

Report on Site Visit to Kotra by Col Sirajuddin(naheed_s@hotmail.com)

1. I had this wonderful opportunity to do a site visit to Kotra, on 16 May 2025, on behalf of Asha for Education, organized by Seva Mandir. I was familiar with this under developed and neglected tribal belt having done a few visits during the year 2005. However, this time I saw an altogether different Kotra. As we entered Kotra I could see some development in the form of some proper houses replacing huts and solar panels on farm lands with improved farming. This was an indication of economic growth in the society. On the part of the Government a few school buildings (with a deserted look for want of teachers) could be seen. I was informed that Seva mandir had added toilets with support from Life Insurance Corporation of India.
2. As per the Itinerary, this was a day trip with a visit to the Block Office of Seva mandir followed by visits to Primary school Gujniya, Nayawas and Shiksha Kendra Ravji Badla, Nayawas.
3. Primary School Gujniya, Nayawas: This is a government school with two class rooms. It was about 15 minutes' drive from the Block Office partly on a dirt road. There is a government teacher posted there but the school is practically run by Seva Mandir. We met the first lady teacher groomed by Seva Mandir. The body language and enthusiasm of the students was very encouraging. The method of activity-based learning was effective as could be seen by the response of the students to questions asked.
4. Shiksha Kendra Ravji Badla, Nayawas: This is another remote facility managed by Seva Mandir. The infrastructure of this facility is provided and supported by the local village council. This includes a small digital lab with three computers. The student community here is divided in to three groups A, B and C. The youngest in age group 5 to 8 years comprised the C group. This group was being taught in the open area while the seniors in group B and C were accommodated in a class room built by the local community. Our first inter action was with group C children. This was a vibrant student community with a zeal to learn and the teacher was doing an excellent job in motivating them to learn. Our next stop was with group B and C, the seniors. Here again the environment and enthusiasm of the children was very encouraging. One could see a glimpse of the next generation of Kotra in these students.
5. Briefing & Feed Back Session with the Block Team: We returned to the Block office for a quick lunch and Feed Back session with the team before our return journey. During my discussions with the team, the following points emerged:
 - a) The students of group B&C at Shiksha Kendra, as I observed, were sharp enough to understand the basics of a computer system. A small capsule course may be added to the curriculum using a screen to teach. The interns visiting these centers may help here.
 - b) The number of students completing their school level (XII Class) under this umbrella of Asha for Education and Seva Mandir will progressively increase in the near future. These students will be at cross roads in their life after completing school education. Higher education

may not be an option for many due to financial constraints. At the same time, they will be among the elite educated youth in the community and will be unwilling to take on unskilled labor work. For this category, some vocational training may help in providing gainful employment.

6. In conclusion, Seva mandir with support from Asha for Education is certainly doing a wonderful job in Kotra. The efforts put in so far have shown commendable results that are clearly visible on ground.



