



# SOUTH ASIAN CHILDREN'S TIMES

Issue 2

July - October 2005

## Scaling New Heights.....

*South Asian Children's Times* - the children's newspaper from South Asia is glad to publish its second issue of the newspaper. Children from six countries in South Asia - Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka have contributed to the newspaper in the form of articles, stories, illustrations and drawings. This newspaper endeavours to construct a creative space in the print media journalism completely coloured by our thoughts, ideas and imagination.

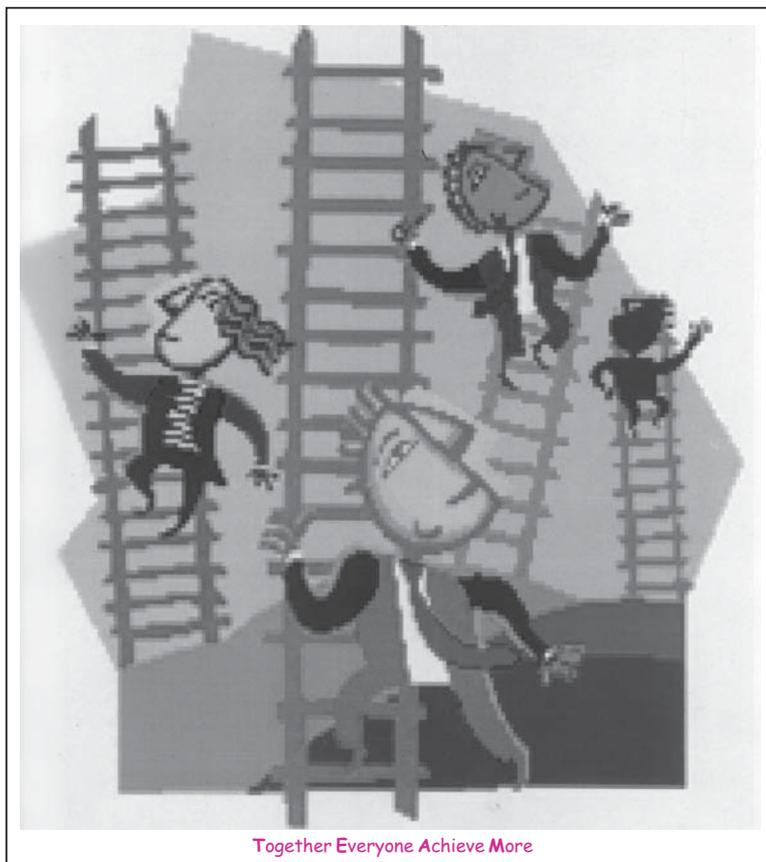
Serious issues of trafficking, child labour, exploitation and abuse have been portrayed through the words of a child. This newspaper comprises of our stories, our issues of concern, problems and our perspective to a solution. It's a voice to reach the ears of the adult world and give us our due Right today, so that we carve out a better tomorrow for the society and generations to come.

Training workshop on production of children's own newspaper saw the publication of the first issue of the newspaper on the closing ceremony. This is the second attempt made by us for producing our very own newspaper.

We wish you all a happy journey into the children's world .....

### TEAM

Together Everyone Achieve More  
*Children of South Asia*



Together Everyone Achieve More

## The Hammer and the Bangles

*Md. Saju, Aparajeo, Bangladesh*

The wrists that were supposed to be wearing bangles,  
The hands are now working with iron hammers,  
Hunger has brought me down to the streets,  
And work has introduced me to the hammer,  
I do not want this misery,  
Want to be happy and make merry,  
Want to make glass bangles,  
And want to wear them too,  
Want to learn to read and write,  
And make a future that is bright. ■

## Let us End Child Domestic Labour

*A. Thilini Chandrasiri, Deepthi Children's Society, Sri Lanka*

Children have the right to education. Many rich people pretend to educate poor children but keep them as domestic servants in their households. Children dream of going to school with lots of hopes but are saddened by not having any education. Owing to poverty many parents send their children for domestic work. But there are some parents, though

they are poor they prefer to send their children to school. If parents love their children they should not send them to work in houses.

It is good to dedicate one day as world children's day but try to keep them happy everyday. ■

## Against Child Marriage

Md. Ali Hossain, Aparajeo, Bangladesh

Marriage of children, boys below the age of 21 and girls below the age of 18 is called child marriage. In the villages of Bangladesh it is a social custom to get girls married off by the age of 14 or 15. Due to illiteracy and superstitious beliefs and no scope of further education in the villages children are married off at an early age.

