

# 4<sup>th</sup> GREEN LEAVES - FILM FESTIVAL of SANSKRITI SCHOOL

## 2005- 2006

### A Report

The Sanskriti School has been named the “Green School” for its innovative and practical environmental curriculum and recycling and waste management efforts. This is one School in Delhi that has been declared as “zero waste” School. Most of the waste generated by the School is recycled and reused. Segregation of waste at source is strictly followed. The main effort is to “create wealth from waste” and “build an attitude amongst the young children” towards waste management and recycling and inculcate in them the habit of conservation from an early age. The School has a full-fledged environment lab, a paper-recycling unit, three bio-enzyme compost pit to tackle both canteen and horticultural waste, plastic weaving loom and a solar concentrator. Rainwater harvesting is also one of the major components of the School’s environmental initiatives.

Creating awareness and developing a GREEN attitude among students and staff is the primary concern for hosting the “Green Leaves Film Festival”. It all started as an EVS project for the 7<sup>th</sup> graders of the batch 2002 – ’03 to create short films on any environmental issues like “no to poly bags”, “eco-visargan”, “kabar se jugar” conserve water...etc. by using simple handycams and computers. Seeing the appreciation & impact of the festival there was no looking back.

Thanks to the Vatavaran Film Festival - 2003 I got in touch with Alka Tomar from Center for Media Studies (CMS) who ever since has been our ‘film bank’ and has never failed to enrich our students with meaningful, short, captivating films which deals with stark sometimes shocking realities which definitely makes the gray cells ticking.

Students till date remember the films like ‘Brush with Death’ on how mongoose is chased, cornered, trapped and slowly beaten to death so that the skin does not split & then fur is plucked. With a handful of fur from each animal only few paintbrushes are made & sold in the open market in spite of being an illegal trade. This film did bring a revolution & students are now careful and aware of what they buy. Another film, which turned many heads, was Mike Pandey’s “Shores of Silence” - whale sharks in India. Students lashed back with comments like “Tsunami was nature’s payback to man”. It did create an emotional stir among students and motivated many to form their own eco club to do something for the cause.

Besides films on Friendicoes , Keep wild life wild - WTI, IFAW, Ozee Ozone – cartoon film, Gajraj, Waste – Chintan, Kudremukh & Last ride of Olive Ridley Turtles our 3<sup>rd</sup> film festival was mainly focused on Mike Pandey’s films - Timeless traveler & Vanishing Giants. We arranged for an interactive session with Mike Pandey who was there in person to answer all the Qs of the students. The students were very disturbed to see how Mike could shoot a film & be there all the time to witness the mutilation and eventual death of the elephant. Mike explained that it was painful but he had to sacrifice one in order to save the rest because when the film was shown to the ministry it did expose the reality of the forest department and turned many heads to take appropriate action. There were some junior students who vividly narrated Mike’s film to him – ‘Shores of Silence’- whale sharks in India that was shown to them the previous year and deeply expressed their anguish.

For the festival sensitive environmental issues are only taken up and one film runs for one week to cover all the students during their EVS period. The films are carefully chosen keeping in mind not to exceed 20 min, the normal attention span of a child. The festival starts from day one after winter vacation to the day before school closes for prep leave for final exams (ie. Jan – Feb). This is the time when it's too cold for students to do any EVS lab activity & they all enjoy & look forward to see GOOD FILMS. Students are asked to give immediate feed back after every film & that leads to group discussions & brainstorming.

The festival have motivated students like Priyanka (class VII) to make their own film on waste management & Ananya kaushik who made her first film when she was in class VI on eco responsible behaviour & another this year on 'Memories of Andaman & after effects of Tsunami'. The film reflects her maturation and predicts a future filmmaker in making. Besides the students film category in our 4<sup>th</sup> film festival we featured films like "Jijivisha" – a river struggles, a film by 'We for Yamuna'. It makes one really think hard and clearly gives us the message that it is very easy to point fingers on others but exposes the real culprit – "I". Cats & Dogs – IFAW is a sensitive film on pet lovers. "Rhino – The Indian Unicorn", film by Naresh Bedi captivated the essence of Kaziranga & our rich biodiversity, which we need to protect and hold on to. "Birds Through My Window" – film by Rudransh Mathur, have definitely motivated many of my students to follow his and Priyanka & Anushka's footsteps.

Films like "Victims of Garbage Dump" & Nutan Manmohan's "Second Hand Life" has given a closer perspective of what rag pickers go through & it has sensitized many hearts to look at Abdul with respect. Abdul is a 12-year-old rag picker who is our true green hero. He collects the non-biodegradable garbage from the school daily after school hours. The school ensures that he goes to his school in the morning & by evening the waste is collected for him to be bagged and sold by him, hence he is now able to devote quality time to himself & at the same time he continues to supports his family. This arrangement ensured the school to reach its 'zero garbage target' & on the other hand it secures Abduls ambition to become an educated kabari wala. Yes reality bites 'coz charity doesn't work for long. The problem of many rag pickers can be solved to a certain extend if every school in India can make such arrangements.

The Sanskriti School's environment program has proved that it does not take much to follow a simple eco-friendly system in a School. Pure dedication and positive attitude can make all the difference.

**Nita Ganguly**

Eco club incharge.  
Sanskriti School  
Chanakya Puri  
Mob : 9811258447