

**Glimpses of a few  
Community & Service Activities**

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**Mahatma Gandhi International School**

## Uttarayan Awareness Rally

Students of MGIS created installations on the road to create awareness about the dangers of 'manja' for birds and humans on Law Garden.

January 2012





## Art Workshop with children from Chharanagar, MGIS and Mercedes College, Australia

We called upon Shri. Toofan Rafai, a noted painter to conduct an art workshop with children hailing from the socially ostracised and socio-economically underprivileged community of Chharanagar.

This community has been stigmatised as criminals and forced to do labour due to The Criminal Tribes Act of 1911. After this act was repealed in 1952, they relocated to the outskirts of Ahmedabad but continue to face social discrimination.

The best art work created collaboratively were displayed in an arts gallery, Kanoria Centre for Arts on 14, 15 and 16 October 2011. This art work was part of the Ahmedabad International Arts Festival ([www.aiaf.in](http://www.aiaf.in)) and was viewed by many locals of the city. It served the purpose of creating awareness about the Chharas, providing them with art skills, giving them exposure to a public space to express themselves, and fingers crossed, maybe pave the way for future collaborations with local artists, in short open up a career option for them.

27 - 29 September 2011 & 14 - 16 October 2011





## Teaching English on the streets

MGIS and exchange students from French school Lycée St Germain en Laye teach street children English.

February 2011



વિદેશી વિદ્યાર્થીઓની પાઠશાળા : અમદાવાદ મેગાસિટી બન્યું છે પરંતુ હજુ પણ અનેક બાળકો એવાં છે જેમને નિયમિત અને પછત્તિસરના શિક્ષણનો લાભ મળતો નથી. આંબાવાડીનાં ગરીબ બાળકોને બુધવારે વિદેશન વિદ્યાર્થીઓની અનોખી પદ્ધતિથી નવું શીખવાનો મોકો મળ્યો હતો. મીઠાખળીની મહાત્મા ગાંધી ઇન્ટરનેશનલ સ્કૂલના વિદ્યાર્થીઓ સાથે મળીને ફ્રાન્સની લેસી ઇન્ટરનેશનલ સ્કૂલના વિદ્યાર્થીઓએ જાહેર માર્ગની બાજુમાં બાળકનો ભણાવ્યો હતો. ફ્રાન્સના આ વિદ્યાર્થીઓ સ્ટુડન્ટ એક્સચેન્જ પ્રોગ્રામ અંતર્ગત મહાત્મા ગાંધી સ્કૂલમાં આવ્યાં છે. તસવીર ધવલ ભરવાડ

Street kids teaching workshop  
at Ambawadi on 16<sup>th</sup> Feb 2011



# Awareness Rally

The students of Mahatma Gandhi International School (MGIS) are organizing a **Safe Uttarayan Rally** which will be flagged off **from MGIS on Thursday, 13 January 2011 at 10 a.m.**

## EVENTS:

- Children from KG to Grade 12 in colorful costumes and makeup
- Two skits at Mithakali Gam at 10.15 a.m.
- An installation performance at Law Garden at 11 a.m.
- A life size game made to engage the onlookers in a playful dialogue
- Posters and banners with slogans written in English, Hindi and Gujarati
- Wall paintings with messages and slogans

MGIS is supported in its efforts by the Forest Department, Gujarat. Students in the higher classes have reached out with this message to several schools including Municipal School Number 2, 6, 7, 10 & 17, A.G School, Nelson International School, Tulip School and C.N Vidhyalay.

January 2011

## Microcredit Project with marginalised community in the city

In February 2010, 17 French students of Lycee International and three teachers came for two weeks to MGIS and collaborated on a series of community service projects and micro-credit programme. They learnt traditional Indian Art techniques, shared French cuisine, art and culture to Indian students and worked on a Microcredit project in Johapura, Ahmedabad – one of the biggest slums of the city. They also initiated many community service projects including teaching English to the slum dwelling children, conducting self-confidence enhancing workshops and fun activities such as football for them.

