

WELFARE INITIATIVES

Along with making Konkan Railway a profit making organisation, the Welfare of Konkan Railway employees and their family members was always my priority.

INTER-REGIONAL BOYS SPORTS CUM PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT CAMPS:

The Need: Children's growth and development remains very high in the minds of parents. The same was with KRCL employees. The 80% of KRCL employees are from local villages. As the job was given to the land loser (Who had given land for the construction of Konkan Railway) in lieu of his land. The jobs were given as per their qualifications and ability. This was my learning while interacting with the employees of KRCL. It was decided to have camps for Boys and Girls separately, as sports cum personality development camps. In these camps parents were not allowed.

Objective: Objective was to develop sportsman ship among children and development of leadership qualities. For the first time annual sports and camp for children was planned in the year 2010. These three days along with various Sports event which I feel is best exercise for a healthy mind, children also mingled with each other from different regions, made new friends. Sports event like cricket, football, running race, long jump, badminton, etc., were held. They were taken for picnic and crash course on personality development, expert talk etc used to be planned. This Sports camp instilled confidence and spirit of team work. Every year the new venue was selected – Karwar, Ratnagiri, Goa and Navi Mumbai.

Result: The camps were well received by the children as well as parents.

INTER-REGIONAL GIRLS SPORTS AND CAMP - 2011.

After conducting Boys Sports and Camp we got an overwhelming response (demand) from our girl children for conducting sports. Hence we began our New year of 2011 with KR's Welfare activity by conducting Inter-Regional Girls Sports and Camp. Girls' sports was conducted not only to get exercise and fun but for the following reasons that I believed:

- Girls who play sports do better in school.
- Girls who play sports learn teamwork and goal-setting skills.
- Playing sports boosts self-confidence.
- Exercise cuts the pressure.

They learned team spirit, gained confidence and enjoyed thoroughly. The tour / picnic on the last day was full of fun and joy. They couldn't stop thanking us and requested to continue the initiative of organising the sports and camp every

year. Sports like skipping, slow cycling, shotput, discus throw, long-jump, table tennis, handball, kho-kho, kabbadi, badminton etc were held.

Thus a new tradition of Boys and Girls sports started on KR, which continued till my retirement. I hear even today children request for conducting Sports Camp. That's the heavenly satisfaction I had, looking at the Happy faces of these children.

OFFICERS SPORTS: For the first time in the year 2010 Konkan Railway Officers Sports was conducted and continued to be held annually. The aim of introducing Sports was to have better understanding among Officers of different departments as well as of different regions. Sports also acted as stressbusters from their Office routine.

In this Sports, Officers from Ratnagiri, Karwar and Belapur participated along with their family members in various sports events like Athletics, badminton, carom, chess, table tennis, lawn tennis slow cycling, volley ball, throw ball, etc. The first Sports Meet was inaugurated by ex-MD / KRCL Dr. K K Gokhale. The trophy was named as "Dr K K Gokhale Trophy".

The Sports Meet arrangement was appreciated by all the Officers.

STAFF SPORTS: Also, at the same time Annual Staff Sports were conducted at Ratnagiri and Madgaon. Staff were encouraged to participate in Inter-Railway Sports. Volleyball team was formed, who participated in the Inter-Railway Sports. Football team of KR was also encouraged to participate in Football Tournament organised by Mid-Day Newspaper in Mumbai.

A demo was arranged for promoting Ball Badminton in the colony. National team was called for this. It was felt the sport is good, less expensive and can be adopted by our staff. I was eyeing the participation of Konkan Railway team in Ball Badminton in Indian Railway sports.

JUDO KARATE TRAINING: During my visits to various stations and interaction with staff I came to know that many children of our staff are doing well in Judo and Karate. These children were encouraged for training and participating in District and State level competitions. These children were encouraged by reimbursing half the training fees for boys and full reimbursement for girls. Within a short time, dozens of children were bringing many awards and cups at District and State levels.

GURUKUL-THE KNOWLEDGE HUB: Gurukul was inaugurated as a centre for imparting computer literacy and other trainings alongwith library facility to the employees and specially to their family members. The unprecedented growth of IT and Mobile phones the cyber-crime was also increased manifold The young people were trapped by Face Book and other social media. There were stories of how young people are becoming target victim of gangs through social media. There was an incident happened in Navi Mumbai of kidnaping and murder of a student of a rich family. I decided to do something for the children of KR Family. The special talk was organised by the cyber-crime team for the children and their parents. It was noticed the parents are not able to control or keep a watch over the activities of their children. So we decided to have computer courses for the housewives of KRCL families, idea was to make them computer and IT literate so they can talk to their children and keep a watch.

