

Sittilingi Run 2023

What went well..

- Good turn up - Many youngsters and children from all the surrounding villages participated beyond our expectations. On the final count, we have about 428 runners and about 20 volunteers...



- Warm support and participation from Ananya and Marudam children along with several good friends and well wishers. This really pepped up our spirits too.



- Excellent planning and team work - Spear headed by Ram and worked together by Ravi & Ravi, Suresh and Anu & Krishna in Sittilingi. And Santosh, Balaji and Bu through weekly calls and later before the event.



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- Beautifully hand written bibs on reusable cloth pieces by our Thulir teachers and lovingly written thank you cards by our Thulir children was a very warm gesture.



- Good route marking - Again, thanks to Ram, Balaji, Ravi and Suresh for the marking the previous evening.
- Registration was smooth - Thanks to Prema's organizing skills, and volunteers Gayathri, Santosh, Sowparnica, Jeevila and others who helped in registering people as they came.
- The weather was perfect for the run. And the Sun kept its promise to lift the fog in time for the run.
- The timing was good - There were no delays in starting or serving food. I was surprised to see so many kids who had taken the 5 am bus to get to the venue in time for the run.
- Excellent warm up dance by RD and Christy (even though Christy had a very busy night)
- Well organized Aid stations and Volunteers- thanks to Ram, Santosh, Balaji, Rajamma, Chutty, bharathi, Srinath, Sathya, Sendhil, Lenin, Chintamani, Chitra, Priya, Santhi and Pravin (kindly add if I have left out any volunteers?). There were absolutely no issues or confusions over the route or the aid stations at all.
- Cheering those who completed the run- Anu and Krishna, Govinda and many others continued to cheer and congratulate the finishers as they kept coming.
- Food was great- This was one of the highlights of the event. Almost all the participants, children and adults thoroughly enjoyed the simple pongal served after the run. All of this was cooked by three of our women cooks- Theerthammal, Jeya and Malliga, who tirelessly worked from 3 am to get the food ready on time.
- As eco-friendly as possible - Use of recyclable cloth bibs and using lime juice and bananas at the aid stations were a great idea. There was hardly anything that went waste except for some leftover food. All the Ananya and Marudam kids and many of our guest took a dip in the stream, thereby saving water for bathing too!!

What did not go well

- Poor registration- we couldn't register anybody before the event inspite of spreading the word. People expecting something (like t-shirts) from the run, and not able to see their health benefits.

- Some food got wasted- The plates were small and I think many people did not go for second helping. About 10-15% of the food was left over – but went into the compost pit for our SOFA trees.
- Delay in getting food for Ananya kids before they left- but everything worked out well in the end.

What we could better next time

- Improve registration numbers – probably have a deadline for registering and get those registered to run together in each village to prepare themselves for the run. We could do a 20 k for them.
- Provide t-shirts or some other mementoes- I am not sure if we should try to give some mementoes for even the local children and adults. Many might cherish the memories of the run for long time. We should look into the cost and the moral value behind giving such gifts.