

DIVI'S INTERVENTION

Driven by the passion to serve the communities Divi's initiated a much-desired intervention of satiating the thirst of people in the highly visited sacred places – the ancient temples of Telangana and AP. Aptly named and popularly known as '*Jala Prasadam*', this intervention has received wide appreciation and commendation of the visitors, priests and the temple authorities alike.

Noting that the devotees from far and wide visit these spiritually significant temples in large numbers but lack clean drinking water, which is a pressing concern to the temple authorities too, Divi's took up the task of setting up water purification plants in six famous temples in Telangana. Started with Yadadri it was extended to the temples in Basara, Bhadrachalam, Cheruvugattu, Kondagattu and Vemulavada. Divi's intended to learn the impact of this first of its kind intervention across the temples. Hence, Deeksha – Centre for Learning and Action was approached to do the impact assessment of the intervention in the said five temples.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Divi's has made provision for safe drinking water by installing multiple water purifying plants in the five famous ancient temples in Telangana anticipating that these would serve to around 1.50 lakh devotees every day. Therefore, the study aims to observe and comprehend the impact of the intervention.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The specific objective of the study is to gauge the outcome of the funds expended by Divi's on setting up RO water purifying plants and the impact on the devotees, authorities, maintenance of the place, sanitation work and the reputation of the temple.

METHODOLOGY

Observation and interactions are majorly planned to understand the result of the intervention. People from various sections are approached and interacted with at length. Random sampling and Snowball sampling methods were adopted for the study.

FINANCIAL OUTLAY

An amount of ₹3,72,95,611.00 was spent by Divi's under its CSR component towards the *Jala Prasadam* project in five temples in Telangana.

MAJOR FINDINGS

A team from Deeksha visited the premises of all five temple to observe and understand the impact of this intervention. Following sections provide an overview of the observations noted from a critical viewpoint while appreciating the positive impact and providing recommendations for sustainability of the effort made by Divi's.

All together 21 RO plants are installed and being used across the five temples. Temple wise details are given in the following table.

S. No	District & Location	Name of the temple	No. of RO plants	No. of SS drinking water sinks
1	Basara, Nirmal District	Sri Gnana Saraswati Devi temple	5	15
2	Bhadrachalam, Bhadradi Kothagudem District	Sri Sita Ramachandra Swami temple	6	15
3	Cheruvugattu, Nalgonda District	Sri Parvati Jadala Ramalingeswara Swami temple	2	7
4	Kondagattu, Jagitlal District	Sri Anjaneya Swami temple	2	4
5	Vemulawada, Siricilla District	Sri Raja Rajeswara Swami temple	6	15

Installation of one more plant at Cheruvugattu temple is kept pending by the temple authorities due to the renovation plan.

BASARA – GNANA SARASWATI JALA PRASADAM

Basara is a large village in Nirmal district of Telangana district on the banks of river Godavari. It has a population of about 5,865 persons from 1,362 families as per the 2011 census. It attracts a large number of devotees and visitors to the famous Gnana Saraswati Devi temple.

- ✚ Being one of the two famous temples in Indian sub-continent, the Gnana Saraswati temple in Basara is popular for *Aksharabhyasam* – initiating children into formal schooling. The temple is located on the banks of river Godavari in Telangana, at an elevation of 1900 feet. Devotees from across the country visit this temple throughout the year.
- ✚ As part of the *Jala Prasadam* project Divi's chose to set up water purifying units in this temple too, under its CSR initiative. Altogether 5 plants of 1000lph were installed about 10 months ago and since then all are fully functional. All the plants have chilling facility and minimum two SS drinking water sinks are provided at each plant. Additional sinks are placed in other different places also in the temple premises, supplying water from the plants.
- ✚ The 5 RO water purifying plants installed in and around the temple are located in the following areas: 1. Main ghat at river Godavari, 2. Near dormitory building (opposite to rooms' reservation office), 3. TTD choultry, 4. Aksharabhyasa Mandapam and 5. Prasadam counter. All plants have good utilization with its locations accessible to different sections ranging from visitors, temple staff, vendors, villagers, wage workers, auto and bus drivers, etc.
- ✚ Water from the plants located near dormitory and at TTD guest house are accessed by not only the guests staying in the guest houses and the temple visitors, but also the villagers and the agriculture / MG-NREGS workers. Wage workers going for work stop by and fill their water bottles. Villagers bring their water cans and carry water from here that is sufficient for their daily consumption, as observed by the study team.
- ✚ The TTD choultry has 100 rooms and is highly occupied guesthouse. Currently it is under renovation but the water plant is properly maintained and utilized by many including the construction workers because of its location that is accessible to all.
- ✚ Sheik Ayub, a resident of the village, shared that he come there every day to take water in two cans (about 35ltrs) that is sufficient for his 7 members family for drinking and cooking. He said *"many of my neighbours and friends also fetch water from these plants on a daily basis despite having an RO plant located in the village itself, because we get it for free of cost and the taste is better. Most of the families from poor economic background and lower middle class of the village have been taking water from one of these Divi's Jala Prasadam units. Earlier to the launch of these plants we used to drink Mission Bageeratha water supplied in the village. But since Divi's water plants installation we started taking water from the plant because this*