English speaking courses were organised for the spouses of employees who were housewives.

The policy was made that all old released computers were utilized for imparting training to staff and staff members.

The aim was to have 100% computer literacy in KRCL staff as well as among their family members. Even the vehicle drivers were given training in computers English speaking and personality development. Gurukul became a centre of activities for children. We created a library & provided computers. Hub was the place for colony children to come and study in a comfortable and undisturbed place of their own.

COMPUTER TRAINING: Computer training to staff and family members was taken on a mission mode. I wanted to achieve 100% computer literacy of all KRCL staff. The computer training was given in Corporate Office, Ratnagiri, Goa and Karwar regions. All released computers were used for this purpose. The training was given by our IT staff.

GYAN SAGAR: An e-Learning Portal and Learning Management System has been implemented in October'2014, which is used by Konkan Rail Academy (KRA) to enhance and support classroom teaching and offering courses to KRCL staff. Provision of on-line learning for employees, on-line assessment, management of training courses and training resource management are its all-important dimensions. The portal was provided in the Lobby of Running Staff i.e. loco pilots and guards. The system was to challenge the knowledge of Running staff. Through the system we were able to upgrade the knowledge of staff. The system was such that Questions for Quiz were selected by the computer at random from

the pool of the questions. The Quiz had the stages like I, II, III and so on. The most of the system was developed in-house by IT staff.

VEHICLE DRIVERS TRAINING: Vehicle drivers were found to be wasting lot of time after their morning duties. It was decided to upgrade their knowledge in general English and Computers. Teachers were our staff and officers. It was well taken by them. The most satisfying remark was that in front of their children they are more confident and when they visit the school of their children they don't feel awkward and ashamed. Earlier drivers were passing time by playing cards.

SANKALP: It was my favourite mission area. We started a school coaching classes for Konkan Railway children studying in 6th plus. The evening coaching classes were conducted. Even outsiders were allowed to join. We could draw teachers from our staff and officers. The idea was to be able to provide quality coaching for engineering and medical aspirants. The institutes like Akash, Mahesh Tutorials were charging more than two lakhs. The high fees was a sure burden for KR staff. We could run it for 2 years. I had little support from my senior officers rightly so as they were now not in the competition age for admission of their children. I feel sad, as the good initiative was killed right after my retirement. I was also teaching Science - Physics, Chemistry Biology for 9th and 10th classes.

TALENT HUNT: It was noticed that many Group D staff were well qualified. Many of them had acquired Diploma and Degree while in service. They were considered having potential for accelerated promotion. These candidates were given training with a view to upgrade their knowledge and capability to clear the departmental exam. Many could clear the exam and joined Group C, which is considered a big milestone of success.

KONKAN STAFF QUARTERS LIFT: Konkan Rail Vihar colony at Nerul, staff quarters are four story buildings on stilt. There were many requests from staff staying on higher floors in these buildings to get allotted flats on lower floors. Most of the time the reason being old parents staying with staff. To mitigate this problem, we got the lift installed in one block. It was appreciated by all residents. The plan was to provide lift in all the blocks.

PHILATELLE EXHIBITION: A Philatelic Workshop and competition was organized on 24.04.2010 at KRV/Nerul. Officials from Mumbai GPO, Philatelic Bureau were invited to conduct this workshop. The aim of this workshop was to guide KR employees and their children in nurturing the hobby of Stamp collection. The workshop had received an overwhelming response wherein some media people

were also present. There was a display of stamp/coin collection by Konkan Railway employees and the collection was judged by the members of Philatelic Bureau and awarded suitably. A stall of philatelic stationery items, T-shirts, key chains, etc was put for sale.

Many exhibitors exchanged stamps and coins.

PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION AND COMPETITION

I always thought and knew I had employees who had great talent apart from their routine office work. Hence decided to conduct Exhibition / Competitions as part of Republic Day & Independence Day Celebration. Cartoon making, Poem, Origami Craft Work, Pot Painting, Calligraphy and Photography were some of the competitions held. We got an overwhelming response. I am proud that in this competitions not only children but Employees right from SAG officers to staff participated with full zeal.

We had invited seniors to participate in the event who had worked on Konkan Railway during construction period and share their collection of photos etc. Some of the rare photographs were on display during the exhibition.

