



## Harekarakamba 2009



*Organised by*

Development Research Communication and Services Centre

*In collaboration with*



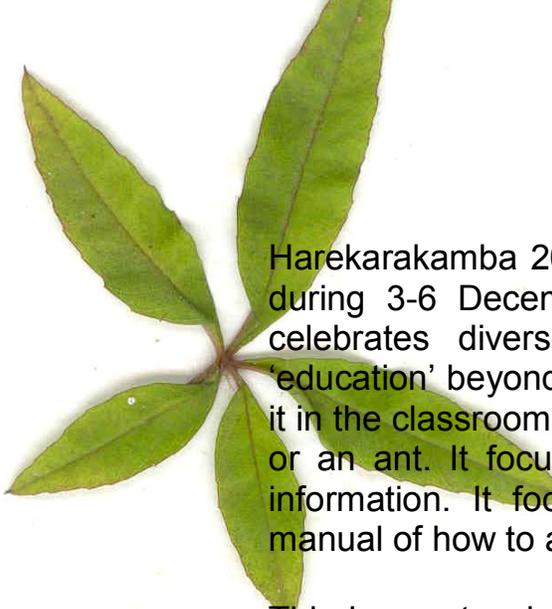
Comet media Foundation



*Save the Children*



Birla Industrial & Technological Museum



Harekarakamba 2009, in the fourth consecutive year, was celebrated during 3-6 December. Harekarakamba is a unique festival, which celebrates diverse approaches to learning. It tries to perceive 'education' beyond its usual meaning, it focuses much on learning, be it in the classroom or out of the classroom. Be it learning about the sky or an ant. It focuses creation of knowledge rather than swallowing information. It focuses on acquiring skills rather than reading the manual of how to acquire that skill.

This is a networked effort by many leading organisations of Kolkata, which brings a special dimension, creativity and enthusiasm to the fair. In some ways, they have made the fair a culminating point of their year-round activities and a showcase for their new achievements.

#### The festival

- creates awareness about approaches to quality education which can be adopted at low cost or no cost and gives direct acquaintance with such models.
- disseminates these ideas to people working in both formal and non formal education
- brings together creative minds with new approaches to education and gives them scope to share their innovations with the public
- creates a meeting ground for children from all walks of life to participate and perform in a variety of cultural exchanges, and special efforts are made to ensure that under privileged children come to the fair

*bal vividha* was initiated by Comet Media Foundation in Mumbai in 1998 and has been travelling from place to place across India for the past decade. Held in Kolkata since 2006, as Harekarakamba attracts some 5000 visitors a day at the Birla Industrial and Technological Museum (BITM) campus on Gurusaday Road. As the fair gains in popularity, the number of visitors keeps growing each year and in 2009, the fair had a footfall of 20,000. It was Organised by Development Research Communication and Services Centre (DR CSC – [www.drcsc.org](http://www.drcsc.org)) with support from Save the Children, Comet media Foundation and BITM.

In the next few pages we will go through a brief report of what happened this year.

**SHOBDO  
KOLPO  
BHROM**  
sound | image | illusion



## Shobdo Kolpo Bhrom, *the film festival*

In the last week of August 2009, Kolkata experienced a unique event for youngsters, it was Shobdo Kolpo Bhrom, a movie festival for youngsters to view and discuss films from all over the world.

Subha Di, Subha Das Mollick, the Festival Curator, collected film from various places. She was assisted by the Preview Committee (Premanshu Dasgupta, Rupali Sachdev) to take the tough decision of selecting a few from some great films across the world.

The screening took place at two venues. Organized school groups came to the auditorium at the Birla Industrial & Technological Museum for two shows every day – 10am to 12 noon and 1pm to 3pm. All the six shows, spread over three days ran to full houses. The evening shows at Nandan III were open to all, where children could come with their parents. Unfortunately, very few children turned up for the evening shows. The seats were filled by adults – film students, film makers, film scholars and lovers of good cinema. Most of them stayed back for an animated discussion after the screenings.

The purpose of organizing this festival was two fold – one, to offer to the young viewers a diversity of stories, a diversity of characters and their concerns and diverse ways of telling stories - and secondly, to explore the pedagogical value of movies. Movies and television, that capture a large part of the child's time and imagination, rarely become part of the classroom discourse. Yet, a lot of topics can be easily introduced through movies and a lot of imaginative exercises can be devised based on the movies screened in the class. Even if screening facilities are not there in the classroom, reference to popular movies and television programmes by the teacher will not only pep up the classroom discussion, but also help her question the ideology behind these popular programmes. This would in turn make the youngsters view the mainstream media critically.



At the inauguration of Shobdo Kolpo Bhrom, the chief guest Sabyasachi Chakrabarty said that in spite of being usurped by the capitalists in promoting a consumer culture, television was a great teacher. He himself had developed his love for wildlife and values of ecological conservation through the programmes viewed in Discovery and National Geographic. Chakrabarty also lamented the fact that in a country where generations of children have grown up on Thakurmar Jhuli, the present generation has got hooked on to Harry Potter.

The films selected for the festival were an eclectic mix of short fiction, short docu features, animation films and even one hour long documentaries on serious subjects. They were films from all over the world – Mongolia, China, Brazil, Europe, USA and of course, India. All the films had children as central characters, but all the films were not necessarily made primarily for children – and practically, none had a moral in the end. In other words, the films were not conventional morality tales – as children's films are expected to be. The films were grouped under themes like

“Ambition”, “Friendship”, “War & Peace”, “Triumph of Will”, “Children Express” and “We’re Like That Only”.

