



Children learn the 'green way' at the Kendriya Vidyalaya at Kolar Gold Fields



CARING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Taking development to new heights, BEML Limited is committed to value-creation for society. The company has taken up initiatives that preserve the natural resources and enhance the life of the community

For public sector BEML, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a well-orchestrated activity with tangible outcomes, such as installed capacity of green energy meeting 75% of its power requirement. The sustainable development programmes have a huge impact on its business, society and the environment. “CSR is ingrained in the company’s DNA. Through CSR, we address issues affecting the company’s ability to achieve its mission with efficient utilisation of resources,” says DK Hota, Chairman and Managing Director, BEML.

With a goal to support the government’s efforts in nation building, the company formulated its CSR vision: “To commit for enhanced value-creation for the society, our shareholders, other stakeholders and the communities by taking up activities and initiatives for sustainable growth for the society with environment concern.” And for this, it has taken up many projects in the vicinity of its units.

The company has set in place a dedicated team to execute and monitor its CSR activities, which are undertaken with the avowed aim: “To reduce the impact of operations on the climate, preserve natural resources to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

BEML Limited (formerly Bharat Earth Movers Limited) was established in May 1964 as a manufacturer of rail coaches, construction and mining equipment. The Miniratna Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) is under the Ministry of Defence and caters to three prime verticals: Defence & Aerospace, Mining & Construction and Rail & Metro. The three verticals are serviced by nine manufacturing units located at Bangalore, Kolar Gold Fields (KGF), Mysore, Palakkad, and a subsidiary unit, Vignyan Industries Ltd, in Chikmagalur district.

Employee participation is the key to keeping the complexes green and clean. Green drives are conducted regularly. Tree plantation in all the premises has mitigated 19,361 tonnes of carbon emission

Hota reiterates that the success of the projects lies in the way the society views them as “a company driven by intrinsic (genuine) rather than extrinsic (profit-led) motivation”.

To realize meaningful results from its CSR activities, the company has earmarked thrust areas for its CSR which include education, skill development, healthcare, environment, community development, women empowerment, sustained development leading to self-reliance and creation of plastic-free zones.

Environment

To do its bit for the environment, the company conducts Green Drives regularly within and around its units where employee participation is the key to keeping the complexes green and clean. The company has planted over 18 lakh saplings till now. And this tree plantation has mitigated 19,361 tonnes of carbon emission for 2018 -2019.

Each unit has been given the responsibility of keeping the area green. The many varieties of plants and trees have won much recognition here. “The complex houses a nursery and we have won many awards for landscaping,” the CSR team says. The Bangalore complex has a Navagraha Vana at the entrance. “Each plant relates to a particular planet and has been planted by eminent visitors,” says a member from the team.

Just a few minutes drive from this complex, the unit has transformed 100 acres of land through its green drive. As the company plants trees annually in this gated enclosure, this green cover now provides oxygen to the neighbourhood. Bio-diversity flourishes here. It is home to butterflies, birds and insects, which are vital for the planet. Over the last 10 years, the unit has distributed around 3,000 medicinal saplings to the employees.

With its vast landscape, BEML Nagar in KGF owes most of the green cover to the constant plantation drives conducted here. The green golf course here was once a rocky, barren land. It took close to three decades of hard work to bring it

Students sit by the wall where educational slogans are painted, so the message is never forgotten ▶





Rejuvenated lakes and ponds help to recharge ground water

As BEML Nagar in KGF does not have any defined boundary walls, the green drives here are spread across open grounds. The result is creation of pristine wooded areas which attract deers and other smaller animals such as wild rabbits and boars

to its current state. It is now a recreational zone as well as a marvel in beautiful man-made landscaping with plenty of flora and fauna. Peacock feathers are frequently seen on the ground showing the presence of natural habitat in the landscaped area.

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The company has also developed an eco-park in KGF where over 7,700 saplings have been planted. These include almond and evergreen trees and medicinal plants. The survival ratio is 90 per cent. As the team monitors this closely, new saplings are planted the moment old ones dry or die. Like the Bangalore Complex, the KGF Eco Park also has a Navagraha Vana. As of now, only official personnel are allowed inside this gated area. This ensures that plant life flourishes without any hindrance. Pathways will be made before the park opens for all. The company also fulfilled its promise of planting 10,000 trees in 2019.

