



KIRPAL SAGAR



2017
2018



CULTURAL, SOCIAL, CHARITABLE AND MEDICAL ACTIVITIES
IN KIRPAL SAGAR/INDIA FROM OCTOBER 2017 TILL OCTOBER 2018

BE GOOD , DO GOOD , BE ONE

Kirpal Sagar - a meeting point for different cultures and religions, a bridge connecting East and West, a place of peace and silence.

Kirpal Sagar stands for tolerance, culture, international communication and cooperation, sustainable agriculture, and social care and support for the needy. People all over the world are actively engaged in this project, hand in hand.



About six hours after departure by car from Delhi Airport, we reach Kirpal Sagar in the state of Punjab in northwestern India there are many people, and many sights uncommon to foreign eyes such as an entire family of five riding on a single motobike or a dozen people crammed into a small car, glancing out of the windows with a joyous look in their eyes. We pass rural areas with lots of small houses and huts and see women who seem to hover over the dusty path, dressed in bright and colourful saris and shawls.

The roads get smaller, and suddenly there is a post: Kirpal Sagar. At the end of a sleepy little village, from quite a distance, we can see white turrets rising through the trees. And then, we are at our destination. As we pass the main entrance gate, we arrive at what seems like a town which unexpected suddenly grew up in amidst the elds.

We pass a bright building, which creates an impression of unbelievable beauty and fragility at the same time, and on its roof stand the symbols of four world religions. It looks like a ship, which just touches the ocean under its keel. Our eyes are attracted by the mosaic, 'God is one', and nearby an inscription which gives the motto of Kirpal Sagar: „Be good, do good, be One“.

In the last 35 years, Kirpal Sagar has transformed from an idealistic vision to a real, vital place in an exhilarant silent and unexcited way. In the beginning there were lots of bushes and thorns, in the midst of a small farm with a well and some scraggy fields.

Initiator and founder was Kirpal Singh, a highly respected personality, in India as well as abroad. He was the president of World Fellowship of Religions for 14 years. He had a vision of a place open to all mankind, where all can meet irrespective of outer labels. To Dr. Harbhajan Singh and his wife Surinder Kaur he gave the challenging duty to put this vision into practice. Together with other volunteers they converted the barren land to fertile fields which are like a green belt embracing Kirpal Sagar, which now measures 80 hektars.



Many people live, work, teach and are educated there. At the same time, Kirpal Sagar is an open place for all visitors, most of whom volunteer or stay there for a few days. Kirpal Sagar nowadays consists of the hospital, schools, the library, a guest house, a fathers' home, agricultural and dairy facilities, just to name a few. The farm delivers wheat, rice, legumes, vegetables, sugar cane and vegetable oils. The dairy farm provides milk, butter, cheese and yoghurt. Kirpal Sagar gets enough produce from the farm to be quite self-sustaining in staple foods. Also the students and the hostels are supplied by the farm.

As a medical doctor, Dr. Harbhajan Singh cared for patients, near Amritisar (near the border of Pakistan) for many years. Then in 1973, he opened a hospital there. The news that a doctor with a big heart and empathy for the poor was in that area spread like wildfire. The hospital in Nag Kalan still works today.

Kirpal Sagar is supported in its charitable aspects by the personal help of many hands and heads, by donations and knowledge transfer. Those who were lucky enough to participate from the onset, report one astonishing thing: looking back they themselves experienced Kirpal Sagar as a place that, shaped and cleansed them like a washing machine, which was open for all mankind and will surely stay open in future.

Just join us in exploring Kirpal Sagar's path in the last 12 months ...



Sport connects

From the 27th till 29th of October 2017, a U19-Volleyball competition of the schools of eastern Punjab took place. This year it was the responsibility of the Kirpal Sagar Academy to organize and host this event.

The competition was opened by Ms Sonali Giri (IAS), Deputy Comissioner of the SBS Nagar district, who is responsible for 180 schools. At the gate she was welcomed by the horse squadron of the Academy. In his opening address Mr. Karamjit Singh Virk, chairman of Kirpal Sagar and the Academy, talked about the upcoming workshop on first aid for grades 10 to 12, which would start over the following days. The first matches were also used for lively exchange and Ms. Sonali Giri expressed her recommendations and plans to get such workshops for the other schools as well.



