



Yatra

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The pilgrims' progress...

FOREWORD

It was a humble beginning on 16th July 1979. A beginning full of sincerity of purpose, commitment and a sense of proportion.

It was the beginning of a journey (Yatra). A beginning based on FAITH, practice of distributive justice, and contributing to Nation Building. It was a journey which accompanied the poor through and through, a process for emancipating the vulnerables, to enable social change, to enlighten, to empower, to catalyse value based transformation and to enable capacities for decision making of the weaker section societies. A journey of service, full of adventures, struggles, challenges, success, even failures, of anticipation, expectation, of values, ethics, courage, conviction, self-reliance, promoting mutual help and solidarity.

It was a dream come true in phases as the work progressed. We had no clue on day one what the initiative would shape up to. However, optimism guided by hard work and consensus in decision making facilitated the achievements.

15th July 2004 marked the culmination of a quarter century of liberative action in partnership with communities, deprived of their basic equality of rights and opportunity.

The retrospection, introspection and the prospection of the journey is presented as an Institutional Memory titled "Yatra". The flashback, the memory of episodes of love, care, entrepreneurship, integration, mainstreaming, inclusion as it happened, is chronological in its evolution and worth celebrating. We have celebrated the "Child", "Family", "Partnership" and "Workers", all of whom made the Vision and Mission possible.



Silver Jubilee celebrations - meeting the President

This volume is presented in four phases namely, Formative Phase, Growth Phase, Consolidation Phase and Reaching-out Phase, looking forward to the future.

The Formative Phase narrates the birth pangs, histories, the identity, challenges embedded in service. The Growth Phase denotes collaboration, qualitative approaches, of growth challenges and extraneous interventions.

The Consolidation Phase recalls the maturity, conceptualization of ideas, vertical dimension of the interventions.

As we celebrated the Silver Jubilee, one cannot but lament the conditions of poor and challenges for those who are identifying with the poor. The bureaucratic, red-taped and corrupt system gives not much hope for poor. It is not a negative attitude or helplessness expressed but a reality check as experienced by an NGO

which has tried to do its share.

However, the future is still one of optimism, recognition, networking, advocacy and capacity building within and without.

On this journey, we have identified ourselves with large segments of society, receiving and giving, making it a mutually beneficial experience. We look forward to the next quarter century and to celebrate the Golden Jubilee.

Rtn. T.K. Mathew
Secretary & Chief Executive



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FORMATIVE PHASE

FLASHBACK

Its yesterday once more...

(in the words of Rtn. T. K. Mathew)

“

It all started way back in 1977-79 when three of the founder members- Mr. Y. Chackochan, Mr. P. J. Thomas and myself were office bearers at the St. Thomas Marthoma Parish in our capacities as Treasurer, Accountant and Secretary respectively. During those days, we met frequently. There was a general perception that as members of the Christian Church, we are isolated from the public and the Faith was not relevant since the faith practices were limited among our fellowmen within the church.

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This reflection led us to think and it yielded certain answers:

Witnessing faith

We asked ourselves, whether we were witnessing our faith in any meaningful way? How could we become relevant as Christians in Delhi?

Infact, we remembered the learning we had had in our native villages; the teachings at the Sunday school that a Christian has to be the salt of the earth, light on the mount and like a seed in the soil. The effect of this teaching-learning in our childhood and youth became questions to us. How do we become true Christians, the salt of the earth, light on the mount and seed in the soil, in our personal lives?

Here it may be pertinent to note what these three things mean in the life of a Christian.

*“Nothing splendid has
ever been achieved
except by those who
dared to believe that
something inside of
them was superior to
circumstance.”*

H.W. Longfellow



Salt of the Earth

Salt is a flavouring agent as well as a preservative. It adds taste to the food and even keeps food from getting stale. Salt is not for itself but for the food in which it is added. When added to the food, it loses its colour and identity, changes its structure and is therefore self-effacing. It is for this sacrificial nature of the salt that it is symbolically used in the Biblical exhortation. The question before us then was whether and how we were, as Christians, adding flavor to the life of others;

Light on the Mount

Light too, exists not for itself. If the light is on the mount or any such higher pedestal, it provides illumination to large number of people. Again the tenet therefore conveys that a Christian is expected to live a life by which others are enlightened or others can draw inspiration from.

Seed in the Soil

It is well known that the seed, by itself, does not produce anything and can remain so for long. However, when the seed in the soil comes in contact with water, it germinates and produces saplings. The saplings then grow to become a plant and the plants in due course produce flowers and fruits. Once again, in the process of giving life to a sapling, the seed shrivels, decays and loses itself. Similarly, unless a Christian is able to give up and commit oneself to nurture such a process of growth, the Christian life really would not become an abundant life.

*“ Were we
contributing to
others’ lives in
any way?”*

THE COMMANDMENTS

Of the Ten Commandments, the two most important ones are, 'Love thy neighbour'. and the concept of 'Distributive Justice'. Once again the question facing us was how do we relate it with our faith and become relevant to the society at large?

Distributive Justice

All three of us were born, brought up and educated in Kerala villages. We had the benefit of education, which had brought us to Delhi. That education was given to us by the civil society of that time, as there were no schools run by the government in that pre-independence era. It was the local elders who took the initiative of creating the infrastructure for the local school, pooling their own resources, many of them volunteer teachers; thereby facilitating us with our 'right to education.'

Infact, the fundamental right to education is a very recent development. In other words, we were given justice. Therefore we strongly believed that as custodians, it is our bounden duty to return to society what we had received in abundance. That is when we asked ourselves whether we were practicing distributive justice, by returning to society what we obtained viz. the education with which we had been empowered.

Service to the Nation

India was, at that time, less than 50 per cent literate. Even now we claim only 65 per cent literacy, which is again disputed. As loyal and patriotic sons of India, we pondered among ourselves as to how we could serve the motherland in a more meaningful way than merely being in employment. We felt that national service demanded, service to a Cause, which could enhance the status of the country in terms of growth and development. On considerable reflection, we felt that Education was that vital and decisive input, which could make a significant difference. Historically, it is well known that no nation has progressed and developed without educating the masses, meaningfully.

Based on such reasoning and deliberation, we concluded that as practitioners of the Christian faith, we needed to engage in some cause related activity relevant to our faith; concretize the concept of distributive justice and also serve the nation-building process. It was decided by the trio to undertake education of the needy, poor and deserving. It was also decided that our pursuit would not be commercial, but rather remain pro-poor. We identified our 'neighbor' among the slum dwellers and went in for educating the poor, living in and around slums.



(Sitting L-R) Mrs. Grace Thomas, Mr. C.M. Mathai, Mr. Punnoose Thomas, Mr. T.K.Mathew
(Standing L-R) Mr. Y. Chackochan, Mr. T.M.Abraham, Mr. P.J. Thomas

THE SEVEN FOUNDING MEMBERS

This thought process and the decision to launch a programme of education and reaching out to the poor necessitated having seven individuals as required under the Society's Registration Act. So the search for other four members began. The group looked for familiarity, cohesiveness and similar philosophical/ideological orientation. Infact the search was confined largely to the same community and the same worshipping unit. The process resulted in the following seven members agreeing to join hands:

1. Mrs. Grace Thomas
2. Mr. C.M. Mathai
3. Mr. Punnoose Thomas
4. Mr. T.K.Mathew
5. Mr. Y. Chackochan
6. Mr. T.M.Abraham
7. Mr. P. J. Thomas

Before the school started on 16th July 1979, a lot many things happened. The group of seven discussed the resource base and unanimously agreed that each one would contribute an amount that will meet the immediate establishment cost and some running cost. Each contributed Rs. 2500 apart from Rs. 100 as membership fee.

Here it is significant to mention that these seven who joined hands, belonged to the lower middle class, maintaining an ordinary standard of living. Hence the sum of 2500/- was a great sacrifice on their part, reflecting their earnest conviction and commitment to the social cause. Thus the seed capital for initiating Deepalaya was Rs. 17,500/- @ Rs. 2500 per member.

STARTING OF THE SCHOOL

A place was needed to run the school. None of the house owners was willing to provide a house on rent for running a school. However a person who knew Mr. Y. Chackochan for a long time and who had alternate accommodation gave his house situated at F Block Chittaranjan Park.

We had identified the venue at South Delhi since Mrs. Grace Thomas, who had agreed to run the school, was shifting in that vicinity. It is worthwhile to mention here that the sum of Rs.17, 500 was applied in the following manner: -

1. To the landlord as advance rent – Rs. 10,000.
2. A cycle rickshaw for – Rs. 1400.
3. Play things like rocking boats and horses, see-saws, mats for children, etc. The balance amount was kept for the recurring cost for first few months.

In order to reduce the burden of rent on Deepalaya, Mr. Y. Chackochan, the Hon. Treasurer and family moved into the same premises and shared the rent. During the day, the drawing room of the two-room accommodation was utilized as the nursery with considerable disadvantage and inconvenience to the Chackochan family. They used it as their drawing-cum-dining room after the school hours. Mrs. Grace Thomas had to put in more money than what we gave as a stipend to commute from Rajinder Nagar

to Chittaranjan Park. The rickshaw-puller, an ayah, a teacher and Mrs. Thomas were the initial staff. On day one, the school had five enrollments. These included Silvi, the daughter of Mr. Chackochan and Roshni, Ms. Thomas's granddaughter. The grounding from Mrs. Thomas has proved so beneficial, that both remained very bright students throughout their lives. Today, Silvi is

on a scholarship, pursuing a PhD degree in the USA and Roshni is a Fashion Design Consultant. They are the first fruits of Deepalaya, which one can truly celebrate!

The children paid a sum of Rs. 30 as fees. To supplement these meagre resources, during the first five years, we took to publishing souvenirs (advertisements), selling raffle tickets, organizing a fete n' fair. The members' families prepared eatables and donated these to Deepalaya to be sold in the stalls.

Attempt to acquire land

for the school

Our enquiry revealed that in order to run a school or to obtain land, a Society is to be registered. Hence we decided to form a society named — “Deepalaya Education Society”, with the group of seven as the founding members.

”



The first tiny stars of Deepalaya. Also seen in the picture are Ms. Grace Thomas (centre); to her left is Ms. Bharti, the first teacher; to her extreme right is Ms. Shanti, the ayah. Ms. Thomas is flanked by Roshni (right) and Silvi (left).

REGISTRATION OF SOCIETY

None of the members had any experience of registering a Society. The following were unanimously elected as the honorary office bearers Mr. Punnoose Thomas as the President, Mr. Y. Chackochan as the Treasurer and Mr. T.K.Mathew as the Secretary. The Secretary, was formally entrusted with the responsibility of registering the Society.




He went about collecting some model bye-laws and formulated the memorandum and Rules and Regulations for Deepalaya Education Society. The draft bye-laws were approved by the group and the Registrar of Societies at Kashmiri Gate was approached for registration.

Here one should share the kind of frustration one has faced with the Registrar's office. As we approached the office, we were told that the format was changed and one had to follow a new format. The same was collected and the proposal for registration was reformulated and submitted with Rs. 50 as the registration fees. However, between submitting this application in the acceptable form and obtaining the registration, the Secretary had to make 13 visits from his residence at Safdarjung Enclave to Kashmiri Gate. Since the Society did not practice greasing of palms or paying under the table, the clerk in-charge managed to delay the process of registration by raising objections, and that too, one at a time! Infact at no point of time, the shortcomings were explained in a positive or helpful way so that all the needed information and data could be collected and submitted in one go. The person, understanding that he is not going to get anything extra from the work, finally managed to take the Parker pen of the Secretary in order to make a signature and insisted that it writes well and he would return it the next time. The 'next time' never happened.

The value orientation and ethics and the tendency to fight corruption made not only the Secretary but the entire Society suffer in many ways. If one were to calculate the cost of commuting 13 times on a scooter and the cost of the Parker pen, it would have been profitable to have paid a sum of Rs.50 or 100 at that time as 'speed money'. But the issue was one of principle and cannot therefore be judged on the parameters of plain economics.