water is pure, tasty and healthy than the municipal water supplied in my village. We are very much thankful to Divi's for providing this facility and to temple authorities for allowing us to take water from the plants".

- ✚ Bojjanna, works supervisor of Devasthanam, informed that the water purifiers provided by Divi's are amazing and serve to minimum 5,000 people daily and it goes up to almost 20,000 to 25,000 people on week-ends and more than 50,000 to 1 lakh persons on festive days. He shared that the TTD guest house which has 100 rooms is under renovation and there are about 70 labour working in the site. All of them use water from the plant located at this guest house for drinking and cooking too. Agriculture labour going from the village to the fields in tractors stop at the plant situated at the dormitory and take water, he added.
- ✚ He says, *nobody expends so much on unknown persons but Divi's intervention is something that we get to see rarely. Their contribution to us, the poor sections of the society is invaluable. They may not know about us and what these water plants are doing to our families, but we are experiencing betterment in health and we are indebted to Divi's for this service. They deserve ovation and foot salutation...* he said with much respect and pious.
- ✚ It is observed at the plant located in the ghat that the auto drivers and the transport vehicles' drivers are also filling their water bottles here.
- ✚ The technician responsible for Vemulawada and Kondagattu temples is responsible for maintaining the plants at Basara too. However, given the distances the technician comes twice a week, as informed by the technician. There is another person from the temple getting trained on operating and maintaining issues but he was not available on the day of the study team's visit due to health issue. Hence, the technical assistant from Devasthanam accompanied the study team and has shown all the plants. It is an indication of ownership by the temple authorities on the intervention of Divi's.
- ✚ Unlike in other places, here the drinking water sinks are spread over the temple premises since the water plants are limited to two inside the temple and the premises is wide. Devotees had to walk long distances to access drinking water. Hence, made provision for drinking water by keeping water sinks in other places. There are about five such locations supplying drinking water in addition to the sinks set up adjacent to the plant.

- ✚ As per the Superintendent, the design of two sinks provided earlier was with fixed filter plates on the drain holes making it difficult to clean the waste material in the sinks. They used to get blocked frequently making the sinks dirty and unhygienic. It was brought to the notice of the Divi's staff and these were replaced immediately. The study team felt it was a great gesture of commitment towards offering effective and efficient service in the real sense of community service.
- ✚ The sanitation workers in the temple premises informed that they clean the place around RO units and wash the SS sinks on a daily basis. However, they admitted that the sinks are cleaned with scrub using cleaning powder twice a week. It is suggested to the staff to make sure that the sinks are properly cleaned at least every alternate day for *Swachhata* – healthy and hygienic practices.
- ✚ One of the women workers informed that water supply during summer is irregular and many times they face shortage of drinking water due to shortage of water. Continued water supply at *Jala Prasadam* units is the blessing to the villagers, especially the single elderly people and the poor families, it helps them to save money from spending on drinking water, she added.
- ✚ Devotees inside the temple premises opined that *'the drinking water facility provided here is unrivaled, the temple environment is peaceful and sanctifying, we feel like sitting here for long enjoying the divinity of the place, we obviously do not carry water inside the temple but after sometime or after having prasad we would need water to drink... at that time the water is readily available in our reach wherever we sit... Divi's contribution is much appreciated'*
- ✚ Another family shared blissfully that they have been visiting the temple for past 3 years and come almost every 6 months seeking blessings of the Goddess to their children to shine in their studies. They felt that the *Jala Prasadam* facility is an excellent service and the availability of purified drinking water has been extended in the premises serving to almost everyone visiting the temple.
- ✚ One of the mothers fetching water from the facility near Aksharabhyasam (₹150/-) mandapam told that the 'families come with small kids and sometimes they exhaust the water they carry and generally afraid of taking water from the taps provided outside. But after witnessing the Divi's plants they feel safe and good to have purified drinking water and do not hesitate to give it to kids too... Parents will be grateful to Divi's for their great service', she added.

