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MUMBAI MOBILE CRECHES NEWSLETTER

# BAL SHRISTI

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## Foreword

We are very happy to inform you that Mumbai Mobile Creches(MMC) has been registered with the National CSR Hub at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. This is an initiative of the Department of Public Enterprises, which is under the Indian government's Ministry of Heavy Industries, to promote inclusive growth through their corporate social responsibility (CSR) . The initiative creates a platform for empaneled NGOs, institutions, universities, and organizations to apply for support for diverse programmes of various public sector undertakings. Public enterprises will use this platform to invest in such NGOs as a form of CSR.

Because MMC works with the children of migrant construction workers, it was always hard to track children or contact them once they have left our centres. Children grow up and a few of them remain in touch with the MMC teachers who cared for them when they were young. However, we are glad to tell you that this year MMC made a conscious effort to link its alumni with each other, the former students, now adults, who attended MMC centres from 1972 onward at various construction sites in Mumbai, Navi Mumbai and Thane.

An Alumni Meet was organized on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2014 and it was a success with 18 of MMC's alumni attending. They were thrilled to be a part of this initiative which gave them an opportunity to bond with each other after a gap of several years. Our alumni shared their life stories, and it was a satisfying moment to know that despite many hardships, many of our alumni are now doing exceptionally well in their respective fields.

The alumni network was named "Hamara MMC," and MMC created an exclusive Facebook page to facilitate strong communication amongst them. This network will be a platform for our alumni to share their experiences, give information about opportunities and help each other to progress while inspiring new generation of MMC children. These empowered individuals serve as agents of change in their own lives and in their communities today. MMC has now formed an alumni network data base with their updated contacts and hopes to expand its members.

## Royal Visit to MMC

It was a great experience for the children and staff of the Agripada centre to welcome Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall during the royal couple's tour of India in November 2013. Prince Charles and the Duchess were all smiles as they met the children, and the little ones were so happy to spend time with Their Royal Highnesses during this very special occasion. The visit was organised by The British Asian Trust, which has been a long-time supporter of MMC.

MMC's Chief Executive Vrshali Pispati and Programme Coordinator Vrshali Naik took Prince Charles and the Duchess around to all the classes during the royal couple's 45-minute visit. The children had prepared a special song and put on a puppet show for the Prince and Duchess, which was very much appreciated by everyone. Before the royal couple left, the children presented them with diyas and a handmade greeting card.

The visit by Prince Charles and the Duchess drew media coverage from both domestic and international media. In case you missed the media coverage, you can see it in the links below:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/theroyalfamily/10437669/Prince-Charles-and-Camilla-visit-Mumbai-creche.html>

<http://aninews.in/videogallery2/17414-british-royals-visit-mobile-creche-for-underprivileged-children-in-mumbai.html>



*Children presented handmade diyas and greeting card to the royal couple*

## The Oberoi Melting Pot

Mumbai Mobile Creches was selected as one of the three benefactors for The Oberoi Melting Pot 2013, an annual charity event in Mumbai that showcases cultural and culinary traditions around the world.

The event was hosted by the Oberoi Hotels, the Consular Corps in Mumbai, and the Indian Merchants' Chamber and featured cultural presentations as well as a selection of beverages and cuisine from the following countries: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Maldives, Poland, Russia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Turkey, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

It was a great platform for MMC to showcase its work with the children of migrant construction labourers at such a prestigious event. The Melting Pot attendees showed great interest in MMC. As they came into the venue, they stopped to ask MMC staffers questions about the organisation's work and took MMC's brochures with them.

## The International Girl Child Day

On the occasion of International Girl Child Day, Nurjana\* - an 11 year old girl from an MMC centre delivered a speech emphasizing education for all children at an event organised by Canadian Consulate in Mumbai. Nurjana won admiration of the audience for her unwavering desire to learn despite her harsh living conditions. Hailing from Darbhanga, Bihar Nurjana migrated to Mumbai with her family about four years ago and lives in a makeshift housing near a construction site. From last four years Nurjana has attended MMC's bridging and after-school programme and hopes to become a teacher some day.

