



**Divi's Laboratories Ltd.**

**AN IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT OF DIVI'S INTERVENTION**

**– DEVELOPMENT OF SWARGAPURI (BURIALGROUND),  
MACHILIPATNAM**

**A CSR INITIATIVE OF DIVI'S  
2023**

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

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## DIVI'S CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Divi's Laboratories is a leading manufacturer of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API) with its headquarters located in Gachibowli, Hyderabad, Telangana, India. Divi's believes and cares deeply in the Business-Society Ecosystem which forms the basis for its CSR component. Its involvement in the social welfare and philanthropic activities started within a few years of launching its business and has been actively contributing with the key objectives of enhancing quality of life and sustainable improvement in the social, economic and environmental conditions of the needy.

Divi's has been taking up various social development activities as part of its CSR initiative. Major goals being protection of natural capital, building a safer environment, creating a positive impact in the lives of the people and improving individual quality of life. Giving back to the community and striving for sustainable development are the principal focal areas of the company's CSR programme. Under this umbrella, diverse activities like: *developing school infrastructure, afforestation activities, health care programmes, providing safe drinking water, construction/renovation activities as per need to develop rural infrastructure, women empowerment programmes*, etc. are taken up in the areas surrounding the company's manufacturing units based on the arising and identified needs.

## IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY

In compliance with the Government of India rules and regulations towards interventions under the CSR component of the Companies/Corporates, Divi's planned for an impact assessment of its four major CSR initiatives – providing infrastructure facilities in educational institutions, plantation, oxygen concentrators for covid-19 patients, development of burial ground. Deeksha - Centre for Learning and Action has been identified and approached for undertaking impact studies of each of these four projects.

Deeksha is a non-profit organisation working in the areas of Child Rights, Adolescence issues, Health, Livelihoods and Gender equality with both urban and rural communities in

Telangana and Andhra Pradesh states. The organization has physical presence in 8 mandals across 4 districts. The basic aim is holistic development of the people and bringing improvement in quality of life of Girl Children, Women and the Aged. To achieve these, awareness programmes and educational activities are held besides running an open house for the neglected senior citizens. Besides, Deeksha takes up partnership programmes in research, advocacy and documentation areas to understand the community level situation, assess needs and advocate for better standards of life.

### **DEVELOPMENT OF SWARGAPURI (BURIAL GROUND)**

More than a century old burial ground or *Smashanam* and the Subrahmanyam Cheruvu, located in the entrance of Machilipatnam, adjacent to the national highway, are prominent across Machilipatnam and a large number of the surrounding villages. Over the years, some landless poor families started to erect small houses on the outside boarder of Swargapuri and later the below middle-class families also started gradual encroachment resulting in narrowing the area.

The century old constructions in the Swargapuri, which were catering to the families from the surrounding areas for performing last rites, rituals and ceremonies of their dead family members, are in dilapidated condition, while the demand is increasing. In this condition the Swargapuri Development Committee approached Divi's for support to develop the burial ground.

### **SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

Consequent to the proposal by the Swargapuri Development Committee, Divi's supported towards construction of various need-based structures in the burial ground (Swargapuri) at Machilipatnam. These include construction of rooms, provision for drinking water, toilets, sheds for conducting last rites & rituals, developing the cremation area, etc. Thus, the objective of the impact study is to understand the present status of the constructions, utility of the facilities and concerns or further support needs identified, if any, by the committee.

### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The specific objective of the study is to understand the impact of Divi's support to Swrgapuri – Burial ground development.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The impact assessment was conducted by using interactive methods – group interaction, one to one interaction, and observation.

## **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The study team interacted with the committee members, but interaction with the caretaker at the burial ground as proposed could not be done as cremations were not happening at the time of the visit.

Similarly, we proposed to interact with the users / beneficiaries of the burial ground and try to understand their perspective of the usage of the structures constructed with Divi's support. However, on the day of the visit, as there were no events of cremation the study team could not interact with the beneficiaries.