What added a unique flavour to the festival were the introductions to all the films and the interactions at the end of every screening. Somebody who loved and understood the medium well, introduced the films to tune the viewers to the visual syntax of the film. This was necessary because the young viewers are exposed to stereotyped audio visual styles in the mainstream media – be it cinema or television. At this festival, every film was different – different in what it had to say and how it was said. The introductions gave the viewers an idea of what to expect. The interactions following the screenings helped the adult facilitators in understanding the cognition process of the children – what they noticed, how much they noticed, what they liked best and what remained with them. For example, after the screening of the delightful short animation film “Shaun the Sheep”, where a gibberish art work done by the sheep gets sold at high price, one child remarked philosophically that beauty lies in the eye of the beholder. This simple film, which had a flock of sheep, an artist and his pet dog as the characters, any teacher could have taught the fundamentals of commune, collective labour, communism and capitalism. A teacher could also have initiated a discussion on good art, bad art and the landmarks in art history through this film. Of course, in a classroom situation, the teacher would have shown the film more than once to initiate the discussion on the different subjects. The films were facilitated by Abhijit Dasgupta, Anjum Katyal, Neha Banka, Malini Mukherjee, Premanshu Dasgupta, Rohit Dasgupta, Rupali Sachdev, Subha Das Mollick and SV Raman.

The wise quips by the young viewers made Shobdo Kolpo Bhrom a memorable experience. Altogether 28 films were screened in three days. Ten schools had sent their children to the screenings. In the nine shows put together, more than 1000 children and adults viewed the films.

Shobdo Kolpo Bhrom was an activity of Harekarakamba, an education festival to celebrate diverse approaches to learning. The organizers of Harekarakamba are grateful to Goethe Institute Max Mueller Bhavan for lending the films of Prix Jeunesse Suitcase and to Kolkata Sukriti Foundation for lending the films of the INPUT collection for Shobdo Kolpo Bhrom. We are also grateful to Cine Central, Drik India and Nalandaway for lending some films from their collection.

#### *The traveling fest*

Besides the screenings during the four days of the festival, special screenings were held on request at several venues – schools, recreation clubs and institutions. At these screenings, the audience was more homogeneous and the discussions were more intense. At most of these screenings, the young viewers were engaged into doing some activities before the start of the screening. The activities helped them to get tuned to the films to be screened.

The first screening on request was held at Kishore Bharati School, Dum Dum. The day was the 6<sup>th</sup> of August – Hiroshima Day and the film screened was a Japanese animation film “Grave of the Fireflies”. For the Shobdo Kolpo Bhrom team it was the first such screening and for Kishore Bharati School it was the first ever film screened in their school premises. There was a lot of excitement among the teachers and children.

Special screening at every venue was a different experience and brought its own rewards. The weekend screenings at Little Palms were a fun filled popcorn viewing experience. There were very small children – six years and younger, there were older children upto 12 years of age and there were parents. All of them interacted before and after the screening and enhanced the joyful atmosphere with their wisecracks and comments.

At Anando, the children huddled in front of the TV set and devoured the films from different countries. Since most of the films were visual treats without any dialogue, the language barrier did not come between them and the lives of children they were watching on screen. The older children were shown the feature film “Baaja”, produced by the Children’s Film Society. This charming film about a little boy and his mouth organ held the viewers spellbound, even though it was devoid of the usual masala elements of mainstream Indian cinema.

We are grateful to Jagadish Bose National Science Talent Search for giving us the opportunity to reach out to a group of youngsters from North Bengal. The last day of a follow up workshop organized for these students was dedicated to screening films right from breakfast time. The first in the list was a television programme, where two little children prepared peanut butter and put together their own breakfast of peanut butter sandwich and orange juice. The last film to be screened was "Beyond Belief", an inspiring film on how differently abled youngsters successfully completed a difficult expedition on the foothills of the Himalayas in North Bengal. Among the other films shown to this group was "Little Terrorist", a short fiction on the Indo Pak border.

All in all, it was a wonderful bouquet of films that included animation films, fiction as well as documentaries. The children enjoyed watching all the three genres and surprised us with their appreciation for documentaries. Shobdo Kolpo Bhrom has opened the minds of the viewers to diverse stories and diverse ways to tell stories. The films have brought out the pains and pleasures of growing up, without being dogmatic about what is right and what is wrong. We do hope that they will leave a lasting impact in the minds of the children.





## The Colloquium on Education for Sustainable Development

*'If you want to think one year ahead, plant rice, If you want to think 10 years ahead, plant trees, But if you want to think 100 years ahead, give education to people.'* –Chinese proverb

### *Background Preparation*

Malini Mukherjee and Priyanka Bhaduri jointly coordinated the colloquium. Both, after having chalked out the key objectives with the core committee, made a draft plan, which was shared with Sri Ardhendu S. Chatterjee in detail, who fine tuned the plan. Anshuman, the festival coordinator contacted Mr. Manabendranath Roy of Save the Children's Fund and he promptly agreed to extend support to the colloquium. The sessions and the speakers were selected according to the focus of this year's theme, Education for Sustainable Development. We had decided to keep space for child speakers as well to learn from them how they think their education to be.

### *Audience*

The audience comprised of more than 150 representatives from schools, colleges, teachers training colleges, universities, educational institutes, NGOs, GOs, Corporate bodies and educators from all over West Bengal.