Because of child marriage, the young girls die while bearing the child after marriage and also the unborn meets with the same fate. The young adolescent girls should be going to school and enjoying her life with girls of her age, instead we find her bringing up the newborn and involved in household chores. The

phenomenon of child marriage is also leading to rapid growth in population. To address this issue of child marriage we have to bring together, the government of Bangladesh, the various non governmental organizations, health care development institutions and education promotion organization in a joint effort to combat child marriage. This apart the ill effects of child marriage have to be discussed and deliberated in school classroom discussions, public meetings and gatherings to create common understanding and a public opinion against child marriage.



Krishna: Suman, 9 years, MJCC, India

## Dream of Buddhikumari to Educate her Daughter

Nakul B.K., Kamal Binayak Child Club, Bhaktapur, Nepal

Stone quarrying is a difficult and dangerous work. Nevertheless, because of poverty, many workers have no other options. Buddhi Kumari Waiwa is one of them. She admits that she and her husband came to Kathmandu in search of better opportunities 9 years back. At present, she is staying, along with her family in a rented room at Kamal Binayak in Bhaktapur district, Nepal. Earlier, her husband used to work at the construction sites. However, now since 4 years they are working together in stone quarrying site earning around Rs. 4000 per month. She has a son and a daughter totaling four members in her family. With the earning of Rs. 4000, most of which is spent on rent, it is difficult for the family to get good food. Even though she

feels proud, that she has sent both of her children to school. Her daughter is six years old and studies at Shree Brahmanari School. Her school fee is Rs. 100 per month. Buddhikumari does not regret on having to spend Rs. 100 for her daughter's education. She says, "I am illiterate because of which I faced many difficulties and have to quarry stones. I do not want to see my daughter quarrying stones. So, even if I have to stay hungry, I am sending my daughter to school". Though her lifestyle is simple, her thinking is high. Will only the earning of the parents make the future of this girl bright? Definitely not, different organizations and the government will have to look into this matter.

## Children's Efforts

Nasir Ahmad, PRWSWO, Pakistan

We are a small group of children from district Rahim Yaar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan. A welfare organization called Pakistan Rural Workers Social Welfare Organization (PRWSWO) has formed this group of children and has told us about our rights. Now we know all about CRC. Before formation of this group also we used to play together but we had never thought that we children could have also done some big works. So far our group has got 57 children from our area and we children have bought necessary things like books, uniforms, sport goods etc. from our pocket money savings.

We have also started tree plantation campaign in our villages. Our group has decided that we will keep our villages green.. Also, many children that used to just wander or watch movies are learning many occupation, as a result of the group's and PRWSWO's efforts. The group has also decided that all the members of our group will help their parents in their work to a certain extent. We have also formed a team of some children, which takes care of the cleanliness in the village. Same village, which was quite dirty earlier, is now shining like a glass. We intend to initiate some more programs soon that will have good results.

## Children's Development Bank

Md. Akil, MJCC, India

Bal Vikas Bank or Children Development Bank - children's faces glow with happiness when this name is mentioned because this is the first bank, which has been started for us children. I am not able to find words to appreciate the manager of this bank. I would say that we all children should be grateful to you. Last year I was manager of the bank. Whoever is the manager should do work his/her work well. Because of the bank we children have learnt many good habits.



Parrots: S. Venkatesan, Jeeva Jyothi, India

## Thoughts of a Migrant Bird

*Ruvini Tharanga, Kantha Sakti, Sri Lanka*

I remember going with the wind to a distant place with my forefathers. The surrounding was glistening in green and blue, and was very refreshing. We stayed near a river. We were able to find plenty of food in the surroundings plenty of water to bathe in and drink too. There we spent many months enjoying freely. The greenness that was, is not to be seen today. When I saw a range of mountains, I couldn't think which side to go. Not a bit of cooling wind. I felt burning hot, everywhere skyscrapers to be seen. Some of them send out black fumes. Roads everywhere. Vehicles are going here and there at a stretch and black fumes reach the sky.

