48°C
Public-Art-Ecology

Report on Outreach Coordination by Delhi Greens

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Web: http://delhigreens.org
New Delhi, India
Blog: http://delhigreens.com
Email: contact@delhigreens.org

public art ecology

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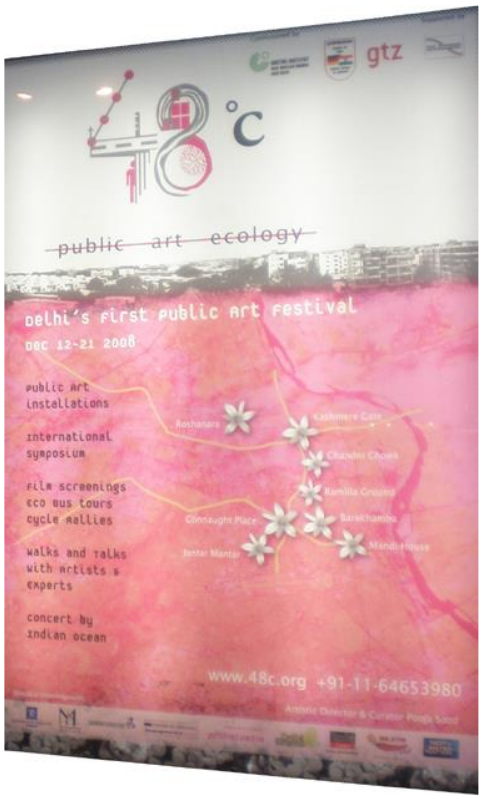
1. Introduction

The 48°C Public.Art.Ecology Festival was celebrated in Delhi, the political capital of the world's largest democracy, in the month of December 2008. Themed, as the name suggests, on global warming and the consequent escalating temperatures leading to climate change and its impact on mega cities – the festival was an experiment aimed at interrogating the teetering ecology of the city through the prism of contemporary art.



Themed also on public art, the festival was an art intervention in the daily lives and working of the citizens of a city that not many come to consider their own. Celebrated from 12th to 21st December, 2008 – urban Delhi was painted pink during the ten days of the festival. And people – from the rickshaw pullers to the Metro riders, the pedestrians and the passengers, artists and eminent personalities, the passerby and the curious onlookers – were all amazed, surprised, shocked, confused, excited and most importantly: inquisitive.

Commissioned by the Goethe Institut/ Max Mueller Bhavan and GTZ and supported by Delhi Government, the 48°C Public.Art.Ecology Festival, a first of its kind Public Eco-Art festival in Delhi, left a lasting impression on a lot of citizens who – knowingly or unknowingly became a part of it: an initiative to raise alarm on the real and now visible threats of a changing climate. **Delhi Greens** was the official Outreach Coordinator-organisation for the 48°C Public.Art.Ecology Festival. We wove a series of walks, talks and Eco-Bus Tours around the Festival to bring together people, to raise awareness about the festival and its underlying objectives and to highlight urban issues as well as spaces of ecological interest.

In addition, **Delhi Greens** also brought together a team of young and enthusiastic Eco-Volunteers, shared from its experience of generating environmental awareness and extended online support for the overall success of the 48°C Public.Art.Ecology Festival.

2. Delhi Urban Ecotourism Bus Tours

Delhi is known to be one of the greenest capital cities in the world. The city's tree cover and the green spaces support a varying degree of urban biodiversity, unique to the National Capital Region (NCR) of Delhi. The city has several big and small green patches, in addition to the Ridge and the Yamuna River flowing through it. The NCR also comprises a few protected areas, urban and rural villages, lakes and large number of water bodies.

Yet the ecotourism potential of the city is little understood, and least explored. Add to that the landfills, the resettlement, unauthorized etc. colonies, the drains and the political ecology of urban planning and development and we touch upon all of conservation, education, traveler responsibility and active community participation aspects needed to make an ideal *urban ecotourism* trip to the most majestic city of all times!