In her address she had warm words for the place and wished the students to participate in this competition in a mood of Fair-Play.



In the library is an exhibition giving the background information, history and meaning of Kirpal Sagar as well as many quotations backing the view that the kernel of all religions is one and the same.



Students save lives

From 30th Oct. till 02nd Nov.17 a first aid training took place at the Academy. Dr. Walter S., a medical doctor from Germany, had organized a team. His assistants, who were 14 and 16 years old, had holidays, so could participate and share their skills as members of a school medical squadron. They had a lot of fun and joy interacting with their Indian counterparts. The Indian students soon lost their shyness and were busy in training life-giving methods.

In the beginning, approximately 25 students had been expected by the team, but in the end more than 250 students took part in the training. Principal Ma'am, Mrs. Madhu Aeri, also sent two teachers, to get training to become first aid trainers themselves.

The students were able to learn things they normally didn't learn at school. They eagerly learned and practised. They obviously liked the interaction with the foreign team, which also the German team so many nice memories that they planned to come back to Kirpal Sagar Academy as soon as possible.

Kick off for sustainable energy supply

At the beginning of November, the first mounting stands for solar panels were installed on the roof, a stepping stone for sustainable energy supply.

Checkup for buildings

Severe climate change, heat, and heavy rainfall are not only a challenge for people but also for buildings. Alex G., an architect and engineer from Germany, and Niklas S. examined the foundations, the walls and roofs of the hospital to look for a better shelter from meteorological wear and tear. Their goal was to strengthen the building's foundation. They also could not refuse, when the music room of the Academy needed their help.



A ventilating training for nurses in the emergency room of the KS Charitable Hospitals took place on Nov. 02nd.

Flower Mosaic

For several days, a man standing on a ladder has been working on a mosaic above the entrance of the major hall. He works quickly, fixing a strip with five more stones till the sun sets and light gets too poor for further work. He said that he had been coming to Kirpal Sagar every year for a long time and that he takes care of the mosaics. Today he worked on a floral motif, inspired from a box he got from Agra, the town which is known world-wide for the Taj Mahal.

From time to time someone stops to get a closer view. Obviously it's a heartfelt wish of the artist, that style and motifs fit the Indian way. For some spectators, it's hard to believe that an artist would come to India to do some work here, but this man apparently gets some joy and inner peace from this work.

Talking to him we discovered that he met Sant Kirpal Singh in Europe and then visited him in Delhi. His concern was to bring understanding amongst human beings, to establish peace and unity, by and with the help of people, but also through places which are dedicated to the inner and outer development of human beings.



Organic agriculture

Harry S., a trader and agronomist from Germany, is fond of sustainable ways of agriculture. He has helped with words and deeds for a long time.

For many years he worked meticulously on the growing of moringa, using leased fields. The goal was to have, in the long run, a reliable additional source of income for Kirpal Sagar. A wide heart and a long breath are needed for this job.

At the same time, it becomes clearer how to make agriculture sustainable in practical life, how to prepare compost and improve the fertility of the fields. As a side benefit, some jobs with fair conditions were created - to meet the needs of livelihood, to increase knowledge and experience which could be passed on to others. Just nice to see that such a plan can work in practical life, too.



As speaker at agricultural seminar, which took place in Kirpal Sagar in November 2017.

Agricultural seminar

Niki R., organic farmer and dairy specialist from the Austrian mountains, likes to share his experience with others, theoretical knowledge as well as practical solutions. The processing of milk and its products like cheese, are his favorite themes. Cooling of fresh milk requires a lot of energy and isn't so easily done in times of frequent black-outs, and especially for small farmers with one to four buffaloes. Therefore, as in previous years, he again gave a workshop on how to prepare cheese. Many came and wanted to improve their knowledge and skills. Ina K., who worked for a long time at Niki's mountain pasture prolonged her stay at Kirpal Sagar to support the dairy farm.

The agricultural seminar on November 14, „practise of sustainable agriculture“ had Niki present on the stage and at the information booth, speaking to others from farmer to farmer. Kirpal Sagar provides hotspots of exchange, knowledge and experience, to develop the surrounding as well. Niki emphasized that healthy food for the health of the animals is important in order to produce healthy food, as visitors could see with own eyes.





