

## Development through Sports



Engaging youth in the community development initiatives is a promising way of providing them opportunities in meaningful ways. They can be very valuable resources to help close the gaps by lending support to developmentally appropriate activities and challenges. Their involvement also strengthens student-centred learning.

To promote, coordinate and facilitate such initiatives, Anant Vikas Project, Social Service League St Stephen's College, Delhi, and United Nations Volunteers have come together to involve students from educational institutions during the International Year of Volunteers (IYV+10). The main idea behind the initiative is to install in the youth:

**“I can make a difference in myself, my family, my community, my nation, and my world; with hope, education, and action.”**

Another important objective is also to encourage educational institutions to adopt communities/villages and support development activities with the help of volunteers from educational institutions and the local community.

### Project in Gomla:

In one such initiative more than 30 students, teachers and professionals from St. Stephens College, Delhi; Symbiosis Law College, Pune; D.Y. Patil International School, Mumbai; DPS Gurgaon among others came together on 20 August 2011 to provide career counselling and promoting sports amongst the village youth in the Gomla Village<sup>1</sup>.

The volunteers were given warm welcome and a village tour was organized after refreshments. The students were amazed by the cleanliness standards of the village<sup>2</sup>. After the tour, volunteers got in two groups and with the help of more than 40 village volunteers established a volley ball and badminton court. To celebrate their accomplishment, a friendly match was organized. In the end, an interactive session was held on various career options.

Rev.Fr. Valson Thampu, Principal, St.Stephen's College has given the approval of adopting Gomla and supporting development initiatives through the Social Service League (SSL)<sup>3</sup>. There is a plan to visit Gomla every month to continue the support and to monitor the planned initiatives.

<sup>1</sup> Gomla, a village in Haryana is situated 125 kms from Delhi and consists of 416 households. For the past one year the villagers are making efforts to turn it into a model village.

<sup>2</sup> The village has wide roads, high cleanliness standards with urinals and dustbins installed throughout the village, efficient drainage system and two parks (funded by Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)).

<sup>3</sup> Student members of the SSL of St Stephens Colleges have been involved in teaching the children of class IV employees. 2011 is the centenary year of the Social Service league, the oldest social service organization in Delhi.



### **In the words of volunteers:**

— It was a wonderful and inspiring moment for all of us. The village was very clean and well maintained with gardens and public toilets being constructed in almost all the streets of the village. We were surprised to see how beautiful and well built the village school is. And most important of all, the villagers were so helpful and friendly. We look forward to visit Gomla village in near future and do something more for the village. — **Thangchungnung Mangte, IIIrd B.A. Programme, President Social Service League St Stephen's College**

—The trip to Gomla village was my first visit to any village of India. Our team assisted villagers to set up the volley ball and a badminton court for the children of Satya Bharti School. In spite of the scorching sun it was really an enjoyable work. As a team we constructed the courts with exact measurements. We also played volleyball with the children. It was fun to interact with the kids of that school. They were very sharp and grasped things quite easily. The thing I liked the most about that village was that they follow their customs and also keep up pace with the changing times. It was indeed a memorable experience for me. — **Kriti rastogi, B.Sc programme (physical sciences), St. Stephens College**

—The journey to this village was a life changing experience for me. At first I thought we were going to an ordinary, backward, dirty village but I was so wrong! The village was very clean, well maintained with 'public convenience' for the villagers as well as tourists. Every third house has hand pumps for drawing out water. It gives me a lot of joy and encouragement to start a project like this, in my region North East to support and work for transforming our villages.— **Joshua Khaute, IIIrd yr. BA programme, St. Stephens College**