

In this issue...

- Indo-US Workshop on Information and Communication
- Science Centres and Schools
- World Environment Day Observed
- Reports from Fraternal Organisations
- Community Programmes

JUL-SEPT, 1991

Capsule 22



A group of leading science museum professionals from America met their Indian counterparts in the Indo-US Workshop held in Delhi and Calcutta during May 5-11, 1991. In the workshop organised under the aegis of the Indo-US Subcommittee on Education and Culture, both the countries proposed to produce jointly two sets of a 2000 sq.ft. travelling exhibition on 'Information and Communication' for simultaneous circulation in both the countries. The participants recommended that in order to curtail expenditure, the exhibits could be fabricated in India. The Smithsonian Institution in the USA and the National Council of Science Museums in India will organise the circulations through their travelling science exhibition programmes.

INDO US WORKSHOP

The exhibition will display information one carries with oneself - name, address, credit card and driving licence, as well as the genetic information which defines individual entity; information about each of the two

countries on the basis of census data acquired through remote sensing will also be provided; interviews with Indians and Americans will provide a comparative view of similar situations in both the countries. The exhibition will offer a comparative study of the Indian and American media, examine future advances in technology and throw light upon such silent tools of communication as gestures, signals and signs. All this, and much more will



be displayed through various sections namely 'Who Am I', 'Who Are We', 'If I Were You', 'Facts and Figures', 'Reaching The Limits' and 'Unspoken Words'.

This was the thirteenth in the chain of the Indo-US Workshops each of which proved to be an excellent forum for developing newer and newer concepts and techniques in exhibit design and outdoor facilities.

Until now, the workshops have drawn some 221 participants out of which 43 Americans visited the science centres in India and 24 Indians went over to the USA.

mended that two workshops on the topics 'Low-cost Learning Kits' and 'Water: The Fountain of Life' be organized in India and the USA in 1991 and 1992 respectively.

The 8-member American delegation was headed by Mr. Shab Levy, President of Levy Design Inc., Portland, Oregon. Dr. Saroj Ghose, Director General, National Council of Science Museums led the 11-member Indian team. Both the leaders felt that the exhibition would strengthen further the cultural and technological ties between the two nations.



In view of the success of the workshop held recently and also to fulfil the requirement of the different science centres in India and the USA, the participants recom-

So far, the following workshops were held under the auspices of the Subcommittee:

- 1) *Electronics Aids to Museums*
September 13-18, 1982
Calcutta



- 2) *Conceptual Development of Participatory Exhibits*
November 15-December 11, 1982
Calcutta

- 3) *Fabrication Techniques of Participatory Exhibits*
August 9-26, 1983
Portland, San Francisco, Berkley, Seattle and Boston

- 4) *Participatory Exhibits for Pre-school Children*
November 18-December 8, 1984
Calcutta, Purulia, Bangalore, Bombay, Ahmedabad and Delhi



- 5) *The Planet Earth*
January 1-18, 1986
Charlotte, New Orleans, Tampa, Orlando and Miami



- 1 and 2: The American participants at the Central Research & Training Laboratory, Calcutta
- 3: At National Science Centre, Delhi
- 4: Serious discussions continued even after the sessions

6) *Creative Endeavours with Exhibits and Programmes*
December 5-20, 1986
Bombay and Goa

7) *New Approaches to Planetarium Education*
March 9-13, 1987
Calcutta

9) *Interactive Video Technology in Science Centres*
September 28-29, 1987
Boston

10) *Ellipses in Nature and in the Mind*
May 9-15, 1988
Bangalore and Ooty



11) *Science Museums Without Walls : Exhibits To Go*
December 5-13, 1988
Delhi, Bangalore, Bombay and Calcutta

12) *Participatory Exhibits on Chemistry*
October 2-4, 1989
San Francisco

13) *Information and Communication*
May 5-11, 1991
Delhi and Calcutta



8) *Design and Construction of Outdoor Science Parks*
April 27-29, 1987
St. Louis, Missouri

1 and 2: Sessions of the workshop at Calcutta and Delhi
3: At the 'Information Revolution' gallery in Delhi



4: Dr. Bernard Finn, Curator of National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D. C., expressing his views in the workshop



Science Centres and Schools

Summer Vacation Hobby Programmes

With the objective of helping students gain extracurricular knowledge in science, vacation hobby programmes were conducted for the students at Calcutta, Bombay and Tirunelveli during their summer holidays.