## **OBSERVATIONS**

### **A. STATUS OF THE COMPLEX**

Since the complex is more than 100 years old, there have been various developments from the beginning before taking this present shape. Hence the report presented below tries to capture the initial, mid-term and present stages in the status of the burial ground (Swargapuri), while talking about the contribution by Divi's in its further development and the impact.

#### **The initial years**

The burial ground (known as Swargapuri) at Machilipatnam is spread across 8 acres of land and is more than a 100-year-old structure. It is a very well-known and a popular place in the area. Families not only from Machilipatnam but also from surrounding villages used to come to this place to perform the last rites or annual ceremonies of their family members and the related rituals. Established in 1913 in the land donated for the purpose by Sri. Doradla Ramarao, the entire place was developed and managed by the donor's family for almost more

than 70 years. Prior to establishing the Swargapuri itself, a big pond – Manasa Sarovaram was dug in the land in the year 1904 and facilities for water in-flow and out-flow were provided by the then British government on the request of the benefactors. Subsequently, a small Shiva temple was built in the year 1913 on the bank of the water body where the families used to offer their prayers after performing the last rites. Initially one small building was constructed with two rooms for stay, one room for sutra-visarjana and one room for storing *asthikalu*. Subsequently, three more rooms, a four-toilets complex and one shed for performing the rituals were also constructed.

Later in 1984 a coordinating committee was formed and registered with the name “Annapurna Sahita Kashi Visweswara Bhakta Haindava Sampradaya Parirakshana Samstha” under the leadership of Sri Doradla Ramarao. It is a life membership committee and new members are included only if the existing member is expired. The current committee has 15 members, in addition to the founding president. This committee has been proactive and took up several development activities to provide more and better facilities to the users of the facility. Besides committee members’ personal contributions, they also mobilized funds towards improving facilities in Swargapuri.

With the funds thus generated a small building with three rooms was constructed, a well was dug, a big dining hall attached with a kitchen was constructed. Also, additional sheds were constructed for performing rituals catering to more families at one time. Subsequently, compound wall was constructed separating the neighbouring residential area on one side which has come up gradually over the years. A small park has been developed within the premises. Some of the earlier facilities were renovated in the year 1999. A vehicle was purchased to carry the dead body from the person’s home to Swargapuri and it was extensively used for the purpose. However, presently it is in a condemned condition.

### **Post 2015**

During the years 2016-17, road expansion work was initiated to the existing national highway connecting Machilipatnam to other cities making it a four-lane road. In the process of land acquisition for the purpose, some part of Swargapuri (nearly 2 acres) had to be given away to the extent that the original Shiva temple and some portions of the pond were lost.

Though the government was supposed to give compensation for the lost land, only interim release was made in the beginning and nothing further has come through till date. The committee is still fighting in the court to get full compensation towards the land acquired by the government.

Meanwhile, the area continued to get the attention of more and more pilgrims and the demand for creating more provisions, including construction of a new temple. With the interim compensation received, the committee planned for reconstruction of the temple so as to accommodate a minimum of 250 pilgrims. To construct this big temple some part of the pond had to be occupied. With the already lost portion of the pond, its size has further been reduced.

### **Recent Developments**

Over the years, much of the burial ground land was encroached by private parties to build houses. Later a residential colony has also come-up in the land between the pond and the cremation area. Thus, the Swargapuri complex was totally separated from the land used for cremation (*smashanam*). 20 feet roads were laid on both sides of Swargapuri complex to enable the residents to commute and also lead to the cremation area. The old buildings and the existing facilities are not sufficient to meet the demand and requirement at the Swargapuri.

### **B. DIVI'S SUPPORT**

In this context, the committee approached Divi's seeking financial support for the development of Swargapuri – to reconstruct the temple (partial), compound wall with gates, more rooms to stay, more toilets and RO plant. Leaving temple development, Divi's came forward to support the other development works in Swargapuri, believing that every family has a right to perform last rites of their beloved family member with dignity.

Therefore, Divi's extended a grant of ₹1,59,52,126 from its CSR fund towards the cause. Divi's support to this burial ground development started in the year 2020 and the works continued till the recent times. Currently construction works are completed and the facilities are ready to be used.