\* Names changed to maintain anonymity.

## Notes from the Field

### Book Week

Mumbai Mobile Creches celebrated its fourth annual Book Week from November 25, 2013 to November 29, 2013 to kindle children's love of books and enhance their interest in reading. During the Book Week, the regular class schedule was set aside and a new set of activities revolving entirely around books and reading was implemented. The Book Week, with its multi-dimensional format, reaches out beyond classroom learning to the homes of children, to community members, and to the government and private schools nearby. Children take it upon themselves to cast the magic spell of books on everyone around them!

“Bharat ki Khoj” (Know India) was the theme for Book Week this year, and all the book reading and other activities revolved around this theme. The theme focused on understanding different states in India. The books selected revealed folklore, history, and facts about different states to the children. To name just a few of the week's highlights, the children loved participating in a “child to child” reading exchange with students from municipal schools, visiting local libraries, listening to book readings and then engaging in related hands-on activities, reading with their parents, and taking part in a book sale.

### Teaching Aids Exhibition by Bal Palika Trainees

This year we took our training programme to another level when our Bal Palika Training course restored its affiliation with SNDT University. (We had had this affiliation earlier, but had been constrained to give it up after a few years.)

Our trainees continued to impress everyone with their creativity and innovation as they displayed their newly made educational aids at the recent exhibition arranged on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014. This year we had three different batches of trainees in the exhibition: 14 trainees from MMC's in-house batch, 16 trainees from the SNDT batch and 9 trainees from the NGO Dharma Bharti Mission's batch.

The teaching aids focused on the theme of “Wild Animals.” where trainees not only learned how to create the aids, but also how to employ creative methods of teaching children about animals. Many of these women came from construction sites and slums. They were very proud to show their work to many friends and supporters of MMC at the exhibition. The trainees also put on lively puppet shows for everyone's enjoyment. Seeing such a wonderful turnout and support at the event helped build the trainees' confidence as they prepared to work as teachers and child care givers in Mumbai.

We thank Ms. Rakhee Lalwani from the Taj Hotels, who was the Chief Guest for the exhibition, for encouraging our trainees.



*Bal Palika trainees displayed the teaching aids they made on exhibition day*



### Annual Camp

Continuing the tradition of the past 27 years, MMC organized an annual camp from 16th to 20th December 2013, at Marve for all children above 5 years attending its day care centres on construction sites. A total of 426 children from our centres spread across the city attended the camp in two batches.

We had planned a number of interesting and fun activities for the children during the camp, including a joker and juggling show, a game show, a fun fair, a Charlie Chaplin show, along with hair beading and body painting. We thank the IL&FS Investment Managers Ltd., whose general funding made this camp possible and sponsored the gifts of special MMC T-shirts for the children. The children enjoyed the camp thoroughly.

### Puppet Workshop

MMC's talented puppet team continued to share its skills by training children and teachers from various organisations. We conducted three puppet-making workshops and 18 shows and reached over 700 people through them. We are proud that our puppet team has been performing its shows and workshops at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS) in Mumbai, and have received great feedback from the participants and audience.

### Staff Social

This year, with the generous support of IL&FS Investment Managers Ltd., we arranged an overnight trip for MMC's staff to Lonavla and Pune. A total of 102 staff enjoyed the outing on January 25 and 26, 2014. Our staff visited some tourist destinations in Pune like Sarasbagh, and the Aga Khan Palace, to name just two. The group had a relaxed stay at a serene location in Kune Mission, Lonavla.

## New Initiatives

### Building Child Care Capacities of Women Living on Construction Sites – Sangharsh Nagar

We are very happy that MMC's 26-day Building Child Care Capacities training programme, which earlier only targeted disadvantaged women living in slums of Mumbai, has now reached the women living on construction site in Powai. The Sangharsh Nagar site at Powai, where MMC also runs its Mobile Bus - Care on Wheels programme for children, was the first site where we conducted this training for women living in the labour community.

A total of six women completed this course successfully. This is a huge step for MMC towards attaining sustainable development for its communities. The women trained would be the change agents to ensure that there is a child care facility available for children at the construction sites. In future, we hope to expand this initiative at multiple construction sites.