With this as the backdrop, a series of a first of its kind Delhi Urban Ecotourism Bus Tours were organized as part of the 48°C Public.Art.Ecology Festival. A total of three bus tours were carried out on 13th (Saturday), 19th (Friday) and 20th (Saturday) of December, 2008. Applications were opened for the Urban Eco-Bus Tour a week before the festival through both the 48c.org and Delhi Greens websites. In addition, the urban eco-tours were also announced on the Festival posters, booklets, Delhi Greens' mailing list and on the Delhi Greens Blog. The Urban Ecotour was also advertised on the second page of a leading national daily (Indian Express) as a public service message courtesy the Department of Environment, Government of NCT of Delhi.

The Urban Eco-Bus Tours were also featured in another leading national daily (Hindustan Times), two days before the launch of the first Delhi Greens Urban Ecotour. This news-clip also carried the tour-registration link and detailed information about all the three eco-tours. This was followed by a news clipping in another leading national daily (Indian Express) the very next day.

On the day of the launch of the bus tour, and thanks also to the support and good wishes from Mr. J.K. Dadoo, Secretary, Environment Forests & Wildlife, Govt. of NCT of Delhi both the media and general public were well informed and all the three Urban Eco-Bus Tours jointly saw a total registrations of over 250 passengers. All the three Urban Eco-Bus Tours started and/or concluded at a 48°C Public.Art.Ecology Project Site and the passengers were well briefed about the Festival, its significance and the various project sites.

The Festival pamphlets were also distributed to all the passengers, in addition to a small green kit comprising a newspaper bag, a stylish cloth bag courtesy SmallSteps.in, and a diary made up of recycled paper. Since the idea was also to promote public transport in the city, the bus for the Eco-Bus tours was chosen to be the standard DTC bus, the symbol of public transport in Delhi. The Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) also takes pride in being the largest fleet of eco-friendly buses in the world, run completely on the less-polluting CNG fuel.

A total of about 150 people were short listed mostly on a first-come first-serve basis. Although we tried our best to have all new faces on each of the three trips, we could not refuse some who were very excited and wanted to be a part of all the three Urban Ecotours. The tours had people from all backgrounds – doctors, engineers, architects, environmentalists, researchers, planners, journalists, teachers, government employees, activists, homemakers, businesswo/men, students and also had some foreign guests like an office-bearer from the Wildlife Ministry of UK and the owner of a cycling group from Canada.

2.1 North City Tour | Saturday | 13th December 2008

The North City Urban Eco-Bus Tour started at 0900 hours from the Vishwavidyalaya (Delhi University) Metro Station. Over 50 people gathered at the Metro Station awaiting the DTC Bus that reached the venue on time. Dr. B.C. Sabata, Senior Scientific Officer at the Department of Environment, Govt. of NCT of Delhi was himself present to inaugurate and flag-off the first ever Eco Tour in the city. Also present at the launch of the Eco Tour was Dr. Faiyaz A. Khudsar – Park Manager and Wildlife Biologist at the Yamuna Biodiversity Park – who was also leading the Tour. The passengers already boarded the bus shortly before it was flagged-off and after a brief self-introduction of all the passengers, the organizers, the Festival and the driver, we began the journey to our first destination: Bhalswa Lake and Landfill.

Located on the GT Karnal Road, the Bhalswa landfill is now a series of small hills composed entirely of garbage and waste. Close to it is the Bhalswa Lake Complex, a 92 ha recreational center. The lake attracts migratory birds that start arriving in Delhi in early winters. The Bhalswa Lake is polluted and smells as bad as the nearby landfill. The Lake with a *hill of waste* in its vicinity would have otherwise been very scenic. Passengers got out of the bus at the Bhalswa Lake and were briefed about wetlands, migratory birds, the now dead Yamuna and the pollution problem by Faiyaz Khudsar. Several of them were amazed at the fact that even after living in Delhi for so long they were unaware of the lake save the issues grappling the city. The next stop for the Tour was the Yamuna Biodiversity Park.

