



S.A.S. GOVERNMENT DEGREE COLLEGE
NARAYANAPURAM, WEST GODAVARI DISTRICT-534411
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BEST PRACTICE

PRESERVATION OF STUDENTS RECORD ON TODDY LEAF MANUSCRIPT

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY



SAS GOVERNMENT DEGREE COLLEGE
NARAYANAPURAM
ELURU DISTRICT

Project Overview:

In the heart of intellectual exploration at SAS Government Degree College, our BA students embark on an exciting project under the whimsical banner of the "Making Toddy Leaf Manuscript and maintaining student's record on it." This unique endeavor blends the traditional with the avant-garde, much like the rich tapestry of toddy leaves in the cultural heritage of our region.

Activity date:

The process started on 3-12-2022 and preparing leaves for writing went on for twenty days. Then each student of History is allowed to record his/her information on the leaves. This could be preserved for more than two hundred days.

Activity conducted by:

The department of History and Telugu conducted the activity.

Resource person:

MSK Krishna Jyothi, Lecturer in History, SRR & CVR Government degree college is invited as the resources person for assistance in the activity.

Aim:

The aim of the Toddy Leaf Manuscript Making Project is to revive and preserve the traditional art of creating manuscripts from toddy leaves, emphasizing its historical and cultural significance, while promoting sustainability and community engagement.

Objectives:

Cultural Preservation:

- Document and preserve the traditional craft of making manuscripts from toddy leaves to safeguard cultural heritage.

Skill Revival:

- Facilitate the revival of the skills associated with toddy leaf manuscript making among artisans and interested individuals.

Authentic Manuscript Production:

- Successfully produce authentic toddy leaf manuscripts using traditional methods, from leaf selection to the final stages of writing and preservation.

Sustainable Practices:

- Promote the use of toddy leaves as an eco-friendly alternative to conventional paper, emphasizing their biodegradability and sustainability.

Documentation and Education:

- Document the step-by-step process involved in toddy leaf manuscript making through written and visual materials.
- Develop educational resources for schools, colleges, and cultural institutions to raise awareness about this traditional craft.

Community Engagement:

- Engage with local communities to involve them in the project, ensuring that the knowledge and techniques are passed on to future generations.

Cultural Awareness:

- Increase awareness and appreciation for toddy leaf manuscripts through exhibitions, workshops, and cultural events.

Preservation Techniques:

- Explore and implement preservation techniques for toddy leaf manuscripts, including the use of natural substances like mustard oil, turmeric, and camphor.

Introduction:

The Toddy Leaf Manuscript Making Project is centered on unraveling the historical significance of traditional manuscript creation using toddy leaves. By delving into the historical roots of this ancient practice, we aim to comprehend the cultural and knowledge preservation aspects embedded in toddy leaf manuscripts. Our project doesn't seek a revival of the tradition but rather focuses on the thorough understanding of its historical context, cultural rituals, and the unique characteristics of toddy leaves that make them a distinctive medium. Through this exploration, we aspire to shed light on the past and showcase the significance of toddy leaf manuscripts within specific communities. The record of college students on paper and in the computer is normal in these days. We go with Toddy leaves just to understand the difficulty and strength of our ancestors.

Methodology:



Collection of the leaves

The methodology involves thorough research, skill revival workshops with local artisans, sourcing toddy leaves sustainably, and faithfully replicating the traditional process, including boiling, drying, and assembling manuscripts. Collecting the leaves: Healthy and big leaves are collected from the nearby farm by the students.

A meeting is held in the college explaining the significance of the Toddy leaf manuscript in the ancient times. Department of History and Telugu conducted the meeting. A guest attended from SRR&CVR GDC, Vijayawada, explaining the procedure of making the manuscript. Principal and other dignitaries on the dias spoke on the occasion.



Dr.TK Visweshwara Rao, speaking on the occasion. Manuscript making expert attended the meeting from Vijayawada.

Slicing the leaves: Proper leaves are sliced



Rolling of the leaves: The leaves are rolled and tied



Boiling the rolls: The leaf rolls are boiled on the stove for more than one and half an hour. Water turns green as the chlorophyll present in the leaves comes out.



Drying the leaves: The leaves are dried for more than four hours under direct sunlight. Change in the colour of the leaves is observed after drying them.

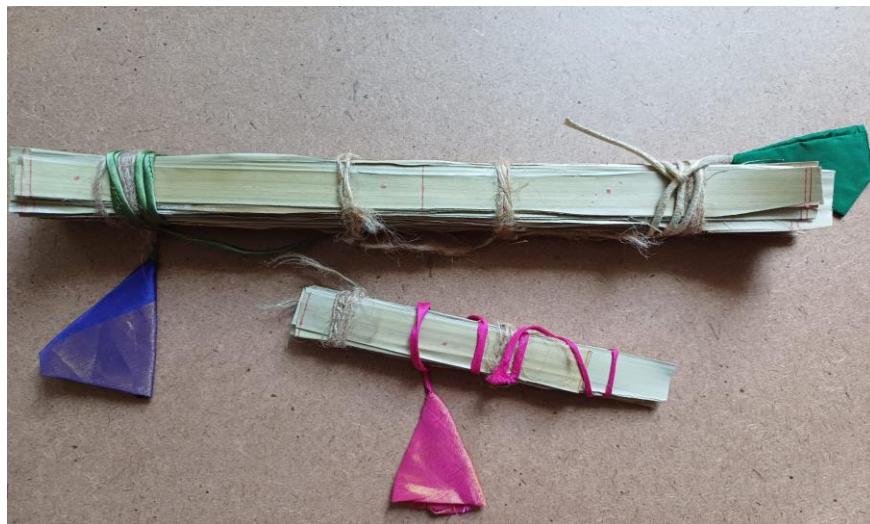


Piling the leaves: Leaves are piled and tied to twelve inch rulers and kept under weight for four days.



Pressing the leaves for few days

A needle like structure is used to write on these leaves. The entire leaf is rubbed with water colour. Then colour is wiped. Some remain of the colour settles in the grooves formed by the needle and we can see the impression of letters. Wooden boards are arranged on both the sides of the book. All the prepared leaves are applied mustard oil, haldi and camphor mixture to avoid insects to spoil the leaf. At the end a hole is drilled and the book is tied with a thread.



An ordinary paper remains for a hundred years. Where as the toddy leaf book remains for more than 500 years.



Outer cover made up of plywood



Two sides' protective cover



Ready to use Toddy leaf empty book

We can write anything on this toddy leaf sheet with a needle or nail. The entire leaf is rubbed with colour and wiped off. Colour settles in the grooves made by nail/Ghantam. A mixture of mustard oil, haldi and camphor keeps the leaves away from insects.

Recording student information:



Students making the record



Writing on toddy leaf



Wiping the colour



Making the book for future reference

Outcome of the Project:

Embarking on the journey of creating a toddy leaf manuscript using ancient methods is a thrilling and enchanting endeavor that transcends the ordinary realms of bookmaking. The very process evokes a sense of connection with history, a vibrant tapestry woven by the hands of our ancestors centuries ago.

The toddy leaf manuscript is not just a book; it is a living artifact, a tangible bridge connecting past and present. The thrill lies not only in the creation but in the immersive experience of resurrecting ancient practices, infusing new life into a tradition that once thrived in the hands of those who came before us.