

Pollute and Prosper: The way forward for India?

- Kruti Buch

Asian Foundation for Philanthropy (AFP) celebrated its achievements at its annual dinner on 9th December with volunteers and supporters. As an organisation working to inspire social change amongst the British Asian community, it has successfully mobilised individuals to give something back whether through volunteering their time, their skills or their resources.

The event, held at SAF restaurant in Shoreditch, was the perfect environment to for AFP supporters to network but also to launch AFP's new project Gyaan Yatra (which means knowledge journey in Sanskrit). This project involves a leadership programme for passionate and motivated individuals who want to become ambassadors of change in their local communities. They do this through a year-long bespoke training pro-



Jyoti Singh (Society for Agro-Industrial Education) and Blossom Carrasco

of Amarpurkashi in Uttar Pradesh. There she made a film about the pollution devastating this village. "In the 1970s, as founder of Society for Agro-Industrial Education, Jyoti Singh, recounted in the film, "this village was beautiful but poor." Jyoti told of how villagers

ment. Blossom's film shocked the audience with images of ash laden crops and waste from the factory being emptied into the village River Aril.

A vibrant discussion followed the film. People were stunned by what they had just seen. It raised the issue of pursuing economic development without thinking about the environmental impacts. As one AFP Supporter noted, "We talk about growth but this is also the reality of growth. We need to make sure progress is inclusive for all." The film certainly left an impression on the audience who were keen to learn how to take further action. A list of action points (available on AFP's website) gave the audience options on what they could do next.

The buzz and excitement from this thought-provoking documentary was clear throughout the rest of the evening's entertainment. Ashish Monga, founder of the READ Initiative, reflected on the event. "I found it insightful and inspiration. AFP is a wonderful organisation. It provides a connection for British Asians to reconnect to roots and give back. For people like me who are born in India, it's great to see second and third generations willing to put their time and effort into making change happen."

If you would like to find out more information about Asian Foundation for Philanthropy and its diverse projects please look at the website www.affp.org.uk



The audience at the restaurant

gramme where they learn about the issues of poverty and develop their own skills in getting others involved.

The main feature of the event was Blossom Carrasco's, powerful film, Pollute and Prosper. Development Ambassador, Blossom, a talented filmmaker by profession, volunteered with AFP partner, Society for Agro-Industrial Education based in the rural village

could not afford to buy vegetables and there were few employment opportunities apart from agriculture for local people.

This all changed when a paper factory opened up in the village. This brought employment and money into the village. But it also brought great environmental damage as a result of the factory's non-compliance with proper waste manage-

Ashiana celebrates its 10th anniversary

Deepa Popat

On Sunday, 12 December 2010, Ashiana celebrated their 10th Anniversary at Cannons High School in Edgware. In attendance were some 250 people including, service users, their carers, volunteers from Ashiana, distinguished guests including the worshipful Mayor's of both the London Boroughs of Harrow and Brent, the Deputy Lieutenant of Harrow and various Councillors.

The afternoon was packed with fun and dance, information and a lot of interaction. Jay Kumar, a well known Bollywood dance choreographer took to the stage to teach everyone what he knows best some great bhangra dance

moves.

Clr Asad Omar said, "This is the second Ashiana event that I have attended... the Bollywood workshop was wonderful and it is a great way of bringing the people together."

The next item on the agenda was a Brazilian workshop of Capoeira involving a presentation by Katherine Lucarotti followed by a demonstration of the art form which combines elements of dance, play and ritualistic fighting by Aldo De Souza. When Aldo got out his "berimbau" which looks like an archer's bow and started playing the sounds, many an amazed face, looked on with sheer surprise. The audience was encouraged to try the moves whist Aldo

played the berimbau and pandeiro. Initially there was apprehension about what appeared to be complex moves but within minutes the whole floor was filled with the audience eager to try the kicks, flicks and turns.

The afternoon finished off with a delicious Mexican meal consisting of nachos, salsa, spicy rice and tortilla rolls which was prepared by the Lions Club. The food and fairy cakes went down a treat for both young and old.

Taruna Mistry, from Metropolitan Police said, "I thoroughly enjoyed the event and it is really good to see so many service users and carers. There has been a lot of insight into the superb work that Ashiana do."