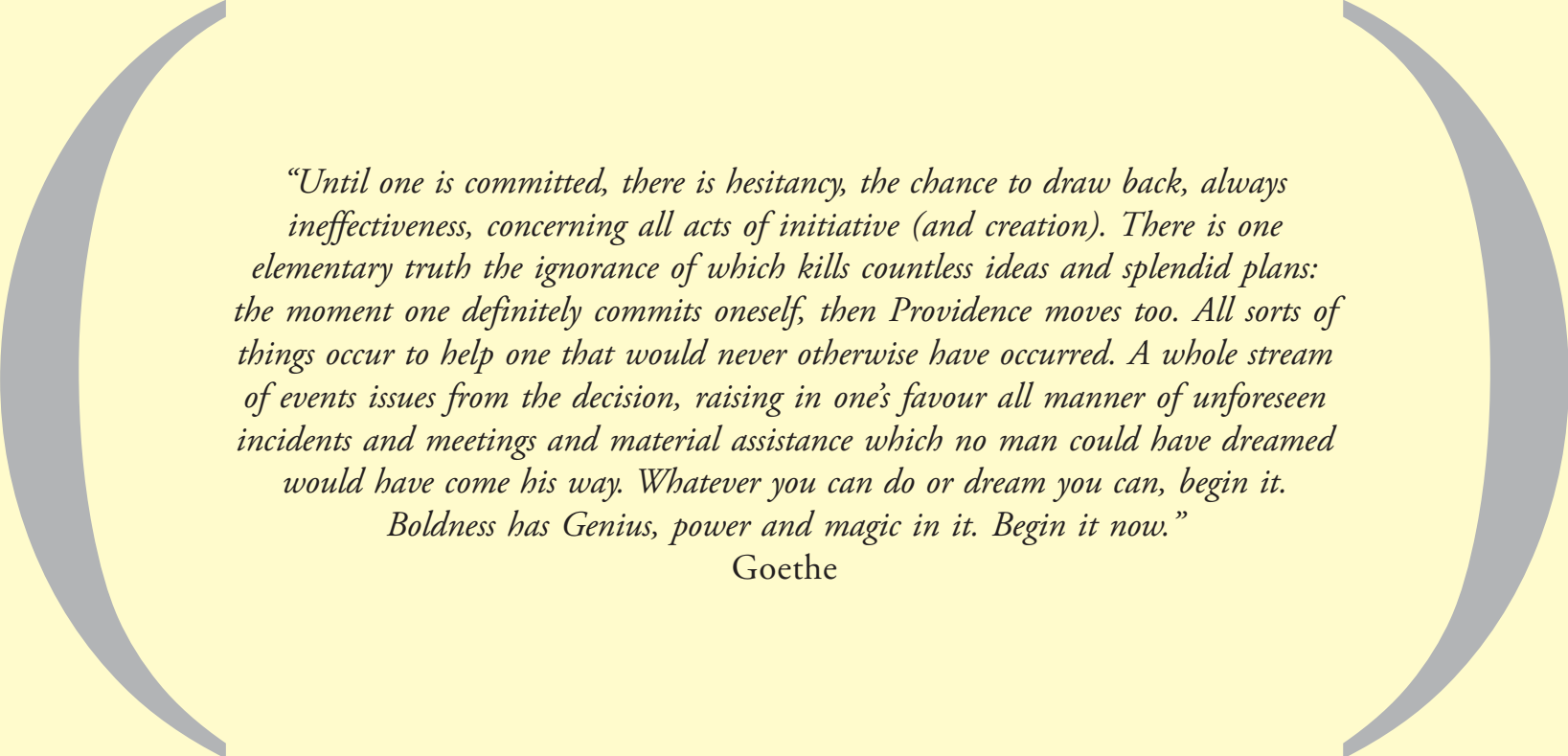
The issue still persists since the Registrar of Societies is not cooperating for a change of address from the place at which it was registered, despite completion of all formalities.

Furthermore, in order to obtain the Registration Certificate and certified copy of the bye-laws, the society members had not only to make many visits but also enter into endless arguments for the assertion of their right to obtain services. One can lament over the state of affairs, which is deteriorating day by day. Infact only very few are able to resist it, suffer loss and get isolated. Whereas, those who conform to the new approaches help each other.



SLOW AND STEADY, MOVING FORWARD...

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“Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness, concerning all acts of initiative (and creation). There is one elementary truth the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one’s favour all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance which no man could have dreamed would have come his way. Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it.

Boldness has Genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now.”

Goethe

In tune with the policy and practice of Distributive Justice, the Deepalaya Management discussed extending quality education to children from weaker sections. Accordingly, a formal decision was taken to extend free or highly subsidized education to poor children who could not afford to pay the sum of Rs.30 that the school was charging. As there was difficulty in finding new premises for the subsidized school, it was decided to run the school in the afternoons at the same premises. However, the parents of poor children did not show much enthusiasm in sending their wards to an afternoon school. This situation and the commitment for extending free education, encouraged the management to integrate the free school with the paid one; which of course raised a lot of eye brows. The parents of children who paid protested. Infact, some of the parents took their children away and admitted them in other schools, saying that *"our children cannot be educated with children of the slums, who have bad character"*. This prompted the management to meet with the parents and explain that since the school management was in favour of educating poor children, therefore the parents who disagreed with the integration exercise could admit their children elsewhere. This decision annoyed the parents and most of them withdrew their wards. It proved to be a blessing in disguise be-



The early years - moving from darkness to light

cause not only did it reduce our tension but also facilitated in accommodating more children who were poor, needy and deserving!

However, it is noteworthy that the management followed a policy that "nothing is for free". Every parent was asked to make a nominal contribution so as to ensure seriousness and

commitment on their part towards their child's education. Infact the concept of stake-holdership and partnership in the development of people became a reality through this policy.

Towards the middle of 1982, a proposal for a school van, was submitted to Moviento Sviluppo e Pace(MSP), Italy. requesting a grant of Rs 1,00,000. for a school van. Mr. Giovanni Ermiglia, their representative in India strongly recommended the case and got the sanction. This was Deepalaya's first step towards approaching the external funders which met with gratifying success. MSP also supported us in putting up two temporary rooms on the first floor which came as a big help since we were facing space constraints as the numbers rose.

By 1984, the strength of the school had grown to 133, with 44 students obtaining free education. Next year the two sections were integrated harmoniously with the total rising to 356, of which 158 were girls.



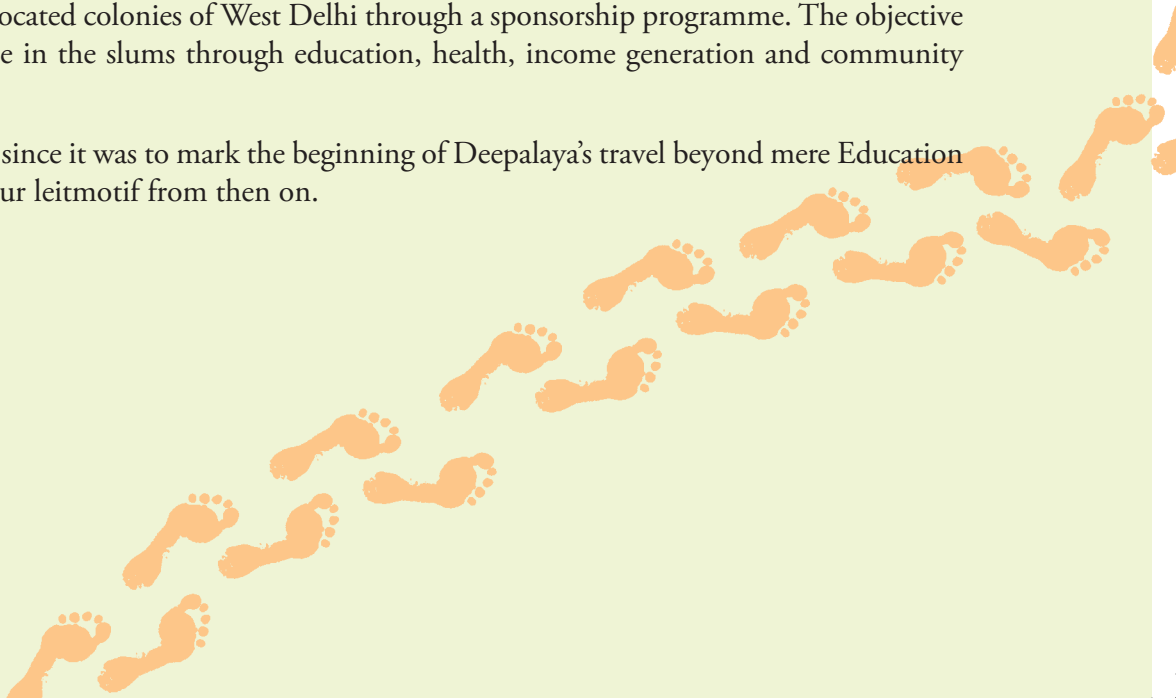
The school van-transporting from ignorance to knowledge

During this phase contact was established with various funding agencies who were interested in the welfare of children belonging to weaker sections. The school was visited by M/s Pierre Bernard Lebas of Aide ET Action, Paris and as also Mrs. Minti Pandey of Save the Children Fund, UK.

A very significant development of this early phase was our efforts to bring in International funders culminating in a section of the school getting sponsored by Aide et action, Paris and Save the Children, UK who sponsored 50 children each. These children were sponsored by parents abroad and were provided free uniforms, free nutritive supplement, free medical check up, free teaching aids and free educational tours and picnics. The improvements seen in the children from the slums were tangible and highly encouraging for those who were involved in the activities.

In consonance with our efforts to look for an expanded resource base, necessary for fulfilling our mission of providing for the marginalized population, negotiations were intensively pursued with Foster Parent PLAN International, USA through its Delhi Office. The proposal was to take up community development work in the relocated colonies of West Delhi through a sponsorship programme. The objective was to reach out to a large number of deserving people in the slums through education, health, income generation and community development.

This marked a very crucial turning point in the journey since it was to mark the beginning of Deepalaya's travel beyond mere Education into 'Integrated Development', which was to become our leitmotif from then on.



GROWTH PHASE

Confidence, Expansion, Momentum...

The period between 1986 and 1992 was a period of substantial growth in Deepalaya in all respects viz. number of beneficiaries, programme diversification, professionalism in approach, formation of multiple linkages (government, corporates, funding agencies). With the stepping in of PLAN International, the Deepalaya School Programme and Urban Community Development programme acted in tandem towards rendering effective services to the marginalized community.

Education not confined to the three Rs- For Deepalaya, right from inception till date, education is much more than mere academics; it has always believed in facilitating children to develop their innate potential to the fullest through a plethora of creative endeavour. Development of childrens' latent talent through dance, drama, music, art and craft was emphasized even during these early years, notwithstanding the resource constraints.

During 1988-89 very significant partnerships were forged which gave a major fillip to Deepalaya's impact and outreach. Interchurch



The joy of learning

"Some succeed because they are destined to, but most succeed because they are determined to."

Margaret Lee Runbeck

Organization for Development Cooperation (ICCO) Holland joined the family of Deepalaya collaborators, through a capital grant, to purchase land for the school at Kalkaji and a recurring block grant for initiating Urban Community Development activities in two locations viz. Transit Camp and Sanjay Amar Colony, Yamuna Pushta.

The Unie School and Evangelie, Amsterdam, Holland (now called the Edukans Foundation) was another supporting organisation, which extended support (at the instance of ICCO through a co-financing mechanism) for the school building

Deepalaya PLAN programme at Raghubir Nagar, Khyala, Meera Bagh and Kirtinagar was fast expanding. Drawing resources from sponsorship and administered jointly by Deepalaya and PLAN, the programme came to become a typical Urban Community Development Project covering all aspects of urban life. It covered around 7507 families under a large team of committed professionals in Social Work/other disciplines of management. The services offered covered areas like education, health, income enhancement and community development. The outreach was substantial and benefits noteworthy. Apart from health and adult literacy, the programme covered many income enhancement (self employment) schemes as well as multiple facets of community development e.g. Women's Forum, Youth Forum, Housing Associations, Potable Water and Credit Co-operatives

The partnership forged with these three International agencies gave tremendous fillip to Deepalaya which transcended much beyond mere monetary assistance. PLAN International brought in a professional management approach and expertise which was, at that point of time not present in the social developmental sector in the country. Through the manuals for programme management, communications, fund management, PLAN introduced a whole new way of working in Deepalaya. Through its insistence upon adherence to systems, procedures, controls and compliances, Deepalaya was internally challenged to rise to the occasion and march towards professional growth. In fact it needs to be mentioned here with a legitimate sense of pride, that we were awarded an A+ rating for Quality, by the external auditors for this period!!

ICCO proved to be in the true sense our partner in development by facilitating Deepalaya to nurture its institutional base. It also provided core support since they believed that the institutional

stability and capability was fundamentally more important than its day-to-day operational functioning.

Similarly Unie School brought immense value to Deepalaya since it came with infrastructure support which gave us not only concrete assets but also enhanced visibility.

In this way, all these three partners gave to Deepalaya, both directly as well as indirectly very substantial support in terms of strength, standing and credibility. Deepalaya was, as a result of this association, able to affiliate with a large number of service providers and also to contribute towards Public Policy and Advocacy specially in the cause of children.