Founder's Day of Kirpal Sagar Academy

Nov. 15th is the founder's day at Kirpal Sagar Academy. Guests from far and wide as well as from abroad came to be part of the festivity. This time Josef B. from Germany was the chief guest.

The Academy is a private school with KG and classes 1 to 12. Students get there their exam. It is an English-medium school, a fact that helps it expand international cooperation and exchange and diminishes obstacles. Teaching is according to CBSE-standard. The Academy is a boarding school and also accepts day scholars.

Scholarships are provided to poor students.



What has happened inbetween

A group on a walk through the fields, to the foil houses? and the mushroom farm. The profits meet the needs of the project, the surplus adds to cover the costs. Parminder und Karamjit Singh accompany the group. They are the children of the „guardians/ caretakers“ of Kirpal Sagar; Dr. Harbhajan Singh und Surinder Kaur.

After the fields they went upstairs on the roof to see the first solar panels.



To meet the needs of the World Conference in 1994, a guest house was built. There the western visitors live during their stay.

Langar hall

The next stop was at the future langar hall (common kitchen). There pillars for the roof are already standing.

The soil was prepared by volunteers from Kirpal Sagar as well as from abroad. (digging the earth, filling with bricks, compacting and finally cementing the floor).



Chapatis in the oven, traditional flat bread made of wheat.



Medical camp

Sebastian A. opens the free medical camp for poor and needy persons from the surroundings, performed by the staff of Charitable Hospital.

Patients were checked (blood pressure, blood sugar, thyroid hormones) where necessary also by X-Ray.

Information of patients and relatives was done, several booklets and pamphlets waited for the readers. In the 5 day camp approximately 500 patients got free medicine. Some were brought to hospital to undergo surgery.



Medical support in Kirpal Sagar started in 1982, just after leveling the scene and laying the bricks for the first multi-purpose building.

Dr. Harbhajan Singh's hospital in Nagkalan and the Kirpal Sagar Charitable Hospital became the base of the medical camps within a short time. To bring medical investigation and help directly to the villages especially for the poorest of the inhabitants, often is the only way to get access to medical supplies.

The hospital is a charitable non-profit institution. The focus lies on help for poor persons, mainly in out-patient sector. Day and night, seven days per week it is open for its patients, open for emergency cases. Till the year of 2014 the numbers of operations in the field of general surgery rose, especially for operations of hernia and gallbladder.



Mr. Agarwal, hospital administrator and orthoptist, checks the eye-sight of a patient with the help of a slit lamp, which was bought with donations a short time ago. Since the camp started in March more than 40 operations were done without fee. The Mobile medical unit was also in charge.



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An Award for the Academy

Out of 500 schools in India, the Kirpal Sagar Academy received the Brainfeed School Excellence Award in the category „Best Day cum boarding and innovation practices school.“ The award is provided each year in 20 different categories by the Brainfeed magazine. One reason the award may have been granted was the new multimedia room where a video-conferencing system was installed and which enables connection with a teacher or specialist far away. The focus lies on preparing for the final exams as well as exploring one’s own skills, and getting an idea of what to do after graduation. The natural sciences are especially conducive for such an additional feature.

New music instrument

A music teacher from Austria brought a vibraphone with him, an instrument which is quite ideal for India and its rainy seasons. It consists of aluminium and is resistant to rust or detuning. The gift was introduced with a nice concert where the teacher showed the scope of expression and virtuosity. As in years before he gave lessons on drums.

In several workshops young people can get vocational skills in handicraft fields. A special kind of „vocational training“ is just coming out, where school and job are combined.

Women like the courses in sewing and other crafts, an easy way to increase family income.



In March news from the „National Institute of Open Schooling“ announced that Kirpal Sagar got the accreditation for some courses:

plumber/welding, electrician, cosmetician/hairdresser, tailoring, computing/programming.



Day of the mother

12th May, mother's day in Kirpal Sagar.

The supreme judge of SBS Nagar district visited the fathers' home and had some surprises in his bag for the ladies.

Earlier, the Academy had an art competition. The best pictures and paintings received prizes and were featured in an exhibition in the fathers' home. It was an honour for the chief guests to inaugurate the exhibition.

In the Fathers' Home there are elder people, whose families cannot care for them sufficiently. Here, they feel safe and accommodated and can further take part in social life.