### *Inauguration*

Subha das Mullick, compered the colloquium. She welcomed all to the 4<sup>th</sup> Harekarakamba and introduced the relevance of the theme of the colloquium.

Thereafter, Malay Mukherjee , a filmmaker and musician entertained the audience with 2 relevant songs of Pete Seager (*What did you learn in school* and *Little Boxes*) which comments on the education system. Malay da's excellent foot-tapping rendition of the songs, and the message of the songs, was an appropriate beginning to the day's activities.



It was an unexpected privilege to have Mr.G.S.Rautela, the Director General of NCSM at the inauguration. Mr. rautela cited several interesting incidents from his vast experience to point out that Science learning is not about big gadgets, but about an open mind which would investigate, probe, solve, analyse, synthesise and create knowledge. He emphasized hands on learning and learning which is life centric. This was echoed by Sri M.Islam, the present director of BITM, who welcomed all and express his willingness to extend support in future too.

Ms. Ludmilla Chakraborty, who is a Russian story writer, told a story for the young audience – Topsy-turvy country, which tells about a country where children has to look after adults, do office, earn money and what not!

Sri Manabendranath Roy, State Program Manager, Save the Children introduced the activities of SCF. He also spoke about their target groups, namely the street children, children from brick kilns, and those in domestic labour and *biri* rolling. He emphasized the need for a sustainable model to address the needs of such children. He appreciated endeavors of forums like Harekarakamba and assured future support..

Inspite of his failing voice, Chief Guest Sri Sabyasachi Chakraborty, a renowned actor, wild life photographer, theatre personality and favorite Felu Da, mesmerized us with his short speech. He



spoke about the redundancy of many learning which our present system of education considers "important" and emphasized on that which we learn everyday from life and from everybody. He invited all to join hands in helping programmes like this to celebrate learning in all its forms.



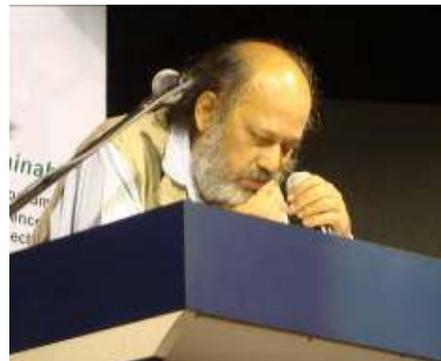
Smt. Chhandita Mukherjee, Director, Comet Media Foundation explained the motive behind the conception of Harekarakamba and its components. She welcomed DRCS as it has taken over the mantle to locally organize Harekarakamba in West Bengal. She suggested alternative ways in which Harekarakamba could be planned in future, eg: instead of having one big mela, small components could be broken up. The Balchitrapat could be offered to schools as a package, small melas could be held in school compounds, and the likes. She thanked and wished luck to all who had contributed since its inception.



Sri Anshuman Das, Festival Coordinator and Secretary of DRCS addressed the young participants and shared what a *mela* actually means. According to him it is an informal meeting place to share, learn and have fun collaboratively. He emphasized the importance of learning from small experiences of life and from all walks of life.

*Key Note Address by Sri Ardhendu Shekhar Chatterjee*

Sri Chatterjee presented his views on what he considers to be a sustainable development education. He defined education to be a process which prepares recipients to manage their lives more efficiently. Sustainable Education, according to him teaches "sharing and caring" and hence it builds a sense of responsibility towards the community, society and the environment. He emphasized the importance of understanding Ecology and hence learning to preserve it through a sustainable plan. He also upheld the importance of collective knowledge and stated how humans have, since time immemorial; build upon their past knowledge to create a knowledge bank which should be optimally utilized. This knowledge does not only lie enclosed within educational institutions but in all professions, all communities, and all social stratum. It is important to expose students to this vast repository of knowledge.



## Session 1

### *Reaching the Unreached*

Bal Raksha Bharat, a part of Save the Children International Alliance is working towards child rights across 12 states in India. In this session, Save the Children presented 3 partners who had been working with them to assure education for children who come from a very disadvantaged background.

### *Working with the Street Children*

CINI ASHA had been working through some formal schools to ensure education to the street children. The field coordinators, peer educators, formal school children and a child from the target group presented their experiences. The children from schools - Modern High school and AG Church school shared enthusiastically how teaching street children had also been a learning experience to them in many ways. They shared the initial challenges related to education (like teaching mathematics) as well as awareness of health and hygiene, and small strategies which they tried to overcome these. Khusboo, a beneficiary child, sang a Rabindrasangeet. CINI ASHA have mainstreamed 80 children so far.

### *Working with the Brick Kiln Children*



*Alamin – “I haven’t committed any crime that I will no be allowed to go to school!”*

Narayantala Mass Communication Society had been working in 80 brick kilns in 2 blocks. The teachers of the informal schools presented the initial challenges which they faced in convincing the families to send the children to schools. Alamin, one of the 2 children from brick kiln shared his initial resistance and how he overcame his apprehensions to join a venture which had benefited him in so many ways.

### *Working with the Child Domestic Worker*

Kajla Janakalyan Samity is working in Purba Medinipur to stop children to be migrated in cities as child domestic workers with support from SCF. They presented one case study of a child and one of the school principal shared his experience on how he created space within the difficult mindset of the community and school to enroll those disadvantaged children.