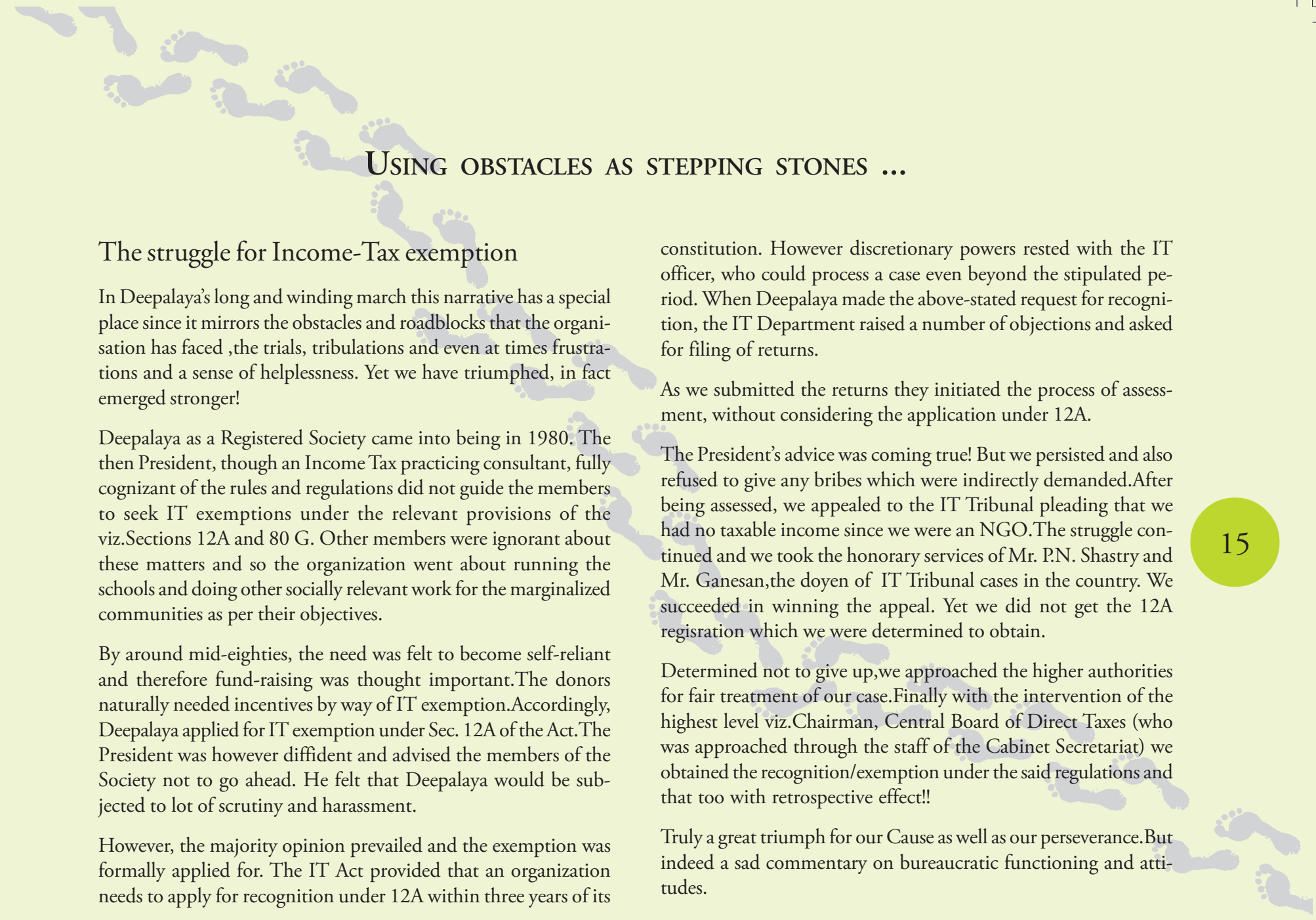
Other landmark achievements of this period were:

- Deepalaya school obtaining the Essentiality certificate for a middle school in Kalkaji area from the Directorate of Education, Delhi Administration and Sponsorship recommendation for land purchase from DDA.
- Scheme of Management of the school got approved by the Education Directorate.
- Application for recognition was submitted to the Education Directorate.

Clearly Deepalaya had by now become a name to reckon with!



Ensuring healthy communities



USING OBSTACLES AS STEPPING STONES ...

The struggle for Income-Tax exemption

In Deepalaya's long and winding march this narrative has a special place since it mirrors the obstacles and roadblocks that the organisation has faced, the trials, tribulations and even at times frustrations and a sense of helplessness. Yet we have triumphed, in fact emerged stronger!

Deepalaya as a Registered Society came into being in 1980. The then President, though an Income Tax practicing consultant, fully cognizant of the rules and regulations did not guide the members to seek IT exemptions under the relevant provisions of the viz. Sections 12A and 80 G. Other members were ignorant about these matters and so the organization went about running the schools and doing other socially relevant work for the marginalized communities as per their objectives.

By around mid-eighties, the need was felt to become self-reliant and therefore fund-raising was thought important. The donors naturally needed incentives by way of IT exemption. Accordingly, Deepalaya applied for IT exemption under Sec. 12A of the Act. The President was however diffident and advised the members of the Society not to go ahead. He felt that Deepalaya would be subjected to lot of scrutiny and harassment.

However, the majority opinion prevailed and the exemption was formally applied for. The IT Act provided that an organization needs to apply for recognition under 12A within three years of its

constitution. However discretionary powers rested with the IT officer, who could process a case even beyond the stipulated period. When Deepalaya made the above-stated request for recognition, the IT Department raised a number of objections and asked for filing of returns.

As we submitted the returns they initiated the process of assessment, without considering the application under 12A.

The President's advice was coming true! But we persisted and also refused to give any bribes which were indirectly demanded. After being assessed, we appealed to the IT Tribunal pleading that we had no taxable income since we were an NGO. The struggle continued and we took the honorary services of Mr. P.N. Shastry and Mr. Ganesan, the doyen of IT Tribunal cases in the country. We succeeded in winning the appeal. Yet we did not get the 12A registration which we were determined to obtain.

Determined not to give up, we approached the higher authorities for fair treatment of our case. Finally with the intervention of the highest level viz. Chairman, Central Board of Direct Taxes (who was approached through the staff of the Cabinet Secretariat) we obtained the recognition/exemption under the said regulations and that too with retrospective effect!!

Truly a great triumph for our Cause as well as our perseverance. But indeed a sad commentary on bureaucratic functioning and attitudes.

USING OBSTACLES AS STEPPING STONES ...

Labour Strike (1992)

As Deepalaya was a social organization it was not strictly following all legal requirements pertaining to workers, during the formative period. PLAN International, one of our major partners insisted that the grassroots level staff of programme development was not to be included as permanent employees; they were to be kept as casual workers. This created problems at the grassroots level and disturbances and skirmishes followed between them and the supervisory staff.

Deepalaya's considerable growth in numbers and programmes had led to a huge increase in staff (400); the HR formalities viz. recruitment, appointment, placement systems were not properly in shape. The trade unions and labour unions took advantage of the situation and raised demands before the managements for regularization, fringe benefits etc. However since there was no provision for this from the donors, Deepalaya could not meet the demands.

The trouble kept brewing and exploded when a grassroots worker was asked to explain the misappropriation of funds and neglect of duty committed by her. Under the guidance of Trade Union leaders, the workers went on strike.

The management dealt with it in more than one ways:

1. Organizational restructuring
2. Disciplinary action

This resulted in interference from the Labour Department and trade union & labour unions, leading to a full-fledged strike by

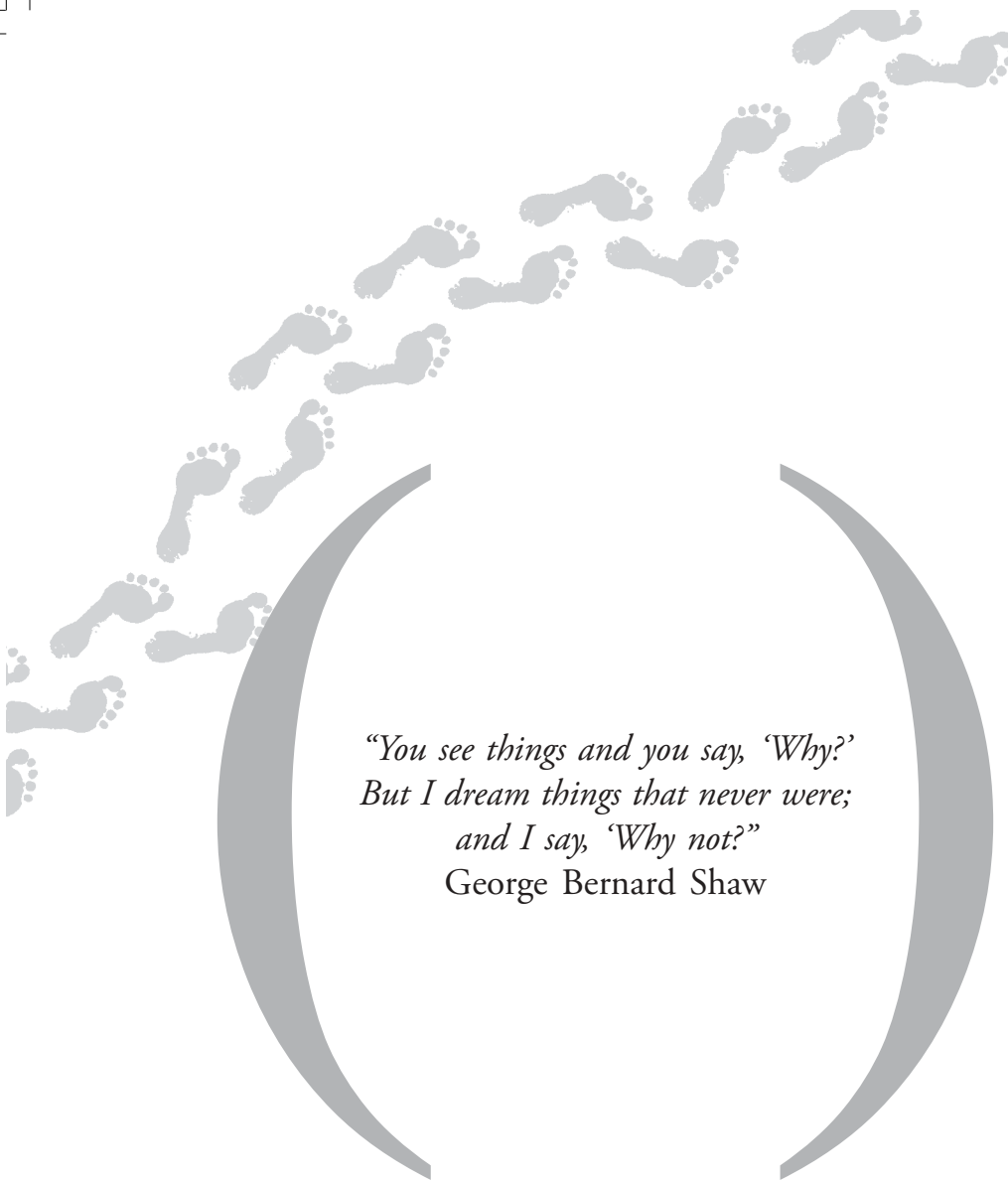
four hundred staff. The management took recourse to injunction from the court against 'gheraos'. Also a number of workers had to be retrenched.

The strike continued for many months and Deepalaya Secretary (now Chief Executive) was subjected to excessive harassment-threats of physical harm, anonymous phone calls, obnoxious leaflets, complaints and allegations made to the Ministries of Home, External Affairs, FCRA division etc. He had to take police protection. Due to the personal influence of the Addl. Home Secretary, the Police Department was very helpful. Time passed and there were 85 cases in court.

The Education Department, FCRA division etc came to Deepalaya for inspections and verifications. Questions were raised in Parliament for which the concerned ministers had to answer.

Although it was a tension ridden period, the struggle had great learning value for Deepalaya. The organisation got to learn the value of proper systems and procedures. The whole HR system began to take shape and it was realized that in such matters emotions have no place; instead one had to be pragmatic. We were advised by legal experts to draft proper contract letters, following HR regulations so that undue advantage could not be taken by anyone.

Finally the Trade Unions left the workers in the lurch and the Management was able to negotiate compensation formula with them. All court cases were withdrawn and settlement was reached. However the one case which started the whole trouble is still pending at the High Court!!



*"You see things and you say, 'Why?'
But I dream things that never were;
and I say, 'Why not?'"*
George Bernard Shaw

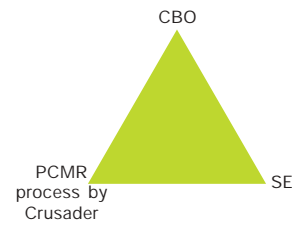
CONSOLIDATION PHASE

Community Empowerment, Visibility, Acclaim

The landmark features of this phase in Deepalaya's journey were the manifold progress that we made in our quest for community empowerment and making them self-reliant. The hallmark approach of Deepalaya in building capabilities at the grass roots and making external help progressively redundant got crystallized into certain Developmental Paradigms, unique to Deepalaya. This was based on our core belief in the Chinese maxim *'Give someone a fish and you feed him for a day; teach the person to fish and you feed him for a lifetime!'*

Deepalaya Development Paradigm was and continues to be predicated on our belief in catalysing from within, through internal change agents. Therefore our model of Community Empowerment has three basic concepts viz. Planning cum Micro Realisation (PCMR), Social Entrepreneurship (SE) and Phase out & Phase in.

The graphic depiction from one level to the next higher level represents the logical change in status as one proceeds with this concept, leading ultimately to the desired goal of an enlightened community capable of independent planning and decision making. A brief explanation of the triangles:-

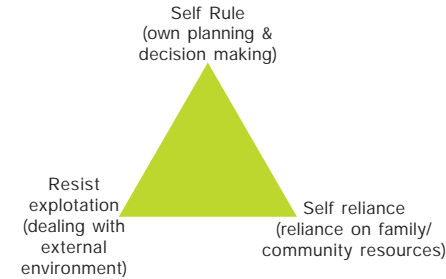


- (a) Triangle I – The first triangle which depicts intervention at the community level, has PCMR on one axis, the SE on the second and the Community Based Organisation (CBO) on the third. The PCMR process aims to build bridges with the community; identify, motivate, train and place the SE in the community. The SE is the grass root professional (from within similar social milieu), who assists in the formation of CBOs. In this, she/he is ably facilitated by the Crusader who is the animator from Deepalaya. PCMR enables peoples' participation and involvement / decision making and establishes the community structure to provide them the human infrastructure, absolutely essential for sustaining the collective interest of the community.