Birla Industrial and Technological Museum, Calcutta organised a Vacation Hobby Camp on June 15, 1991 wherein 120 students completed some 40 projects in Physics, Chemistry, Life Science, Aeromodelling and Ship-building. Popular lectures and slide shows on 'We and Our Environment', 'History of Computers' and 'Science Project Making' were also organised.

Vacation Hobby Centres in A Vacation Hobby Centre in Physics, Chemistry, Life Science, Electronics, Computer, Art and Craft and Astronomy were organised by **Nehru Science Centre, Bombay** during April and May, 1991. 180 projects were completed by the 247 students

who participated from Bombay and Thane.

From April 18 - May 18, 1991 **District Science Centre, Tirunelveli** conducted Vacation Hobby Courses in Electronics, Electricity, Chemistry, Astronomy and Computer Science. Among the 210 participants, the best performers were awarded attractive prizes on the International Museums Day celebrated on May 18, 1991.

On the occasion, a lecture on 'Latest Trends in Information Technology' was also delivered.



programme were also organised in the months of April and May.

Teachers' Training Programmes at Bombay

During June, 1991 two teachers' training programmes were conducted at the **Nehru Science Centre, Bombay** for the teachers of H.J. College of Education, Bombay. The participants were trained to design and fabricate teaching aids required for supplementing classroom teaching in Physics, Chemistry, Life Science, Electricity and Electronics. They were trained to use these aids in practical demonstrations. They were further introduced to the objectives and methods of forming science clubs in their respective places.

For the first time, **District Science Centre, Gulbarga** organised a Hobby Centre on Biology during the summer vacation. A Physics Hobby Centre, an astronomy awareness programme and a computer awareness



Computer Training for Rural Students

In response to tremendous enthusiasm from the rural students regarding computer training, **Birla Industrial and Technological Museum, Calcutta** organised computer awareness programmes in the rural regions of the districts of Hooghly, Nadia and Burdwan. 118 students and 20 teachers from 9 schools participated in the programme.



Annual Science Quiz

The Annual Science Quiz competition was organised on the occasion of the 32nd anniversary of the **Birla Industrial and Technological Museum, Calcutta**. 26 teams from 17 schools and 42

teams from 20 schools participated in the primary and secondary quiz respectively.

which included discussions on various topics of interest.



Student - Scientist Interaction at BITM

Practical Training For Museology Students

Birla Industrial and Technological Museum, Calcutta organised for the students who passed the Madhyamik Examination in 1990 a Student-Scientist Interaction Programme from June 2-4, 1991 in the premises of the museum. Eminent scientists and economists as well as the students took part in the programme

A practical training programme for the 2nd Year Post Graduate Museology students of the University of Calcutta was conducted by the **Birla Industrial and Technological Museum** between April 22 and 29, 1991. The trainees were exposed to the planning of exhibition galleries on 'Art and Archaeology' and 'Natural History'.



World Environment Day Observed

On June 5 and 6, 1991, Birla Industrial and Technological Museum, Calcutta organised a quiz contest, a story writing competition on environment, a tree identification programme, a costume parade and puppet shows. Another interesting event involved writing names of flowering plants from Rabindranath Tagore's essays and poems. Attractive prizes were awarded to the winners of the competitions. Saplings of flowering plants and fruit bearing trees were given to the people free of cost.

Tree identification and tree plantation programmes, film shows on environment and a science demonstration lecture on nature were organised at Nehru Science Centre, Bombay.

A seminar on 'Climate Change : The need for Global Partnership' was held in the auditorium of Regional Science Centre, Lucknow on June 5, 1991. It was presided over by Dr. P K Ray, Director, Industrial Toxicological Research Centre, Lucknow.



He also inaugurated the week-long science cartoon exhibition. About 250 cartoons depicting the hazards caused by environmental pollution were on display. A tree plantation programme, a general knowledge competition, film shows on environment and a slide show-cum-lecture on the art and techniques of drawing science cartoons were organised.

(contd. on page 8)

Above: Cartoon exhibition at Lucknow

Right: Model rocketry programme at Jodhpur

Below: A tree plantation programme on the World Environment Day

Reports from Fraternal Organisations

Model Rocketry Programme at Jodhpur

In March, 1991 students and teachers of Jodhpur met at a Model Rocketry Workshop organised by the Faculty of Engineering, University of Jodhpur. Activities concentrated on preparation of models of single and double stage rockets, on measurement of the heights attained. A quiz contest, a slide show and several video shows were also organised. The programme was sponsored by the Department of Science and Technology, Government of Rajasthan.



