

Ramesh Bandaru

Gunthakodur village, Tadoor Mandal ,
Nagarkurnool District

Ramesh Bandaru is a native of Gunthakodur village of Tadoor Mandal in Nagarkurnool District. He is the eldest son. He has completed his intermediate in BiPC (Biology, Physics and Chemistry) with 87.6% percentage from Government Junior College, Tadoor. He is the first person in the family who has gone to school.

Ramesh has collected over 477 different varieties of seeds from different flowers, herbs, weeds, trees etc. These have been properly and neatly packed, labeled and preserved. These seeds are his only material acquisitions which he values as priceless. He started collection of seeds for the last two years, inspired by the COP 11 - International Bio-Diversity Conference held in Hyderabad in 2013.

He has made seed collection as his passion. Wherever he goes, he wanders around and hooks for places

where there is the possibility of collecting the seeds.

There is a superstition in his village about sharing knowledge. If anybody wants to know regarding the plant and asks for the name and its uses to any of the elders of his village, elders simply deny of knowing the plants. They feel that by sharing the knowledge, the medicinal value of the herbs will vanish and hence hide the information about plants. This appears to be a way of protecting their personal interest. Ramesh is trying to change this mindset among his villagers, by insisting on sharing so that knowledge of plants is carried forward to next generations. His efforts are yielding positive though at a slower pace.

Ramesh is very passionate and zealous in collecting the seeds. He makes extensive efforts to know the names of the seeds collected by him. For each of the seeds collected, he

also obtained the scientific name by taking assistance from his botany lecturer Mr Rajendar, who indeed has been encouraging and supporting Ramesh in his pursuit.

One day he brought a leaf of a plant from a distant place where he had gone to meet his relatives. By the time he brought it to his home, the plant had got decomposed and was of the stage that no one could recognize it. In another attempt, he captured a photograph of a plant in his phone when he went to another village. Since his phone has a low resolution, the image was unrecognized by his elders and his lecturer, which further led to his failure in recognizing the plant species.

His family works as daily labor. He lost his father during 2015 an untimely death. Ramesh is the eldest son and has a sister, and brother to look after. Mother works as farm labor in the village. He joined B.Sc in University college of Science Saifabad OU in Hyderabad and is serious in learning to more about plants. He assured us that he would

continue collecting the seeds even while in college.

Ramesh got honoured by the Honorable Governor of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh on 15th October 2015 in Ravindra Bharathi, Hyderabad. On International Biodiversity Day-2016 he was invited to display his seed collection at Birla Science museum, Hyderabad. Telangana state forest minister Sri Jogu Ramanna felicitated him for his services to Biodiversity. Council for Green Revolution Organization (CGR), Hyderabad honoured Ramesh with "CGR Green student Award-2017". He showcases his seeds in the recently held "Sattvik festival" during December 2017 organized by SISTI at Ahmedabad.

Ramesh has the potential to become a change maker by assuming social leadership in his village and among the youth. It is the responsibility of the society to promote such passionate and naturally talented children to make our society better and humane.