- (b) Triangle II – This triangle depicts the Cultural Change at the individual level on one axis; Social Transformation on the second axis and Own Resource Management on the third axis. Here, the Crusader from the previous level is promoted as the Manager

while the SE, having acquired necessary skills, becomes a local consultant. The community is encouraged to follow a family development plan and pay attention to aspects of budgeting and control of family income. This phase also witnesses adequate resource mobilization.



- (c) Triangle III – The third triangle depicts the unleashing of efforts depicted under the first and second triangles / phases. Sustained activities of the preceding levels lead to positive gains at this stage. The CBOs are firmly established and have their own norms, procedures, controls and decision-making capacities. The Crusader here becomes more of an advisor. The social entrepreneur by this time has a thorough grasp and feel of issues affecting the community and with the help of external linkages, addresses them effectively. The community, now on the path of self-reliance, renders external assistance almost redundant. When this stage is reached Deepalaya intervention is no more required and all activities are undertaken by the community through the CBOs.

This strategy/approach keeps the community and the organisation always prepared for a phase-out from the initial day itself.

The development paradigm thus completes its cycle over a period of a decade rendering Deepalaya intervention unnecessary since the community has by now become self sustainable in all respects i.e. cultural, social, economic, moral, religious and political – a new world order at the micro level which in an upward spiral can lead to macro and mega levels of world order.

Planning Cum Micro - Realization (P.C.M.R.)

PCMR is a process oriented participatory exercise designed as the first phase in the integrated development project. It is not time bound since it takes its own shape and evolves as it moves through people participation and involvement. Initially it happens between the community and project organizers and later within the community itself. The paradigm is the outcome of years of experience and learning process. Under this, the programme features i.e. target, budget, process are not brought in externally; rather they evolve from within the community.

PCMR begins with organizing the community which is the basis for formation of community associations eg. Village Assembly / Mahila Mandal / Youth Forum / Sports Club / Prayer Group or any other. Great emphasis is given to dialogue and intellectual sharing which paves the way for constructive action leading to Praxis. This approach not only gives opportunity to the community for self reliance from day one itself but also generates interest in people participation towards similar / repeated activities.

PCMR offers tremendous scope for study, analysis and resolution of myriad issues relevant to communities eg. land ownership, means of production (ownership / utilization), trade and market mechanisms, labour issues, service infrastructure issues etc. Since the approach tackles such germane issues which are the root causes of poverty and deprivation, therefore success in following such a developmental model is assured.

The participatory approach involving the entire community is adopted throughout the three phases of paradigm as described in the graphic. External help / resources (from the government, banks, cooperatives, donor agencies) is obtained wherever required.

Such a process yields beneficial qualitative achievements for the community in terms of their Capacity Building for taking on similar projects / programmes.

Social Entrepreneur (SE)

The SE is a person from within the community or from similar social milieu, familiar with its specific needs, strengths, challenges and dynamics. Such persons are trained over a period of time and serve as local consultants on matters like education, community health, organization, skill upgradation so that in course of time they get equipped to set up their own establishment (Social Clinics). In forming this cadre, Deepalaya makes its own contribution since these are human assets created and left behind in the community when Deepalaya phases out. The SE enters into a Memorandum of Understanding with the local CBOs to maintain long standing working relationships. Maintaining a close liaison with the families and community, the SE collects fees etc. directly from the community while at the same time earning their own livelihood. A sustainable and cost effective concept, it ensures maximum coverage in the community. Currently there are over 140 SEs working in Delhi.

Crusaders

This is a cadre of socially motivated workers, who by virtue of their concern, commitment and loyalty, willingness to work hard, learning orientation are geared towards empowerment of the socially marginalized segments. Once the Crusaders are selected, they are placed in “phase in” clusters for a one year training period. The Crusader begins as a grass root trainee manager who becomes a full fledged professional manager in 2/3 years. As the cluster develops, and as Deepalaya phases out, the Crusader turned manager stays back as consultant manager to the cluster and gets compensated at the community level thereby making Deepalaya support redundant.

In this process Deepalay forged effective partnership with the Government and other developmental agencies. Community based literacy program were adopted in collaboration with Delhi Sarva

Shiksha Abhiyan and were rewarded for their contribution in literacy campaigns. Special trainings were organized for Community Health Workers in the areas of Reproductive Health, AIDS Awareness, Participation of Girl Child and Local Resources Mobilization.

Establishment of 44 local Area Associations (CBO's) with community revolving funds was another positive feature.

In line with the developmental paradigm, Deepalaya successfully phased-out from the West Delhi program areas. Seven ‘Crusaders’ from the Deepalaya Order took charge of the new project in the slum clusters of West Delhi along the Planning cum Micro Realization approach (PCMR) lines.

The community, now on the path of self-reli-



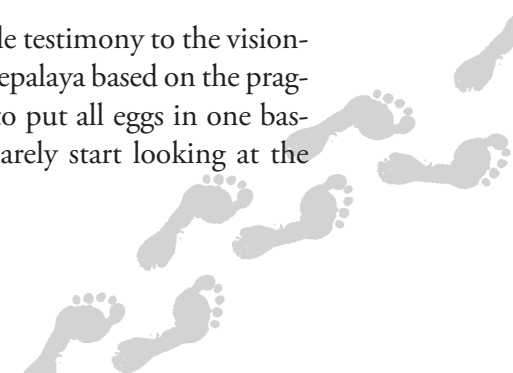
Awareness enhancement camp

ance, renders external assistance almost redundant. When this stage is reached, Deepalaya intervention is no more required and all activities are undertaken by the community through the CBOs.

Another significant feature of this period was Deepalaya's efforts and considerable success in **Resource Mobilization** through indigenous means and the pronounced visibility it received through sustained media attention.

A Fund Raising Desk became operational. Deepalaya till now had been primarily dependent on foreign funds. In order to preempt any unforeseen occurrences, which may hamper the flow of funds and consequently the upliftment of the underprivileged, the Desk was set up and innovative schemes were launched for raising resources from indigenous sources.

This again was ample testimony to the visionary leadership of Deepalaya based on the pragmatic wisdom not to put all eggs in one basket and also to squarely start looking at the



issue of sustainability in the long run. Deepalaya always upheld that sustained development is all about people participation and that the true panacea for an equitable and fair society ultimately rests with civil society at large. It was with this enlightened thinking that conscious efforts were made, albeit modest, to devise mechanisms for resource mobilization through local sources.

As a logical extension of this thinking, involvement of civil society was sought and

the 'Child Sponsorship' scheme was launched. The first Indian sponsor parent Babu Mathew, was recruited in 1992 who contributed Rs. 1200/- towards full sponsorship of one Deepalaya child's education and health care. The visit to the UAE in 1993 was a rewarding experience, which added around 100 sponsors to the family of Deepalaya bringing the total to around 700.

Co-terminus with the need to undertake innovative projects for resource-mobiliza-

tion, Deepalaya felt the need to raise its profile and become more visible in the public eye. This led to the setting up of the **Communications Division**, geared towards sensitizing the Indian public to the cause that Deepalaya had been spear-heading for over a decade. Deepalaya's ground credibility and transparency started getting positive responses as a result of which many well wishers and supporters came to patronize Deepalaya. Between March 1991 and April 1992, the following activities

Waiting to be loved

It is well known that a child, even a needy one, is best brought up by his family. Institutional care for deprived children has not proved to be an answer. Stemming from this belief, we encourage people to sponsor a child; care for his education, health etc; while he continues in his natural environment. Sponsorship is distinct from adoption in that it adopts a cause and not the case! From amongst the deprived communities Deepalaya is serving, a child between 4 to 14 years of age, a boy or a girl, depending on preferences, is identified for sponsorship. We encourage regular contact between the sponsor and the sponsored child. A minimum of two communications-verbal or non-verbal (drawings, illustrations, etc.) are sent by the child to the sponsor parent. Sponsorship, with the element of personal interest is thus an effective one-to-one development tool, aided by progress reports on the child, visits, correspondence, etc.



Sponsor Ms.Saumya Singh with her sponsored child Prity Priyadarshini

were envisaged/undertaken:

- A quarterly Newsletter disseminating information/updates on Deepalaya
- Appeal advertisements in the media
- Direct Mailers to spread the word about Deepalaya
- Fund raising through Public Schools

Corporate Philanthropy : At this stage Deepalaya also entered into ventures with corporate houses. As our credibility grew, many reputed business houses (both in the public as well as private sectors) collaborated with us. Tata Infosys donated computers, Schlumberger came forward to give children an opportunity to surf the internet, The Bank of Sakura helped to establish the Transit Home for Street & Working Children at Gusbethi, Haryana, British Telecom took up child sponsorships. Tata Education Trust pro-

Corporate Social Responsibility at its best



vided a community development project, Coca Cola India supported the construction of Rain Water Harvesting structure at our School. The Punjab National Bank, Bank of Baroda, came forward with cash donations. The Communication Division's effort in building part-



Support comes from far and wide

nerships with business houses resulted in CSL Securities Pvt. Ltd. supporting a skill development centre in Shalimar Bagh.

Our relationship with **Emabassies** also witnessed some very gratifying outcomes. The Australian High Commission funded an AIDS Awareness programme, The Japanese Embassy supported infrastructure development at Gusbethi, The German Embassy donated a Maruti Van for the Disability Project and provided furniture for our main school at Kalkaji Extn. The South African High Commission also contributed for construction of the same school. The New Zealand High Commis-

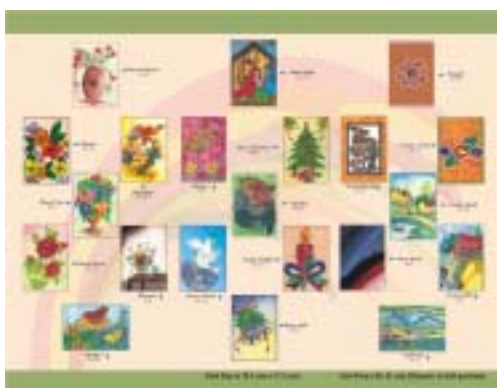
Mr. Javed Akhtar launching the Deepalaya Greeting Cards



sion and the British High Commission also extended valuable support to the cause of vulnerable children.

Donation Boxes were placed in leading hotels, garment shops, restaurants and gift emporiums. They began providing a regular source of income for Deepalaya, besides enhancing our visibility in the public eye.

Greeting Cards This project, intending to give people an opportunity to contrib-



Greetings from Deepalaya! drawings of our school children

ute, was launched in 1998. Till date it subserves the twin purposes of resource mobilisation and visibility enhancement.

As a fitting tribute to these assiduous efforts the *5th Asian Fundraising award was won by Deepalaya!*

Fundraising in Public Schools - an unhappy experience

During this phase, Deepalaya's relationship with the Public Schools of Delhi grew. We therefore decided to use this platform for our fundraising initiatives. Accordingly, 96 schools were contacted out of which 33 agreed to the fundraising proposal. In this regard, it is pertinent to note that such fundraising (for charitable causes) in educational institutions is a common practice and yields good results. Unfortunately, Deepalaya had to abandon the project for ethical reasons, elucidated as under:

- Feedback received from many parents indicating displeasure on the ground that their children should not be used for fundraising. Some even went to the extent of tearing off the forms
- Misappropriation of resources raised by some children for their personal use
- Duplication of forms by some parents / students and using the same for raising resources without accounting for them
- Use of unfair practices and misappropriation on the part of certain schools, to take advantage of the incentives scheme (for collections over a specified amount)
- Malpractice on the part of a school management which never submitted the forms wherein highest collections had taken place, leading to serious controversy between the collecting students and the management and also disagreement with Deepalaya
- Change in school management of a certain school wherein the new management refused to handover the collected funds on the plea that they did not agree with fund raising policy

In such a scenario, Deepalaya decided not to go ahead with the initiative since we felt that such malpractices, unethical behaviour on the part of certain school managements, children and parents were not in consonance with our basic objectives and values; to go ahead with fund - raising would therefore tantamount to colluding with or condoning such practices. Deepalaya also felt that continuation of the initiative would have a detrimental impact on young minds which can be very damaging in their formative years.

VOICES...

*I am thoroughly impressed by the warm atmosphere of this school.
The rapport between the Principal and the children is remarkable. So far, the
school has done an excellent job of imparting all-round education to the student.
The introduction of computers gives new dimension to its activity.
It is a step in the right direction, to bring the slum areas at par with
the other future citizens of the world.*

Shiela Gujral

(visit made to inaugurate the Computer Centre
at Deepalaya School Sanjay Colony)

*I would like to thank you for the hospitality that you, your staff
and the children extended so generously to me during my visit.
I am very impressed by the project and by the efforts that you are making
day after day to the benefit of the Deepalaya Children.
I wish Deepalaya every success in its activities and initiatives.*

Ms. Dehaene

(wife of Belgian Prime Minister after visiting Deepalaya School)



Deepalaya makes NEWS !!