✚ The EO of the Devasthanam and the main priest of the temple shared that water cans, filled from the RO plant, are being provided to the staff working in different counters or offices in the temple. These units are a blessing to the devotees and the staff too, as earlier it used to be difficult to provide safe drinking water to everyone, especially during summer and rainy seasons, despite having RO plant due to its limitation. But the plants provided by Divi's are optimally utilized and serving to not just the visitors, staff and the vendors around but also the villagers and general public in Basara village. *This might be an unintended impact but a very positive and a great impact in terms of giving back to community...* the study team felt.

BHADRACHALAM – BHADRADRI JALA PRASADAM

- ✚ The temple is located at about 50 meters elevation from the sea level on the banks of river Godavari.
- ✚ There are 6 RO plants installed in Bhadrachalam, including the one at Parnasaala, about 35 kilometers away from the main temple. The 5 plants in Bhadrachalam are located at (1) Soumitri Sadan, (2) Sri Rama Nilayam & Sri Sita Nilayam, (3) Near main road at the temple, (4) Annadana Satram, and (5) inside the main temple.
- ✚ All these plants are of 1000lph capacity with the TDS kept at 50-60ppm. Provision for chilling also provided in these plants but are operated only during summer season keeping the requirement of the people and the maintenance as well, as decided by the temple authorities.
- ✚ Bore water is used for purification in the RO plants other than the one in the main temple. The plant inside the temple complex is supplied with Godavari water pumped up to the hillock from the tank near the river.
- ✚ The two plants near guest houses where rooms are provided to the devotees are catering to about 250 rooms and the Devasthanam administrative building. These two plants cater to an average of eight hundred people every day in the general days and about 2,500 people on special days.
- ✚ The plant installed at the main road close to the main temple is the most used after the plant that is next to the queue complex, as observed. At the time of the team's visit about 50 persons accessed water from eight taps of the two SS water sinks, within half-an-hour time. It was Monday morning and hence the number was low, if it was a Saturday or Sunday, the number

of people availing water would rise to about 300 to 400 per hour, one of the shopkeepers near the plant shared.

- ✚ *Yachakas* (mendicants) sitting near the plant here soliciting alms were extremely impressed and pleased to have the supply of pure water 24/7 for 365 days. One of them shared that he has been there for past 10 years, *‘witnessed many changes around the place but this is the best development which resulted in satisfying the thirst of the devotees, especially during summer days with cool water. Everyone taking water from the taps invariably feel the bliss and bless the provider (the Divi’s) openly and loudly... GOD BLESS YOU! LONG LIVE YOU!!’*
- ✚ Earlier there used to be one tap in the tiny park over there and could not meet the demand. There used to be much rush, sometimes leading to petty fights, when the crowd was heavy. Moreover, there used to be plastic bottles and empty water packets everywhere around that place leaving it shabby, the vendors around informed.
- ✚ A middle-aged woman vendor selling butter milk opined that the buyers are confident that the purified water is used in the butter milk as she takes water from the RO plant and prepare butter milk there and then itself. She shared with great contentment that her sales increased and the cool water is making it more attractive to the buyers. And, she now lives in pride with her own earnings, without depending on the negligent son’s family.
- ✚ Other traditional vendors of lemon soda, colour soda and fruit juice are also using water from Jala Prasadam units. Since the water is purified pilgrims are not hesitating to buy from these vendors, with a strong belief that it is free from contamination and their health will not get affected.
- ✚ Almost everyone in Bhadrachalam expressed that with the installation of RO plants there is a significant decrease in plastic bottles and water packets waste. The surroundings are looking much better than earlier, they felt.
- ✚ Since water tastes good, pure and cool, almost all the devotees and visitors are taking water from Divi’s RO plants. Especially near the guest houses and inside the temple, as observed, without any class distinction. They fill their containers and carry for their travel consumption.
- ✚ Godavari water is being pumped up to the temple and the same is supplied to the plant. The candles are changed every 15 days on an average, based on the usage of the drinking water.

Almost all the plants run 24/7 except the one inside the temple premises since the temple is closed from 9pm to 4.30am.