Similarly, the Mysuru Complex has more than 70 per cent green cover. Environment consciousness is ingrained in each of the BEML units as it is one of the CSR management's goals that the company has set for itself. A group of senior personnel planted saplings before beginning their training session. The complex now has 32 new trees.

The clear vision of a green planet full of different life forms is visible in the training calendar of the company. Each month is dedicated to a migratory bird and gives information on that species. The Centres of Excellence, where all the skill development training takes place, have gone a step ahead by printing a bird on the certificates given on completion of the programmes. "These initiatives are constant reminders that we share the planet with other species whom we need to take care of," says a member of the team.

Even before the decision taken by the government to eliminate single-use plastics, the company had taken a pledge to become

a 'no-plastic zone' in all its units. It has eliminated the single-use plastic bottles from its premises, passionately championed by CMD Hota. "Employees and guests are encouraged to use environment-friendly products and glass bottles." At every turn of BEML Nagar, KGF, one can see signs of 'We are at a plastic-free zone'. The signage is a reminder that plastic is harmful for the environment and does not degrade for centuries. During the 'Swachhta Pakhwada' weeks, employees go all out to clean the premises and the areas around the units.

Water Conservation

With water scarcity becoming a major issue across the world, BEML Limited is working on ways to conserve water and work for maximum utilisation of water resources. It has helped in rejuvenating the Bethamangala and Ramasagar lakes in Kolar. Spread across a huge expanse of 997 acres, these are the main sources of drinking water for the villages in that region. The land was desilted and vegetation removed for rainwater harvesting. These ponds also help in ground water recharge.

Water bodies have also been created across BEML Nagar for the same purpose. These water resources are mainly used by the wildlife in that area. Within the golf course, check-dams and planned leveling have led to the creation of water bodies. Besides rainwater harvesting, these also prevent soil erosion and enriches soil fertility. Even in the Mysuru Complex, two ponds have been created for ground water recharge. At the KGF unit, a rooftop rainwater harvesting unit has also been installed.

Education

Knowledge leads to a good base and results in a progressive nation. Following this motto and to catch people young, inculcate values and proper education in them, the company has set up four schools under its umbrella. Here, education is imparted from nursery to pre-university (PU) levels. In 2018, around 3,309 students benefited with quality education provided by BEML schools. Out of this, 1,789 were non-BEML wards, making up 54% of the students in the schools. The company also provided 12



'value education kits' to the teachers of the schools it operates in KGF and Bengaluru.

The teachers in these schools take a holistic approach towards development and education. J. Sudha, Principal, Government Secondary School, KGF, says, "We focus on the overall development of the student. Cultural activities and sports programmes are held regularly. The school has an eco-club as well. Yoga and meditation classes are also held." Students to the BEML schools come from the neighbouring areas, rural belt apart from employees' wards. The school is affiliated to the Karnataka State Board.

From infrastructure in the schools to staff salaries, BEML Limited takes full responsibility of its schools. It ensures that the facilities are at par with any private school in terms of fully equipped science laboratories, libraries, sports facilities, and school buses.

Students at the PU level in KGF are happy to get admission in these institutions. Yogeshwari Bai, for instance, was studying in St Joseph's Convent earlier. She left that and took admission in BEML School as "this is the best school for education in science". Her father is a painter, mother a housewife and brother is studying at the ITI in KGF. Vedha, a student of first year PU, is also happy to have joined the school. She wants to graduate in science and become a lecturer. She lives in D.K. Halli. Her father is a carpenter and mother a housewife.

Right next to this school is a Kendriya Vidyalaya. Affiliated to CBSE, this school is also fully supported by BEML Limited.

(Above)
At schools supported by BEML, every morning is bright; and (left) ITI interns being trained on machines in Kolar ▶





◀ Simulator experience at the Centre of Excellence

Here, green practices are encouraged. The school has a compost pit and garbage bins are clearly marked, while rain and roof water harvesting is also being done. Tree plantation drives are common and a medicinal garden has been also set up in the premises.

The classrooms in the schools have also been carefully designed to impart proper knowledge and values among the students. Classroom walls have been painted with educational slogans to make health, hygiene and environment friendliness a daily habit. A wall with value-based slogans has also been painted in the premises. "The focus is on environment and conservation of natural resources," explains Dr Rubina M.R., Principal of the school. "All the students get a potted plant on their birthday, which is why the entrance is all green now. They paint the pots themselves. Children have also learned vermi-composting and ways of saving water." The school got an award for its green initiatives as well.