## Session 2

*Experiments and experiences in Content, Pedagogy and Delivery Mechanism of Education for Sustainable Development*

*Abhijit Bardhan of Science Communicator's Forum, Science education- A leap from books to everyday life*

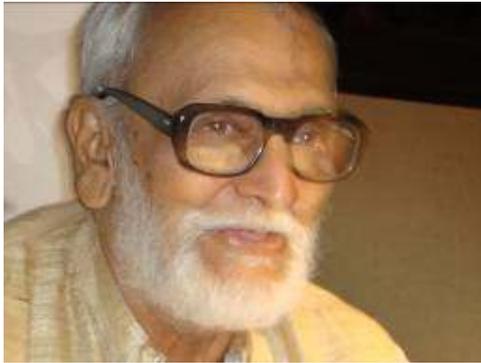


Sri Abhijit Bardhan shared his experiences of science learning in childhood. It was, according to him, rather dull and daunting. Hence, he went ahead to explore the avenues of Science learning, which would make learning science meaningful and enjoyable. He spoke about the Vigyan jatha days and the inception of Science Communicators' Forum. He shared on hands on science learning through low cost no cast TLMs in classroom and through science camps.

*Mihir Sengupta of Kishore Bharati School, Inculcating values of responsible citizenship through classroom processes*

Sri Sengupta, a veteran educationist and the founder member of Kishore Bharati school, charmed the audience by citing several anecdotes from his life as an educator, to establish the importance

of morality in education. He lamented the dearth of social morality in the present day and shared strategies by which students could be encouraged to built values useful for his social life.



*Srimanti Sarkar of IISER, Kolkata, Technology in developing 21st century skills in classroom*

Through a power point presentation , Ms. Sarkar shared how she has used ICT in classroom to develop 21<sup>st</sup> C skills like Communication, Collaboration, Media literacy etc. She showed slides to establish what advantage a colourful powerpoint has over illustrations drawn in books. She also advocated a judicious use of technology, or else the purpose might be lost.

*Sri J. J. Chattopadhyay of West Bengal Board of Secondary Education, Towards Education for Life*

Sri Chattopadhyay shared the importance of learning beyond the boundaries. He spoke of the endeavors of the WBBSE in rehashing the curriculum, syllabus, textbooks and methodologies to promote education which is life centric. He emphasized the importance of Life skill education and EVS in this regard.

The session was moderated by Sri Samar Bagchi , who stated that sustainable development comes from developing a creative mind, which is much lacking in our school system.



**Session3**

*Through Our Eyes, Panel of 8 children, moderated by Samantak Das, Jadavpur University*



It was long envisioned that the colloquium at Harekarakamba should have children discussing education. Hence, this year a panel of 8 children was formed. These were children from all levels and forms of schools. There were students from English medium private schools and government schools, Bengali medium government school, NGO run schools, brick kiln children and child domestic help .

Mr. Das took chatted away with them for more than an hour in an adjoining room allowing them to debate and discuss on serious education issues. The panel discussion on stage was a showcasing of this discussion.

It was revealing to hear how children responded to questions like whether there should be punishment in school, is uniform necessary, should children take tuitions, how important is examination in the school system and such others. It was also interesting to note how the views differed with the social background of the students.

#### *Wind Up*

Ardhendu Shekhar Chatterjee, DRCSC

Sri Chatterjee summed up all the sessions and took up the important areas which emerged in the sessions like concern regarding non availability of resources, and even, space for activities for children, lack of accountability in the system or democratization of education where even the child has the right to choose and comment upon his education. He also discussed the future prospects of Harekarakamba and invited suggestions from the audience on how the interested educators who think differently could come under one umbrella to do something worthwhile to address areas of education which are unattended to by the formal system.

There was an open session after this and many educators expressed their enthusiasm to be a part of the fair or any other networking activity which could be beneficial for the students and the teachers.

Ms. Das Mullick and Malini extended a vote of thanks to all.

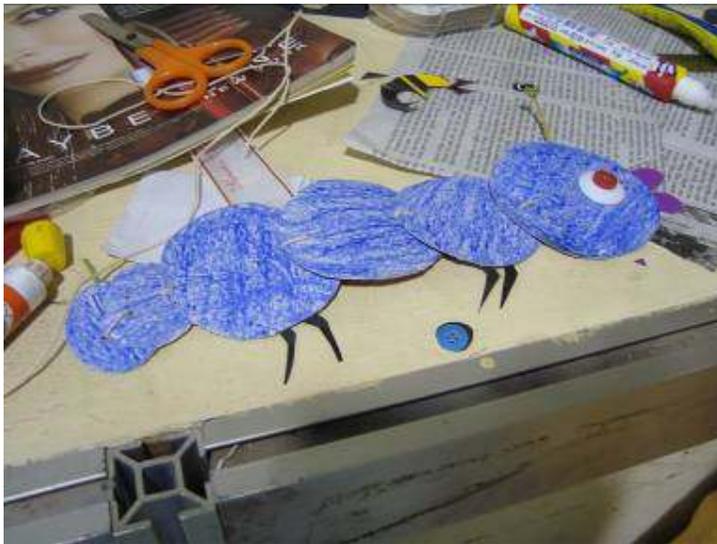


## Workshops for children and educators

This year Harekarakamba's workshops kicked off to a flying start in October under the coordination of Gitanjali Ghosh and Suhita Basu Mallik. Six workshops were held, three for teachers and three for young people and the response to all of them was encouraging. These workshops were mostly of three days duration. A total of 25 schools and organisations participated enthusiastically in them. This was followed by 10 one day workshops during the festival.