- ✚ The SS water sinks arranged in the queue lines are optimally utilised by the devotees standing in the long queue lines waiting for darshan. It reaches the peak in summer with heavy flow of devotees and the demand for cool water becomes high. Thus, the provision of chiller and RO plant by Divi's is best used opportunity to supply safe and cool drinking water to the devotees without interruption, claimed the AE. Sametime, the load on the water purifier intensifies due to continuous filtration and water filters had to be changed more frequently, he stated.
- ✚ Availability of cool water in the queue complex is an added advantage to the pilgrims but load on the purifier. That time candles are changed frequently as the water also contains tiny sand particles in addition to continuous load of purification, the Assistant Engineer informed.
- ✚ Street vendors, small shop keepers, puja material sellers in all the places merrily shared that they are now free from carrying water from home and especially during summer they used to struggle to keep their water bottles cool by wrapping it with thick wet cloth. They profoundly thanked Divi's for providing purified water for everyone – the workers in the temple, devotees, vendors and general public also.
- ✚ Families living close to the guest houses are also taking water in cans from the nearby plants. They shared that there is lot of difference in the taste of the water from Divi's RO plants to that of the RO water bubbles they used to buy. Therefore, they prefer to and got used to drink RO water from Divi's plants.
- ✚ The plant at dining hall is another highly used plant. In addition to the water sink kept outside the Annadana Satram, the temple authorities made a connection to the drinking water taps inside the dining hall so that the devotees having *anna prasadam* can be served with *jala prasadam* also. However, only one sink with four taps could be provided outside due to space problem. It is causing pushing and petty fights as a large number of people try to use it.
- ✚ Maintenance of sinks and the place around the sinks is a concern. There is water stagnation with treated water flowing out from the plant just behind the enclosure at Sri Rama Nilayam guest house. It is full of mosquitoes and frogs are also inhabiting here. Digging a soakage /

water harvesting pit and connecting the overflowing water to the drainage would solve the problem. Temple management should be alerted to this affect.

- ✚ In the main temple the height of the inlet water tank at the RO plant is not suiting to the height of the purifier causing issues in the water supply to the purifier. This need to be urgently addressed to make the plant work efficiently.
- ✚ Rajesh, a longtime vendor of puja material inside the main temple complex, suggested keeping one more sink of four taps at Laddu counter extending the water supply from the plant in the temple. He claims that all the devotees, after darshan, buy *prasadam* at these counters and eat sitting in the open place there. There is no provision for drinking water and if one sink is provided there, it will serve to many, he appealed.
- ✚ The executive engineer of the Devasthanam expressed his gratitude to Divi's saying that *Jala Prasadam* is the best utilized service and it goes a long way. He shared that they got appreciation from many VIP visitors to Bhadradri for having the RO plants installed in multiple important places.

CHERUVUGATTU – RAMALINGESWARA JALA PRASADAM

- ✚ Sri Parvati Jadala Ramalingeswara Swamy temple is located at about 311 meters above the sea level on a small hill in Narkatpally mandal of Nalgonda district. The deity is believed to be erected by sage Parasurama and devotees believe that all their problems will get solved if they sleep inside or outside the temple for a night, especially on the new moon day.
- ✚ As per the temple authorities, workers, general public and the vendors, every new moon day (Amavasya) almost about a lakh people visit the temple. Not only the families from distant places but also from nearby places come in the morning, stay overnight and leave on the next day. Around 1,000 devotees visit the temple on any Sunday and Monday. On the remaining days there will be less visitors.
- ✚ Two RO units were installed in Cheruvugattu 8 months ago, one at the Parvathi devi temple located at the foot of the hill and the other at the guest house complex close to the main temple on the hillock next to the road where sheds are constructed for the devotees to halt for the night.

- ✚ Both the units are 1000lph capacity having chilling facility, attached to 2000liter capacity UPVC tanks. They are provided with two sinks at each of these two places having 8 taps per site. These units are supervised by the technician deployed by Divi's while the electrician and supervisor deployed by the temple accompany him to learn so that they can attend to the emergency needs, if required take care of the units in future. It was a good sign towards taking over for sustainability of the intervention.
- ✚ The water supplied to the units is the Krishna River water from Sagar project which has 280 TDS. The technician here sets the meter to lower the TDS to 40ppm. There is no similarity followed in setting the TDS at all the plants, as observed by the study team across the temples.
- ✚ In Cheruvugattu near the Parvati Devi temple there is a big sump constructed by the temple authorities long back to store the water. It is of one lakh liter capacity and the water is supplied to different points from this sump. The *Jala Prasadam* unit here is also gets water from the sump through motor. A concern is the frequency at which this sump is cleaned.
- ✚ Cleaning of drinking water sinks at the purifying plants and inside the enclosure also needs focus. According to the technician, though the cleaning staff attend to the works, there is always room for improvement. There should be a systematic schedule or regulation, he felt.
- ✚ One woman sanitation worker shared her views – *“I have seen the worst in my 14 years’ experience here. When there was shortage of water supply in the temple, the poor devotees and their families had to struggle for water. Most of the devotees climb steps to the temple... by the time they reach the temple they would be tired and thirsty. Sometimes, they would faint with dehydration. All that is over now with the continuous supply of pure water through the two RO plants provided by Divi’s, down the hill and on the hill top. It is an incredible service... we are thankful to Divi’s...”*
- ✚ A regular visitor to the temple informed that earlier they used to bring their own water bottles but for the past 6, 7 months they stopped carrying bottles and accessing *Jala Prasadam* facility. He added with much delight, “it is a boon to the pilgrims, this area is known for hard water with high fluoride content, we were scared to drink water from the taps provided by the temple, we were not aware of the source of water, but now the *Jala Prasadam* plants are providing purified water, we drink from there without any hesitation”. He appealed to consider setting up one or two water sinks making provision for drinking water in the steps route as many