This period can truly be christened as Deepalaya in the Arclights. The period witnessed considerable visibility for Deepalaya in the form of news items/articles that appeared in almost all the National dailies and many other publications, covering a range of our events and activities. Clearly we had come to be on the radar-screen of the media in a big way!

Our credentials as proponents of new paradigms and true believers in equity and integration were getting established with each passing day.

Deepalaya got a lot of media attention by way of T.V. commercials on Zee and Star T.V., audio coverage on AIR and FM channel; coverage on Parakh, Dubai News Channel and Channel 33. Aaj Tak, Star News, Subah Savere and Zee News all covered us. The print media too viz. Hindustan Times, Times of India, Statesman, Hindu, Mid Day, India Express, City Scan, Pioneer, Rastriya Sahara, Amar Ujala and Punjab Kesri reported our activities.

The Chief Executive's interview on the occasion of the 'Education for All Summit' in Delhi was telecast.

Talk on the All India Radio by the Chief Executive on Literary Mission on the National Literacy Day was another instance of the recognition and credence given to the organization's efforts.

Another feather in Deepalaya's cap came when four of our students went to watch World Cup Cricket in UK. Almost all the major national dailies and electronic channels covered the event.

DEEPALAYA - AN INSIGHT

Providing light to children in slums

AN INDIAN COMPANY HAS DEVELOPED A LOW-COST, SOLAR-POWERED LIGHTING SYSTEM TO BRING LIGHT TO CHILDREN IN SLUMS. THE SYSTEM, WHICH IS BEING TRIED IN DELHI, PROVIDES A SOURCE OF LIGHT FOR STUDY AND READING IN THE EVENING. THE SYSTEM IS A SOLAR-POWERED LIGHTING SYSTEM THAT IS BEING TRIED IN DELHI. THE SYSTEM IS A SOLAR-POWERED LIGHTING SYSTEM THAT IS BEING TRIED IN DELHI.

Deepalaya: Ray of hope for future torch bearers

Deepalaya is making a difference to their lives

Students at NRI International School are happy to share their experiences of the school. They are also happy to share their experiences of the school.


[illegible]

Love, peace and a lot of talent

Slowly children and teachers of the city's leading schools made February 1992 a historic. Gortner, Chaudhry reports



During the first half of the 1990s, the city of Chicago has been the scene of a number of historic events. In 1990, the city celebrated its 400th anniversary. In 1991, the city celebrated the 100th anniversary of the founding of the city of Chicago. In 1992, the city celebrated the 100th anniversary of the founding of the city of Chicago.



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President plays host to Deepalaya kids



President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, accompanied by Vice President B.S. Yashwantrao Chavan, visited the Deepalaya orphanage in Mumbai on Tuesday. The President, dressed in a light blue shirt and dark trousers, is seen interacting with a group of children. Some children are standing and talking to him, while others are sitting on the ground. The Vice President is also engaged with the children. The background shows the simple, light-colored walls of the orphanage.

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[illegible]

Deepalaya awards for kids

For the first time, the Deepalaya Foundation has awarded the Deepalaya Award for the Best Child Artist. The award was presented to a young girl, who was the winner of the award. The award was presented to her by the Deepalaya Foundation. The award was presented to her by the Deepalaya Foundation. The award was presented to her by the Deepalaya Foundation.

[illegible]

PLAYGROUND THAT CHANGES

By [illegible] and [illegible]

For many children, the playground is a place of joy and discovery. But for children in the slums of Mumbai, India, the playground is a place of danger. The children of the slums are often the victims of violence and exploitation. They are often the children of the poor, and they often live in the most dangerous places. But now, a new playground has been built in the slums of Mumbai. It is a playground that changes. It is a playground that is built for the children of the slums. It is a playground that is built for the children of the poor. It is a playground that is built for the children of the future.



It is a playground that is built for the children of the slums. It is a playground that is built for the children of the poor. It is a playground that is built for the children of the future.



It is a playground that is built for the children of the slums. It is a playground that is built for the children of the poor. It is a playground that is built for the children of the future.

Deepalaya launches computer school



Applause!

In the realm of collaborations and linkages also, Deepalaya made great strides. A lot of acknowledgement and applause came our way. We got support & collaboration of:

- Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.
- Income Tax Department
- Slum Wing (DDA)
- The Municipal Corporation of Delhi
- The National Open School

Deepalaya was presented with the Vijaya Gujral Award for the year 1998 for outstanding work in the field of education of underprivileged children, especially girls. The Award instituted by the Vijaya Gujral Foundation carried a cash prize of Rs. 1 Lakh and a citation. The award was conferred upon Deepalaya by Rajya Sabha member and noted jurist Dr. L. M. Singhvi in September 1998.

Its all about caring - Ms. Nandita Das with her sponsored children




Mr. TK Mathew, Secretary & Chief Executive of Deepalaya was conferred the Dr. Ambedkar Smriti Award for his outstanding contribution in helping the cause of the downtrodden. The Award instituted by Dalit Children's Education and Development Programme Trust was presented to Mr. Mathew in May 1998 by Hon. (Ex) Justice V.M. Tarkunde.

Public Relations: During this phase we saw a large number of celebrities visiting and encouraging Deepalaya. These include Mr. Larry Summers (US Treasury Secretary), Nandita Das, Manya Patil, Sharon Lowen, Nafisa Ali, Gul Panag, members of World Presidents Organisation (WPO), Mr. Macgreever (Ambassador of European Commission) Sheila Dikshit (C.M. Delhi), Dr. Narendra Nath (Minister of Education NCT Delhi) and a delegation from Prince of Wales Foundation.

After visiting Deepalaya School, Sanjay Colony, Mr. Summers said, *"this visit would always remain fresh in our memories and I thank Deepalaya and your children for the wonderful hospitality."*




VOICES...



The association with Deepalaya, over a period of almost two decades, has personally helped me to prioritise the values of life. The principle of "others need more help than me" helped me to have a compassionate eye on the underprivileged in the society. Education of these children has been the hall-mark of Deepalaya. Deepalaya's glorious work started by a handful of committed persons & should be continued with all vigour. More youngsters should be drawn into Deepalaya for carrying the torch aloft. Personally, I will not leave any stone unturned to achieve this goal. I do urge others also to help Deepalaya in whatever small way one could.

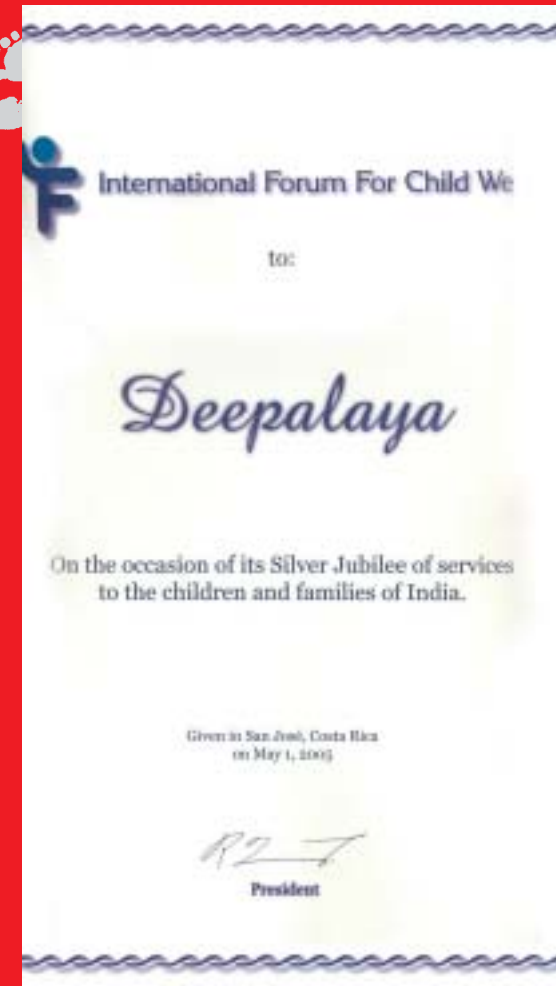
Mr. BP Thomas, Board Member



I really appreciate the work of Deepalaya to educate not only the slum children but also help the community to come up by giving training and education for the old people too and to the family of the children in different slum areas. The credit goes to the founding members of Deepalaya who started the organization, 25 years back ... Another magnanimous outlook of Deepalaya organization is that there is no disparity in the treatment of different religious children in their education field. Even USA branch of Deepalaya needs different kind of work namely to bring up children without spoiling their moral values and attachments to their parents.

Dr. (Mrs.) Thankam Mathew, Board Member

A STANDING OVATION!



VOICES...

The missionary zeal of few-committed Syrian Christians residents of Delhi has brought the dreams of many a boy or girl in the urban clusters of Delhi to fruition. Social equality and parity, obviously the keynote of Deepalaya's work ethics, has value-added to the ongoing work.

Ms. Mariam Mathew, Board Member

I don't now remember when my association with Deepalaya first started. It was many years ago. But the association has been very fulfilling. Whether it was photography of their schools in South Delhi or their work in the Gole Kuan Basti in Okhla, or copying paintings in the different Art galleries, it was a pleasure to see the work they have been doing and to contribute my little talent in helping them with their requirement for good photographs.

I think the main reason I have enjoyed working with the Deepalaya team is because of their dedication and whole hearted involvement in what they do.

Mr. Avinash Pasricha, Eminent Photographer

It's heartening to see the way Deepalaya has touched so many lives of the underprivileged children in Delhi. I take pride in being associated with Deepalaya. I have been involved in initiating some activities, particularly in the area of teacher-training at Deepalaya. It is indeed satisfying to see the impact of that. The day is not far when several of Deepalaya children will be scientists, doctors, engineers and leaders of tomorrow.

Mr. Jyoti Sagar-Renowned Legal Expert



VOICES...

An excellent school full of warmth & enthusiasm and most important hope for the future. I wish you all well.

Maneka Gandhi, Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment

It is always a pleasure to come to Deepalaya. The committed teachers and other staff and the lovely enthusiastic children are a treat to meet.

Keep the good work going.

Nandita Das, Eminent Actress

This is one of the best initiatives for India. Education is the only solution for many problems. Deepalaya is blessed with really motivated teachers which is a real gift to the children.

Fiona Prins, a Dutch Sponsor

The beauty of Deepalaya is not in helping those who have less, but it is in helping others do more with what they have. Sustainability and true partnership with the community through dedicated, receptive staff and strong visionary leadership make Deepalaya a model for others to follow.

I am blessed to be a part of the Deepalaya Family.

Jacob Singh, Volunteer

ENLISTING NEW 'FRIENDS' TO HELP OLD ONES ...



In the year 1997-98, the A T Kearney Consultants did a study of Deepalaya which brought out the following concerns: one that the Deepalaya Board was 'very ethnic' and two that the HR systems need to be professionalised. In answer to these concerns, 'Friends of Deepalaya' group was created and their names appear on the letterhead. The group comprises of well-known people with social sensitivity. Apart from raising our profile in the public eye, they also guide and support Deepalaya in its endeavors. The list includes:

Mr. Arun Kapur
Mr. Avinash Pasricha
Ms. Devi Cherian
Mr. Dinesh Goel
Mr. Gopan
Ms. Gul Panag
Mr. Jyoti Sagar
Ms. Manpreet Brar
Ms. Nafisa Ali
Mr. Pavan K. Varma
Mr. Prem Singh
Ms. Prema Sagar
Mr. Raghu Rai
Ms. Sharon Lowen
Ms. Shovana Narayan
Mr. Suhel Seth

Besides these some other celebrities like Ms. Shabana Azmi, Ms. Maneka Gandhi, Mr. Satish Gujral and others also give us significant support and encouragement.

Other distinguishing milestones that merit mention here are:

- **Rechristening** - Deepalaya Education Society was renamed as Deepalaya. We had come a long way since 1979 when Education was our sole activity. Now, Deepalaya was engaged intensively in multiple facets of development. Additionally a shorter nomenclature was thought to be more conducive from a PR and marketing perspective.
- **Change of Premises** – Deepalaya For-

mal School shifted to Sanjay Colony in Okhla Phase II, which was more spacious.

- **National Open School Accreditation** – This crucial linkage came as a big boon to the neo-literates, school drop-outs and the working youth and adults and the response was quite overwhelming in both academic and vocational schemes.
- **Bal Bhavishya Kosh** – This saving scheme entailed setting aside of Rs. 50

per month in recurring deposit to be judiciously used at the time of a child's higher education. Parents in the community showed interest and within a short span of time 250 different accounts got opened.