*One of the trainees receiving her certificate after successfully completing the course*

### Advocacy Programme Visits Home Regions of Migrants and Other Organisations

MMC's advocacy team took advantage of an excellent opportunity to visit various organisations working in the home regions of migrants who work at construction sites in Mumbai, visiting rural Maharashtra and Odisha as part of advocacy programme. During their Odisha visit, the team visited families of three migrant workers in their remote villages of Odisha. These workers reside at two construction sites in Mumbai where the advocacy team works.

The team also visited Darbar Sahitya Sangh in Sodhua village in Khordha district, an organisation which works extensively on the identity issues faced by migrants.

The team visited various organizations like Kalapandhari Magasvargiya and Adivasi Gramin Vikas Sanstha in Latur, Paryay in Osmanabad, and Savitribai Phule Mahila Mandal in Beed during their visit. These are organisations which focus on women's and children's rights.

The team also visited Gramin Samasya Mukti Trust in Yavatmal, which works with various vulnerable groups in source villages focusing on sex education awareness and advocates sustainable agriculture among farmers.

This was a crucial experience for the MMC team members, enabling them to better understand the issues of migrant workers.



*MMC's advocacy team visiting Gramin Samasya Mukti Trust in Yavatmal*

### Capacity Building Certificate Course for Library

Ms. Manisha Patil and Ms. Sandhya Singh, two of MMC's teachers, had an opportunity to participate in a capacity building training certificate course for Library Educators, organised by the Vidya Bhawan Society of Udaipur and Sir Ratan Tata Trust. During the course, they were trained to use the medium of books and setting up libraries in the most innovative ways for children. Both of them have bloomed and prospered throughout the training and also worked on some field projects as part of their course. We hope to incorporate their skills in library education into MMC's programme soon.

#### MMC in numbers

**27** lokdoots conducted and over **6100** community members reached

**9** health camps held and over **360** community members reached

**6** eye camps were facilitated and over **300** community members were benefited

**209** PAN cards and **93** Aadhar Cards facilitated for people living on construction sites in the past six months

A total of **30** day care centres operated and **6** day care centres closed

# Fundraising and Friendraising

## Global Giving: We made it, thanks to you!

We are excited to announce that we have earned a permanent spot on Global Giving; a U.S.-based fundraising platform. Now friends of MMC can donate online through this quick and easy way and help us to continue the work we do.

Donate to MMC at

<http://www.globalgiving.org/projects/mumbaimobilecreches/>

## Footsteps4Good

This year, 69 children and youth, along with 22 teachers from construction sites of Powai, participated in the Footsteps4Good walkathon on October 2, 2013. During this fund-raising event, 27 runners supported MMC. Our teachers sang an inaugural song for the run which was appreciated by everyone, and our youth and children participated in the walkathon.

## Mumbai Marathon

The Mumbai Marathon is the largest annual fund-raising event for MMC. The Standard Chartered Mumbai Marathon organized on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2014, was a great success for MMC!

Eleven teams from five of our corporate partners and a total of 250 runners ran to support MMC. We watched with great appreciation as our friends and donors proudly wore our logo to demonstrate their support for the cause of migrant children. Our participants always report how much fun and excitement there is in running with nearly 40,000 people, whether they compete in the Dream Run (6 km), the half marathon (21 km), or the full marathon (42 km).

We were thrilled with the large number of corporates and individuals who committed to running on our behalf. For details on how you can get involved in the Mumbai Marathon 2015,

[please contact communications@mmcmail.org.in](mailto:communications@mmcmail.org.in)



*We were thrilled to have a renowned actress Ms. Anrita Puri to run in support for MMC in Marathon this year!*

## Thane Marathon

MMC participated in the Hiranandani Thane Half Marathon this year as a charity partner for the event. Eighteen youths from construction sites where MMC has its day care centres ran in the marathon.