### *Workshops for Teachers*

#### *PUPPETRY IN EDUCATION by puppeteer Subhasis Sen.*



This workshop was focused on using puppets in the course of regular classroom teaching. 24 teachers and educators took part. Over three days the participants explored how versatile puppets could be and how they could enhance the learning process. They also learnt how to manipulate puppets and use voice modulation. The workshop ended on a high note with everyone creating their own puppets using every day materials. The feedback from the participants was

enthusiastic. The majority felt that puppetry in the classroom would not only help make lessons more lively but could also help motivate students to learn better. Puppets could also help both the teacher and student increase their creativity.

“Excellent! Never knew that puppets could be used this way. I thought they were useful only in story telling and entertainment!” : Davinder Virdi, Children’s Foundation School

#### *ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE: Know Your Surroundings by Anshuman Das, Surjakanta Das of DRCS*



Aimed at demonstrating how EVS or Environment Science can be taught with an easy hands-on approach the workshop too had a “learning by doing” environment. Instead of simply disseminating information, it encouraged participants to try out every activity and draw their own conclusions. It thereby demonstrated that retention is better and the class is more interesting if students learn and discover on their own rather than be spoon-fed information. Several participants commented that they had learnt new skills and activities at the

workshop. Many appreciated the way teaching environment science was linked to other subjects as well. The experience was summed up aptly by a participant who said “I would like to apply what I learnt to my classroom AND to my own life.” 19 teachers and development professionals took part in it over three days.

“I was surprised that such few words were spoken but so much delivered and imparted. My mind was working more than my ears!” Namrata Manot, parent

#### *CLASSROOM POLITICS by Roop Sen and Uma Chatterjee of Sanjog*

A workshop with a difference, this two-day event was focused on understanding the teacher’s role in classroom dynamics. It had a small group of 8 teachers participating. The group was kept small intentionally as the workshop was aimed at self-discovery. The workshop was exploratory in nature, with participants delving into their own experiences as students and then analyzing how those experiences affect their present role as teachers. There was much introspection with the facilitators encouraging participants to understand how experiences mould them as people and as professionals. The participants were unanimous in declaring the workshop a novel and enriching experience. They felt that it sensitized them towards the needs of their students and fostered a greater understanding of the teacher-student interaction.

“I learnt how I can interact with my students in a kind and empathetic manner and understand them better” - Kankan Banerji, NK Pal Adarsha Shihsayatan x

#### *LEAD THE WAY, Developing leadership skills by Somnath Gupta*

Leadership skills empower individuals to motivate themselves as well as others towards positive goals. While some are natural leaders, others may have untapped potential which may remain unexplored. The aim of the workshop was thus to understand leadership qualities and how to encourage it in a school set-up, both with teachers and students. 14 teachers from Bengali and English medium schools took part in this two day workshop. During the course of the two days facilitator Somnath Gupta used a combination of discussion and experiential games to enhance the leadership skills of the participants. This helped them to understand their own leadership skills and find ways of making the most of them. Ways of communicating with students as well as various techniques of teaching and communicating were also touched upon. The participants found the workshop beneficial and helpful. Many commented that they would be able to use the techniques learnt in their own classroom interactions. One teacher felt they would also help her deal with her colleagues. Several participants requested a longer workshop while others felt that more such workshops could be organized in their schools so that other teachers could also benefit.

“Two things that I learnt today which I will try to apply are to praise the students openly and criticize individually.” - Pushpalata Dugar, Arya Vidya Mandir

#### *PROJECT BASED LEARNING by Malini Mukherjee, Intel*

The aim of this workshop was to focus on making education learner centric and life oriented, where learners learn through research and activity based methods. In this regard Project Based Learning (PBL) is an essential component of the school curriculum. It not only encourages students to go beyond drawing charts and reproducing information but also helps them explore their world through an investigative process which helps them reach their own conclusions. The 24 participants were a mixed group from NGO run slum/street school, government schools and English-medium private schools. Facilitator Malini Mukherjee initiated the session by requesting the participants to share their own experiences while practicing Project Based Learning, a by-now familiar term, in their own classrooms. It soon emerged that in most of the schools, students are given topics on which they put up chart and posters. Ms. Mukherjee then went on to discuss the salient features of PBL with the help of a Power Point presentation and several examples.

The second session involved the participants getting into groups to work on a project. Handouts on how to plan, execute and evaluate the project were distributed to aid them. The groups then

selected topics, fixed goals, identified skills to focus upon and essential questions to be developed and finally set the activities required. They then dispersed to collect information through surveys, interviews, measurements, and research. On reassembling they recorded the data, analysed it and put up a presentation – some on charts and posters and some through role plays. The participants evaluated each others performances using the suggested evaluation tools. The entire session was activity based and life-centric with the focus on self learning and development.

The feedback from the participants was enthusiastic with all of them finding the workshop interesting and useful. Some participants said that it would help them improve their teaching skills and make their classes more interactive. Several appreciated the hands-on approach as they felt that doing a project themselves helped clarify their ideas. There were many suggestions for holding such workshops in the school so that many more teachers can benefit.