- Another small savings scheme which got launched was 'a Rupee a Day'scheme. Under this, one rupee saved by the parents for the child saw an equivalent contribution from Deepalaya

Dancing their way to a secure future



- Collaboration with the Narangs, an industrial house for a joint venture which was to see fruition soon, in the setting up of the Ramditti J.R.Narang School in Khirkee village, a prime example of Corporate Social Responsibility.
- 46 children from Deepalaya School were treated to a flight of fantasy (courtesy British Airways) to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of UNICEF.
- The Integrated Community Development Programmes got implemented in a large number of slum clusters of South Delhi (Sanjay Colony, Golekuan, Transit Camp, Gandhi Basti, Tagore Basti, V.P. Singh Camp, Karpoori Thakur Camp, Indira Camp) now extended to over 49100 persons in 11135 house-holds.
- Linkages were established with the NGO Forum for Street and Working Children, Delhi; Directorate of Social Welfare, NCT of Delhi; Campaign against Child Labour, Central Secretariat, Bombay and APFCW – Asia Pacific Forum for Child welfare.
- Additional linkages were established for training in Dress Designing, Secretarial Practice, Beauty Culture, Refrigeration and Air-conditioning, Electrical and Elec-

One fine morning Mr. P. N. Shastri, a Chartered Accountant and practicing tax consultant, called up the CE of Deepalaya. Mr. P. N. Shastri is the Hon. Tax consultant to Deepalaya.

His burden was to find a solution for the impending Income Tax payable by Ramditti J.R. Narang Public Charitable Trust. The Trust was established by the children of the late Ramditti and Jivandaram Narang to honour their parents and undertake social service so that their souls rest in peace. The duly formed Trust received donations from the corporate units run by the Narangs and claimed tax relief as was permissible under the IT Act. However, as they did not spend the funds donated, the trustees passed resolutions to carry forward the donated funds to be spent in ten years as is provided by the Act.

The Narangs wanted to undertake social service with the funds received by the Trust but for various reasons could not do it. Now Mr. Shastri had to find a way to spend and avoid to pay the Income Tax in default.

Mr. Shastri enquired with Deepalaya whether a solution could be suggested. Deepalaya suggested that they invest the funds to create an infrastructure for education and manage it. Deepalaya could join hands in educating poor children from the slums which was the same objective for Narang Trust.

An MOU was drawn up. The Narangs provided the hardware (land, building, furniture) and Deepalaya collaborated with the software (staff and recurring cost). This partnership is continuing for the last 8 years and is the **best example of Corporate – NGO partnership** for a cause.

This partnership not only solved the Income Tax issue but also facilitated social work in the name of Narang parents, who rest in peace and the benefit of service reaches out to around 300 children, their families and communities.

tronics and Library Courses with the cooperation of Urvi Vikram Charitable Trust, Samuel Foundation, SGTB Industrial Training Institute and Shramik Vidya Peeth.

- Acquisition of 900 square yards of land for the construction of the **Human Resource Centre** at Institutional Area, Janakpuri. This unit was envisaged as the epitome of Deepalaya mission in its service for human development, of the weak, needy and neglected sections of society. It was designed to provide specialized Training, Research, Documentation and Analysis to meet in-house training needs of Development Professionals, Managers, Grass Root Workers and Community Based Leaders.
- **Deepalaya School**, Govindpuri, (now known as Deepalaya School Kalkaji Extension), exclusively for the deprived children was in the process of coming up. The auspicious launch to this mega project began with the laying of Foundation Stone by, the then, Honourable Lt. Governor of Delhi Shri P.K. Dave on 24th August 1996. Located conveniently to provide edu-



We're all in it together!

cational services to nearly 1320 children, this school is accessible to nearly nine surrounding slum clusters of South Delhi area with an overall population of 55145. This centre serves as the main school for higher and comprehensive learning in areas of academic and vocational courses. It was designed to serve as the nucleus school for children in the nearby communities

- **Street and Working Children Project** was piloted which was conceived of as a safe haven and refuge for this hardest hit category of have-nots, leading a life full of neglect, abuse and exploitation. Around 100 children were identified in Banana Godown, near Azadpur wholesale vegetable market, West Delhi. It was heart-wrenching to witness how these young children sweat and toil to unload rows after rows of banana stalks brought to Delhi by goods trains. While they go on to carry them to the waiting trucks for further transportation to the wholesale markets, they even receive harsh beating from fruit dealers, truck drivers and the police.. Most of them actually sleep on the platform without shelter or civic facilities. Having to lead a life of uncertainty and constant threat, reaching succour to these children was a complex issue. To strike that elusive chord, Deepalaya launched the programme for Child Labour and run-aways. As a long term home for providing Institutional Care for the most needy category, **Deepalaya Gram Complex**, in Gusbethi, Haryana, also got to be on the drawing board.

Deepalaya School Kalkaji Extn. is the first public school exclusively meant for children from weaker sections (including children in slums). The school is established according to the norms of the Education Act and Rules. It has all the amenities and facilities of a public school which is run usually on commercial basis ; whereas Deepalaya School, though an English medium school is highly subsidized, taking a token fee due to our policy that 'nothing is for free.' The rationale for the token fee is also to make the parents stake holders and partners with Deepalaya.

Unfortunately despite the above mentioned features, Deepalaya school has still not got the Government recognition even though, ever since 1996 the matter is being relentlessly pursued.

Deepalaya has consistently maintained that the Delhi Education Act, (under which Deepalaya Schools have not been able to get recognized) is **anti poor**. The stipulations of the Act demand specifically certain physical infra-structural amenities and facilities and payment of salaries at Govt. rates. All the provisions of the Act and Rules have been made to offer a conducive environment for imparting quality education and to make the management fulfill the rights of the teaching community and adequately compensate for their engagement.

However these stipulations and regulations are not afforded by the large majority who are poor. Since the Govt. is not providing adequate number of schools and since a large majority of the poor cannot purchase education, the act is anti-poor as the provisions of the act and rules are unaffordable for the poor.

Secondly, the Act is **discriminatory** in its application vis a vis government run institutions. The stipulations pertaining to buildings, playgrounds, library, laboratory, drinking water, lavatory etc. are insisted upon in case of privately managed schools. However, with regard to government schools these provisions are not insisted upon; infact the standard and quality of education is low / poor which is a well - acknowledged fact.

Thirdly the Act **promotes corruption**. The provisions of the Act are such that most privately managed schools cannot comply with its stipulations as in the case of government schools. The tendency for privately managed schools is to create records but not follow the stipulations in practice. Therefore, for getting the records accepted, private schools resort to unfair means, which are encouraged by the law enforcement authorities. Hence, the Act not only, not fulfill the purpose for which it is enacted but, also becomes instrumental in promoting corruption.

In this manner the Education Act and Rules act as a barrier in promoting quality education of the poor. These social sections have to make do with the government school education with its low standards (as evidenced by the poor pass percentage over the years) leaving them very disadvantaged in relation to career prospects.

The NGO schools catering exclusively to poor and vulnerable sections of society, who are eligible for free education, need to be covered by a different Education Act. Such an Act should be governed by the financial capacity of the users (in this case the poor slum dwellers), the efficiency and quality of education and the result percentage of the school.



Holding the banner aloft - Deepalaya School Kalkaji Extn.

Institutional Care: A home away from home

Over 1,00,000 children, in Delhi, the National capital, live on the streets. Cognizant of their legitimate need for shelter, care and a dignified life, Deepalaya seeks to give some of these children a chance at our hostel in Deepalaya Gram, Gusbethi, in Haryana state.

Home to over 80 children (both boys and girls) in difficult circumstances (street/run-away children, children from broken homes, victims of battering or child abuse, differently-abled children, children of lifetime convicts, alcoholics, drug-addicts, HIV/AIDS patients, sex workers, and other vulnerable categories, Deepalaya's Gusbethi centre, provides protection and refuge to such unfortunate children. Apart from regular counselling, formal/ vocational education and latent talent development, the children are also equipped with requisite life-skills (emotional, social and practical) to set them on the path to socio-cultural stability and economic independence



Providing a safe haven - Boys Hostel and Technical Institute

CHANGING MINDSETS AND PARADIGMS

Including the differently-abled

Mentally or physically challenged children often face social stigma and ostracism. If they are poor the problem gets compounded. Deepalaya strives hard to change this.

'Mainstreaming the Differently-Abled' came to be one of our five thrust areas at this stage. Since real change can happen only with change in thinking, Deepalaya aims to develop positive attitudes among parents and communities towards:

- a paradigm shift from perceiving these children not as 'disabled' or 'handicapped' but rather as children with special-needs and 'differently-abled'.
- mainstreaming them into the general education and healthcare system.
- providing special education/developmental therapy.

How this programme got integrated into Deepalaya's other programmes is an interesting anecdote that needs to be told in this context:



En'abling' to empower - Safal, a differently-abled boy learning computers

During one of his visits to the slums, the Chief Executive Mr. Mathew came across a man sitting in the midst of some women/girls who were assembled around the water tap. The CE was struck with the thought as to why this person was sitting amidst the women and whether this man could be utilised to make these women literate. When the subject was broached by the CE, the women replied

Kiran, going miles with a smile



in unison that he was 'handicapped' and therefore 'useless' and 'good for nothing'.

That was enough to set the CE thinking, *"what can we do? wasn't there a way by which people with handicaps could be made socially useful and have their dignity?"*

Of course after serious thought and deliberation he found the answer; Deepalaya had added another string to its programmes and the project for the 'differently-abled' was born!! And this man Rajkumar became the first beneficiary of the new project! Today Rajkumar on his wheel chair is mobile. He keeps a petty shop and runs a telephone booth and has become a useful human as opposed to the chorus by the women – "disabled and useless."

Deepalaya's special project today has multiple facets viz. assessment of the nature and extent of disability; special education, referrals wherever needed, occupational therapy, provision of aids and appliances. In its endeavour, Deepalaya has also tied up with socially sensitive agencies like 'Balloons' and others which work to alleviate their sufferings and restore their dignity of the challenged.

Raj Kumar - disempowered to empowered





Gender Equity

This sector also received Deepalaya's attention during this period and soon became a full-fledged programme.

In consonance with the Indian Constitutional provision of 'Positive Discrimination' we aim at emancipation of women towards development and economic empowerment, through education, participation, training and resource management.

"Deepalaya is an institution that wisely puts girl child development as a core priority and puts it into clear action. They deeply understand that education and confidence building in the girl child will result in the most comprehensive upliftment of economic, health and social well-being of the next generation. Today's girl is tomorrow's woman, and through her, the home and community will be empowered."

*Sharon Lowen,
Eminent Odissi Dancer
and a Friend of Deepalaya*

Aspirations unlimited! - 'Positive Discrimination' in girl-child education

‘ART WITH A HEART’

Maitree-Shree

Deepalaya did not break for summer vacation even for schools because it was believed that the slum children could be made to utilise the time in creative activities. This would not only give them a break from studies but also help in discovering and displaying their latent talents. Accordingly in 1993 summer break Deepalaya involved the school children in various creative pursuits like singing, danc-

ing, art, craft, painting, debating etc. This was with the purpose of inculcating confidence, leadership and team-work in the children.

When the summer break ended, there was a suggestion that the children should be given an opportunity to present their learnings in a performance by displaying their talents. This resulted in a grand function in which the children performed a Shakespearean classic, various Indian eth-

nic dance forms etc. Sponsor parents, Government officials and other guests where invited.

Deepalaya concluded that it was an excellent way of encouraging latent talent development besides tackling the problem of dropouts and also providing a platform for solidarity and fellow-feeling among the children. This initiative was given the name of ‘Maitree-Shree’ and became an annual feature which was from then on a

common meeting-ground for the sponsors and their sponsored children.

Abhinaya

With the launch of Fund-raising in 1990, Deepalaya had started approaching the public schools in Delhi with the intention of bringing together children from the elite classes and the slum children, and also to plan ways to fund-raise. The underlying philosophy of this initiative was also to sensitise the elite



children (future high position holders in society) towards the plight of the poor children (future working classes / labourers).

Through this initiative the slum children got an opportunity to challenge themselves to reach their dreams/aspirations. Children were organized, issues identified, script written and the process was launched.

In this Deepalaya schools partnered with leading public schools. Notable among them were Mother's International ,Kalka

Public, Blue Bells, St.Thomas, Mira Model, American Embassy and the British School.

Since then Abhinaya became an annual feature of Deepalaya schools and has remained so for many years.

Kala Arpan

After the successful launch and conduct of 'Maitree-Shree' Deepalaya was convinced that the children from slums had

enough talent and that it only needed to be scratched and refined. This led to another innovative idea which was visualised as 'Classics meeting Classes'! The idea was that reputed artistes of national and international stature would come together and raise resources for the poor and thus establish a link with our children who gave artistic/cultural performances. In this manner artistes (painters, dancers, singers etc) like Shovana Narayan, Subroto Kundu, Bulbul Sharma and many others participated in this initiative.

Proud as Peacocks



Mr. Subroto Kundu renowned painter at Kala Arpan



THE MANY 'FIRSTS' OF DEEPALAYA...

Deepalaya goes Electronic

Deepalaya started off Communication and Fundraising around 1990. As we were looking for enhancing visibility, one of our well wishers overheard a conversation between the then CEO of Star TV and a socialite. This well wisher conveyed the gist of the conversation to Deepalaya. "If any NGO is interested then Star TV would be able to provide free space for projecting their Cause."