devotees climb the hill using steps and feels thirsty after climbing half the way, carrying water bottles makes it difficult to walk. Providing water on the steps route would help the pedestrians greatly in overcoming the danger of dehydration, especially during summer, he opined.

- ✚ One more unit was sanctioned and planned to install near Gundam but kept pending due to the plans for renovation of the place as shared by the Senior Assistant from the temple administration. The study team observed that there is a good facility for purified water at Gundam which is sufficient to the visiting devotees. It is also catering to the devotees visiting Laddu counter through an additional SS water sink set up to supply the water. Hence, suggested identifying a more strategic place to establish the RO plant so that it can be optimally utilized.
- ✚ **Suggestion:** There is *Paakasala* (kitchen) attached with dining hall where about 200 members are provided with *Anna Prasadam* every day. There is no proper drinking water facility there. Providing two small RO water stations of 100lph at *Paakasala* would cater to the needs of the *Paakasala* as well as the *Annadana Satram*. It can also provide purified water to the families of the priests living next to the *Paakasala*.

KONDAGATTU – ANJANNA JALA PRASADAM

- ✚ Anjaneya Swamy temple at Kondagattu is located on a hill lock in Jagitial district, Telangana. Almost all the devotees visiting the temple at Vemulawada also visits this temple, thus making the number of daily visitors to around 500 and about 1500 to 2000 on Sunday to Tuesday.
- ✚ Divi's installed 2 RO water purifying plants, known as *Anjanna Jala Prasadam*, in this location. One is established in the parking area at the bottom of the hillock, before entering the temple premises. The second plant is set up near Koneru, close to the main temple, little above the level of the main entrance of the temple.
- ✚ Both the units are of 1000lph capacity with chiller facility. Mission Bhagiratha water is supplied to both the units. Generally, this water is filtered before supply but the pipelines run for long distances and often there are pipeline damages occurring due to pressure or some other reason causing contamination of water, thus containing fine sand particles in the water, the technician shared. This is putting burden on the filters and had to be changed more frequently, he added.

- ✚ As per the Devasthanam electrician, both the units run continuously from 9 in the morning till late in the evenings. On festive days and other auspicious days when the crowd increases the filters are switched on much earlier to cater to the devotees needs.
- ✚ Devotees who stay overnight or come early in the morning to spend the whole day would use this water for cooking also. During such days the usage shoots up to around 10,000 liters in a day. During summer general public from nearby places or travelers passing through also take water from the RO plant located down the hillock.
- ✚ A few devotees suggested extending the supply till the *prasadam* counter inside the temple compound so that the devotees can drink water after eating *prasadam*. One of them also mentioned that if pure drinking water is available there, visitors would not carry water bottles thus reducing the plastic waste in the temple premises.
- ✚ Up to 10 families of the priests reside there but they are using municipal water only for all the purposes including drinking water. Some of them have their own homebased filters to protect themselves from waterborne diseases but a few others don't have it. One of the main *Poojaries* appealed for providing a small unit for these families or laying a pipeline and supply drinking water from the purifier to their quarters. He recommended one or two tap connections at the residential area would be sufficient for all the 10 families living there.
- ✚ The technician visits the site twice a week and on the remaining days the Devasthanam electrician takes care of the operation and the maintenance of the plants.
- ✚ Both, Technician and Electrician felt that cleaning and maintenance has been an issue despite the sweepers clean the sinks twice a day because the visitors are throwing chillies, curry leaves and leftover rice grains in the sink while they wash their plates and tiffin boxes after eating food. It is difficult to control them from doing this as the staff cannot stay there throughout the day and the visitors don't care for keeping it clean though they take drinking water from the same sinks, they complained.
- ✚ The AEO shared that the RO plant set up by the temple in the administrative building caters to the office and the students of *Samskruta Paathasala* only. But the water purifying units installed by Divi's are strategically located to serve the devotees and are fulfilling the purpose. They are very much useful and the visitors are extremely happy for the tasty and pure water

they are getting now, he added. Also, requested for a smaller unit at Poojari's houses while seeking support to provide one more facility to meet the needs of the devotees, especially when the crowd bulges during weekends and the auspicious days.