## Thank you!

We are very thankful to all of our friends and supporters – individuals, organisations and corporates – for their generous and committed support. The children, teachers, and staff members would like to extend their warmest regards to all of you! In particular, we would like to thank the following:

- Dr. Pareshnath Paul for his dedicated support to our work.
- Employees from Infiniti Retail Ltd., Cromax, Mount Everest Mineral Water Ltd., TATA Communications Ltd. and TATA Motors Ltd. volunteered at MMC's six centres during March 3<sup>rd</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>, 2014 - 'Tata Volunteering Week' celebrating the 175<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of founder of the TATA group - the late Jamsetji Tata. Thank you Infiniti Retail Ltd. for donating a TV and camera to our centre.
- First Presbyterian Church of Holland, Michigan, for supporting MMC's nutrition programme.
- GiveIndia and Give Foundation for their extensive support for our education programme, corpus fund, and nutrition programme.
- Hirco, KPMG in India, Prudential Process Management Services India, and TATA Capital Ltd. for fundraising through GiveIndia's iGive platform during the Joy of Giving Week.
- IL&FS Investment Managers Ltd., which sponsored fun events for both the children's annual camp and the staff picnic.
- IndusInd Bank for their generous donation of clothes and books during the Joy of Giving Week.
- KPMG in India for continuing to support our work, and for organizing a number of volunteering events and fun outings for the children.
- Mr. Ananthraman and Mr. Rajat Gupta for their continued support towards teachers' salaries.
- Mr. Chandramouli Batibrolu, Mr. Dhiren Kapadia, Mr. Rajiv Ohol, Ms. Rashmi Sundaram, Mr. Sameer Naik, and Mr. Vijaykumar Shingrani for their support through donations towards our corpus fund.
- Mr. Jamshyd Godrej, for a generous donation towards our corpus fund.
- Mr. Joe Walters and Mr. Shreyans Iyer from Songbound for training MMC's children in music and forming their choir group. Children are really enjoying this new venture.
- Mr. Nish Bhutani, who has been a consistent supporter of our cause, for his outstanding efforts to raise funds for MMC during the Mumbai Marathon.
- Ms. Jenny Roberts, Ms. Kim Murch, and Ms. Sei Chong for their volunteering at our office.
- Ms. Mehroo Dara Vasania, for a generous donation towards MMC's corpus fund.
- Ms. Tannaz Daver for setting up a fundraiser on GlobalGiving, for her son, Zahaan, and his friends, at the Kid's Dash in the Singapore Marathon.
- Mumbai Connexions members for their fabulous volunteering efforts at five of the MMC's centres.
- Our donors – Child Vikaas International, Concern India Foundation, Impact Foundation, Global Giving, IDBI Bank, IL&FS Investment Managers Ltd., MoneyGram Foundation, Reliance Foundation, and The Global Fund for Children – for their generous support of our work.
- PAS Exports Pvt. Ltd., for supporting our nutrition programme.
- Prof. Sangeeta Bagga-Gupta, for her guidance and support to MMC's Research team.
- Rajhans Vidyalaya for hosting our children on their Sports Day. A total of 132 MMC's children from 8 centres attended!
- Ramlila Charities, for donating towards our nutrition programme.
- Reliance Foundation, for supporting MMC's education programme through its "Education For All" initiative.
- S. M. Construction, for donating towards the corpus fund.
- TATA Communications Ltd., which raised funds for us during the Joy of Giving Week.
- The American School of Bombay, for donating to our corpus fund.
- The Breadsticks Foundation, for its generous support to MMC.
- The Central Social Welfare Board, for continued support of our programme.
- The Essar Foundation, the Sadguru Kamubaba Foundation and the R. Jhunjhunwala Foundation for donating generously to our corpus fund.
- The team from Edelweiss Tokio Life Insurance, Business Unit, for generously donating to MMC centres and for providing valuable office items, such as laptops, a television, a DVD player and a camera.
- Verein Mobile Krippen Freiburg, Premdhara der Strom Liebe e. V. and Mr. and Mrs. Pankoke, for their ongoing and dedicated support to our work.
- Walsingham House School, for supporting MMC's programme.
- Yorkshire Indian Society, U.K., for selecting MMC as recipient of funds from its annual charity banquet.