Taking this as a wonderful opportunity Ms. Purba Dutt a staff member of Deepalaya working in the Communication Division was deputed to obtain an appointment with the CEO. With her flair for PR, she managed to obtain an appointment for the very next day. Deepalaya CE alongwith Purba met the said CEO who gave a patient hearing and told us that if Deepalaya was ready to take the risk (as the India office could not promise definitely) and make a commercial film of 30 seconds at own cost, according to Star specifications, the same would be sent across to the Regional Office, Hongkong for decision making at their level.

Taking courage and help of Mr. Shonu Chandra who had earlier done a PR film for Deepalaya, we produced a 30 seconds film as advised. This gentlemen did the work for free, using the available footage, charging only the studio time and expenses. The job was so wonderfully done that both the film as well as the producer won an award. Another interesting occurrence was that while the film was being edited, a representative of Zee TV visited the studio and requested that a copy may be given to them for airing it free of cost! Deepalaya agreed without however stating that the film was being made for another channel. We were finally able to air the film on both channels.

This is how Deepalaya got to be the first Indian NGO to go electronic and establish a presence in the Electronic media.

World Cup at Lords, UK (1999)

Mr. Sanjiv Kaura of NAFRE left the corporate world to set up an advocacy organization as an umbrella covering the Right to Education. Wanting to experience the thrill of serving a Cause personally, he managed to obtain resources for taking some children from poor communities to see the World Cup. However he got stuck since he could not find any slum children having passports.

Since Deepalaya's children already had their passports ready (having made their Holland trip earlier) we were fortunate enough to have four (three of them girls) of our children selected.

The children enjoyed the World Cup final and semi final in England! This again was a 'First' both for Deepalaya as well as for Mr. Kaura.

Connaught Place Shopping Festival

Deepalaya was one of the first to participate in the CP Shopping Festival where the shopkeepers association offered free space and facilities.

Dubai Shopping Festival

This festival is an annual commercial venture. Here again Deepalaya was the first organization to obtain a stall free of cost to market itself, in 2002. The effort raised a hundred child sponsorships in a matter of a month. Many of them continue their support even now.

...THE MANY 'FIRSTS'

The Holland trip

ICCO of Holland brought in the Unie School and Evangelie as a co-financing partner to Deepalaya. Over time the Foundation for Christian Education (the new name for Unie School and Evangelie) wanted to undertake fundraising, using innovative methods. They consulted Deepalaya for a joint venture due to their familiarity with the confidence and enthusiasm of the organization. The deliberations for the joint venture culminated in accepting the suggestion of Deepalaya to have cultural presentation by the school students in Holland Schools.

On principle, this Dutch Foundation had agreed to finance the whole project viz airtickets, food, stay etc. This exchange programme became a great event with sixty children participating. Permission was sought and obtained from



Doing India proud -Deepalaya children during the Holland trip



their parents and the awesome task of procuring sixty passports for these slum children was successfully accomplished. Deepalaya children gave thirty performances in Holland getting tremendous appreciation. The Holland media also responded very enthusiastically. This event resulted in the Foundation initiating two projects 1) All Kids to School; 2) Going Global. Under the second project children of Holland visited India, Ethiopia, and other African countries. The first project raised substantial amounts for supporting children in the third world countries.

In this regard Deepalaya was the first NGO to have sent sixty children from the slums for a period of three weeks to a foreign. It was an experience of a lifetime not only for the students but also for the teachers and staff who accompanied them since the Deepalaya contingent consisted of seventy people in all. The places where our children performed cherish this memory perpetually.

Art for the World

When Art for the World, Geneva, an organization of eminent architects wanted to provide playfields or recreation facilities for children from weaker sections, they identified India and later Delhi. Looking around for a school having sufficient space, they drew a blank until they finally contacted Youth Reach, who identified Deepalaya. Ours was the only case in which the school had legally owned land where the play field could be established and which catered to economically weaker children. Again this was one of the 'First' in India and in Delhi for both Art for the World and Deepalaya. The relationship between the two further culminated in Art for the World providing two more play fields (separate ones for boys and girls) in Deepalaya Gram, Gusbethi.



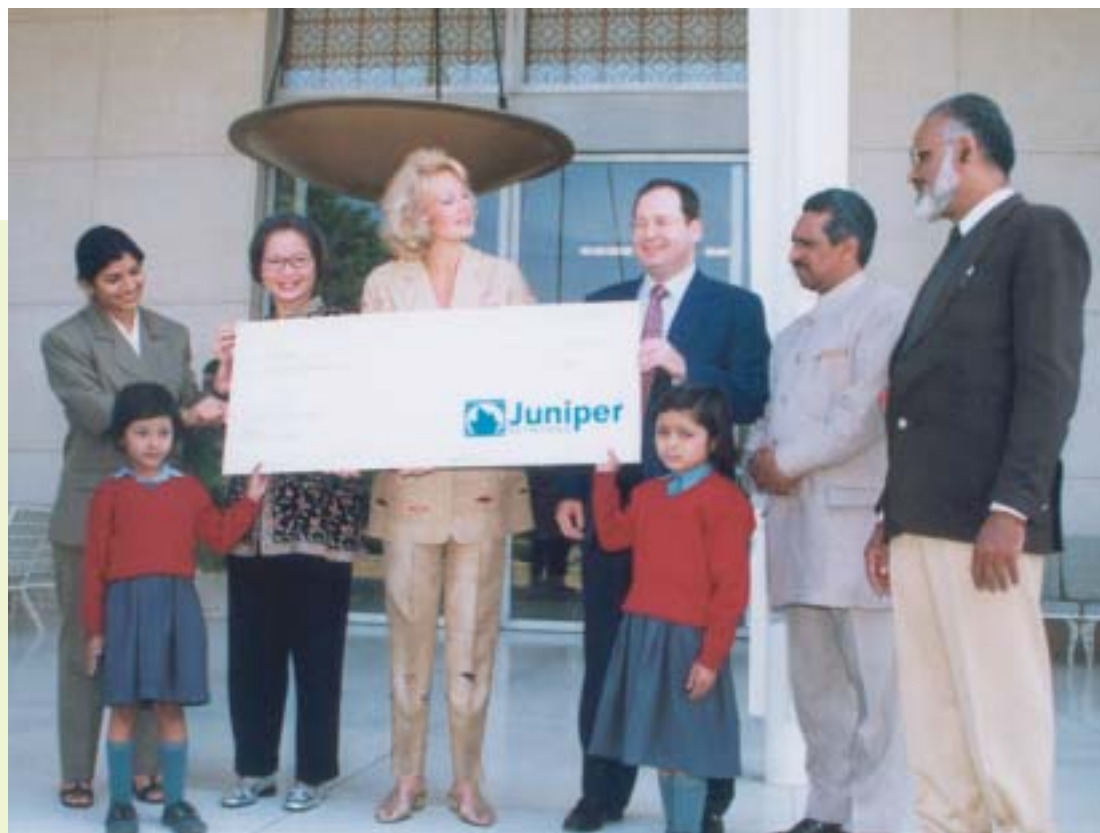
Playfully yours - play material donated by Art for the World

In the case AMC Target Corporation, Intelsat, Sapient Corporation and CSG, it was the first time that they were venturing into exercising their corporate social responsibility in India. They contacted the PR agencies to identify and shortlist potential partners. Deepalaya was identified and became the first to partner with these three corporates with whom the relationship continues ever since.

Deepalaya And Corporates - Collaboration

When Juniper Networks USA wanted for the first time to enter India with their agenda for Corporate Social Responsibility, they assigned their Singapore office to identify a suitable NGO to receive their support. Their regional office representative came for a preliminary enquiry to Delhi for shortlisting potential NGOs. Their representative met Ms. Jacqueline Lundquist, the wife of the US ambassador in India. She recommended us highly to Juniper since we were known to her already.

As a result Deepalaya was able to get USD 75000 as the first grant and two more grants later, each amounting to USD 20000. For Juniper Networks it was the first project in India and for Deepalaya also it was the first collaboration with a corporate.



LARGE- heartedness of Juniper Networks -Ms. Jacqueline Lundquist with the ceremonial cheque-donated by Juniper

A group of four Germans planned a visit to India and the sister of one of the persons had some play materials to be carried for the children in India. This lady was a K.G. teacher and went about collecting useful things which were then packed into two cardboard boxes and shoved under the seat of the caravan which the Germans drove from Germany to India via Afghanistan and Pakistan. On arriving in Delhi they went into a shopping plaza requesting for identification of a suitable social organization to donate the stuff to. The shopkeeper identified Delhi Council for Child Welfare and Deepalaya. Wanting to associate with a Government institution they called up DCCW from whom they could not get any response. When they contacted Deepalaya they were encouraged to personally meet the children and donate the materials with their own hands. In fact they had the pleasure of photographing the exciting competition among children to ride the wooden horse which had been brought by them!

Fascinated with this relationship they became sponsors and continue to sponsor one child each. They have even registered themselves as 'Friends of Deepalaya' in Germany.

A group of East Germans who came to India as a Choir 'Kemerchor', visited Bombay and Delhi where they accepted hospitality of German families. Emotionally disturbed at the plight of street children in India, they went back taking stock of their experience with the decision to extend help to these



children, in Delhi. They contacted their local hosts for identifying an NGO which could use their resources judiciously and honestly following a proper accounting procedure. This German lady Mrs. Sharma (married to an Indian) went about identifying NGO's and forwarded the profiles of three shortlisted ones to Kemerchor; who in turn decided to partner with Deepalaya.

This was yet another 'First' and forty members of Kemerchor sponsored one child each, from Deepalaya. The relationship continues till date!

No short cuts please, we're Deepalaya!

"Character is the final decision to reject whatever is demeaning to oneself or others, and with confidence and honesty to choose what is right."

Gen. Arthur G. Trudeau

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In its long and arduous march Deepalaya encountered many obstacles and roadblocks; sometimes the ride got rough, the climb too steep. However we stopped for breath, took stock of our situation-then moved ahead, using the obstacles as stepping-stones. Justifiably we are proud because notwithstanding the many tough challenges (archaic regulations, bureaucratic apathy, corruption, resource crunch, initial community unwillingness, HR difficulties etc.) Deepalaya has never compromised on its Core Absolutes (TRUST)* and is still forging ahead.

T Transparency
R Reliability
U Undaunted
S Sincerity
T Truth



REACHING-OUT PHASE

Expansion, Enlargement, Replication

The current phase of Deepalaya, beginning 2002 marks a major change in the ongoing journey of the organisation in more ways than one. Clearly we have come of age. The degree of professionalism in our approach, both in our developmental paradigms as well as in relation to our own organisational structures -Corporate governance, HR, Advocacy and Networking, state-of-the-art Strategic Planning-all these have been the distinguishing features of this period.

In the year 2002, a strategic planning exercise was undertaken.

The purpose was to develop a proactive, professional and dynamic organisation ready to take on greater challenges and play a bigger role on the national and global map.

The other major outcomes of this exercise were:

- New vision and mission formulated
- Core competencies identified and documented
- Programme sectors restructured
- Sectorwise programme mission formulated
- Programme plan for next five years outlined; and
- Concrete steps suggested for sustainability of the organization.

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VISION

A society based on legitimate rights, equity, justice, honesty, social sensitivity and a culture of service, in which all are self-reliant.

MISSION

We in Deepalaya commit ourselves to ;

Continue to identify with and work along the economically and socially deprived, the physically and mentally challenged, starting with children so that they become educated, skilled and aware

Enable them to be self-reliant and enjoy a healthy, dignified and sustainable quality of life

And to that end, act as a resource to and collaborate with other agencies Governmental or Non-Governmental, as well as suitably intervene in policy formulation

Here it would be pertinent to note that as a result of Deepalaya's efforts towards sustainability and commensurately reduced dependence on foreign funds, the percentage of foreign funds decreased to 57%. The Indian contribution grew from 21% to 43%.

In 2004, another feather was added in Deepalaya's cap. We became one of the Indian NGO's to be identified as a 'RESOURCE' by the REACH India project, under the ambit of the USAID. This project envisages using Deepalaya's experience of implementation of the last 25 years, towards capacity building of other smaller/younger NGOs, who need assistance and advocacy support in the area of child rights, especially in the realm of education. The programme is afoot and making good progress; six Delhi-based NGOs are taking our assistance in Programme Planning and their own Capacity-building.

REACH India Project

In 2003 when REACH India announced the launching of a programme for educating 'At risk' children, Deepalaya was prompted to bid for it. There were two categories we could apply for 1) Direct implementation and 2) Capacity building. There was a big debate within Deepalaya regarding the choice of project. Many senior members were not confident regarding option (2), the others including the CE found it to be the opportune moment to establish itself as a Resource/Capacity building organization.

It was indeed a pleasant surprise, when Deepalaya was identified as one of the NGO's for Capacity building of smaller NGO's. This was yet another feather in the cap of Deepalaya!

The Corporate Office is operating as the think tank of Deepalaya and the co-ordinating and converging point of different units and programmes. Established to formulate and administer policy of Deepalaya and guide Project/Programme units, the Chief Executive of Deepalaya and a support team of Managers in Finance, Administration, Program, Human Resource, Marketing function in this unit. The main objectives are recruitment and placement of staff, program planning, guiding and monitoring, feed back reporting to Funding Agencies, fulfilling statutory requirements, ensuring proper utilization of funds, managing growth and development of Deepalaya and providing organizational support and strength to project units in Programme Planning and Implementation, Administration, Internal audit and resource mobilization.