It is a nice tradition in Kirpal Sagar, that the students of the Academy visit the people living in fathers' home from time to time. There they do sewa (a kind of selfless help).

They clean, talk to, and exchange views with the elder generation, who like to share their experiences with the younger ones.

Work at Langar Hall continued

In May, work at the langar hall continued. Since many years, meals were taken, sitting on the floor under the open sky, in traditional long rows side by side. In the rainy season, a nearby shelter was used. In the future, the new hall would provide enough dry space for all.

The earth was levelled and strengthened, many hands took out the excess earth. Some of the pillars which have stood there for more than ten years will require replacement. Winds and the weather had not been too kind to them. The pillars will carry the roof construction.

Langar - a common kitchen which supplies more than 300 persons per day with traditional vegetarian food. During major events, thousands take part in having meals.



Many inhabitants of Kirpal Sagar and grown ups like to help in the parks. Doing something together connects people, and as a side effect, money can be saved and used for other urgent needs.



Interreligious conference

A major interreligious conference took place in Amritsar in 1974. Unity of Man, the responsible body behind Kirpal Sagar, was also invited to send speakers.

Representatives of different religious faiths and communities, like yogis and swamis, met there. Some of them had also been to Kirpal Sagar before, contributing to conferences there.

The conference was broadcasted in Punjab. The invitation to come to Kirpal Sagar was spread in February 2019, on the occasion of the 125th birthday of Kirpal Singh, the founder of Kirpal Sagar.

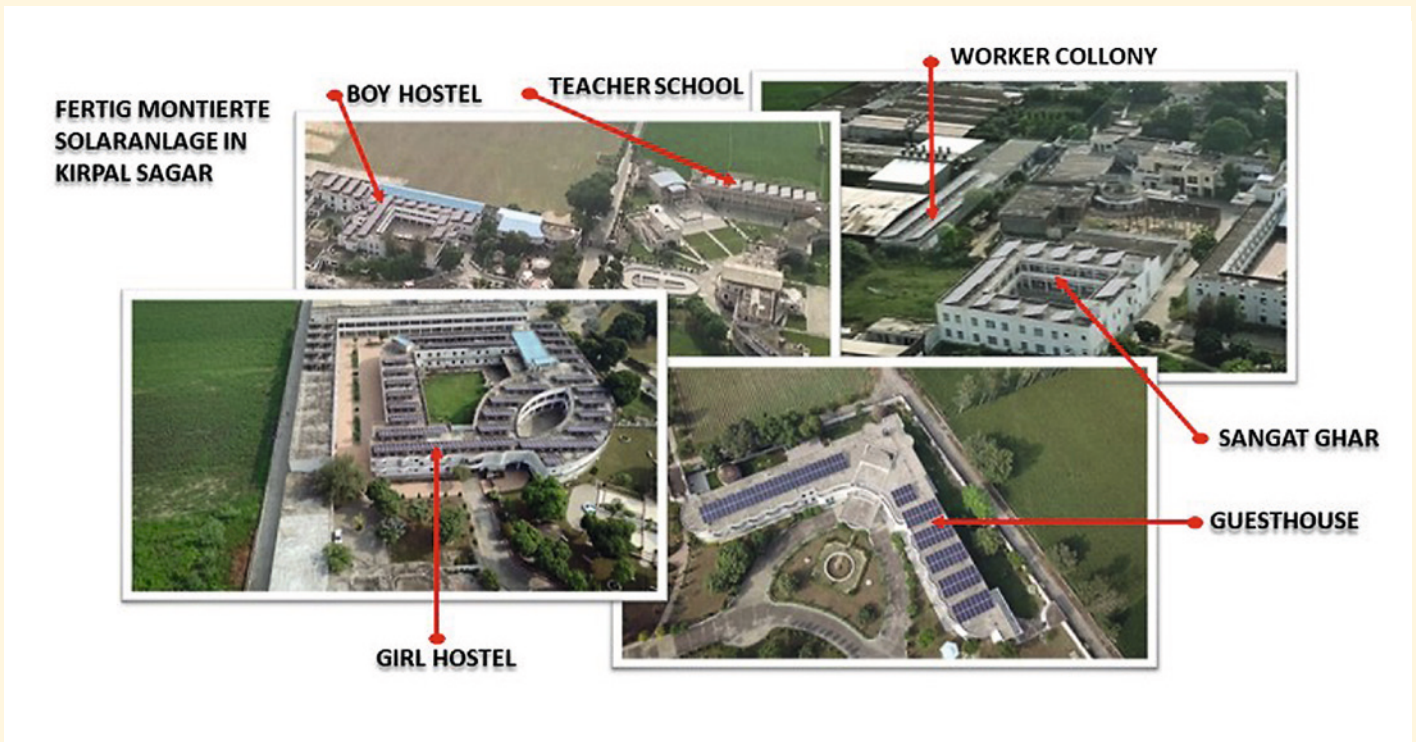
A few times a year, the doors of the major assembly hall (bhawan) are open for conferences. Representatives of several religions and religious groups sit on the platform and speak about the interconnecting link of all living beings. The idea and initiative as well as the first piece of land in Kirpal Sagar, came from Kirpal Singh – the initiator of the first world conference on Unity of Man in 1974 in Delhi. Tens of thousands of participants from near and far took part in that conference. Kirpal Singh summarized that the key to solving the problems of each individual as well as the problems of division among mankind lay on the base of man (= human being), less in speaking but much more in practical deed and action, in sewa to man, land and the whole planet, according to the motto: one ounce of practical life is more worth than tons of theories.