The following are the structures built with Divi's CSR fund support –

- Compound wall to the Swargapuri complex
- Entry arches, and the gates to enter the Swargapuri premises
- Hall accommodating 300 people to sit
- Rooms for accommodation in the Swargapuri complex with attached toilets
- RO plant
- Additional toilets

### **C. IMPACT OF DIVI'S SUPPORT**

While the newly constructed buildings are ready to use, the existing structures and the completed constructions are best used by the people who come to burial ground for cremation and related rituals. Swargapuri complex is a preferred place even for performing monthly and annual ceremonies given the availability of all facilities and the convenience to accommodate more people attending to the ceremonies. The provision of RO plant providing purified water for drinking and cooking is the most sought-after feature. The complex has a storage place for keeping the last remains of the body (asthikalu) till their merger in the river. There is a demand for storage of 22 mortal remains per month, on an average. Thus, it caters to all the traditional needs of the death ceremonies.

Non-local families who wish to cremate their parents' or family members' bodies at native village come to the Swargapuri complex and stay for the entire period till completion of the rituals, generally 11 – 12 days.

Particularly for the families living in rented houses this place is a big relief if someone in their family dies. The general practice is that the house owners object to keeping the dead body or perform rituals in the house, with the belief that it is not auspicious for them. Such families bring the body to this place for cremation and also to complete the formalities prior to cremation. They stay here for the performance of daily rituals for the stipulated period. The facilities are convenient for their stay and for conducting the traditional practices. Even monthly and annual ceremonies are also done here with greater ease given the accommodation and other facilities offered in Swargapuri complex.

Similar is the case also with ailing or aged persons in their last stages of life are not a welcome if living in a rented house. It has been stated by the committee members that sometimes such persons are brought here to spend the rest of their life just like a hospice home.

*An instance quoted by a committee member...*

Two sisters from Hyderabad, whose mother passed away in Hyderabad contacted one of the committee members. They preferred to cremate their mother's body in Swargapuri where their father was also cremated earlier. Hence, they felt sentimental to place their mother also next to their father. They brought their mother's body in an ambulance all the way from Hyderabad to Machilipatnam, cremated her body in the burial ground and stayed in the complex for 11 days for completion of all the rituals in the presence of their relatives.

They were very happy that all the facilities are available at one place and they could stay here with a secured feeling. They could peacefully do everything to their satisfaction and left with great relief and peace at heart, after contributing some money to the committee to use for any requirement in the premises.

With the new facilities in Swargapuri provided with financial support by Divi's, families from distant places are also wanting to come here to perform the last rites of their dear ones, to complete the rituals and to conduct the monthly or annual ceremonies. There has been an average occupation of 54 per month for three rooms. *'Earlier due to in-sufficient availability of rooms we could not help but had to refuse the request of the grieved families. Now, with the increased rooms and improved facilities this number would go up and more families can access it. We will be able to serve more families...'* one of the committee members expressed.

The new temples of different idols constructed in the temple premises and the events being organized during festivals and special days are attracting more pilgrims. The number of pilgrims visiting the place has increased manifold. This also has a positive impact on the number of families utilizing the facilities provided in Swargapuri. *"The native families of this area living in distant places have started inquiring about the place and the facilities..."* stated one of the committee members.

Swargapuri has turned into a place of solace and peace for the families who are in grief with the loss of their dear ones.



*Our aim is to make the mourning families feel comfortable and send off their dear ones with dignity. The families who come here with grief after losing their beloved ones should stay here peacefully and return with peace at mind overcoming their grief – Vice President of the committee*

## CONCLUSIONS

The interactions with the development committee members, visitors, volunteers and the priest clearly brought out the satisfactory elements that were achieved through the support provided by Divi's. One can say that the overall impact has been positive. The intimate sentiments of the grieving families reaching out to this place are taken care and satisfied. The following section presents the impact of Divi's support, areas for further development and suggestions towards sustainability.