North London girls guide the way to business success

A group of entrepreneurial girls from North London Collegiate School (NLCS) in Edgware snatched the 'Best Overall Company' trophy in the interim competition of Young Enterprise, West London, on Tuesday 14th December 2010 at an event attended by the Mayor of Brent, Cllr Harbhajan Singh and the Mayor of Harrow, Cllr Asad Omar. Young Enterprise is a charity that works with schools to encourage entrepreneurship among young people via a nationwide scheme. The NLCS girls stormed to victory with their product 'The Alternative Passport to London', a teenage tour guide to the Capital. Judges described their entry as an innovative idea executed with considerable professionalism both in the presentation of their business plan and their trade stand.

Among the nine entrants in the Young Enterprise West London interim competition were: Purple Crown (Harrow High School) selling consumer products; 'Footprints on the Moon' (NLCS) marketing a business success book; Take Note (NLCS) manufacturing organisational products; East West Fusion (Heathfield School) who stage events; Sound Dreamz (JFS) selling blue-tooth enabled sleep pillows; Rising Stars (The Swaminarayan School) who developed a health chart for children, Imagine (Kingsbury High School) who made greetings cards; PicN'Mix (JFS) who manufactured wallets out of discarded wrappers and



Hadia Tariq, Serena Patel, Priya Shah (bottom row) with others

The Alternative (NLCS) with their 'Alternative Passport to London' tour guide. Participating groups go on to national and European finals as well as completing the funding of their business plans and producing their products within the 12-month school time table.

Joint Managing Directors of The Alternative, Serena Patel (17) and Hadia Tariq (17) said "we are so thrilled to have won the 'Best Overall Company' prize. The whole concept of running a business is new to us and it was hard work overcoming many of the obstacles we encountered, like raising sufficient start-up funds; developing a brand identity and marketing our guide to businesses in the tourism industry". The company's Finance Director, Woojung Ko (17) paid tribute to teacher Stephen Goward, their Young Enterprise coordinator, and external business advisers, entrepreneurs Akash Soni and Lopa Patel, saying that "without the invaluable advice of our business mentors, we would have found it difficult to progress beyond the first obstacle we encountered which was the high cost of publishing!"

The Alternative, which comprises twenty-three girls, hopes to attract an endorsement from Mayor

of London, Boris Johnson in their bid to promote London tourist attractions suitable for teenagers and young adults in time for the London Olympics 2012. "We really want to promote local businesses and so have spent hours scouring London for the real "hidden jewels" that our demographic would love to read about and we've invested a lot of time reviewing venues, attractions and offers to really bring the 'Alternative Passport to London' to life in an uncomplicated and to-the-point way", explained Priya Shah (17), the company's Sales Director.

The company is now finalising promotional vouchers to be included in the guide and hopes to launch the 'Alternative Passport to London' early in 2011 with a groundbreaking photo competition run on its website and Facebook page in the New Year.

The Young Enterprise Company has been running since 1963 and over 1 million young people have participated in the programme to date. Students aged 15-19 gain practical experience of business and enterprise through setting up and running their own real company. In West London more than 600 young people from more than 30 schools across the region set up almost 40 start-up companies. The programme is typically run in Year 10 (14-15 year olds) or Year 12 Students (16-17 year olds).

(Asian Voice will publish an exclusive interview with Serena Patel from The Alternative in the coming issues.)

Travel Hub Limited awarded by Jet Airways

Established in 2004, Travel Hub Ltd has been awarded the best seller of Jet Airways tickets on 17th November 2010 in London.

Travel hub received Best seller of Jet airways award three years in a row now.

Vikash Gupta M D said, "Our aim is to give a massive choice of travel products at a affordable price- from package holidays, tailor made itineraries, scheduled and charter flights, business travel, cruises, car hire, world-



Lydia Nazareth (Jet Air General Manager Sales UK & Ireland), Vikas Gupta, Sachin Gupta, Directors Travel Hub Ltd and , Raja Segran (Senior Vice president Europe)

wide hotels, and ferries. We are specialised travel consultants to provide you

the right choice of holiday or flight at the lowest possible price."