February 2010





# To create, to act, to serve:

## Going beyond the classroom

**S**tudents of DP 1 and 2 have been devoting their weekends to work with the underprivileged children of Mithakali village, where the school is located. With guidance and support from their CAS coordinator, Nandita Dinesh and their language teacher, Anjou Musafir they have taken great initiative in identifying and addressing the primary academic needs and concerns of these students as well as their parents.



**Note from the CAS Coordinator:** Talk to students at IB programs across the world and they will tell you about

CAS. Creativity, Action and Service. The 150 hour commitment that every Diploma student has to complete in order to graduate. Not content with challenging students in more traditional academic disciplines, the IB has immense focus on a wholesome approach to education. It is not sufficient to solve equations and analyze market behaviour if you cannot, simultaneously, appreciate the instinct of creativity, the rigor of physical exercise and the intricacies of community service

This year, we are embarking on a new phase in MGIS's CAS journey. While students have participated autonomously in a variety of activities in the past, this year, we are putting modules in place that will engage the school as an entity. Our diploma students recently compiled a "needs assessment" for Mithakali Gam, the area that surrounds our



**Students from Mithakali village in MGIS**

school. Understanding the comparative privilege that they have, MGIS CAS members are organizing a series of community interactions based on which we will be launching an in house education program in July, for English and computer skills. Our students will learn how to teach their peers from Mithakali, disciplines that they currently do not have access to.



# Hum Filmwallahs!

As many as 26 students - grade X and XI - of Mahatma Gandhi International School have made seven documentary films on disappearing street professions in *aapnu Amdavad*, each under the expertise and creative service of French film expert Bernard Marescot. **Anurita Rathore** profiles the young film-makers' works

## DORIWALA

Film by: Aaliya Gandhi, Aamir Ranginwala, Pujan Patel, Srushti Bhandari

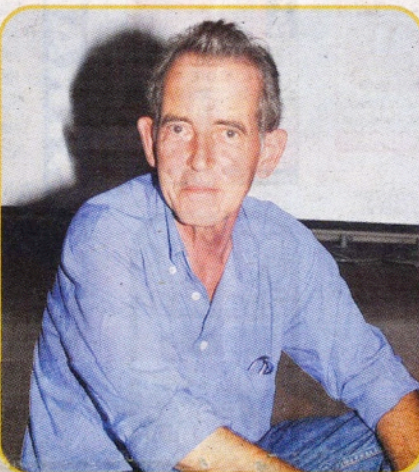


These men, rather boys, are currently the busiest. With Uttarayan the most popular festival, this film on *manja*-makers (glass thread makers) evokes interest beyond the ordinary. Watch them make the *manja*, hurt their fingers and still go about it and you know there's a spirit behind the thread they make which probably lets kites battle it out in the skies!



## BERNARD MARESCOT

FRENCH FILM MAKER, WHO HELPED THE KIDS WITH THEIR FILM-MAKING



An executive producer for top French films, an Oscar nominee too, Bernard Marescot is in Ahmedabad on the invitation of his friend, Pascal Chazot of the Mahatma Gandhi International School. The man behind French films like *Les Charlots* (Crazy Boys) and *Tous Les Matins Du Monde* (All the Mornings of the World), Marescot has lent extensive creative input in the making of these documentary films that students made on disappearing street professions. Film making isn't just about presenting a story or dealing with technology. Like Marescot explains: "Film making shapes thinking, behaviour, teaches to deal with people, lets you delve into and understand human relationships, lets you take an initiative, teaches you how to talk and what to say... film-making helps you learn and grow."

"Yeh Shaher Amdavad, karte hain tujhko yaad", each film begins with this line sung with *Amdavadi* images flashing by. "This experience teaches them to look at life, something they may skip otherwise. When you move with the camera, you see things differently," says Marescot. To work with constraints is even more interesting, he assures. As for students, they couldn't have had a better experience. Endless hours of conversation, uncountable questions for Marescot and a desire to just do it, there was a lot the students had beyond that went into the making of these documentary films that Marescot hopes "we can show at the French Film Festival in Sarlat next November".