The Yamuna Biodiversity Park (YBP) is a bio-heritage site that is a repository of approx. 50 threatened communities found on the Yamuna river basin. With a Nature Interpretation Center (NIC) in place and an enthusiastic staff and park management, this joint venture between the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) and the University of Delhi is an open laboratory. The Park has two wetlands which are visited by large number of migratory birds in the winter season. The resident bird diversity is also remarkable in YBP. Here, the passengers were exposed to the real meaning of biodiversity and explained its importance in making a healthy city. Some found the NIC a very interesting learning place while others could not get enough of the wetlands and the birds. Still others, especially children got busy collecting natural souvenirs of all kinds. Also present at the park was Dr. A.K. Singh, Botanists and Ecologists, who briefed everyone about the plant diversity and its role in maintaining a healthy bird population.

After a round of the two wetlands at the Park, everyone got together at the green-amphitheater where a play performance was arranged. Before the play, there was a small discussion on the city and its development. Antral, a group that performs street theater on social and environmental issues, informed the audience about the impacts of inequity in development, our ecologically imbalanced consumption patterns and the bigger crisis of global climatic change. The performance got many thinking about a lot of very obvious issues that had otherwise not come to their mind before.

The visit to the Park concluded with bidding farewell to the team leader Faiyaz Khudsar, and many people noted the contact details of the Park management, for an extensive visit later on. The Biodiversity Foundation newsletters were distributed to all the passengers in the bus, and we left for our next destination: the North Delhi (Kamala Nehru) Ridge.

The Kamala Nehru Ridge is the northern patch of the now fragmented Delhi Ridge. It is a protected area and also has had its dates with history! The Bus was halted at the gate of the Ridge, right opposite to the main gate of the University of Delhi and the passengers were briefed about the region.

The final destination of the Tour was Roshanara Bagh. This green space is one of the few remaining gardens of Mughal origin in the city. Overlaid with transformations by the British and independent India over time, this beautiful garden and its tomb pavilion stand abandoned and neglected in the present day. The passengers were briefed about the history of the place and were also taken to the 48°C Public.Art.Ecology project sites. The Tour concluded by distributing green-kits to everyone.

2.2 South Central City Tour | Friday | 19th December 2008

The South-Central Eco-Bus Tour started at 0900 hours from Max Mueller Bhavan. The over 50 people who turned up for the Bus Tour were offered tea on reaching the venue. The Bus was parked near the Agrasen Ki Baoli which was both a 48°C Public.Art.Ecology Project site and the first site of the day. The Baoli, a medieval period step-well right in the heart of the city, is a classic example of Delhi's unique architecture. However, it remains hidden amidst the concrete jungle and even from those who travel daily through this part of the city.

The *Baoli* amazed everyone who was briefed about it and the passengers also appreciated the 48°C Public.Art.Ecology project installed here. Everyone wanted to restore and popularize this structure and a lot of ideas, right from making it a tea/ coffee house to opening it for visiting at night, started coming up! Everyone walked down till the last step of the step-well.

From the Baoli, the bus moved to the next site: the Bhuli Bhatiyari Park. Bhuli Bhatiyari ka Mahal is the northern most part of the South-Central Ridge, yet having a strong identity of its own. The Bhuli Bhatiyari Mahal was a hunting lodge for Feroz Shah Tughlaq and is now in ruins in one corner of the park. The park has a small wetland and also exhibits the geology of the ridge very beautifully.

Here, when we entered, we observed that a part of the park was being dug haphazardly and very aggressively. On inquiring we were informed that a certain underground pipeline that was leaking was not being able to be located by the authorities who had then instructed to dig the entire place to locate and fix it!

Passengers were then taken to the Bhuli Bhatiyari ka Mahal and shown the rich biodiversity supported by this place. A very smelly water treatment plant just next to the Mahal also caught the attention of several passengers. The visit by such a large group of people to this otherwise abandoned park also attracted some of the authorities to come and inquire what was happening. Apparently, the park had never seen so many people together since a long time.