VEMULAWADA – RAJANNA JALA PRASADAM

- ✚ Raja Rajeswara Swamy temple located in Vemulawada is one of the most popular ancient temples in Telangana. Along with the main shrine there are many *upalayas* of other deities including Ananta Padmanabha swamy and Sita, Rama accompanied by Lakshmana and Hanuman, thereby giving it another name – Hari Hara Kshetram. This temple is visited by devotees not only from across the state but also a large number from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and all over the country.
- ✚ The pond located in this temple, known as Dharma Gundam, is believed to be of holy water and have medicinal properties. Hence, devotees bathe in this Gundam before proceeding to Darshan of the deity.
- ✚ As per the Executive Engineer of the Devasthanam, around 20 thousand people visit the temple every day and the number go up to more than a lakh on festive days and even more during Sivaratri time. Providing safe drinking water to these many devotees was an uphill task earlier but with Divi's intervention officials are relaxed since everybody gets purified water to drink.
- ✚ The RO water plants installed here by Divi's are known as '*Rajanna Jala Prasadam*' going by the name of the deity in the temple. There are five plants installed in different places of the temple. Out of five, one is located inside the temple complex next to EO office, one is at Kalabhavan, one is installed in the parking area and two in Nandeewara guest houses. There are chillers enclosed to 3 of these plants. Temple authorities requested to provide chillers at the remaining two plants too.
- ✚ The unit located next to the EO office is the highly used plant that runs continuously for 24/7. There are four SS drinking water sinks with four taps per sink are located in the queue complex connected to this plant, making provision for water to the devotees waiting for Darshan.
- ✚ The EO informed that water cans are filled with purified water from the filters and are arranged for *Poojaris*, inside the main temple (Garbhagudi), other temples (Upalayas) in the complex,

and wherever the priests are placed. Similarly, water cans are provided to the staff working in different counters, viz., ticket counter, laddu counter, etc.

- ✚ Here all the water purifying plants are connected to bore water. The filters are changed for every 15 days and the plant located in the temple complex might require change of candles more frequently depending on the usage. Technician checks all the plants every alternative day and does the required maintenance.
- ✚ The Devasthanam AE informed that prior to Divi's setting up the water purifying plants, they used to supply drinking water through taps fixed to the walls with cement sinks and they used to be unhygienic despite the efforts to clean and maintain regularly. But with the elegant enclosures, purification machinery and SS drinking water sinks the look has completely changed and the devotees feel safe to drink water from these sites. Temple management received much appreciation for receiving support from Divi's for setting up these expensive water purifying plants, he added.
- ✚ The EO of Devasthanam informed that the *Jala Prasadam* water is used for preparation of Laddu prasadam, and observed a change in the taste of Laddu prasadam. Purified water is also being supplied to the devotees taking Anna Prasadam at Annadana Satram, he added.
- ✚ There are many small vendors and shops around the temple complex selling pooja material like coconuts, flowers, idols, fruits, etc. They all depend on *Jala Prasadam* units for drinking water hence widely used by the shop keepers, their families, buyers, cab/auto drivers and also the visitors, the EO informed the study team.
- ✚ The technician informed that cleaning inside the enclosures is an issue in addition to cleaning the sinks frequently, as the temple staff are not keen in this matter. He says that the unit located next to EO's office is maintained properly but the other units are neglected, especially the one in the parking area and the two located in the guesthouse complexes in Basaveswara.
- ✚ The study team observed that the unit located in the parking area is used largely for cooking purpose in addition to drinking. People are taking water in bubbles / water cans but it is also observed that here they are using the sinks for hand wash and cleaning of plates, spoons and tiffin boxes after eating food and the leftover food particles, many times curry leaves, tomato peel and chillies blocking the sink holes obstructing the water from draining out.

