

GANDHI SMARAK SANGRAHALAYA

BARRACKPORE.

ANNUAL REPORT OF ACTIVITIES, 2008-09.

The United Nations Organizations out of disillusionment and disgust, dedicated this Century to Mahatma Gandhi, the Apostle of Peace and Non-Violence and declared the first decade as the Decade of Non-Violence. We, at the Museum dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi, could be better judges to realize how far the world is progressing or not-progressing because of our day to day exposure to and inter-actions with different types of visitors - scholars, students and general public throughout the year. One development is encouraging.

In the early seventies of the last Century we introduced a School Programme to reach the Museum and its collection and services to different schools, colleges and University Departments, for awareness, information and dissemination of knowledge in particular areas. This year we have launched this Programme with a different perspective and backdrop of a civilization culture that has created and produced wanton Violence, global warming environmental pollution, depletion of natural resources, destruction of bio-diversity affecting the healthy existence of Man on Earth.

We wrote to schools and colleges to come to the Museum once and inter-act with us on an alternative civilization culture, emanating from Gandhiji's life-style, thoughts and programmes and their implement actions in all the areas of human activities with ecological considerations uppermost. Astonishing was the response and Head Masters, Head Mistress, Principals and some Academicians and Social Activists, belonging to Urdu, Hindi, English and Bengali Mediums activity participated in the deliberations and vied with each other to have follow up programmes - illustrated lectures and exhibitions-in their institutions.

The popularity of the Sangrahalaya has also gone up much and different tourist-guides have included this museum as a must - see place of interest in Kolkata with route-direction. The Archive and Library also are being used by students and scholars doing their M.Phil, P.H.D. or post-doctoral studies belonging to different Universities, even outside this province or abroad.

Keeping these in view the Annual Report of Activities of this Sangrahalaya, during the financial year 2008-09, ending on the 31st March, 2009, in being presented to the friends and connoisseurs.

1. New Investment:

The Sangrahalaya could invest this financial year Rs. 8,00,000/- (rupees eight lac) in Fixed Deposit at the Uco Bank, Barrackpore Branch, in its name. The total investment, in the name of the Sangrahalaya, at the end of the year, stands to Rs. 2,14,00,000/- (rupees two crores fourteen lacs).

2. Financial Assitance:

Prof. Amlan Dutta, eminent Social Scientist and Academician and former Vice Chancellor of the Viswa Bharati University, donated Rs. 10,000/- (rupees ten thousand) to the Sangrahalaya the entire amount of the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Award that the Sangrahalaya Presented to him this financial year. We express our deep gratitude to Prof. Dutta.

3. Publications:

a) New Book:

"The Millennium and other Essays" - a 131 page-book by the Secretary, published on the occasion of the visit to Kolkata of Martin Luther King III, son of the illustrious Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the legendary Civil Rights Activist and 'American Gandhi'. The hon'ble Governor of West Bengal, Sri Gopal Krishna Gandh, handed over to Martin Luther King III the book at the Raj Bhaban, Kolkata, on the 26th February, 2009. The Sangrahalaya also, presented to him a 15" x 12" laminated photograph of a Cartoon, showing Gandhiji and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., etc.. Obviously the hon'ble Governor was also presented both the copy of the Book and copy of the Cartoon.

b) Bi-Lingual Journal Gandhi Sangbad / Gandhi News:

Four (4) Issue of the Sangrahalaya's bi-lingual quarterly Journal - Gandhi Sangbad / Gandhi News - June, September, December and March, 2008-09, were brought out this year and the writers included such eminent Academicians, Judges and Social Activists like Justice Sri Rajinder Sacher, Chariman of the Minority Commission, Prof. Jahar Sen, Prof. Chittabrata Palit, Prof. Swami Someswaranda, Zhang Onany, Tengin Monlam, Dr. Barsha Das, Dr. Sajal Basu, etc.. In each Issue Reminiscences of eminent Freedom Fighter, who came in contact and worked with Gandhiji, in the collection of the Sangrahalaya, are being published and in the 4 (four) Issue we have published reminiscences of Dr. Nirmal Kumar Basu, Labany Probha Dutta, Dr. Satis Chandra Dasgupta, Dr. R.R. Diwakar, Smt. Bela Basu (Noakhali Days). There are providing direct research materials and well-taken by Academician.