The next site for the visit was the Aravalli Biodiversity Park. And to reach this site, the trip was planned in such a manner that the Bus drove through the entire South-Central Ridge. Here, the passengers saw the Metro construction taking place on the Ridge and the price the city is paying in the name of development.

After this, the Bus reached the entrance of the Aravalli Biodiversity Park (ABP), where we were also joined by Professor Vikram Soni, a concerned and active citizen from the southern part of the city. The Aravalli Biodiversity Park is not yet open to the public as it is still in the experimental phase, trying to reconstruct the original vegetation of Delhi within the Park premises. We were also greeted by Dr. Shah Hussain, Park Manager and Ecologists who briefed everyone about the park, its importance as an urban green space and the role of biodiversity in sustaining human civilization. Both Dr. Hussain and Prof. Soni took the group for a walk in the greens of ABP while vividly explaining different parts of the park. The group was also taken to some plantations and also to sites where natural vegetation had grown when the place was left to its own.

We had entered from the Vasant Kunj entrance of the park and moved out from the other side. Both Dr. Hussain and Prof. Soni walked everyone till the other gate and the bus had already reached the spot. The passengers boarded the bus and were then taken to Connaught Place and the Festival pamphlets with detailed road map to the project sites were given and explained to them.

2.3 East City Tour | Saturday | 20th December 2008

The East City Urban Eco-Bus Tour started from Max Mueller Bhavan at 1100 hours. Again, a group of about 50 people gathered at the Festival hub and were greeted with tea and biscuits. They were then taken to the Agrasen Ki Baoli, which invited the same surprised and awed look in their eyes as we had seen in the passengers of the previous day. Everyone completed their urge to go down till the last step of the *Baoli* and we walked back with a more surprised group than the previous day.

The next site for the day was the Yamuna River at ITO Bridge. Now a drain, the Yamuna flows through Delhi and is the major source of water supply for the city. At ITO, one can actually go all the way till the river. Before the bus stopped at a bus stand near the way to the left bank of the river, passengers were distributed promotional stickers picked up from Atul Bhalla's Chabeel. The stickers asked the passengers two questions: Have you seen the Yamuna? Have you touched the Yamuna?

As the passengers descended the bus, they were keen to see if they could answer these questions, for not all of them could answer them in the first go! As we walked towards the river, on a small *bund* with the river on the left and the floodplains on the right, people were informed about the floodplains in the city are now under threat as their importance is not adequately understood and it is feared that the city may lose them to real estate. This was discussed with the passengers with useful inputs of all kinds from them.

The water of the Yamuna was such that no one felt like touching it. While returning to the bus, the passengers themselves came forward to answer "yes" to the first question and "No, never" to the second. The bus then moved to the next site: the Ghazipur Landfill Site. Here, the bus halted and not everyone seemed that keen on getting down. The group was shown the landfill site and the impact of our over-consumption on the city. We were then greeted by the members of Chintan organisation who explained us the working of the entire landfill and the issues involved. The passengers had a lot of their ideas to share with the members of Chintan and it became a brainstorming session on managing city waste.

Some, while walking back to the bus, suggested the city should have a café meeting where all those who are concerned about environmental issues could get together and discuss those, while others could come and talk about the good work they are doing. From here, we moved to the beautiful and picturesque Sanjay Lake. The Sanjay Lake complex is known for an abundance of fine indigenous trees. The lake was primarily targeted at attracting migratory birds. In the busy and relatively congested East Delhi area, Sanjay Lake is a perfect green getaway!

The halt at Sanjay Lake was very momentary owing to time constraints but after the trip to the dismal Ghazipur Landfill, the passengers wanted even more and more of this green space. The passengers here were greeted with large number of domesticated ducks who were moving to the lake to take a bath. After this small feel good stoppage here, we moved to Kashmere Gate, at the fringe of the walled city of Shahajahanabad. Along with the Inter-State Bus Terminal (ISBT) and the

giant Metro station, this area serves as the most active getaway into the city connecting the capital with its immediate hinterland and beyond.