“Er onektai bidyalayaer babosthanponar modhey thakleo aro beshi shikhoke ei dhorer pashikhan dile samogreek bhabe eta chaloo hote pare.” - Sujit Sarkar, APC High School for Boys, Salt Lake

#### *PACK A TIFFIN, by Ankur Kala*

Fast foods and quick-fixes have taken over tiffin boxes like never before! And yet it is possible to make the tiffin nutritious and healthy and still keep the child interested in it. This was the premise on which this half-day workshop was based. It was open to both parents and teachers. However there were only teachers present that day. The two facilitators from Ankurkala started the session with a presentation on what comprises healthy food. This was followed by lively discussions about the topic and related subjects. With a small group of 6 participants it was possible for everyone to have a voice and so many opinions were aired. The discussions centered on the nutrition needs of children and interesting and exciting tiffin menus. The participants found the workshop informative and helpful. They felt that not only could they pass on this knowledge to the parents of their children but that they could also apply it in their own day-to-day lives. Most of the participants were teachers and all felt that this would be a very useful workshop for parents to attend. One participant strongly advocated a ban on junk foods in school.

“The workshop was very fruitful and an eye opener in many aspects.”- Irani Das, St. Augustine’s Day School

#### *CREATIVE STRATEGIES IN CLASSROOM by Ranjana Nundee*

Why are some children in the classroom different from others? Why do some disrupt the class constantly, trying the teacher’s patience and distracting their fellow students? Is punishment the only way to chastise such children? These were some of the questions which this one day workshop aimed to address. Facilitated by educationist Ranjana Nundee the workshop was intended for primary school teachers. During the course of the day Mrs.Nundee discussed ways in which teaching could be made more interesting and relevant to the students. She spoke of some of the common problems that students faced and drew upon the collective experience of the teachers present to find practical solutions and ways of handling these problems. The workshop also dealt with ways in which games and activities can be used to teach and hold the attention of the students as well as stimulate them and make them and question. An impromptu decision to involve a group of noisy children next door to demonstrate some techniques proved very effective! The reaction of the participants was very enthusiastic. They appreciated the interactive quality of the sessions and felt that they were going back eager to try out the new ideas they had picked up that day. Many commented that they found the discussions on how to behave with the child who is creating the problems in the classroom and disrupting it and how to hold that child’s attention very useful. The disturbance caused by a group of children visiting BITM sometimes made it difficult to hear clearly and several participants found it distracting. One of the participants commented that though he enjoyed the workshop he felt that these methods would be difficult to implement in a large classroom and that too much attention to disruptive students could take attention away from the more diligent ones.

“Mrs.Nundee not only shared her knowledge with us but also gave us a chance to share our own experiences and innovative methods of teaching with others” - Sutapa Chakraborty, Children’s Foundation School

### *COLOURFUL BLACKBOARD by Anshuman Das and Gitanjali Ghosh*

According to some, the blackboard is the best TLM ever invented. Thus this workshop was all about ways to use this vital tool in every teacher's repertoire, in an optimum and interesting manner and engage the students effectively. 23 participants from NGOs and mainstream schools attended it. Through discussions and activities, facilitators Anshuman Das and Gitanjali Ghosh explored innovative ways of using the blackboard, especially in situations when it was the only aid available to the teacher. Participants were involved in a series of imaginative games and exercises through which they learnt how to use simple illustrations and drawings to make their lessons interesting. Group activities brought home the importance of clarity and simplicity in blackboard usage as well as the benefits of planning its use ahead of the class. A demonstration of how pictures can be used to liven up a lesson had both the facilitators scribbling away furiously, creating pictures out of simple lines, to prove that teachers need not be artists to be able to draw! Several blackboard games were also introduced which the participants could use as "fillers" to encourage their students to use their imaginations. The participants found the workshop useful and were eager to apply the techniques they had learnt in their classrooms. Many felt that it would make their lessons more interesting and would help students retain what they learn in the classroom. Several commented that the workshop had taught them how to draw pictures effectively in a very short time. A few commented that actual use of coloured chalk would have enhanced the blackboard.

"Board work is not fully appreciated in many schools. It is considered the easiest way of teaching. But today's workshop has shown how it can be used effectively and in an interesting way to help children study and learn better." - Gargi Bose, Children's Foundation School

### *Workshops for Young People*

#### CLAY MODELLING by Smriti Gupta



Due to the large number of registrations this day long workshop was held twice with two sets of children. In all, artist Smriti Gupta taught 28 children how to model clay proficiently. The children were introduced to a technique of clay modelling where a rolling pin is used to flatten a block of clay into desired thickness. The clay is then moulded into different shapes to produce beautiful jugs, containers and artefacts. The children enjoyed this experience immensely. They had fun patting away at the blocks of clay without caring for their dresses, face or hands which

were gradually covered by mud! At the end of the day they produced beautiful art work which they will be able to take home once they are baked and ready in December.

"I want to come here and learn some more" - Ratik Prasad, Anando

## LIVING WITH THE MEDIA by Subha Das Mollick



The workshop was aimed at sensitizing the participants to the media, which is all intrusive in our lives today. The 28 participants included school students, students of a videography course and a few interested professionals. Over three days the participants analysed and deconstructed various media artifacts – images, texts, voices and videos. They also learnt to look beyond the projected images and raise their voices if they felt the need to do so. The participants emphasized that the

workshop was an eye opener to them, as it made them aware and conscious about the manipulative world of today's media. Many wanted to share their experience with friends and relatives.

“In order to become a complete citizen it is necessary to keep abreast of what is happening in your country. The media is our main source of news. I have learnt much about the media after attending this workshop” - Saurav Naskar, 13 years, NK Pal Adarsha Shikshayatan.