Sometimes I hear the sound of crackers. We are not used to those sounds. Why are we harassed like this? Why destroy our freedom? How do we live without plant life? They are destroyed daily. No water. At the end there will be a desert. Cool wind will become hot. Our habitat will be a world that is hot. Oh! God, what happened to the world that we lived happily? Won't our kin get a chance to live on this earth? I am afraid of that. Who is responsible for this? ■



Domestic Violence: Anju Balami, 14 years, CONCERN, Nepal

## Our Bank: A Ray of Hope and Inspiration for Children

*Razi Haider, Mahila Development Centre, India*

My name is Soni. I study in non-formal teaching center. Like me there are many children in this world who are poor and helpless but they want to prove themselves to be self-dependent. Today the problems I am facing I couldn't tell to anyone. My father's eyesight is weak so no one gives him work if he is not earning then how can our family survive. My mother also remains ill most of the time. The situation of the family is pathetic. We don't get full stomach food. I am thinking that in which center I go for study,

where, apart from studies, stitching, bag making are taught to the girls free of cost. I want to learn these professional activities after studies. From this I can earn money also. One day in my center, group of children of 'Children's Development Bank', which is organized by MDC, came and told us about this bank. They said that we run this bank. Among us one of the child is the manager of this bank who take the help of the member working in this organization. After getting the full details of this bank many ideas came to my mind. After facing much problem I also opened an account in this

bank and started saving money. The Children's Development Bank is having the facilities of taking advance. Those children who regularly deposit their money for six months in this bank they become eligible for taking advance. I kept on trying. I thought that after taking an advance I could open a small cosmetic shop near by my house, which will certainly change our family condition. And then I opened the shop after taking the advance from the bank and I am feeling very good. Sometimes I think if there won't be any Children's Development Bank then what would happen to the helpless children like us.

Today from this shop I am taking care of my family and also depositing the installment of the bank. Our neighbours are also very happy. It is also said that the bank run by this organization is like a ray of hope and inspiration for the children like us who want to do something in life and be self-dependent. It also helps in achieving the status in the society. We can get rid of humiliation. Time to time there is a meeting of children in this organization in which we put our difficulties and discuss. It helps increasing the work and also provides relief in working pattern. ■

### Orphan Child

*Pratap Shrestha, Dakchhinkali Child Club, Nepal*

Nor do he has a name or a class,  
Nor do he has any kin or a house,  
No parents and no brothers and sisters,  
He cries for happiness to forget his sorrows,  
No money and no support,  
Nor any prestige in society,  
Hither and thither he roam all the day,  
Soothing the disturbed mind here and there. ■

## Formation of Child Rights Club

*Faisal Mahmood, PRWSWO, Pakistan*

We children used to wander on the streets and in the markets; some of us would watch films and some would play billiards. Pakistan Rural Workers Association (PRWSWO) called a meeting our village and started a school in the village. Now we children, instead of wasting our

time, study in school. All the expenses of the school are born by PRWSWO. With the help of PRWSWO, a child protection committee has also been formed in the village. We talk about our problems in our weekly meetings and try to resolve them with the help of PRWSWO's social

organizer. We convince those parents who are not sending their children to school to send them to school. If some child has some problem, the child protection committee soon takes action and solves the problem. ■

## The World of Children

*Buddhiprabha, Kantha Sakti, Sri Lanka*

Children's world is beautiful. Our world is created by our own sweet thoughts. World is beautiful and sweet when the sun shines. What shall we do to make our world a happy place? It may be a problem for us. But let's think, to make our world happy.

The first part of our life is childhood. To protect it we must know our rights and responsibilities. Childhood is the time

for a child to do many things freely and to engage in experiment.

In 1987 United Nations passed a law on the Rights of the Child. It may be our good future. Children's rights are divided into four major parts,

1. Right to survive
2. Right to Development
3. Right to protection
4. Right to participation

Many of child's childhood are darkened by the abuse of others. 90% of the children are like that. We can see and hear about these through the media. Who is responsible for child abuse? How does child abuse happen? Is it a problem for little children like us? What should we do to prevent it? Think what we can do. Let's help

them to stand. Let's treat them lovingly and kindly. Let's take them to our sweet children's world. Without thinking of differences of nationality and religion. Let all little children join hand together.

**Let us add light to the world.**

### SOUTH ASIAN CHILDREN'S TIMES EDITORIAL TEAM

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### Thank You All.....

From its inception "South Asian Children's Times" involved many dedicated people who exhibited the highest level of cooperation and concern for children.

This newspaper would not have been possible without the inspiration and encouragement of a number of people. We take this opportunity to express our gratitude towards each and every person who has helped us in bringing out this newspaper in its present form.

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#### South Asian Children's Times

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**"South Asian Alliance of Children for Child Rights"**

[Facilitated by Butterflies]

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