Here, the bus halted right in front of the *Chabeel*, where people got down and had water. They also interacted with the volunteers at all the sites in Kashmere Gate, before joining the Public talk on Yamuna by Professor Vikram Soni.

3. Bird Walks

Delhi is one of the most richly diverse cities in the world, even when indexed on its bird diversity. Several studies reveal over 400 species of birds that have been reported from the city, one out of every three bird species in the subcontinent. It was thus decided to remind the people of the city about this rich heritage and call for Bird Walks. Two such bird walks were arranged for, after consultation with Mr. Nikhil Devasar of Delhi Bird Network. Both the bird trips were planned in the North campus area and were led by Ranjit Lal, author of the book Birds of Delhi, Sudeshna Dey and Govind Singh.

3.1 Bird Walk with Ranjit Lal and Sudeshna Dey Sunday, 14th December 2008

The bird walk started at 0730 hours and everyone had been informed to meet at the Flagstaff tower, a landmark in the North Delhi Ridge. A total of 15 people turned up in the early hours of a beautiful and clear Sunday morning. They were first briefed about the 48°C Public.Art.Ecology Festival and were informed about the various project sites. Next, they were given a brief introduction by Ranjit Lal of the history of the North Delhi Ridge, its involvement in the mutiny of 1857 and the plantation drive of the 1930s.

We then took a walk through the Ridge where Ranjit Lal enlightened the group about the bird diversity present in the Ridge and identified several bird sounds. The group was warned about the mischievous monkeys and also advised to ignore them. Sudeshna Dey pointed towards several bird species and identified them to the group. The group moved through the green under storey and passed through landmark features like the *Khooni Khan Jheel, Chaubarja etc.* The group took several photographs throughout the walk. The walk concluded at around 0930 hours with several people planning to visit the different eating joints of North campus.

3.2 Bird Walk with Govind Singh Sunday, 21st December 2008

The second bird walk took place on the following Sunday from the same flag-staff tower in the North Delhi (Kamala Nehru) Ridge.

A total of 12 people turned up in the early hours of Sunday. The morning was foggy and though it was not the best day for bird watching, our expedition started from the flag-staff tower at around 0745 hours. As we walked we noted monkeys waking up and coming out of trees while the sound of birds only kept getting louder as the walk proceeded.

In addition to several usual birds like the crow, sparrows, mynas and the pigeons, we also saw crow pheasant, peacocks, green bee-eaters etc. The group was also briefed about the history of the Ridge and given a talk on the trees and biodiversity present there. The walk concluded at around 0900 hours and the group was informed about the 48°C Public.Art.Ecology Festival and invited to visit the various sites.

4. Interactive Public Talks

4.1 Talk by Sohail Hashmi on the Water Channels of Delhi

Saturday, 13th December 2008 | *Delhi Public Library, Chandni Chowk*

Sohail Hashmi is a well-known figure from Delhi and has been involved in organizing heritage walks in the city. He has written extensively about the historical monuments in Delhi and is presently engaged in documentation and translation of all available material on Delhi. The talk by Sohail Hashmi, started on a very democratic poll. People were asked to poll on whether they would like to be talked to in Hindi or in English. A crowd of over 40 people turned up at the otherwise quiet and left alone Public Library, and many were taken away to the Town Hall by the Da Motus 48°C Public.Art.Ecology performance just before the talk.

Sohail Hashmi delivered an impressive and illustrious presentation on the history of the water channels that existed or are now dying in Delhi, and also shared snippets of Delhi's remarkable history. The hour long talk left the audience bewildered and excited about the stories of the city. Mr. Hashmi explained in detail the water management systems in Shahjahanabad, which sparked a connection with the audience, which largely comprised the local public from the area. Towards the end of the talk, the now very interested audience had a lot of questions on the history of the city, its development and demography, which were all answered by Sohail Hashnmi based on his experience and expertise on the subject.

