

# Visit to Prajnalaya

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## The Beginning and my previous visit

Prajnalaya an educational institute was a labour of love built in 2002 by Jugal Bhuyan. It was a year after he decided to bid goodbye to the life of insurgency. Jugal Bhuyan established Prajnalaya , an institution where children of poor and uneducated parents get opportunities to learn, grow and flourish in a friendly environment. Prajnalaya , is located in the rural area of Saraipani, near the town of Titabar, district Jorhat. I visited Prajnalaya earlier year 2006 in month of April. There were 120 Student (girls 40. & boys 80) at that time. A residential hostel named “Ashtha” is accommodating few needy students.

## Passing of Jugal Bhuyan

In the evening of 03-15-2007 while leading a multi-faith prayer, Bhuyan became unconscious and passed away. He was not even 40 years old. It is a great loss not only to Prajnalaya but to the community as a whole.

Today Jugal is no more. The students, teachers, members and the well-wishers of Prajnalaya have joined hands and combined their efforts to keep the light left by Jugal burning.

## Prajnalaya now:



I visited Prajnalaya again on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2008. On My visit I realized that Prajnalaya has been making significant impact in and around that area. Prajnalaya , has now 275 students (153 male and 122 female) between the age group of 4 to 15. The residential part Astha, accommodates 85 students, 33 girls and 52 boys. There are 21 teachers (8 male and 13 female) to look after the education of the children. Three office bearers are there to run the school. Some of the students are orphans. Prajnalaya aims for the overall personality development of these kids, teaching them the rich cultural heritage of country along with the regular coursework.

### **Well wishers of Prajnalaya:**

Prajnalaya had the honor of welcoming many visitors both from within and outside India. Some of the visitors from India who visited Prajnalaya are:

Chief Minister of Assam Mr. Tarun Gogoi, Education Minister of Assam Mr. Ripun Bora, Dr Kanak Sen Deka, President of Axom Sahitya Sabha, Gyanpith laureate Dr. Mamoni Goswami , Wahid Saleh of Nether land and many others.



**Chief Minister of Assam visiting Prajnalaya**

**Some of the present activities of Prajnalaya are:**



**Fish from Prajnalaya Fishery**

1. To generate income Prajnalaya has started some innovative schemes such as organic fertilizer (vermiculture), fish and poultry farming, weaving and handlooms.
2. In cooperation with local medical doctors Prajnalaya runs medical camps. When possible the medical camp facilities are extended to the villagers.
3. On the subject of preservation of food and preparation of pickles, jams etc., Mrs. Meghali Bora of the Meghali Food Production Centre has given a three days training to students of 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> classes. This would help the students to help their families to generate extra income.
4. The District Agricultural Department of Assam has put a scheme to plant trees in the compound of Prajnalaya. 100 trees were already planted.
5. In 2007 Prajnalaya also arranged accommodation for a 30 years old widow and her two daughters aged 3 and 7.
6. On 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2007 at Prajnalaya a Science Workshop was organized for the Science Teachers. 30 science teachers from seven nearby schools participated in this workshop. This was financed by Assam Science Society Guwahati.
7. In order to provide milk to the school children, in 2008 at a cost of Rs. 21,000/- Prajnalaya bought a cow with a calf. In the coming month deepening



on availability of funds they intend to buy another 4 cows.



**Mr. Utpal Sarma advising on organic fertilizer**

8. In February 2008, Mr. Utpal Kumar Sarma of Assam Agricultural Service rendered free consultancy to the villagers in and around Titabor. This consultancy on agriculture, veterinary & fishery projects was sponsored by Friends of Assam & Seven Sisters [FASS], a USA based Think Tank group in association with Prajnalaya.

9. From February 2008 students of Prajnalaya started appearing the High School Leaving Certificate (HSLC) examinations.

For its existence Prajnalaya needs help. Help is needed in order to continue their work. Their plans are capital intensive but in the end, they will be self-sustained. Any amount of generous monetary help from well-wishers will surely help them. As I completed my visit I felt that success of Prajnalaya will inspire other youths of Assam to come forward for such noble efforts.