4. Renovation of Galleries & other Exhibitions:

A thorough renovation of display of all the 5 Galleries and 3 permanent Exhibitions in the 3 corridors - a) 200 years of the Indian Freedom Movement, b) Biography of Netaji and c) Pilgrim's Progress of the last 2 years of the life of Mahatma Gandhiji - were undertaken this year with new digital photo copies with backup same size thermocoals for dimension new colored labels and fresh coats for insides of the showcase, etc.. A new pane 'Face Speak All' with photo-copies of 30 faces of Gandhiji, from the earliest - 1876 to the last available photography, 28th January, 1948, has been added to the display this year.

An innovative addition in the display at the Main or Biographical Gallery this year was the placement of specimens of handicraft, rural art and craft - papier-mâché dokra, terracotta, sponge wood (sola) leather, etc., placed inside the 84 running feet showcase to (a) inform the visitors about encouragement by Gandhiji about rural arts-crafts and (b) to make the display more attractive.

5. Digitalization Computerization of collection in the Museum & Library:

This process of digital and computerized documentation of all collection in the Sangrahalaya has been started this financial year and likely to be completed soon.

6. Preparation of CDs & DVDs:

This year the Sangrahalaya has prepared CDs and DVDs of (a) itself & (b) the Mural Painting with Commentaries in English & Bengali respectively and have been put on sale from a newly

installed sales counter. Publications of the Sangrahalaya, quite a few now, are also being sold from here and response of the visitors are encouraging.

7. PROGRAMMES:

a) Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Award:

This financial year the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Award, instituted in the year 1996-97 comprising of Rs. 10,000/- in cash, a Silver Salver, etc., was awarded to Prof. Amlan Datta, eminent Educationist, Social Scientist, Author and former Vice-Chancellor of the Viswa Bharati University, a well attended function held in the Sangrahalaya - auditorium on the 2nd October, 2008. Members of our Managing Committee were present along with many dignitaries

b) Seminar on Social & Religious Philosophies of Mahatma Gandhi:

The Sangrahalaya collaborated with the Dept. of Philosophy, University of Calcutta, to organize a whole day seminar on 24-09-2008 at the Alipore Campus where Professors of other Departments like History, Political Science, etc. also participated. The key Note Address was delivered by Prof. Arun Banerjee, Prof. Nurul Hassan Professor of History and Speakers included Prof. Chittabrata Palit of the Jadavpur University, Prof. Hiranmay Banerjee of the Calcutta & Jadavpur Universities Prof. Tapan Kumar Chattopadhyay of the Dept. of Political Science, Calcutta University, the Director-Secretary of the Sangrahalaya and obviously Professors of the Dept. of Philosophy Prof. Uma Banerjee, Prof. Nini Chanda etc.. The audiences were mainly drawn from the former students of the Philosophy Dept. teaching in different colleges and students. It was a very lively and highly educative exposition of Gandhiji's Thoughts and their applications.

c) (i) Public Protest Meeting on Tibet's Struggle for Independence:

The Sangrahalaya collaborated with the People's Union of Civil Liberties, West Bengal Gandhi Peace Foundation, A.P.D.R., Bharatiya Seva Dal, Indian News Service, etc. organizations working for freedom and democracy, to organize a Public Meeting at the office of the Bharatiya Seva Dal, Kolkata - 20, on 17-05-2008, to discuss and protest against the Chinese aggression on Tibet and oppression over the freedom - aspiring Tibetan people. It was very well - attended and the speakers included Academicians and Activists. The Director-Secretary of the Sangrahalaya opened the proceedings.

(ii) Public Protest Meeting on 'Terrorism':

The Sangrahalaya organized a Public Meeting on 11-08-2008 against 'Terrorism' at the 'Metro Mancha', Esplanade, Kolkata, in collaboration with like-minded organizations like P.U.C.L., Indian News Service, Yuger Dak Socialist Front, etc., to discuss about this Menace and ways to counter-act this highly harmful practice. Sri M.P.Singh, eminent Socialist Activist, presided and speakers included Dr. Sitaram Behani, Dr. Sajal Basu, Sri Samarjit Kar, eminent Journalist Sri Niranjana Haldar, the Director-Secretary of the Sangrahalaya, etc.. It was very well-attended.

