

## Summary Report and Pictures (below)

### Musi River Bank Cleanup at Amberpet Bridge on March 20, 2010

Hyderabad: Rivers of the World Foundation (ROW) with the cooperation of the local community leaders, residents and Sree Nidhi Institute of Science and Technology (SNIST) performed a debris/trash cleanup of a small segment on the banks of Musi River near Amberpet Bridge on March 20, 2010, successfully. The Bridge is on a major artery of the city and is 75 meters long. Fifty – three (53) SNIST National Social Service (NSS) volunteers, participated in this beneficial activity. Musi River is the life blood of Hyderabad and other downstream communities. It is heavily polluted and the banks of the river are loaded with debris and trash. SNIST volunteers, community leaders and area Member of State Legislative Assembly (MLA), initiated a piece to a mammoth project of restoring Musi River to its natural & pristine condition before man's intervention.

Of significance of the event, is that Hon. MLA Ahmed Balala has immediately agreed to provide the following amenities, as presented by ROW with consultation of the stakeholders:

1. Install and operate a dumpster at one corner of the bridge with high volume garbage.
2. Subsidize costs of a nearby pay toilet from bridge, for free access to people who cannot pay (though the amount is less than a cent), and currently relieving on the banks of the Musi.
3. Provide support for cleanup twice in a year when garbage collects on the banks after rainy season (September) and festival season (January). Unfortunately, in Hyderabad the weather is quite hot on March 22, to coordinate outdoor activities with world water day and also exam times for majority of students.

What is extraordinary is that Honorable MLA Balala went a step further and said that he will work towards providing two dumpsters one on each side of the bridge and also provide high meshed fence along the bridge so people cannot dump in the river. Hon. Ahmed Balala found time to be at the site 12:45 and stayed for half an hour discussing various aspects with constituents, and Ram Koduri (ROW), and his parting words were, "I am so excited that so many people are helping us, and I will do everything that I can to address the above two issues; with meshed fence, the above request item number 3 is moot as there is no chance to dump in the river". He also came back and distributed certificates to the students.

#### CLEANUP

The thought of this public private partnership for cleanup came up in a meeting with Director Narasimha Reddy of SNIST when the ROW delegation from USA visited Hyderabad, India on December 28, 2009. But for SNIST's interest and participation, this program is not possible. Community leader Mr. Kanukula Reddy obtained the permits, arranged the truck and acted as liaison to Hon. MLA Balala in addition to providing food and meeting place in his house for further interactions with the participants. Ms. Morolia (ROW – Hyderabad) planned and scheduled the event for February 20, 2010, but the event had to be delayed due to local agitations, and conditions in state,

The 53 volunteers and NSS organizer Mr. Srinivasa Rao Challa, arrived by SNIST bus and assembled about 11:15 a.m. on that day at the site. Safety training and some pollution facts were presented by Ram Koduri; and the garbage bags (Allice Ferguson), caps, leather and vinyl gloves,

caps and masks provided by ROW were distributed. ROW took back gloves, for cleaning and reuse. About eight pairs of long boots were made available if any volunteers wanted, but none were used. Boots will be reused. Caps and masks are given to volunteers for their use in future. The volunteers were distributed into three varying size groups to pick up debris from three corners of the bridge, the fourth corner was relatively clean as this area is being used by washermen/women for manual cleaning of clothes and sun drying.

Before and after cleanup (See Pictures attached/linked), every volunteer took a pledge:

**” I will pick up a piece of litter every day.”**

Volunteers began work immediately and worked for two hours as planned, except for a short five minute break to hear MLA and his commitment. The temperature on that day was close to 100 degrees F or 38 C. and with malodor, further cleaning was not desirable. It is estimated that 80 percent of the targeted bank debris is cleared. Additional discussion, interaction, issuance of certificates took place in Mr. Kunukula Reddy's house before lunch. At three p.m. the SNIST bus took off from the site.

The training included key concepts and definitions such as decompose, biodegrade, reduce, reuse and recycle. Some materials biodegrade more slowly than others – glass and plastic bottles 400-500 years, aluminum cans 200 – 300 years, whereas banana peels biodegrade in two months only. Though it is important to separate and dispose of properly, due to heavy contamination of rotten organic material, and some animal wastes, it was not continued after mock separation of paper, biodegradables, and plastics. Also, all the material was dumped in the same truck as the administrative mechanism is not in place separate disposal and/or recycling. The silver lining is that good amount of bottles, metals, and plastics are picked up by neighborhood poor kids for sale to the recycling vendors. Even, the chicken necks and other waste meat products are picked up by local meat processors for some cash. Only when the vendor does not show up, these waste products are thrown on banks. Even as we were doing cleanup, other poultry waste processor showed up and gave his telephone number, helped us in providing drinking water to the volunteers so we can call him when the regular contracted vendor does not show up. ROW will work with the new vendor to fill up the gaps of poultry waste disposal.

Garbage removal bags donated by Alice Ferguson Foundation, USA were sufficient for this cleanup as volunteers suggested reuse of the bags by dumping trash in the dump truck till the bags cannot be reused. The gloves, also donated by the Foundation could not be used as the trash contained high volume of wet material like rotten organics and waste poultry products. As such, ROW used polyvinyl and leather gloves. Volunteers thanked the Alice Ferguson Foundation for the donation and related valuable material and standard procedure.

Various news paper reporters and TV reporters visited the site and talked to volunteers, community leaders and ROW members. One major Newspaper reported the event in the local language Telugu (see attached), that we know of.

