

## **TWINKLE, TWINKLE, LITTLE STARS**

MUMMY, PAPA, AND TEACHERS UNITE

-Manthan Mehta

The Pali-Chimbai Municipal School, adopted by Aseema, has become the first municipal school in Mumbai to have a Parent-Teacher Association (PTA). The school floated this idea to check absenteeism and even inspire parents to take pro-active role in their child's education.

The first PTA meeting was held in July 25, which co-incidentally was also Parent's Day. Said Maria D'Souza, Education Officer with the school, "Absenteeism has been a major problem in the past, particularly Saturdays, when attendance often dropped to almost 50 percent. This year, when the school reopened, we began counselling parents. In fact, class teachers personally talked to the parents. It was while conducting this exercise when we hit upon the concept of forming a PTA."

The school has now made the parents responsible to check absenteeism. "Realisation will slowly spread among the community that it's education that is the great equaliser and not their deep tooted belief that more children mean more workers in the family to bring more income," emphasized D'Souza.