4.2 Talk by Mary Miss and Akshay Kaul on Medicinal Plants

Sunday, 14th December 2008 | *Roshanhara Bagh*

A talk by Mary Miss, a New York based artist of the Roshanara's Net project, and Akshay Kaul who is a Landscape Architect from Delhi was organized around the tomb of Roshanara in Roshanara Bagh. The New York based Mary Miss is known for her environmentally based artwork and has focused on redefining the boundaries between sculpture, architecture, landscape design and installation art for more than three decades. Akshay Kaul has established a unique practice in the field of landscape and architecture where he focuses on conservation and restoration of environment through landscape design. Landscape to him is an opportunity to restore *Balance in Nature* through his understanding of issues related to water, soil, biodiversity and habitat conservation.

With the Roshanara Tomb in the vicinity, and staged around the Roshanara's Net project installation, the talk saw a mixed crowd of over 70 people, some of whom had been brought into the green space for the first, or after a long time by the Da Motus performance just before the talk. The Roshanara's Net project was aimed at exploring issues of sustainability in relation to urban ecology and community awareness, using the locale of the neglected archaeological site of the Roshanara Bagh. The talk, themed on medicinal plants and urban landscape, started with an introduction of the speakers starting with Mary Miss, Akshay Kaul and other dignitaries.

Since the talk had a prominently Hindi speaking audience, Akshay Kaul volunteered to be the translator for Mary Miss and played a key role in getting across the artist's message to the general public. Mary Miss began her talk by explaining her project and its importance to the public. She also talked about the Roshanara Bagh and then shifted focus on emphasizing the importance of medicinal plants. The next speaker was Akshay Kaul himself who highlighted the importance of medicinal plants and vividly described a lot of medicinal plants and their uses thus also talking about the very useful traditional knowledge database that we have.

Other dignitaries present spoke on relevant issue such as the need to preserve indigenous knowledge. The stage was then opened to discussion and questions from the audience and a lot of people finally got an opportunity to get their queries about the project and the festival answered. The basics of the art project, the status of Roshanara Bagh, to the cutting of trees in the city were questions, remarks and issues that were raised by the audience. The talk concluded with the speakers walking through the art project along with the audience members, discussing and sharing concerns over all that had been said so far.

4.3 Talk by Faiyaz A. Khudsar on Parks and Urban Biodiversity

Friday, 19th December 2008 | 20, Barakhamba Road

Faiyaz A. Khudsar is a wildlife ecologist and the Park Manager of the Yamuna Biodiversity Park (YBP), an initiative by the Delhi Development Authority and the University of Delhi. The YBP is a model park in the Northern part of the city which is trying to replicate the different ecosystems that once existed alongside River Yamuna and are now threatened or extinct. The talk on *Parks and Urban Biodiversity* was organized at 20, Barakhamba Road, just below the tree hanging from the crane art installation. 20 Barakhamba Road is a structure which, unlike its neighbours, has refused to grow into a building!

The talk started with just about 15 people in the busy and bustling street of Barakhamba Road and Faiyaz Khudsar initiated the talk by informing and asking the audience as to how many of them were sure that the next breath they would inhale would come out. For with the total number of automobiles entering the city showing a J-shaped curve increase, the carbon monoxide concentration is now alarmingly high. By the time Faiyaz Khudsar got done with getting this point to the people, the audience had increased from 15 to over 70. The audience also included Navtoj Altaf who had earlier filmed the scientist for her video project at this site itself.

Faiyaz Khudsar briefed the audience on the present status of Delhi's environment and the challenges being faced by the city. He then emphasized on the environment versus development debate and how the city of Delhi has been witnessing the challenges of development since the past few years now. In his talk, he discussed everything from the Yamuna, the Delhi Ridge and the problems associated with transport, energy, waste, water and urban planning. The over ninety minutes talk not only covered every aspect of the Delhi's environment, it also gave so much food for thought to the audience that almost everyone had a question to ask, a point to highlight, an issue to raise or a remark to make. The talk concluded with the beginning of the screening of Navtoj Altaf's project that also highlighted similar issues in the city.