Besides being green, the school also has a focus on new methods of teaching and digital learning. It has six e-classrooms which are fully equipped to provide digital education and are at par with any modern school. The students take part in state and national-level science exhibitions and competitions frequently. Meritorious students have participated in national programmes like 'Pariksha pe Charcha'.

Skill Development

Professional skills open new avenues of earning and offer sustainable livelihood to people. With technology being the company's strength, the 'Centres of Excellence' in the units offer skill training to students, employees as well as to people from the neighboring areas. The company has adopted government ITIs at KGF and Mandya districts in Karnataka. The youth come here for their internship.

At the Centre of Excellence in KGF, a big batch can be trained. Regular training sessions for upgradation of skills are held. At the Mysuru Centre of Excellence, a digital classroom has been made complete with a digital display board. Around 230 students from ITIs are trained here annually. The students get a practical know-how of machines when they are trained on the simulators. Even graduates from engineering colleges are trained here to make models of the machines.

BEML has also donated 17 machines and various assemblies to five ITIs. The company provided one BL9H Loader along with tools kits and aggregates. More than 400 unskilled contract workers, engaged through service providers, were provided three months' on the job training in fitter/welder/electrician trades. Skill development courses have also been conducted for youth in naxal-affected tribal areas of Odisha.

BEML's apprenticeships for students of ITIs and vocational skilling centres have benefited many. The PSU also promotes rural community programmes, including those for infrastructure development

For those looking to enhance their other skills, BEML Nagar, KGF has an LWF Activity Centre. Here, people from in and around the unit can enroll in various courses. There are computer courses, yoga, vedic mathematics and abacus classes. Women can learn tailoring, take up a beautician course, or even opt for Bharatnatyam classes. Western dance classes are on the anvil. The centre has associated with a driving school to teach the interested ones how to drive. A diploma course in para medical science is also available. There is even a course on calligraphy for children. With expert teachers, the centre offers summer camps and short-term training sessions also. The centre has tied up with a computer school, Golden City Computer Education, to teach programming and other useful softwares. A lot of retired personnel also come as everyone wants to learn how to use a computer.

Healthcare

As healthcare access is limited in remote locations and villages, the company organizes regular medical health camps around the units. The range is vast around KGF. In a 20 km radius, a camp is held every fortnight and around 1,500 patients are treated annually.

"Normally three camps are held at the same time in different villages. The villages of Oorgam, Marikuppam, Champion Reef, and Ajjapalli have a constant influx of patients. All records are maintained and medicine is given free of cost. The common health issues seen in the area are diabetes, hypertension, dental problems, and musculoskeletal disorders," says the doctor at a camp in Marikuppam. As an ambulance accompanies the doctor, emergency cases get immediate attention and are sent off to the nearest government hospital for further care. Some are also sent to the BEML Medical Centre. The hospital treats around 36,000 patients in a year.

Even the Mysuru unit conducts regular health camps in the surrounding villages. Aids and appliances have also been provided to the specially abled through the Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO).

Malnutrition being a malaise, the company provided mid-day meal for students for a year in association with Akshaya Patra Foundation in Bengaluru. It has also provided them a vehicle for food transportation.

Tuberculosis and polio camps are also held from time to time. Children are the largest beneficiaries as more than 30 per cent get free access to the polio immunisation programme. An annual voluntary blood donation camp is also organised at the BEML Medical Centre. With over 100 units of blood collected, 30 units are preserved in the blood bank and 70 units shifted to the government hospital.

Sanitation

Clean habits lead to good health. Following this, the company gives full support to the government's Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. It has built many toilets in the government schools around the units. Along with the local authorities, the teams do a survey to assess the needs. "We give complete infrastructure with storage tanks and flush, so that they don't face any problem in keeping it clean," says the CSR team.



Healthcare camp at Marikuppam, KGF



Boys and girls in many schools around the units now have access to clean and good toilets



BEML supports sports and has given a ground to a cricket academy

Around the Bangalore complex, toilets were constructed for girls in the Government Higher Secondary School in the neighbouring village of Harohalli. In tune with the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, the company enacted a skit in two rural schools to educate the villagers about cleanliness. And now the students are doing it in real life themselves to make this a part of their lives. The girls and teachers are very happy at the school in Kodihalli, as they now have a sanitatised place. Five toilets have been built in government high schools at Doddachinnahalli and Doddur, KGF. Out of this, three are for girls and two for boys. Toilets for the challenged ones have also been built in some schools.