## CHAIWALA

Film by: Vishal Pandit, Saumil Shah, Shaurya Sinha, Palaash Tarapore



Who doesn't notice the ubiquitous *chaiwallahs* around town! This film features one such *chai ki kithi* where two brothers prepare tea, pour it in plastic glasses and repeat the exercise. What's different about this film is that the visuals speak for themselves while a contrasting talk by students as background voices projects exactly that which happens at *kithis*: chit chatter.

## BLACKSMITH

Film by: Ruju Carlson, Wafa Refai, Mahi Baid, Chandrika Makwana, Sakhi Ganeriwala



The film is an interesting study of the life of the roadside blacksmith. Rameshbhai sits by the road and has his family alongside the entire day, helping out in little works. The students learnt more than just the precarious state of his profession; they also discovered metal welding is a fascinating art, also more difficult than it appears.



## KICHUWALA

Film by: Yesha Sanghvi, Tanvi Karwal, Sanaa Kochar, Rukmini Kaji, Jatin Solanki

Every household knows of this dish but how many are familiar with its preparation? Some hungry students stop for *kichu* and discuss this healthy dish's preparation with Pareshbhai and his family who run a business of preparing this Gujarati dish. If not anything else, the film surely teaches you to savour *ghee*.



## MAHOUTS - THE ELEPHANT PEOPLE

Film by: Janvi Karwal and Krina Prajapati



Who hasn't seen the elephant, with all its make-up (yes, the *rangoli*-kind design we see on its trunk) walk the city streets? Not so much anymore! This film documents a day in the life of a mahout, Avdeshbhai Tivari, who loves his elephant the way "you love your Maruti car". That's how he explains his attachment to the animal and tells us why he chose his nomadic life over the comfort of a sedentary married life.

## PATEL COLONY

Film by: Shiraj Sagara, Shripal Shah, Parth Jain, Zara Desai



It's not the US alone you find our Patels in large numbers. This film tracks the Mithakali Gam, a residential area predominantly populated by the Patel community. While every second person here is a Patel, the protagonist tries to locate a certain Mr Patel. Will she find the right one? The film tells you.



Documenting disappearing traditions of city

Students make films on disappearing professions

November 2008 - January 2009



city



**Temperature**  
CITY 44 27  
CAPITAL 42 27



**Relative Humidity**  
CITY 8.30 AM 11%  
CAPITAL 8.30 AM 11%



**Forecast for Today**  
Mainly sunny sky

TEMP(MAX)

44 C



# Calling the shots

Ad films by 22 MGIS students are driving the government's Nirmal Gujarat campaign

NANDINI SHAH

Guess who's pushing ahead the Nirmal Gujarat campaign. Twenty-two Class X students of the Mahatma Gandhi International School.

Impressed by their professional work, the state government bagged their one-minute films on social issues for a cool Rs 88,000.

These films will be screened at multiplexes before the movies begin and during intervals.

The messages are on educating the girl child, toilet hygiene, rain-water harvesting, saying no to spitting and smoking, respecting heritage sites, reducing car emissions amongst others, "all that we are trying to propagate through Nirmal Gujarat", says Kaushik Mehta, deputy general manager of the Nirmal Gujarat Mission.

What floored mission officials was the crisp execution.

"The ads deliver the messages in a precise manner. Moreover, they have a teenager's perspective, which no professional ad agency would have been able to deliver," says another official in the mission, not wanting to be named.

About a 100 compact discs of films were given to CEPT students, who organised an awareness campaign at Vastapur Lake on April 22, the Earth Day.

## BEHIND THE SCENES

The advertisements weren't originally prepared for the Nirmal Gujarat project. Rather, they were the students' final project culmi-

nat-ing their year-long technology course.

The government's action has been a great encouragement though.

"Initially, I had planned that the students create blogsites, but I could see they were not kicked about the idea," says MGIS technology initiator Benjamin Mailian.

"So the students and I brainstormed and we came up with the idea of creating ads on social causes." The students were allowed to choose issue close to their hearts, "something that touched them personally" as Mailian puts it, so that they would be able to express it in the best way.

"The ideating, creating story boards for each shot, deciding camera angles, film-ing, editing as well as acting in the ads — everything was com-pletely done by the kids," says Mailian.