d) Seminar on Gandhiji & Integration & Harmony:

The Sangrahalaya collaborated with the Halisahar Rajib Gandhi Memorial Society to organize a symposium on Gandhiji & Harmony at Halisahar, North 24-Parganas, on 18-10-2008 in which local social activists and academic personalities mainly spoke. The Director-Secretary of the

Sangrahalaya presided. Earlier different competitions among school students were held for awareness - building and prizes were distributed.

e) Symposium on 'Social Forestry:

The Sangrahalaya, with the assistance of the Sub-Divisional Information Office, Govt. of West Bengal, Barrackpore, organized a whole day Symposium on the necessity or 'Social Forestry' at the Sangrahalaya itself on the 20th January, 2009. The Paschim Banga Bigyan Mancha lent its support also and the speakers included Head Masters and Head Mistress of local schools, Activists drawn from the Science Forum, senior officers of the Information Dept., Fire Service, Forest Dept. of the State, Sri Ashok Chakravarty, the S.D.I.O., Barrackpore, etc.. The Secretary of the Sangrahalaya presided and altogether around one hundred persons including students from several local schools participated.

f) Youth Camp on Social Issues:

The Sangrahalaya assisted the West Bengal Gandhi Peace Foundation to organize a state-level whole - day Youth Camp to discuss about various social Issues and ways to solve problems in the Gandhian way on 07-06-2008 at Maurigram, Howrah. The speakers included academicians and social activists including Sri Ramesh Sharma of the All India Gandhian Peace Foundation, Sri Chandan Pal, Secretary, West Bengal Gandhian Peace Foundation, conducted the proceedings. Later on Sri Sharma was taken to the Sangrahalaya in the evening for a visit.

g) Sishu Mela:

The Sangrahalaya assisted ACCORD, a NGO working on rural women and child development, to organize its annual Children's Fair or Sishu Mela for awareness - building, rejuvenation and fellow-feeling, at Subhas Palli, Barrackpore Block - I on 15-02-2009. Prof. Tapan Kumar Chattopadhyay, Professor, Dept. of Political Science, Calcutta University, inaugurated the Fair. It was very well-attended, particularly, women - activists who were taught about Vermiculture organic manners, etc., by two Progress from the Agricultural, University, Mohanpur, Kalyani, Nadia Dt.. The Secretary of the Sangrahalaya presided.

h) Symposium on the Gandhian views about agriculture and industrialization:

The Sangrahalaya extended necessary help to the Naihati Rajib Gandhi Memorial Society to Organize their annual 'Harmony Festival' and annual seminar on Gandhiji. This year it was held on the 31st January, 2009 and theme was 'Gandhian Views about agriculture and industrialization, particularly in the back drop o recent development in this state. The speakers included Dr. Ratan Nandi, former Teacher-in-charge, Naihati Rishi Bamkim College and the Secretary of the Sangrahalaya presided. It was very well - attended.

8) All India Gandhi Sangrahalayas' Secretaries Conference:

This financial year Bihar Gandhi Sangrahalaya hosted the annual Secretaries' Conference of different Gandhi Sangrahalaya of Patna on the 27th & 28th February, 2009. This is an annual feature where issues arising cindering Gandhiji throughout the world and mutual interests are discussed. The conference was inaugurated by eminent Historian Prof. Bimal Prasad, presently Chairman of the All India Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya Samiti and Dr. Barsha Das, Secretary of the Samiti and Director, National Gandhi Museum, conducted the proceedings. After presentation of reports by Sangrahalayas from Ahmadabad, Mumbai, Madurai, Barrackpore, Patna and New Delhi, Prof. Bimal Prasad spoke on the challenges faced by the world and role of the Gandhi Sangrahalayas to meet these in the Gandhian way. Thereafter discussion on mutual interests took place and Sri Amrut Bhai Modi, Sri M.T.Aajgaonkar, the representative

from Madurai, Dr. Razi Ahmad and Dr. Barsha Das contributed to a very lively discussion. The arrangements by the Patna Sangrahalaya was fascinating and very caring.