Sports

From knowledge to physical abilities and sports, the company has taken a 360-degree view in its CSR activities. A playground at KGF reverberates with shouts of runs and wickets. A quiet ground in the day, it becomes a vibrant cricket academy in the evening. An enthusiastic coach, Appu Jaykanth wants his students to reach the national team as well as play for the Ranji trophy. "This is life for me," he says enthusiastically, having trained established cricketers like Manish Pandey, Mayank

Agarwal, Robin Uthhapa in Bengaluru. "I also want to make a regional team." He approached the company with this proposal two years back. "My father retired from BEML and when I expressed the desire to start an academy, he suggested this." Students of all age groups are welcome in this academy.

Sustainable Rural Community

From building toilets to organising healthcare camps, the company has been moving on the sustainable development path in and around its units. In Kolar district, it has adopted the villages of Dasarahosahalli and Ajjapalli. Around 55 per cent of population here belongs to socially and economically weaker community.

G. Naraayanappa, ex-chairman of Ajjapalli, is joyful as he talks about the facilities the company has given. With almost 140 families, the community needed help with the entire infrastructure. BEML constructed toilets, septic tank, soak pit, created good roads, cleaned the drainage system, installed a new bore well and fitted it with existing water pipelines. It also made provisions for drinking water, provided solar street lighting and concrete garbage bins.

VOICE OF CHANGE



GEETHA
Village Ajjapalli, KGF

The 27-year-old braveheart was awarded for saving many on a January evening.

“During my apprenticeship in 2013-14, I saw honeybees attacking the people after the shift was over. I quickly burned some paper and dispersed the bees with the smoke. Now, I work in the security team.”



VEDANTA, KGF

The eight-year-old is happy learning abacus at the skill development centre.

“My father is a farmer. I have become better at mental maths now.”

Support & Awards

Going the extra mile to support women, the company supports the KGF chapter of the Women in Public Sector (WIP) forum. This has been created under the aegis of SCOPE. This forum takes up many cultural, sports and aid programmes. It has helped in fund raising and sending goods to areas affected by natural calamities such as earthquake and floods. BEML Limited provides the transport logistics for these projects.

Honouring a braveheart, the women’s association and Labour Welfare Association felicitated 27-year-old Geetha, from Ajjapalli, for saving colleagues from a bee attack. Fresh out of ITI, she was an apprentice at the unit in 2013-14. One day, honeybees emerged out of a broken honeycomb and attacked the people coming out of the unit. The young girl quickly ran inside, burned some paper and dispersed the bees with the smoke. Now, she is working on contract with the company in the security team.

Waste Management

With an employee base going into thousands, the company has an internal check on waste. To manage food waste, the company has installed biogas plants in its units. Here, organic and canteen waste is turned into cooking gas. At the Bangalore and KGF complexes, these cylinders are used to make tea and snacks for the workforce.

Around 3,000-4,000 lunches are served per day in the canteen at Bangalore. With the installation of the biogas plant, the unit saves around Rs 90,000 per annum on gas expense. In fact, since the establishment of this plant in 2017, food waste has come down

significantly with the workforce monitoring their own waste. Boards with the message of ‘Do Not Waste Food’ have been put on the canteen walls in the units.

The Mysuru Complex offers support to the local authorities in the town. As Brindavan Gardens at Mysuru are a famous tourist spot, a lot of garbage collects there. The company sends machines to dispose of this garbage at the designated dumping ground. At the KGF unit, a 500KLD sewage treatment plant has been established. The treated water is then used for watering the area. An absolutely clean and well-managed space, this has no stench or trace of dirt in the treated water.

Green Company

Besides green cover, energy-efficiency is another area that BEML Limited is focussed on. It has set up a 5 MW capacity wind power generation project at Gadag, Karnataka. There are 18 MW capacity windmill projects at Bagalkot and Koppal districts, Karnataka. With these projects, 75 per cent of the company’s energy needs will be met, enabling it to become a ‘green company’.

All the units have made full efforts to reduce the consumption of energy. Solar energy is used for lighting in most areas. The Mysuru Complex has a 200 KW solar panel. LED bulbs are used within the premises of all the units, to encourage saving of electricity.

To sum it up the BEML way, “Implementing green practices in home and office can reduce waste, conserve natural resources and improve both air and water quality while protecting the environment and lending a hand towards bio-diversity”. 🌱



With a 200 KW solar panel, Mysuru Complex is energy-friendly