Deepalaya Marketing Division-Communication plays a vital role in improving the image of our work and helps capitalize on the credibility and reputation through soliciting solidarity, philanthropy and altruism. This unit was established in 1990 with the aim of communicating to society at large about Deepalaya's efforts. The Marketing Division functions as the umbilical chord of Deepalaya bringing in people closer to Deepalaya and to one another in our common mission.

Additionally this division is a unique effort of Deepalaya to raise funds at low costs within the country and to build a broadbased domestic support which not only builds public awareness but also facilitates and oversees wide ranging participation in resource mobilisation.



Other landmarks achievements/features of this current phase are

- Accreditation of Deepalaya as an International legal entity, with offices in the U.S.A., U.K. & Germany.

Deepalaya goes International-

The British Telecom (BT) had organized a workshop for its staff on Corporate Social Responsibility Mr. Chris Tuppen was one of the participants from the UK (London) office. Chris Tuppen with a social bent of mind took C.S.R. very seriously and wanted to visit a social development project before participating in the workshop so as to equip himself with the reality at the ground level.

One of his colleague at BT, who was sponsoring a child at Deepalaya suggested that Chris visit the organisation to obtain a first hand knowledge of the activities undertaken and also met her sponsored child. They visited the school and project at Sanjay Colony. Chris was visibly pleased and scribbled words of appreciation in the visitor's book.

Deepalaya did not know the extent of his happiness and satisfaction until a telephone call came in September from BT, London asking whether the funds raised for Deepalaya could be sent through the CEO of BT India.

What actually happened was the following : Chris Tuppen narrated his experience to his wife Deborah, who was a great enthusiast for social causes. They discussed among themselves how to help a genuine cause like Deepalaya. The couple worked silently, organized a backyard dinner and dance party with BT staff and local residents of Chris's village. Chris has a large backyard extending over a hectare.

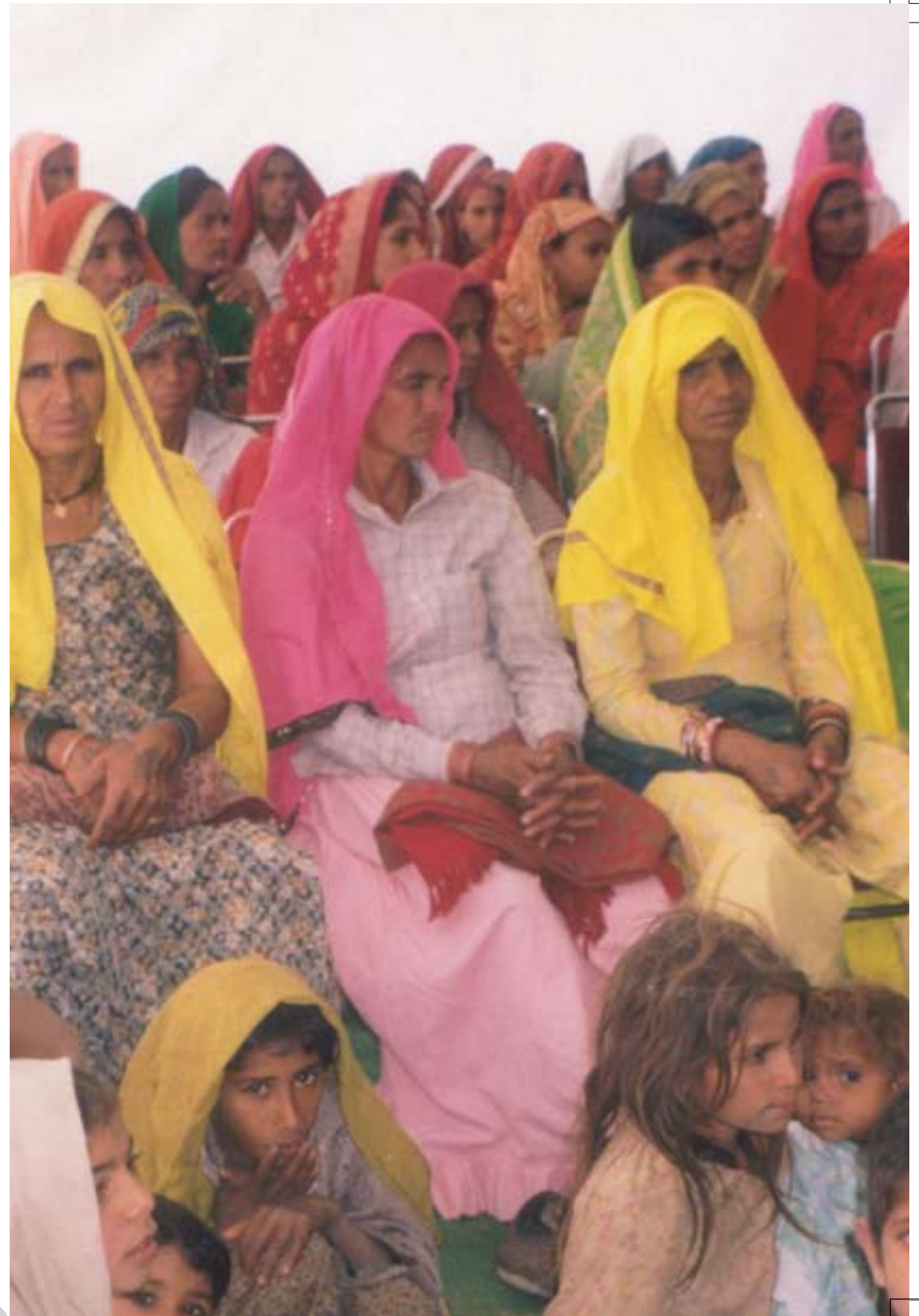
The backyard dinner and dance party collected over Pound 4000 and the same is supporting ten students of Deepalaya School on a perpetual basis. The relationship continues to grow. Deborah took an active role. Mr. Mathew visited them in their village on the outskirts of London and discussed the potential of creating a Trust in U.K. to support Deepalaya.

A few friends of Deepalaya including the Tuppens have registered themselves as Deepalaya Friends in UK under a Trust, approved by the UK Charity Commissioner. The Trust has the facility to collect back revenues to the extent of 28% of the donations received by the Trust from the Revenue Department of the UK Government.



- Setting up of a fully functional hostel for street children (separate sections for boys and girls) with all the required facilities and a capacity to accommodate about 250 inmates. An English medium formal school was established within the campus of Deepalaya Gram. Over three hundred children attend classes, 60% of them being girls. A technical institute for vocational training courses is also operational.
- Marketable Skills-Deepalaya has introduced skill training as an integral part of formal education. The activity is not limited to the ornamental Socially Useful Productive Work of the regular curriculum, but extended to marketable skill training. We want to equip our students with skills, which have a demand in the competitive market. Examples are advanced computer education, science education through Internet and vocational courses like electronics and advanced beauty culture. Once again this is a reiteration of Deepalaya's pragmatic wisdom of linking relevant education to the specific socio-economic context of its client communities within the overall model of making them self-reliant.
- Expansion in our rural project-From 5 villages of Tavru Block, Mewat, Haryana Deepalaya has now, according to our strategy of spiral expansion, taken up 84 villages of the same block for intervention to form self help groups (SHGs) and related activities. Efforts are on to mobilize them and other villagers to take up issues related to education of children, improvement in government run schools, improvement of roads, capacity building and availing of government facilities for socio-economic upliftment.

Lessons in team-building - Self-Help-Groups
of Meo community women in Haryana



A platform for 'Shram-dan': Volunteerism

A very significant building block in Deepalaya's core endeavour is the concept and practice of Volunteerism. Through this the organisation has successfully harnessed the support of many committed and professional agencies and individuals (Indian and foreigners) who have championed the cause of the underprivileged. We have linked up with various organizations that place volunteers. One of these organizations is Youthreach, a Delhi-based voluntary organization that creates programmes for young people to contribute their time and skills in order to benefit society.

Deepalaya also welcomes students to work in our organization and research our projects. University students from professional courses are placed in Deepalaya on a regular basis. These students mainly come from Social work and Management institutes all over India as also from universities abroad. The inflow of students has increased after opening a placement section on our website.

Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO) is another organization with which Deepalaya collaborates. Mr. Frenck van Orsouw the first VSO volunteer did a two year stint, streamlining and giving a strategic direction to the Communication and Fund Raising activities. Ms. Elizabeth Carter, a HR professional followed. She played a significant role in streamlining HR processes at Deepalaya. .

Child Welfare League of America

Deepalaya is a member of the International Forum for Child Welfare ever since 1994. The annual World Forums are a platform for networking. Mr. Mathew was regularly attending the Forum and a relationship came about with the other regular members. One such member, Mr. Marty Scherr of CWLA got fascinated with the activities and achievements of Deepalaya and felt that we could collaborate with them. They got an opportunity to bid for an exchange programme with resources from the US State Department and Deepalaya was contacted for the collaboration. Once again the partnership proved to be a good experience and Deepalaya got a chance to host American NGO leaders in India. This exchange happened over two consecutive years resulting in huge learning for everyone involved.

Making themselves feel at home





GAZING INTO THE CRYSTAL BALL; THE ROAD AHEAD...

“Far away there in the sunshine are my highest aspirations. I may not reach them, but I can look up and see their beauty, believe in them and try to follow where they lead.”

Louisa May Alcott

Of course we have come a very long way and we can look to the future with confidence and hope, even a sense of exhilaration on having come thus far. However it may be appropriate to state that there is no room for complacency since the challenges are formidable. Working towards ‘a society based on legitimate rights, equity, justice, honesty, social sensitivity...’ we cannot rest on our laurels... the journey must go on.

At present Deepalaya has five formal schools providing English medium (public school like) education to the children in slums. They provide quality education at affordable cost. But none of these schools have government recognition. After a long struggle, due to tremendous resource crunch, we could clear all obstacles and met the conditions of the Education Act and Rules except the specified salary to our teachers. It seems recognition of Deepalaya school is still a far cry. During this painful process of

getting recognition we have realised that quality Education is not accessible for the poor and since we are determined to meet the needs of these marginalized segments, we have to find alternate ways.

If the “poor have no chance” Deepalaya believes it has no role. However being optimistic and not accepting defeat, Deepalaya in the next decade vows to work at removing the inequities through such innovative and pragmatic strategies.

Some action lines/strategies for this are; (1) Corporate education on social responsibility. By partnering with corporates and influencing them through action lines, a lot can be changed for the better; (2) Promote alternate learning as a supplement to formal education until acts and rules are amended to suit the poor and formal certificates are made redundant to earn a decent living; (3) Organise and involve poor communities to develop their own

programs with the element of self reliance;(4) Community participation to change the quality of Govt. Programmes and its effective implementation, leading to realisation of fundamental rights through democratic processes.

Another major challenge that needs serious attention is related to HR. The NGO sector is moving in tandem with the changing scenario of liberalization and rising economic expectations. Commitment to the profession of Social development is commensurately declining resulting in the large turn over of staff in NGOs. Since, by definition, any qualitative development of communities needs a long term association and a pronounced service-orientation, fellowship of hand holding and nurturing, such turnover of human resource is hugely debilitating. Deepalaya continues to struggle with these limitations.

The issue of succession planning, both at the highest level as well as down the hierarchy is another aspect that merits attention. In the last one-year, effective steps have been taken in this direction. A team of senior management level functionaries (SMT) with sufficient administrative experience and considerable tenure at

Deepalaya, has been constituted and decision-making has been delegated to some extent. However such mechanisms take time to get strengthened and become institutionalised.

The aspect of organisational architecture; the reporting relationships, team learning, conflict resolution and other such structures and processes need to get streamlined and operationally smooth.

Then there is the all-important issue of self-sustainability and progressively reduced dependency on outside funding and the co-terminus generation of resources through our own strengths and strategies. Deepalaya has made strides in this area, yet there is a long way to go.

However we truly believe in the intrinsic wisdom which upholds that 'the journey is the destination!'. With this perspective and our hallmark faith in ourselves and the validity of our dreams, we look to the ever-expanding frontiers with anticipation and excitement. We have dared to build beautiful castles, some of which are still in our mindscape and 'in the air'...we need to forge ahead relentlessly to put pillars under them so that they remain not in the air but rather become a 'ground' Reality!!



The Chief Minister Ms. Sheila Dikshit at the Silver Jubilee event, 16th. July 2004 - Releasing Deepalaya's 'Child Achievers' publication. Also seen are Dr. Kapila Vatsayan and Rtn. T.K. Mathew

"A man's reach should exceed his grasp; or what is heaven for!"

Robert Browning



At the helm of affairs - The Present Board Members

(Clockwise from the top)

Rtn. T.K.Mathew

Ms. Mariam Mathew

Mr. T.M.Abraham

Ms. Elizabeth Isaac

Mr.P.J.Thomas

Mr.B.P.Thomas

Mr.Y.Chackochan

Mr.J.K.Varghese

Mr. A.J.Philip

Mr.KV.Thomas

Dr.(Ms.) Thankam Mathew

Ms. Grace Thomas





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