4.4 Talk on Yamuna by Professor Vikram Soni

Saturday, 20th December 2008 | *Kashmere Gate*

Vikram Soni is a Professor at the National Physical Laboratory and a prolific writer who has written numerous articles and popular papers on the Yamuna in Delhi, addressing water issues in the city. His passion for the river and his understanding of the city and its relation with water has put him at the forefront of citizens' activism for a sustainable city. Professor Soni's talk was slated to happen in front of the Kashmere Gate monument but owing to last minute information about the lack of permission for putting up a public address system in front of an archaeological site, the venue was quickly shifted to the back side of the monument just below the big empty bucket art installation. The event was initiated by introducing Professor Soni to the mixed audience that comprised curious citizens who had just come out from the Metro, passersby and the passengers of the East City Delhi Greens Urban Eco-Bus Tour.

The audience also included Professor Mihir Deb, Director, School of Environmental Studies, University of Delhi and well known amateur ornithologist Anand Arya among others. The talk started with the screening of a 22 minute film by Professor Soni that highlights the economic importance of the Yamuna floodplains. The film, though in English, saw much appreciation from the audience especially when Prof. Soni himself demonstrated live the experiment he uses in the film to get across the significance of the floodplains.

After the film, Prof. Soni talked to the audience addressing questions that were visible from the faces of the people. He also called for citizens to get active so as to ensure that Delhi does not lose its ambience and is able to sustain itself and the citizens for times to come. Prof. Soni made the audience involved in the discussion and passed across the microphone to the audience members as well. A remark by one of them that all the destructive and mindless activities that we are doing today may not show any visible harm today but we are actually doing all this on the dead bodies of our coming generations saw much appreciation from all. The talk concluded with more questions and inputs from everyone and a walk to all the other art installations.

5. Workshops and Other Events

5.1 Workshops by Navdanya

Monday, 15th December 2008 | Palika Bazaar Garden
Sunday, 21st December 2008 | Max Mueller Bhavan

Navdanya started as a program of the Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology (RFSTE), a participatory research initiative founded by world-renowned scientist and environmentalist Dr. Vandana Shiva, to provide direction and support to environmental activism. Navdanya is actively involved in the rejuvenation of indigenous knowledge and culture. It has created awareness on the hazards of genetic engineering, defended people's knowledge from bio-piracy and food rights in the face of globalisation.

Two workshops were organized in collaboration with Navdanya, one for school children and the other was open to general public. The workshop for schools was organized on the garden on top of Palika Bazaar, adjacent to the project by Learning Site. Children of DAV Public School, Loni Road were invited for the workshop and were briefed about Navdanya and its working. They also took a round of the Learning Site's project and were then explained the importance of diversity and the losing diversity in our foods. They were informed about India's rich indigenous knowledge and resources and the increasing threats that these now face.

The students were then involved in an interactive workshop where they were taught how to make a tasty dessert using only the organic and indigenous foods. The students cut fruits and were explained how Indians need to be proud of their natural heritage. Once the dessert was prepared, it was distributed to everyone present in the area who relished it a lot. The workshop concluded with making children plant a sapling in a pot and taking it home. They were also instructed on how to take care of the plants. The seeds of freedom were also distributed to all students.

The second workshop was to take place at Max Mueller Bhawan but did not invite much audience owing to it being a Sunday and also the concluding day for the Festival. Since only about 10 people turned up, it was cancelled, though the Navdanya products and publications were put for display.

5.2 Workshop by Jan Sandesh

Sunday, 21st December 2008 | *Max Mueller Bhawan*

Jan Sandesh is a non-profit charitable organisation based out of Delhi that provides training for needful woman and adolescents from the slum areas of Delhi. It make newspaper-carry bags for worldwide distribution. The organisation was called in to carry out a *Kabad se Jugad* (best out of waste) workshop and teach people how they can make attractive and useful things out of simple waste material. A total of 10 people attended the workshop at Max Mueller Bhavan where they learnt how to make decorative pieces out of cartons, magazines and cardboards.