- ✚ Anjaneyulu, who is working as electrician in the temple for the past 18 years opines that this is the best facility for the devotees visiting the temple, as many a times they have to wait hours together in the queue lines for Darshan and during summer it will be very difficult for them. *Making arrangement for chilled drinking water in the queue lines resolved the problem and received huge appreciation. All credit goes to Divi's*, he shared with much glee.
- ✚ The EO and the AE of Devasthanam were pleased to share the positive impact of *Jala Prasadam* intervention with much appreciation and delight saying that the usefulness or utility is not just 100% but it is 500%, which the study team feels is not an exaggeration at all, but a fact...

SUGGESTIONS

- ✚ The temple authorities are very much satisfied with the facility and the service of the technicians currently operating the plants and attending the maintenance of the machines. Divi's has been providing free maintenance of the purifiers since its installation about 10 months ago. The Devasthanam officials at all the study sites (the 5 temples) expressed their gratitude for the intervention and all the support extended by Divi's and ensured that the maintenance responsibility will be taken by them in future.
- ✚ The officials informed that Divi's technicians are training the designated staff member for future maintenance. They have engaged services of one Devasthanam staff to learn and takeover the maintenance responsibility in future with the suggestion by Divi's. But they need more technical inputs since their experience and background vary greatly in most of the places. Hence, the study team recommends a quick short training to these staff of the respective temples on the technical aspects of the purifiers for efficient maintenance of the plants for sustainable longer years.
- ✚ It is observed that the technicians in different places are setting different levels of TDS in the purifying units. Based on the existing TDS levels in the water supplied to the units they have to set the levels but it is observed that there is no uniformity in the measures followed by the technicians. It is better to set standard measures to be followed by everyone at every place.
- ✚ The push button taps provided in the SS drinking water sinks are very comfortable to use even by the children. This system minimizes water wastage unlike the traditional model taps which

are sometimes left open by the users after filling their water containers leading to water running off waste. Nevertheless, the study team observed that in almost all the temple sites in one or more places these taps are broken and the team was told that this type of taps is new to many people coming from rural areas and they try to operate using heavy pressure causing breaking of tap heads. In such cases the broken taps were replaced with plastic old style tap heads which are not durable. Temple authorities should be made responsible to use a particular type of tap heads when required replacement to make the appearance clean, neat and symmetrical.

- ✚ In almost all these temples, devotees from faraway places come in groups to stay for more than a day but generally prefer to stay in the dormitories or open place or temple choultries. They cook their food, take bath in the public toilets or in open area and rely on Divi's RO plants for water for all purposes. One family who come to Vemulawada for two days on a regular basis expressed that earlier it used to be tough to get good water to drink, they always carried two bubbles of 20 liters water cans for their usage. But now they are rid of that burden and says that they guide the other devotees to keep the surroundings clean explaining how they used to struggle for water earlier. *One of the members suggested keeping a voice record with messages of keeping the place clean, use the water only to drinking purpose, don't clean plates and boxes in the sinks, etc and play it continuously, which the study team felt as a good idea and it applies to all the intervention temples.*
- ✚ People are washing their tiffin boxes and plates after they eat the food and the food waste is thrown in the sinks resulting in blockades. Though we strongly object washing plates and tiffin boxes in these drinking water sinks, keeping in mind the profile of the visitors and also remembering that there is no system of controlling it, it is suggested to keep two medium size dustbins on either side of the sinks. This might help the devotees to drop the food waste before they wash their boxes, so as to avoid water blockades and using the purified water to clean all that trash again.
- ✚ Cleaning of sinks should be taken up on a daily basis and in the locations where floating is high it might require more than one time cleaning. Unless it is made part of the routine work of the sanitation workers of the temple and guest houses, it is seen as Divi's plant and the workers are not serious about cleaning these places. They are not caring technicians as they

are the employees of the temple and technicians are coming from outside. If the sanitation supervisor is made responsible for maintenance of the sinks and the plants, it may work.

- ✚ In the locations where the water sinks are kept adjacent to the UPVC shed, the edge of the roof is just ending on the sink. In rainy season or even in winter when there is mist, water drops fall in the glasses / containers while filling water from the taps. Therefore, extending the roof by one foot or two will cover the sink in entirety and will help the devotees to fill water without any contamination.
- ✚ In almost half of the places the sheds are constructed under the trees or there are trees around the sheds. This is again causing blockades in the sinks because the dry leaves, flowers and other plant waste is falling in the sink. This will also get resolved if the shed design is changed a bit with extension of roof in the front side of the shed to cover the water sinks.
- ✚ Technicians are regularly visiting the units, checking the TDS, cleaning the filters and chemical mixtures, changing the candles, ensuring proper functioning of the machines and training the technician of the Devasthanam. They play key role in this divine intervention and are the main link between Divi's and the temple authorities. However, the study team felt that they need to be little more committed and proactive to bring the challenges and issues to the notice of the temple authorities for proper maintenance and sustainability of the intervention.
- ✚ Ensuring proper connection to drainage system of waste water is important to avoid stagnation of water leading to mosquitos and worms to breed. Provision of soakage pit or percolation tank or water harvesting system channeling the used water into it would also help in improving the ground water level near the location. Recycling the back wash water for gardening and other cleaning purposes would help in optimal utilization of the resources and water conservation. This may be made a compulsory duty of the temple authorities when Divi's enter into understanding for establishing water purifiers in any temple, in future.

