



ProjectsAbroad

Herald Hindustan



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Official News letter of Projects Abroad | India

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COUNTRY DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Welcome to India's July Newsletter!

This year's summer season has started as we see our volunteer numbers grow into the hundreds!

This is great as with so many volunteers arriving, we were able to carry out so much more important and worthwhile work around the local area.

What came through to me this month was a realisation that for all the hard work and effort we, the staff and volunteers, put in, India and her humble people never fail to give something back. Be it the wide smile of a child as we work side by side, or the respectful bow from a village elder as they survey the work we have done for their community, or the laughter of the local people as they go about their daily chores, intrigued by our presence in their village.

It's certainly a great feeling to know that we are making a noticeable difference both locally and globally. As Gandhi so beautifully put it,

"Be the change you want to see in the world."

So until next month, a big thanks to everyone for all your hard work and commitment to our projects.

You are indeed making a difference.

Cheers!

INGRID SPRAKE

Operations Director
Projects Abroad | India



PROJECT UPDATE : JOURNALISM

Story By Pooja

Voices of the World: Coordinator & Sub-Editor

In the month of May, four workshops were held for the club members of Velammal College of Engineering and Technology, Madurai. As always, they were bubbly during all the sessions and eager to know and learn more about Journalism.

Here's a brief note of the sessions held: On May 3rd, I handled a workshop on 'Before, during and after an interview' for fifteen members. It was a very interactive session. Volunteer Takuma from Japan accompanied me to do the photographs.

On May 8th, Italian volunteers Monica and Luca spoke about 'Movie review and its Kinds'. I guided them throughout the session by adding my inputs as well. Volunteer Jessie came with us to observe the workshop and she assisted in doing the video footages for the session. Nine members attended the session. I handled the session on 'Parts of an article' on May 14th for 10 club members. Volunteer Takuma did the photos of this session.

Volunteer Alice did a workshop on 'Traditional Vs. New Media'. Video footages and photos of the session were done by Andy Hill, the Information Manager of Projects Abroad. Volunteer Jessie was with us too and was excited to observe the session.

Volunteer Alice accompanied me on May 27th, to photograph the session that I handled on 'Hierarchy of a magazine' and VotW article reading session. Six members were present for the session. I hope this report would help you in understanding what we actually do at the project. Keep reading our newsletters every month for more news and updates! ❧



An Epiphanic Bus ride

Story By Luca SCARAFIL

Italy

sensation. If every smell, every noise, every face were to strike you, if here is one thing that could summarize the smells and sounds of India, it would be its buses. At any rate, a bus was my first, concrete impression of India.

When I decided to explore the heart of the city on my first day here, I couldn't have known that the twenty minutes in a Madurai bus could be so meaningful for me. For a foreigner to catch a bus here is an adventure. First of all, you must pay attention while crossing the road to reach the bus stop, since it is uncertain whether you'll survive this! Then you must watch for the bus. To tell the truth, when the bus quickly arrived, I hadn't had the time to take in what I had already seen around me. I got on the bus frantically, pushed by numerous other people and found myself in front of a ticket conductor who stared at me with a strange uncertainty. There was no seat available, but it was even worse when I realized that I had to stand in that melee! Even in Europe sometimes the means of transport are crowded, but after seeing an Indian bus I must admit that only in India a person really experiences what "crowded" means.

The bus proceeded forward fighting its way among cars, bikes and rickshaws. Every vehicle honked, people tried to cross the road from every side. What confusion! It seemed to be a battlefield more than a road!

Nevertheless, in the bus and on the road, there was also a certain order. Everybody knew how to behave in such a complicated microcosm. An unexpected serenity overwhelmed me. The women with their colourful saris, the flowers that adorned their Three buses try to fight their way in Madurai's traffic hair, the inquiring glances of the



men were soothing in the suffocating heat. When I got off the bus, serenity turned into a new awareness, the awareness that there is nothing strange in such confusion. I was the foreigner who hadn't immediately been able to distinguish an organized system and had simply

considered it to be confusion. This was a system, which had its own rules, and I was the stranger, who always should try to understand better before prejudging. My first impression of India had been a short bus trip and it was that short bus trip which helped me modify my approach to a culture so different from mine



A Barefoot Country

Story By Monica CRISTINI

Italy



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Arriving in India entails a storm of conflicting emotions, of different and intense impressions, that it's difficult to put them in order and to speak about them. But if you ask me to summarize it, I would tell you: this is a barefoot country. It's a country that doesn't cover itself, that doesn't hide anything, that doesn't need something like shoes to protect itself or to run better: it's a country that is as it shows itself, without compromises. Walking through the streets of Madurai I can see people lying down on the pavement, eating some fruit, simply getting some rest, people Barefoot on the streets of Madurai

chatting, selling every kind of thing, children playing in the rubbish, barking dogs, cows, and a crowd of buses, cars, motorbikes, bicycles and rickshaws. Everyone shouts, and honks. Pedestrians and cars cross and intersect without rules except those of fate and luck. Someone prays, someone smokes,

someone sleeps, and someone simply stands staring at the chaotic world in front of him. There's no elegance in all that, there's no harmony. There's noise, there's smell, there's incessant activity, but in all that there's life, in all its power, its contradictions, its violence, its sacredness, its energy. India is a country that doesn't lie, like someone who has nothing to hide. In Madurai, people walk barefoot exactly as the town itself walks barefoot, limping, crawling, hobbling, but always with their head held high, with sad but proud eyes, which reflect the whole truth. I'm sure it's only an impression and I'm sure they have their secrets too, something hidden, something we can't see, but this is certainly something different compared to what we Westerners hide, compared to what we Westerners keep as a secret. What I'm sure about is that one never asks a Westerner to walk barefoot! First of all, it's considered unhygienic, but more importantly, it's improper, indecent and rude. What I'm now curious to

discover what in India is regarded as improper, indecent, rude. What are they hiding, what are their secrets? And why? That's what I want to discover, that's what I'm looking forward to discovering. To start with, I think I need to get used to walking barefoot, don't you think? ■■

Volunteers during various activities