5.3 Workshop by Aajao Aajao

Wednesday, 17th December 2008 | *Ramlila Maidan*

A workshop for school and street children was organized in collaboration with *Aajao Aajao*, a city based group that is a call to the citizens of Delhi to come together for the city and its people. The workshop started with gathering children from the schools close to Ramlila Maidan and also from the shops, smaller parks and eating outlets near the ground. A total of around 40 children gathered at the Ramlila Maidan around the different art installations displayed there.

The children were then made to stand in a circle and were involved in various activities that made them think while also made them use their otherwise non-obvious skills. Concentration, speed, agility, patience and leadership skills were all tested in the interesting activities that were carried out with the children. Most of the children there had never experienced such a workshop ever before and were both thrilled and excited. It was not until they got very tired and exhausted that the over an hour long workshop concluded, with smiles on everyone's faces and a needful request for more later on. Even till the time that this report was being compiled, we have been getting requests from people and children from the area to continue having such activities there.

5.4 Street Play by Jamghat

Wednesday, 17th December 2008 | *Ramlila Maidan*

Jamghat, a group of street children, came into being as a result of an initiative by Action Aid India in 2003 to perform a play on homelessness for the then visiting Prince Charles.

This play brought together a small group of street children and some very talented young theater artists. The groups has since evolved into a family which came together at Ramlila Grounds to perform a play on *Global Warming* that tried to awaken city dwellers to the causes and adverse impacts of climate change, a problem which many refuse to recognize, while others remain unaware of.

Jamghat's performance started in their usual style of calling together everyone present in the 200m radius of the *stage* by going around the place shouting *Aajao Aajao, Naatak Dekho*. This time around, they also used the decorated pink rickshaws that were placed inside the Ramlila Maidan for a major part of the festival. The rickshaws and the Jamghat team pulled together a crowd of over 100 people, some of whom had been living in the area for a long time, but were entering the ground for the first time. The almost half an hour long play kept the audience captivated as it explained to them the intricacies of the issue of global warming, the lack of adequate action on the matter and the role individuals can play in preventing a drastic climatic change.

The play concluded with members from Jamghat asking the audience the steps they would now take to ensure a clean, green environment and brighter future. After that, a group discussion got initiated among all who were present there and people came up with both problems, issues as well as with ideas and solutions.

5.5 Sanskriti 350

Tuesday, 16th December 2008 | *Sanskriti School*

In the middle of the festival, Sanskriti School called for Sanskrit 350, an Eco-Clubs unite against climate change. Established by the Civil Services Society in the Indian capital city of Delhi, Sanskriti has become one of the leading schools in the little over ten years of its establishment. The school recently won an award for its work with ragpickers and slum-children and has addressed its share of equity issues. *Sanskriti 350* was an inter-school event inviting eco-clubs from over 30 schools, in a bid to highlight the importance of 350. 350 is the most important number on the planet right now as 350 ppm is the upper safe limit of carbon concentration in the atmosphere. Remarkably enough, Sanskriti (meaning culture) 350 was an event completely for the youth, by the youth and of the youth! The youth event had everything from a green fashion show, a brainstorming session, green film competition, ad-mad, to a rock-band competition titled 'the sounds of 350'!

The event saw a good participation and was inaugurated by the Secretary, Environment in the Government of Delhi Mr. J.K. Dadoo who elaborated on the science and policy of climate change. He also warned the students of a disease called 'affluenza' which, according to him, is a major threat to the global environment. The 48°C Public.Art.Ecology Festival was announced on the stage and all participating schools were invited to attend the festival. The festival pamphlets and brochures were also distributed during Sanskriti 350.

The enthusiasm of the young adults and the energy levels in them clearly suggested that the youth has understood the urgency to act today in order to ensure their survival, and the survival of their children and grandchildren on this Planet. It was most inspiring when the School Principal Ms. Abha Sahgal took to stage and declared that her generation had clearly not done enough to protect our environment and that she is whole-heartedly with the youth for leading the green movement.