Seminar on 'Natural Disasters Management : Scenario of West Bengal'

The theme of the 78th Indian Science Congress held at Indore during January 3-8, 1991, was 'Coping with Natural Disasters : An Integrated Approach'. As a follow up of the deliberations on the theme, as well as for working out ways and means to materialise appropriate programmes for disasters management relevant to the state of West Bengal, the Indian Science Congress Association (ISCA) in collaboration with the Department of Science and



Technology (DST), Government of West Bengal held a seminar on 'Natural Disasters Management : Scenario of West Bengal' from June 5-7, 1991. The topics covered in the seminar were 'Cyclone and Severe Storms', 'Severe Rain and Flood', and 'Drought'.

The objectives of the seminar were to take stock of the existing practices, ways and means to combat natural disasters; to identify the gaps regarding programmes on grappling with natural disasters, to suggest how existing procedures and methods of prevention of natural disasters elsewhere could be adopted in West Bengal; to delve into the deeper aspects of S&T of natural disasters and work out coordination and integration of approach and strategies for efforts in this direction.



Discussions were held on relief, recovery, rehabilitation, health and medicine, support from financial institutions and role of non-governmental and voluntary organisations. The role of government departments, academic institutions and mass media were also discussed.

The seminar held in the auditorium of the Indian Science Congress Association was inaugurated by Prof. B. Ray Chowdhuri, Vice Chancellor, University of Calcutta. Dr. A.B. Das Gupta, Member, State Planning Board, Government of West Bengal presided over the seminar.

Nehru Museum of Science & Technology at Kharagpur

Considering the historical importance of the Old Building which not only served as the main building in the early years of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kharagpur but was also the infamous Hijli Detention Camp in the pre-independence era, Prof. K.L. Chopra, Director decided to renovate it and house in it a museum of science & technology. In tune with the Nehru Centenary celebrations the museum was named after Jawaharlal Nehru. The prime objectives of the museum are to create a scientific and technological environment for the surrounding rural populace and to reflect the scientific and technological development that is taking place in the country and abroad. A conference room is also being furnished where documents pertaining to the history of the building as well as of the Institute will be displayed.

The museum was inaugurated on August 3, 1990 by Mr. Russi Mody, Chairman, Tata Iron and Steel Company; and Chairman, Board of Governors, IIT, Kharagpur.



At present the museum has a hundred exhibits including 14 outdoor exhibits for children and a Hunter Plane - which was donated by the Ministry of Defence and installed with the help of Indian Air Force, Kalaikunda. Besides, a large number of working models like mono rail, levitation, Bengali computer, Teesta barrage regulator, sterling engine, solar paddy drier, microelectronics and image processing displays were contributed by the different departments of the Institute.

Top: A view of the Nehru Museum of Science & Technology at the IIT, Kharagpur

Left: A part of the audience in the auditorium of the Indian Science Congress Association

Bottom: Dignitaries at the seminar on 'Natural Disasters Management: Scenario of West Bengal'



Community Programmes

District Science Centre, Dharampur

Unemployed men and women were trained to make leaf-cups and stone blocks in the community training programmes the centre held in collaboration with Rural Technology Institute, Gandhinagar during the months of April and May, 1991.

Raman Science Centre Celebrates Museum Week

Museum Week celebration programmes at Raman Science Centre, Nagpur comprised science film shows, video film shows, sky observation programmes, mobile science exhibition and a demonstration-cum-lecture on 'Adulteration of Food'.

A folk dance competition for children was organised by District Science Centre, Dharampur to celebrate its 7th anniversary on April 27, 1991.



A training programme on 'Nutrition' was held from May 6-10, 1991. Women from the district of Valsad were exposed to training in food preservation, child care and kitchen gardening. Popular lectures on nutrition, hygiene and child care were organised.

District Science Centre, Tirunelveli

Housewives and unemployed youths participated in a community training programme held at District Science Centre, Tirunelveli on May 21, 25, 26 and 27, 1991. They were exposed to the preparation of washing soap, toilet soap, shampoo and detergent powder.

(contd. from page 6)



A symposium on 'Protection and Conservation of Natural Heritages of Orissa; Problems and Solutions' was organised at Regional Science Centre, Bhubaneswar. A popular lecture on 'Global Warming and its Effects', a slide show on 'Rare Plants of Orissa', a science quiz, a debate competition, an extempore speech and a tree identification programme were held from June 3-5, 1991.



Published by:
National Council of
Science Museums
Sector-V, Block-GN,
Bidhannagar Calcutta-700091
INDIA