Apart from the technical aspects of filmmaking, the students were also exposed to concepts of making advertisements during a work-shop by a creative ad film maker from Mudra Communications agency. The students documented each step in their project report. The project not only got the students their first earnings (some of them handed the money to their parents as per tradition), but also gave them skills that could shape their future.

"This will guide us in deciding what we want to do in the future," says Krina Prajapati one of the students.

The Rs 88,000 has been equally shared among the students.



PICT: MANISH MISTRY



(Top) from left: Benjamin Mailian (teacher), Sharmeen Attarwala, Parin Sanghvi, Shripal Shah, Shivraj Sajara and Krina Prajapati (sitting). The state government has bought one-minute films made by 22 students of Mahatma Gandhi International School on social issues for Rs 88,000. Bottom: Students capture some social issues on their camera on the Amdavadi roads



(Above)  
**The Times of India Supplement-  
Ahmedabad Mirror**  
pg. 2  
April 25, 2008

Making Social  
Awareness  
Adverts

Students conceive and  
create adverts. Govt  
purchases them to create  
awareness

January- April 2008



CITY

| AM | SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 2008

# Elite school students return to teach at municipal shala

Two class X girls, who once studied at Mithakhali Municipal Shala No. 4 and are now students of Mahatma Gandhi International School, have returned to teach English using fun methods



Kinjal (left) and Preeti take an English class at Mithakhali Municipal Shala No. 4

NANDINI SHAH

Two former students of Mithakhali Municipal Shala No. 4 are back to school after seven years, this time as teachers. No, they are not 20-somethings, but young class X girls.

Kinjal Patel and Preeti Patel earlier studied at the municipal school till class II.

The next year, they were inducted into the Mahatma Gandhi International School, which every year educates two municipal school students free every year.

Kinjal and Preeti now are English teachers in the school where studies are irregular, teachers remain absent often and students have nothing constructive to do.

Kinjal and Preeti were among the 15 class X MGIS students selected to teach at the municipal school just to "help out and get some teaching experience in the bargain."

The duo spent a month teaching English at their school and want to do so again next year.

"It was an amazing experience going back to our own school as teachers after about seven years. We are really glad to be giving something back to our shala as we were lucky enough to be able to build a strong education base," says Preeti, a resident of Mithakhali gaam and daughter of an auto parts dealer.

The girls remember that their teachers were often not present in class, which meant that spending hours doing nothing.

Kinjal and Preeti say they made sure that their 'students' didn't have the same experience with them.

"We planned out the activities in such a way that the children could have fun along with learning the language," says Kinjal, who also lives in Mithakhali.

Her father is an auditor in a chartered accounting firm. So, for one

whole month, the class VII students of the shala would set aside their English textbooks and learn the fun way.

The prepositions 'in' and 'out' were learnt by actually going in and out of the class, singing or dancing out the Boogie Woogie song, learning to greet a friend as well as introducing themselves — exactly the way Kinjal and Preeti learnt language skills at MGIS.

Their class III MGIS teacher Minoo Joshi says the girls have come a long way from what they were then.

"They had difficulty with English language skills, but as they got involved in different school activities, they picked up remarkably well," says Joshi, also their class X class teacher this year.

She has keenly watched their progress. "They have a sense of responsibility and are able to grasp most concepts without much guidance," she adds.

Talking about their experiences of teaching, Kinjal says, "We noticed that shala students were scared of speaking up before teachers. Our activities loosened them up and they wanted us to take extra classes during the summer break."

The two girls also got a chance to pen their experiences in MGIS's newsletter 'The Eye.' Their parents have accepted their transformation from municipal school kids to English-speaking smart girls following a tough IB curriculum, and are of course, happy.

"We are three teachers who have to handle a large number of students, which means we can't do them justice, especially in English subject," confesses the principal of Shala No. 4, Jyotsna Gandhi.

"Also, we have to complete the syllabus in a stipulated time, so we can't veer away from the textbook the way the MGIS teachers could," Gandhi.

Teaching English to underprivileged children

Underprivileged students on full scholarship at MGIS give back to society.

November 2007- April 2008