- Divi's intervention in developing Swargapuri in Machilipatnam has started in the year 2020. The support is for construction of compound wall with arches and gates to the premises, establishing RO plant and providing infrastructural facilities in Swargapuri complex. The overall spent amount was ₹ 1,59,52,126.
- It is observed from the records of the committee that there is a decent demand for the rooms in Swargapuri. The newly constructed two storied building having four rooms and a suit, all having attached bathrooms would attract more families to stay in the campus. In addition to the rooms, the RO plant is most useful to the families who reside in the complex for ten days to two weeks or more to complete the rituals and ceremonies as per their beliefs.
- The toilet complex, sheds to perform the rituals, dining hall with kitchen and the mortal remains reserve facility are also being used to a great extent. Families from economically backward sections and coming from distant places are able to use these facilities and perform the last rites and rituals of their lost dear ones with dignity and comfort.
- There is a need to renovate the kitchen to suit to the needs of the residing families also who would like to prepare their own food, if required.

- The facilities at Swargapuri complex are being used to a great extent by the families without own house. It is also true in case of families having a member on death bed or suffering from chronic illness and counting days, residing in the small, rented houses, apartments.
- The environment here is soothing and helps the grieving families get solace.
- The enhanced capacity of the hall, planned to accommodate 250 to 300 persons to sit at a time, is also a preferred place to sit in silence and pray for peace. According to the temple Priest, these arrangements are attracting more devotees and that in itself spreads the word about Swargapuri complex.
- The RO plant is particularly useful in providing purified water to the devotees. During auspicious months and festive times, large number of devotees come to the temple and the number might even exceed 1000 to 1500 per day. During such times too, the committee ensures supply of purified water to all the devotees with the support of RO plant – as informed by the committee members.
- The President of the committee shared that Divi's support is extremely valuable in making Swargapuri an important place for the aggrieved families to tender a dignified and respectful farewell to their demised family member. It also helped in development of the place to bring back the glory of the century-old temple which was lost due to the road extension of national highway.
- The century old pond constructed during the Britishers' time is an amazing structure with traditional feeder system and the outlet to clean the pond is a significant feature of the premises. The locality is known by the name of the pond – 'subrahmanyam cheruvu' given its unique design in construction with direct auto feeder channel from the main water source. Sadly, it has become half of its size due to road extension, construction of new temple and the gradual encroachment to construct residential houses.
- Despite its size the significance of the pond is still continuing among the citizens, compelling the committee to take up protection measures, viz., desilting, cleaning and fencing around the pond. However, the committee is committed to protect the

historical pond by constructing a proper bund, revive the feeder channel and repair the outlet which are obstructed due to constructions coming up around the pond.

- The Swargapuri premises has become an iconic place and land mark in the entrance of the Machilipatnam town adjacent to the Vijayawada – Machilipatnam national highway, with the development activities taken up with the support of Divi's under its CSR initiative.

Witnessing the development and the utility of the facilities at Swargapuri, one must acknowledge Divi's efforts in identifying the right issue for intervention, considering the people's interest and the community needs, adhering to the true sense of Corporate Social Responsibility objectives.

Appreciating this, the assessment team is of the feeling that the onus is also on the Swrgapuri development committee. The income generated from lending the rooms and other facilities in Swargapuri is catering to the maintenance of the complex to some extent. However, there is a further need to sustain the efforts and to take the spirit forward. Towards this, the committee may proactively mobilise other resources too to match with Divi's support.

## PHOTO GALLERY



**Pic 1 – Arch to Swargapuri complex**



**Pic 2 – RO Plant Constructed in Swargapuri**



**Pic 3 – Storage Facility to Store Mortal Remains (*Asthikalu*)**



**Pic 4 – The Stone Plaque of New Building**





**Pic 5 – The Newly Constructed Two-storied Building**



**Pic 6 – Room with Attached Bathroom in the New Building**



**Pic 7 – Newly Constructed Toilets**

**“Death may be the greatest of all human blessing”**

*– Socrates*

& & & & &