## *PROTECTING YOURSELF, by Ayesha Sinha*

A workshop aimed at promoting techniques for self protection. 18 young girls in the age group 14 to 18 years participated in it. Women everywhere have been conditioned through the centuries to think of themselves as the weaker sex. This workshop was visualized as a process aimed at personal transformation of girls and women from a state of powerlessness to power by creating a space where girls and young women can nurture, nourish and experience their strength, go through the process of de-victimization and emerge as capable, strong, empowered individuals. The workshop was conducted using the Wenlindo technique. The participants enjoyed the experience of the workshop and felt it gave them greater confidence to face difficult situations that they may encounter in their every day lives. They have emerged stronger, they voiced.

“In this modern and unsafe world we girls should be alert and the meaning of this workshop has got inculcated in my mind.” Somashree Chakraborty, 13 years, Children's Foundation School

## *WRITE NOW! A creative writing workshop with a difference by Swati Ghosh*



This one day workshop aimed to expose the participants to the magic of words and ways in which they can be moulded to express thoughts in an imaginative and unique manner. There were 21 participants between the age groups of 10 to 14 years from both Bengali and English medium schools. The workshop involved the children in a series of exercises which

had them writing about themselves, about memories associated to particular colours and about emotions evoked after hearing a particular piece of music. The last session...and the most popular.... had the children composing the autobiography of a random object that they were given. (torch, bell, scarf, etc.). They learnt how to expand on an idea and how to write both emotionally and factually. During the course of the day Ms. Ghosh stressed that creative writing was not only a creative activity but also a means of communication. She spoke of the role of imagination and presentation in creative writing and the need to pay attention to spellings and vocabulary. Simplicity and clarity especially were of vital importance, she underlined. In their feedback the children were very positive about what they had learnt. Several commented that they enjoyed the activities a lot. "Autobiography of an object" emerged as the most popular activity while some children said they found it difficult to write about emotions. The students said that the workshop helped them express their thoughts and learn new skills. They were appreciative of the facilitator's inputs, which they felt would help them improve their writing skills. Several children expressed disappointment that the workshop ended so soon!

"A very enhancing workshop where I got to learn the essence of imagination and creativity." - Somsree Chakraborty Children's Foundation

*LEND ME YOUR EARS, Learning to be a confident public speaker by Kingshuk Bandhopadhyay, Kolkata Creative Art Performers*

Speaking before an audience can be a challenging task. But facilitators Kingshuk Bandhopadhyaya and Soumita Sarkar demonstrated that it can also be entertaining and a lot of fun! 22 children in the age group 12 to 16 years participated in this one day workshop. They were from both Bengali and English medium schools. After a round of introductions the children jumped headlong into a day of interesting activities. Through these they learnt the basics of public speaking like how to make a good first impression, how to handle posture and how to appear presentable and confident. Issues like stage fright and how to overcome it were discussed. Using drama techniques the facilitators taught the children to speak clearly and audibly while paying attention to expressions and voice modulation. They were encouraged to come up to the make-shift stage and speak individually so that they could receive pointers from the facilitators and the group to enhance their own unique skills. The facilitators stressed the importance of graceful movements, presentation and most importantly, the power of a smile! Much attention was devoted to developing the skills of the individual child as well as to helping the group think creatively. The participants unanimously enjoyed the workshop and all of them mentioned that they would love to attend more such sessions. The games were of particular interest. Many of the children mentioned that the part they enjoyed most was collecting information from the fair and then standing up on stage to talk about what they liked. Some children did not find the story telling session interesting.

"I am a particularly introvert person and I have stage fright. The lessons of personal grooming her helped me overcome my fear. I feel a drastic change." - Debaroti Dutta, Aditya Academy

*RIGHTS AND WRONGS, Becoming a responsible citizen by Mirna Guha*

The focus of this one day workshop was to help the participants appreciate that one's rights as a human being usually go hand in hand with accepting the related responsibilities. Facilitator Mirna Guha used a host of activities to encourage the 15 participants to focus on rights that are applicable to them and to explore their roles in ensuring the protection of these rights while understanding the related responsibilities. The children participated in a number of games which helped them identify rights that were important to them. These were followed by discussions and exchanges which helped the children find ways to uphold their rights without fringing on the rights of others. There were also activities that involved depicting important rights artistically as well as writing about those rights that were important to individual participants. The participants were unanimous in their appreciation of the workshop. Several commented that they appreciated the methodology with its stress on activity and discussion. Some students felt the workshop had changed their way of looking at things while others said that it helped them to appreciate the viewpoints of others. Still others felt that it had made them better citizens.

"The workshop changed my way of thinking and contributed a lot to me." - Suryasis Ghosh, Aditya Academy