**COSTS:**

This event in Hyderabad, being first of this kind, where everybody participated from near and far, the cost of cleanup was very reasonable. But considering a whole truck of garbage disposal cost ROW

\$300 only, with help from other sources amounting to additional \$300. It is ROW Hyderabad team opinion that the optimal size is 25 – 50 members for each cleanup and cost per member varies \$ 3 – 4 per head compared to the Mach 20<sup>th</sup> event ROW cost of \$6 per head approximately, contingent upon obtaining similar cooperation.

There are intangible benefits of awareness, MLA's assurance, and health benefits. We offered free caps of Rivers of World with our local telephone numbers, which hopefully will give boost to the organization public relations.

Two new members with very valuable experience, Messers. Kannekanti from Hyderabad and Mcmillan from Australia are willing to share their expertise with us.

## SUMMARY

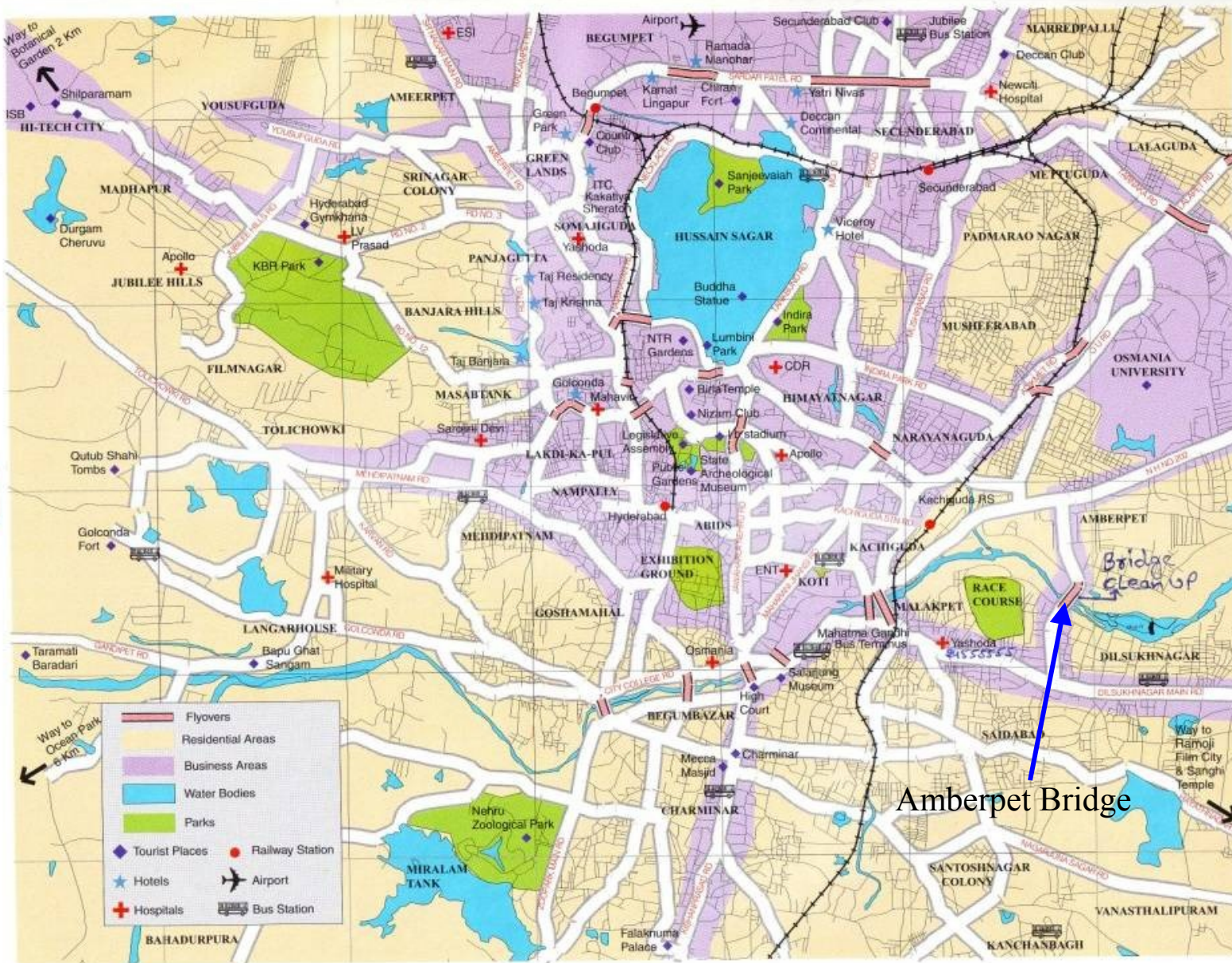
The A.P. Government, Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC), and other interested public and private agencies are working hard to restore the Musi River. While the projects take time to complete, this cleanup is a very small attempt by the local residents, and sponsors.

ROW is formed with various nationals with a view to do our bit for the restoration of the rivers and banks. ROW members, with very limited resources. With this event ROW has added Musi River in Hyderabad for its cleanup program, in addition to Yamuna River in Agra, Haryana In India.

For Further information please contact ROW Hyderabad Team:  
Ram Koduri or Pushpa Morolia

9390034657, 9849940967

Site location and a few pictures below



Amberpet Bridge location for 20<sup>th</sup> March 2010 cleanup



Site Before Cleanup



Volunteers Getting Ready for the Cleanup

Volunteers Collecting Trash



Volunteers Finishing Up Trash Cleanup at the Musi River Bank