WORKSHOP ON SOLAR SYSTEM: A Workshop on Solar System was organised for the children of KR family members at Navi Mumbai on 17.12.2012 wherein Officials from Nehru Planetarium, Mumbai had made a PPT & DVD on Solar System followed by Q&A and viewing of Moon & Jupiter through telescope. Though the workshop was for children but many adults also enjoyed the amazing experience of star gazing and viewing the Moon & Jupiter through the Telescope.

CYCLE EXPEDITIONS SOCIAL MESSAGES: Some of my staff were very enthusiastic for cycling and going on expeditions. They were fully encouraged in their endeavour. They were carrying topical social message every time. We used to support them fully and used to monitor their day to day movements and used to arrange assistance whenever needed. Every time a new social message was chosen. The issues like Girl Child, Water conservation, Environment etc were taken up.

DIFFERENTLY ABLED CHILDREN: A Camp was organised at Mumbai of all the parents having different abled children. It was a unexpected of numbers, when about 50 families attended the camp. Experts were called including Psychiatrists, Doctors and counsellors. There was general lectures and individual sessions of parents, children with experts. Staff were identified who were posted at small stations and having no facilities for Differently abled children.

Such staff was shifted to towns having such facilities. Many staff was transferred to Mumbai.

SPECIAL CARE FOR CHRONIC ALCOHOLIC: To keep track of staff who are chronic alcoholic and to monitor their performance, measures were taken including counselling so that they can give up the habit, thereby living a better life and being able to provide their families their best support.

The list was kept confidential.

COUNSELLING OF STAFF: During my formal and informal interaction with staff, I noticed many of them were stressed and lack emotional intelligence. They were finding difficulty in maintaining work life balance in their lives. I decided to have counselling at doorsteps. We appointed Counsellor who was visiting our office thrice a week. It helped working relations among staff, staff and officers besides their relations at home. Now the staff was better equipped to handle their emotions and relationships. The issues and discussions were kept confined to Doctor and Staff. The Counsellor was meeting me once a week and was to tell me the irritants if any which need to be addressed by the administration.

STRESS MANAGEMENT SEMINAR: Students face number of stressors both at school and in the society, Adolescence is the worst possible time for student to be pressurised into activities like academics, which can be boring but they are important. Exam time is the most tough time students face. I believe that Parents play a vital role in providing their children a stress-free atmosphere. To cope with this stress during examination time and to excel in studies, a Seminar /Counselling on Stress Management used to be conducted every year for children above class 8th along with their parents. This Seminar used to get a great response wherein both concerned parents and children made use of the expert tips on stress management and study skills.

Similarly, 'Stress Management' Seminar for Officers was also conducted by Dr S Srinivasan life coach expert at Mumbai, Ratnagiri and Madgaon.

CHILDREN 'IQ' MAPPING

Chaitanya – An Innovative Project

To give the best possible care to KR family children and to facilitate them to realize their true potential and to improve future prospects and life of the children, distinctive programmes and projects were undertaken to pave way for a paradigm shift in the health care of children.

One such project was – "PROJECT CHAITANYA" where the cognitive (intellectual), conative (behavioural) and affective (emotional) development of

the children from 0-10 years in Konkan Railway was assessed and performance enhancement taken. The project involved active participation of parents. Accordingly, renowned Psychiatrists & Psychologists from Indian Academy of Paediatrics, and SNDT University and from other NGO agencies like Young Buzz was roped in. The project was conducted in two phases initially.

Phase I:

The Phase-I divided into three sessions:

Session 1: The aim of this session was to sensitize parents about the developmental milestones of children between ages 0–10 years. This session focused on age specific physical, behavioural, cognitive and emotional development of the child.

Session 2: The second session was on understanding parental needs. The aim was to understand the developmental issues the participants in the session faced as parents.

Session 3: This phase focused on assessment. The participants fill out three types of questionnaires. The first questionnaire assessed the levels of stress faced by the parents, Second, questionnaire assessed the attitude the parents have towards their children and Third questionnaire was a checklist of symptoms that will help identify developmental (behavioural, cognitive, emotional, learning concerns in children.

Phase II:

This Phase of the project focused on the assessment of cognitive (intellectual), conative development of the children with the input of the parents as and when necessary in the comprehensive cognitive (intellectual), conative (behavioural) and affective (emotional) assessment of the child.

LADIES ROOM & DRIVERS ROOM

During the year 2011, Ladies Room and Drivers room were built with basic amenities like table and chairs and a carrom board. To upgrade the knowledge of computers, a computer was also provided in the Drivers room.

PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN

In the present-day scenario where we prefer nothing less than the best, it has become mandatory for a child to cope up with the expectations of the parents and the teachers. In this endeavour he/she may lose confidence with a slight patch of failure. So, to keep up the child's confidence and help him/her be ready to accept the challenges of life, you need to make the right move.