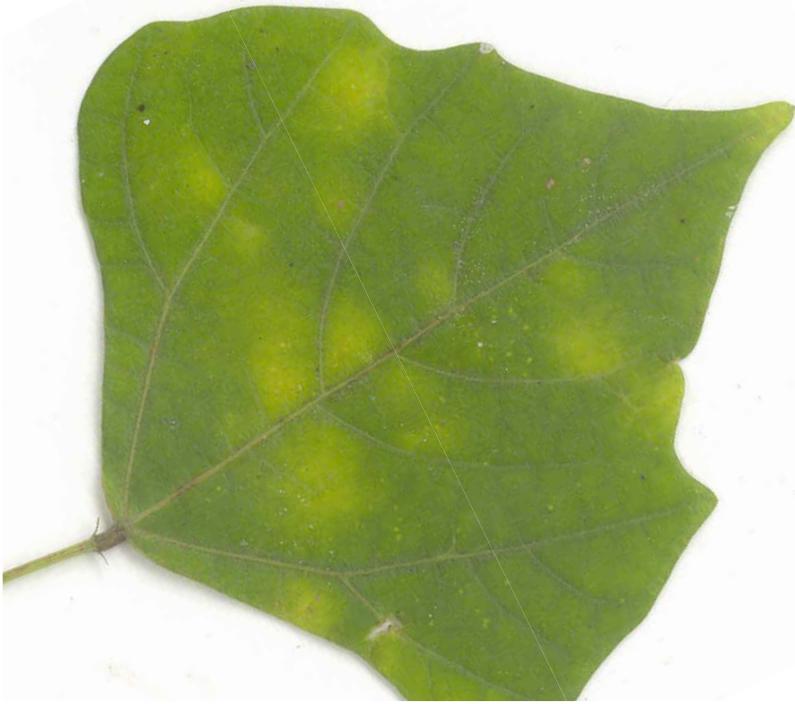
## CARTOONING by Debasis Deb



This half-day workshop was divided into two sessions. The first took the form of an illustrated talk by the facilitator, cartoonist Debasis Deb while the second half was devoted to the participants creating their own cartoons using the pointers given by Mr. Deb. 21 students aged 13 to 17 years attended the workshop. Mr. Deb began by stressing that cartooning is a humorous and direct method of conveying a particular message to the general masses. He clarified that an effective cartoon is characterized by its concept and the drawing ability of the

artist. He then went on to talk about the importance of facial expressions and body language in the cartoon and how they can be used effectively. He also spoke of the importance of popularizing cartoons because of their capacity to spread awareness without verbal communication. Mr. Deb punctuated his talk with several drawings on the whiteboard. Through these he demonstrated how a few lines could effectively change facial expressions, body language and movement. He presented an interesting insight into the history of cartooning and followed it with a power point presentation of the works of several famous cartoonists. The workshop culminated with the children drawing their own cartoons with individual inputs from Mr. Deb. The feedback from the children was positive. While some enjoyed learning the history of cartooning and learning about the works of famous cartoonists, others were fascinated by the facilitator's own drawing skills. Many expressed that they had learnt new skills and picked up useful tips from Mr. Deb. Several children enjoyed incorporating their new-found knowledge in their own drawings, though several expressed regret that the facilitator had to leave early and could not give them tips to improve their own cartoons.

I like the way Debasis Sir was drawing. He was drawing it so easily!"- Nikita Verma, Arya Vidya Mandir High School for Girls



# The Fair, Interactive Corner and Rangmanch



Finishing lunch quickly...



The art on display...



Posters on child rights...



Draw as you wish...



Talpata-r sepia...



Toy from waste



Let us draw...



Natural cure... herbal corner



Things out of paper



Bioscope...



The volunteer team...



Puppet corner...



The certificate...



Science through bubbles and balloons...



Knowing earthworms...



The other side...



The tiger...



Self make up...

The life of the fair is its interactive corners. We had, this year, a simpler form of corners under garden umbrellas. We had many interesting corners where children can try out things, express their creativity and do things which are not 'allowed' to do inside the classroom. Some of the stalls were Science experiments by BITM, drawing and story telling corner by Shamil, make up and acting corner by Jhalapala, toys from waste by Swanirvar, puppet corner by Simple puppets, Bioscope on Kolkata by Simple puppets, Natural pesticide and herbal medicine by DRCSC, Survey Corner by B.Ed. Students, Paper crafts by Anando, toys made of palm leaf, interactive corners by Little Palms, Medicine corner by CDMU, corner by Childline, Craft corner by Don Bosco Ashalayam etc.

This year a huge display board was set to display posters and photographs on Child Rights by Save the Children. The workshop outcomes were also displayed there.

The Rangmanch had some interesting performances by the child artists of Jhalapala, Sabuj Pran, Save the Children, Pubpaschim, Aditya Academy, Path etc.

The Rangmanch coordination was done by Ananda demymukherjee. Anshuman Das organized the Interactive Corners.

# The supporters

The major support was organized by Priyanka, Priyanka Bhaduri, who organized donation in terms of food packets from Haldiram, Sharma's Azad Hind Dhaba and Mandarin. Bhajahari Manna was also donated food for one day.

Sayanti, Sayanti Mukherji, though staying outside the city, helped in organizing donation in terms of paintings from prominent south Indian artists for raising fund. She also played a major role in selling some of the paintings and organizing exhibition.

The fair is grateful to some well known artists who donated their paintings for raising fund. We organized exhibition in K2 Galleries and Standard Chattered Bank, but unfortunately could not sale anything. We still have 14 such which can be sold for future fairs.

Comet Media Foundation and Save the Children extended their unforgettable help.

BITM staffs helped us a lot in organizing the fair.

Sri Abhijit Gupta volunteered in drawing the logos.

Cannel 10 was the media partner and this year it had a huge amount of media coverage by various media houses.

At some point of time, it was thought that the fair will not happen because of fund shortage. DRCSC, alone took the burden by spending half of the fair's budget (the total money spent for this year's festival was Rs.2,25,000) along with manpower support - before, during and after the fair.

There were a lot of supports from different corners which are milestones in organizing this.

The fair is especially thankful to Subha Das Mallik, Malini Mukherjee, Gitanjali Ghosh, Suhita Basu Mallik and Ananda Mukherjee for sharing invaluable thoughts, ideas and time.

Anshuman, this year's festival coordinators needs special mention as some very innovative ideas came out of his mind this year and he had ultimately sailed through the various odds, struggles and tough time while coordinating this.

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