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# NEWSLETTER

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Aseema celebrates our sixtieth year of Independence in a meaningful way - by providing education of value, to more and more children.

A lot has been happening at Aseema! A new Aanganwadi, 'designer luggage', a new school bus and so much more. We are proud to share it all with you.

### **Aanganwadi at Jambhwadi, Igatpuri**

An Aanganwadi was set up by Aseema in Jambhwadi, Igatpuri. This school was constructed on land generously donated by Sitabai Kavji Mengal. A puja was held on 18 June 2007. The sacred oil lamp was lit by Sitabai, followed by the little students, who said prayers and sprinkled the traditional rice. The school was decorated with floral festoons, and auspicious signs on the doors, made with red powder and turmeric gave the school a very festive look



The Aanganwadi was formally inaugurated on 15 July 2007. The senior officials and staff of the Mahindra & Mahindra Plant at Igatpuri, as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility, spent the morning at the Aanganwadi. They provided saplings which were planted around the School. The Mahindra staff were so enthusiastically involved in the tree-planting activity, that they even volunteered to carry out the 'greening' of Aseema's plot of land at



Awalkheda. A generous donation from Mahindra has enabled us to start this Aanganwadi.

### **Women's Self Help Group, Awalkheda, Igatpuri**

Helping the Awalkheda women to set up a Self Help Group (SHG) is an initiative for community development, started in April. Aseema impressed upon the women the need for doing a business that will help them to be financially secure. A Business Plan was prepared by two students of the S.P.Jain Institute of Management and Research after detailed discussions with the women.

Mrs. Kiran, an entrepreneur in the Agarbatti business, imparts training to them in making agarbattis. Aseema funds the training cost and is marketing the products. The packaging of the agarbattis carries a message that the tribal women will fund the education of their children through this product. The first lot of agarbattis was received in May and is being sold at Aseema's office and at exhibitions.

### **Balwadi at Khar Danda**

The BMC has planned to start 84 new English medium schools in 2007 under the Mumbai Public School Project. They have called upon NGOs to run the Pre-Primary sections of these schools. Aseema has recognized the urgent need for quality education in BMC schools and has agreed to run the Pre-Primary (Junior and Senior K.G.) in two such schools - Khar Danda Municipal School (West) and Santacruz (West), Municipal Secondary School, Gazdar Park. The Khar Danda Balwadi started on 23rd July 2007. As of date, we have over 30 children in each class with trained teachers and volunteers. The Santacruz school is expected to start functioning shortly.



These schools have been selected as they are in the same Ward (H/West Ward) as the PCMS adopted by Aseema six years ago. With three schools in the same geographical area, Aseema intends to make efforts to see that all children in the area are in school and not on the streets.

### **Corporate Social Responsibility Bazaar**

The Bombay Chamber of Commerce and Industry's (BCCI) CSR Bazaar was organized on 29 May 2007, at the Cricket Club of India. Aseema and twenty-five other Indian NGOs participated. Aseema products on display were greatly appreciated by all. The BCCI bought paintings done by the Aseema children to present to the guest speakers at the event. Some companies showed interest in supporting our projects as well.

### **NGO Festival at InOrbit Mall**

Aseema was also invited to participate in an NGO Festival, "It's Raining Goodness", at InOrbit Mall [Malad] on 26 July. A plasma screen played the Aseema five minute documentary in a continuous loop to give observers a fair introduction.



### Aseema artwork for Samsonite

Aseema is literally going places! TBWA\India commissioned a project for their client American Tourister/ Samsonite. Forty Aseema children painted their Dream Vacation of which, two paintings, created by Taufiq Khan [aged 14] and Shanavaz Sheikh [aged 8], became the central advertising idea for the Company's latest campaign to promote a new range of premium luggage. This was launched on 1 July, at an event hosted at Zenzi. Designer Anita Dongre, and T.V. Personalities Rakshanda Khan and Shamita Singha used the children's artwork to create bags, scarves, coffee tables and trays. The 'Dream Vacation' paintings were unique, and they were all sold within a few hours, and the latecomers were disappointed.



### Inauguration of School Bus

The Celebrate Bandra Trust generously donated a school bus to Aseema which will be used by the children of the Pali-Chimbai Municipal School. The bus was inaugurated at a function on the 8 August 2007. The school children put up song and dance performances for our guests. Chief Guest Shaan and the Trustees of the Celebrate Bandra Trust were very impressed by the children and Aseema's activities. Students who had scored above seventy five percent in their annual exams were honored with gifts. The function ended with the children taking their first ride in their new school bus.



### Independence Day Celebration

GE Commercial Finance India joined Aseema to celebrate 60 years of our Independence. The teachers and students had decorated the school in the colours of the National Flag. The children put up performances of patriotic songs and poems for our guests. They even did a small skit with the message "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country". The GE staffs were welcomed into each classroom and they distributed sweets to our children.



Gandhiji said, "We don't inherit the world from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children."  
We believe that the gift of education brings equal opportunity and true freedom to our children. With each newsletter we hope that you, dear reader, will appreciate the progress Aseema is making, and our commitment to giving children a future that is meaningful.

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