'Personality Development' Program was conducted for Kids of Konkan Railway family (age group of 08 – 12 yrs., & 13 – 18 yrs.) in the Executive Club, KRV/Nerul to Enhance Life Skills - Life Skills such as Emotional Intelligence, Communications, Etiquette, Study Skills, Time Management & Environmental

Awareness. In today's rat race of competition, it becomes very essential for us to pay special attention to the effective development of our child's personality. The Personality Development Program was held for 5 Saturdays/Sundays (3 hrs. per Sat/Sun) from 10 hrs. to 13.00 hrs. In a batch around 20 kids were trained. A highly professional trainer imparted the training. This Course empowered children with an ability to enhance in every field and a new approach to learn. Parents (employees) highly appreciated this initiative and the programme saw a good turnout. There was a huge response for this course.

PRINTING PRESS VISIT: Visit to DNA Printing Press at Mhape, Navi Mumbai - To make the children of Konkan Railway employees aware of the complex mechanisms of a newspaper printing press and realize how much time and effort goes into bringing their favourite newspaper at their doorstep, a visit to DNA Printing Press at Mhape in Navi Mumbai was organised on 22.04.2010. The kids were fascinated to see the detailed demonstration of the mechanism of the various machines used in the press. Around 50 children visited the DNA Printing Press. This was also to encourage the children to read the newspapers.

ARTISTIC SKILLS OF KONKAN RAILWAY CHILDREN- DESK CALENDAR

Encouraged young artists of KR family. On the eve of Children's Day, KRWC& SSA had conducted an Inter-Regional Drawing Competition on 13.11.2011, wherein more than 200 children from Belapur, Ratnagiri and Karwar Regions participated. There were four categories and various topics were given. The competition was aimed to inspire children's imagination & creative skills as well as to promote their artistic talent. The winning drawings were put forth in the desk calendar to commemorate & encourage the kids. Drawing Competition on 25.12.2009 for the Children of KR family was conducted by the undersigned. Around 98 children had participated in the competition. They were divided in four categories age group wise. The drawing competition was followed by lunch. The prize-winning drawings were put forth in the form of desk calendar to commemorate and encourage the children. The desk calendars were put on sale and the proceeds were donated as charity in orphanages. This became a routine for KRCL.

CELEBRATIONS FOR CHILDREN

Children's Day celebration started as an annual feat on KR. During this occasion an Inter-Regional Cultural Competition used to be organised wherein children from all regions of KR participated with enthusiasm. Children got the opportunity showcase their talent in performing arts and thereafter enjoyed the different delicacies spread for them. Events like puppet show, magic show and even Mallakhamb were organized.

Drawing Competition was organised for children as part of Christmas Celebration. This helped us to tap the artistic talent present in the children of our KR employees. Immense response was received in all the categories. Children were taken to Vatsalya Ashram – an orphanage to inculcate the habit of sharing in them and knowing the joy of giving. Thereafter children on their own used to be ready to visit any orphanage or old-age home whenever we used to visit one. I am happy I could initiate these things to the children.

WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION: International Women Day celebration started from 08.03.2010: For the first time in Konkan Railway International Women Day was celebrated on a very grand scale wherein all the KR Women employees were the guests. Many events were lined up for the whole day. To commemorate the event Ms. Flavia Agnes, Advocate High Court and renowned Social Worker was invited as Chief Guest. 'Suggestion Wall' was created for KR women employees, who were encouraged to freely express their suggestions on this occasion. This event was appreciated by all the KR women employees. The celebration continued thereafter, and every year achiever , renowned personality was invited to share her experience and to motivate KR lady employees. Talks on Diet, Health and women empowerment along with fun games were organised on this day. This celebration continued till the year 2015.

KONKAN RAIL CO-OPERATIVE CREDIT SOCIETY LTD was registered to promote social and economic betterment of members through the habit of thrift, self-help and mutual in accordance with Co-operative principles. This society helps to give the employees a sense of involvement so as to increase the productivity and achieve mutuality of interest among the staff. The Credit Society is a hit amongst the KR Employees due to easy loan method and also due to lower interest rate on loan as compared to Banks. Many employees are saving money by way of Recurring Deposit and Fixed Deposit and are getting better return.

TREKKING: It is said Trekking is an exercise of endurance and will power, trekking in a group brings out the best in an individual. A 'Trek' to Karnala Pinnacle was organized for KR family members on 25.04.2010. The event was a huge success. Many people came forward for the advance registration for second trek. The response was over whelming.