Not only the Solar plant grows

The solar panels now cover more and more roofs in Kirpal Sagar, inspite of the heat. At daytime it's more than 40 degrees Celsius and the nighttime temperature doesn't get less than 25 degrees.

In Kirpal Sagar there are many fruitbearing plants like oranges, papaya, pomelos, which grow up to the skies after the rainy season.



Inauguration

On August 31st, a first part of 250 kWpeak of the solar plant was connected to the cables.

At 10:00 a.m., the program started with the opening ceremony. Then the panels were connected with the electric supply network.

Since then it has been producing electricity. An electric meter shows the amount of electric current produced. Next week the second part with 250 kWpeak shall be connected to the grid.

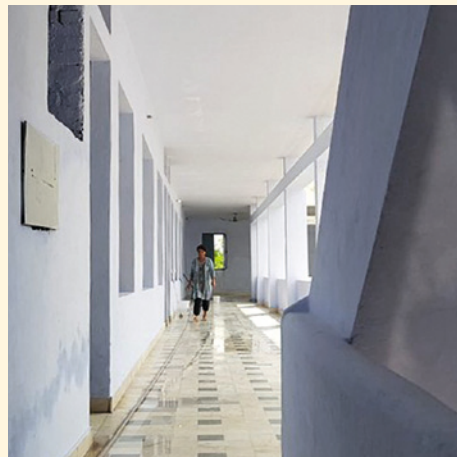


Further award

The Academy got the award in nationwide school ranking test „national school award“ as best residential boarding school of the year 2018 in Punjab.

Congratulations!





Renovation

Work behind the langar continues, also renovation work in sangat ghat, the lodging for the volunteers.



Photovoltaik, 3rd step

On October 9th, work on the roof of the fathers' home was taken up again. There, a further 200 kW_{peak} solar panels shall be installed. Till November the connection to the grid is expected. Together with the previously installed 500 kW_p, Kirpal Sagar will have more than 700 kW_p at the end of the year, covering some 65% of power requirements.

Climate change is evident. The temperature in the summer season is getting hotter. At night time, the temperature is hardly falling, which means more power is needed for airconditioning and more rooms that need cooling.



more than 30 years ago ...



*Each of us is unique in his or her own way.
Behind the life of each individual,
who comes into the world,
is a divine intention.*

*No one was created without meaning
and we should learn something from everyone.
That is the secret of humility.*

Kirpal Singh

*Give a child a palace and all the amenities,
and it becomes a useless person in this world.
Give him right understanding instead - love,
free from own interest and attachment.
If such a child finds itself in the wilderness,
it will be able to build a palace there.*

Harbhajan Singh

*I believe, that there is something in everybody,
That enlightens, when we see others
and come to know them,
And that we all are a light for other people.
In my life I experienced,
That through a little, little thing,
Which is done by somebody,
Other persons are backed and led furtheron.*

Albert Schweitzer

*Many common people in various common places,
Who do a lot of little, little things,
Are indeed able to change
The world's face
from Afrika*





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