9) Internship of Museology Students:

This has become an annual feature now. Students of the Dept. of Museology, University of Calcutta, are sent here for 3 months practical training after obtaining their post-graduate degrees. Sometimes students from the Dept. of Museology, Rabindra Bharati University, are also sent. This financial year 6 (six) such students from the Dept. of Museology, Calcutta University, were sent here to undergo practical training in museological techniques and aspects and computer from 1st January to 31st March, 2009. They had been issued completion certificates also. The Sangrahalaya shared their to and fro travelling.

10) Visit by the students of the Dept. of Museology:

This is also an annual programme. Students of the Dept. of Museology, Calcutta University and also of the Rabindra Bharati University are sent here for educational tour and this year the students of the Calcutta University, both part I & part II (5th & 6th) visited on 14-03-2009 and had a whole-day exposure to the galleries talks on museological aspects, services and film shows, etc.. Some Professor, of the Department, including Dr. Sachindra Nath Bhattacharyya, present Head and Prof. Autal Bhowmik accompanied them.

11) Guest Lectureship:

The Secretary continues to be the Guest Lecture at the Dept. of Museology, Calcutta University and Dept. of Master of Social Work, Vidyasagar University. Apart from these he lectured at the Rabindra Bharati University and different colleges on U.G.C. assignments mainly on Gandhian topics.

12) T.V. Shootings and telecast, Radio recordings and broadcast and Newspaper coverages of the Sangrahalaya and interviews of the Secretary etc.:

Like the preceding years the Sangrahalaya received Media-attention and T.V. Radio and newspapers covered news about Sangrahalaya's programmes and also features about it. Also the Indian Express and the Ananda Bazar Patrika Published several interviews of the Director-Secretary on different dates. Some are mentioned below:

- a) Channel Vision - 26-06-2008.
- b) Kolkata Doora Darshan for its 2nd October Programme on 25-09-2008.
- c) Live T.V. interview of the Director-Secretary on various aspects of life and thoughts of Gandhiji and their relevance by Calcutta T.V. on 2nd October, 2008 at 9:30 pm for an hour.
- d) Radio Recording of a Talk on Gandhiji for 2nd October by the IGNOU Gyanbani F.M. Channel on 22-09-2008. Dr. Suparna Guptoo, Director, Gandhian Studies Center, Calcutta University also featured.
- e) Altogether 5 T.V. talks on the 2nd October, 2008 and 3 on the 30th January, 2009, by the Director-Secretary were telecasted by the Calcutta Doora Darshan.
- f) Ananda bazaar Patrika - 27th August, 2008.
- g) Indian Express 24-02-2009.

13) Observance of Important National Days:

Like previous years the Sangrahalaya observed in befitting manners Mahatma Gandhi 140th Birthday on the 2nd October, 2008 with a public meeting at the Sangrahalaya where Prof. Amlan

Datta was awarded this year's Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Award, the Independence Day on the 15th August, Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore's Birthday on the 8th May, 2008 and Netaji's Birthday on the 23 January, 2009. On all these days the Sangrahalaya was kept open from 9:30 am for the visitors.

14) LIBRARY:

The library has also grown with new books, both purchased and received as gifts. Some rare books have been bound, laminated and photo copies of these were done for preservation. Presently the pest control of books is done directly by us.

No. of Books: Around 12,000

No. of Visitors: 15,000

No. of Readers: 1600

No. of Journals: Subscribed: 15, Gifts: 17

Daily News Papers: 3

Press-clippings of important news are carried out regularly.

Research Scholars and eminent Personalities, using the Library:

- a) H.E. the Governor of West Bengal Sri Gopal Krishna Gandhi.
 - b) Dr. Tapas Kumar Banerjee.
 - c) Prof. Hossainur Rahman.
 - d) Prof Jahar Sen.
 - e) Dr. Sajal Basu.
 - f) Dr. Suparna Guptoo.
 - g) Prof. Sandip Das.
 - h) Prof. Kanai Pada Roy.
 - i) Dr. P.M. Roy.
 - j) Prof. Dhruva Narayan Banerjee.
 - k) Prof. Sukanya Sarkar.
 - l) Prof. Anindita Banerjee.
 - m) Prof. Sarmistha Nath.
 - n) Prof. Manjushree Mukherjee.
 - o) Prof. Somasree Ghosh
- & host of students doing their Ph.D & M.Phils at various Universities.

Prof. Supriya Munshi,
Secretary,
GANDHI SMARAK SANGRAHALAYA,
BARRACKPORE.