CONCLUSIONS

Jala Prasadam – purified drinking water plants in the temples has been a unique model of Divi's though there were efforts earlier to provide RO water in the temples by different sources. The sophisticated machinery and the attractive enclosures, the SS drinking water sinks with comfortable push button taps and the taste of the water are much appreciated by the devotees,

general public and the temple authorities alike. Everyone with whom the study team interacted opined that donating water (*jala daanam*) is equal to saving life (*prana danam*) and is an action of sanctity, and blessed Divi's for this unparalleled intervention.

On an average, about one lakh people use the *Jala Prasadam* facility every day. It gets double on weekends and further bulges on auspicious and festive days, sometimes reaching to four to five lakh people. This is an extraordinary intervention which requires proper maintenance, viz., ensuring continuous water supply source, changing candles, ensuring required TDS and timely cleaning of equipment to warrant safe and pure drinking water. Attaching an exclusive technician to operate and maintain the plants shows the commitment to the cause and not just leaving it as a physical facility. Sametime, ensuring involvement of temple authorities at all levels is evidence of nurturing a sense of shared responsibility to ensure the sustenance of the effort and the precious resource.

After observing the sites and studying the impact, the study team felt that it is not just another intervention of Divi's under its CSR division but is a much thoughtful action, compassionately designed and provided with a divinity. Nevertheless, the team is of the opinion that the respective Devasthanams authorities have a much greater responsibility in maintaining cleanliness and hygiene of the water sinks and the surroundings. Authorities may be pursued to arrange dustbins next to or close to the drinking water sinks to minimize throwing the leftovers of food in the sinks which is the main reason for blockages. To reduce this further, continued announcement to use the facility only for drinking purpose might help as suggested by a concerned devotee. Making cleaning of the sinks as part of the sanitation staff's job responsibility would contribute to mainstream the activity and owning up the action by the staff. It will in turn contribute to optimum utilization of the facility with long term sustainability.

One instance to quote here as evidence for the popularity and success of the intervention is – when the study team was interacting with visitors and vendors in one of the temples a Marathi family came to the team and shared that they have seen Divi's purifying units and utilized with much pleasure in two temples, and pleaded to provide such facilities in other major temples too, especially those temples located on hillocks / hills where drinking water facility is not adequate. This is an outcome of the true sense of commitment of Divi's towards giving back to the community with a vision.

PHOTO GALLERY



Pic 1 – Pilgrims & Local people taking water from Jala Prasadam unit at Bhadrachalam



Pic 2 – Interaction with Buttermilk vendor



Pic 3 – Fruit Juice vendor taking water



Pic 4 - A devotee from Kadapa filling water containers to use in their return travel



Pic 5 - Rush for water at the main temple in Vemulawada



Pic 6 & 7 - SS water sinks in the queue complex in Bhadrachalam



Pic 8 – Jala Prasadam unit near guest houses



Pic 9 & 10 – Rajanna Jala Prasadam units in different locations in Vemulawada



Pic 11 – Interaction with EO & AE, Vemulawada



Pic 12 & 13 – Sri Anjanna Jala Prasadam units in Kondagattu



Pics 14 & 15 – Additional water sinks and fridge at Gnana Saraswati temple, Basara



Pic 16 – Interaction with fruit and flower vendors



Pic 17 & 18 – Maintenance work at Basara and Cheruvugattu temple units



Pic 19 – Jala Prasadam at TTD choultry, Basara



Pic 20, 21, 22, 23 – Water accessed by pilgrims at different locations



Pic 24 – Interaction with sanitation workers at Cheruvugattu



Pic 25 – Inside view of the RO plant



Pic 26 - Jala Prasadam unit at Devasthanam guest houses in Bhadrachalam

PURE WATER Is The World's First And Foremost Medicine
- A Slovakian Proverb

#####